Department of Philosophy and World Religions

(College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences)

www.uni.edu/philrel

The Department of Philosophy and World Religions offers the following programs:

Undergraduate Majors (B.A.)
• Philosophy (p. 1)
• Religious Studies (p. 2)

Minors
• Ethics (p. 3)
• Philosophy (p. 4)
• Religious Studies (p. 4)

Program Certificate (p. 4)
• Religious Literacy (p. 5)
• Youth Work in Religious Settings (p. 5) (also listed in Department of Health, Recreation and Community Services)

Bachelor of Arts Degree Programs

Philosophy Major

The Philosophy major requires a minimum of 120 total hours to graduate. This total includes UNIFI/General Education requirements, 36 hours of coursework in the major, plus electives to complete the minimum of 120 hours.

The Philosophy major is designed to provide depth and breadth in the study of philosophy, emphasizing the skills of logical reasoning, analytic reading, effective writing, and ethical reasoning, as well as focused study of the history of western philosophy, and fundamental conceptions of human nature and human practices. The major is also flexible, so that students can take courses of interest to them. Courses in the philosophy major give students an opportunity to gain useful conceptual tools, increase their flexibility of mind, and improve their ability to view issues from multiple perspectives. Philosophy is one of the best pre-law majors; philosophy majors typically do extremely well in admission tests to graduate and professional schools.

The philosophy major stresses learning goals that enable students to achieve the skills deemed essential by employers, in particular, strong critical thinking and communication skills. Because the major is organized around learning goals, students know exactly why they are taking each class. As they explore philosophy, they also see that each class is helping them to become college graduates who possess knowledge and skills valued by employers as well as professional and graduate schools.

Philosophy Major - Learning Goals and Courses

What is a learning goal?

A learning goal is a set of skills or body of knowledge that a student should expect to acquire or expand their mastery of by completing a particular major.

By establishing learning goals, majors in Philosophy know exactly why they are taking each class. These learning goals divide the classes taken by majors in Philosophy into categories that are easily understood and that guide the student through the major and the learning process.

Learning Goal 1: Skills: Philosophy majors will demonstrate proficiency in critical thinking, analytical writing, reading and understanding complex materials; as well as analyzing, evaluating, and constructing arguments.

Courses that support Learning Goal 1:

Logical Reasoning
Required:

| PHIL 1030 | Elementary Logic OR |

Reading for Arguments and Assumptions
Students who have completed Learning Goal 4 will have satisfied this requirement.

Analytic Writing
Students who have completed Learning Goal 4 will have satisfied this requirement.

Learning Goal 2: Ethical Reasoning: Philosophy majors will understand ethical theories and use this understanding to think through moral and ethical problems in a principled and systematic way.

Courses that support Learning Goal 2:

Required:

| PHIL 2500 | Ethics * |

Learning Goal 3: History of Philosophy: By reading key texts from the rich western philosophical tradition, Philosophy majors will gain useful conceptual tools, increase their flexibility of mind, and improve their ability to view issues from multiple perspectives.

Courses that support Learning Goal 3:

Required: at least three course from the following:

| PHIL 2210 | Dawn of Western Thought: Ancient Philosophy |
| PHIL/RELS 2220 | Faith and Reason: Philosophy in the Middle Ages |
| PHIL 2230 | The Age of Reason: Philosophy in the Renaissance and Enlightenment |
Learning Goal 4: Philosophy majors will investigate fundamental conceptions of what it means to be a person and to engage in essential human activities.

Courses that support Learning Goal 4:

A. Understanding Human Nature
Required: at least two courses from the following: 6
- PHIL 3310 Consciousness and Mind: Philosophical Perspectives
- PHIL 3330 Death, Sex and the Body: Phenomenology and Foucault
- PHIL 3360 Intellectual Vices and Virtues: Theory and Practice
- PHIL 3610 Nietzsche, Nihilism, and Technology

B. Basic Human Practices
Required: at least two courses from the following. 6
At least one of these courses must be in "analytical philosophy": either PHIL 3350 or PHIL 3620. (Taking both of these courses will completely satisfy this requirement.)
- PHIL 2140 Philosophy of Religion
- PHIL 3320 Political Philosophy
- PHIL 3350 How We Know: Philosophical Perspectives
- PHIL 3370 Philosophy of Law
- PHIL 3620 Philosophy of Language: Wittgenstein

Learning Goal 5: Career Preparation: Philosophy majors will be able to relate their major to their careers and to their future goals.

Required:
- PHIL 4490 Professional Development Seminar 3

Through thoughtful reflection and critical discernment, students synthesize their work in the major, clarifying what they have done and linking their achievements with life goals, while they also explore how deep learning outcomes in the major offer preparation for a career, graduate or professional school.

Electives: in order to reach 36 hours, students can choose from courses not used above or from the following courses in Philosophy. No more than two courses in applied ethics (PHIL 1540, PHIL 1560 PHIL 2550, PHIL 2570, PHIL 3110, PHIL 3510) count toward the philosophy major:
- PHIL 1040 Justice and the Good Life: Philosophical Perspectives
- PHIL 1050 The Art of Critical Thinking and Writing
- PHIL 1080 World Philosophies
- PHIL/RELS 1540 Ethics in Business
- PHIL 1560 Science, Technology, and Ethics (STE)
- PHIL/RELS 2550 Environmental Ethics
- PHIL 2570 Good Sex: The Ethics of Human Sexuality
- PHIL/RELS 3110/ CAP 3194 Perspectives on Death and Dying
- PHIL 3186 Studies in Philosophy
- PHIL/RELS 3510/ CAP 3173 Bio-Medical Ethics
- PHIL 4080 Individual Readings in Philosophy

Total hours 36

* Courses followed by asterisk (*) count toward the Ethics minor (15-hour minor).
^ Courses followed by the symbol (*) also satisfy the Liberal Arts Core Capstone requirement.
QCourses followed by (^) also satisfy the UNIFI Quantitative Reasoning category.
R Courses followed by (R) also satisfy the UNIFI Responsibility category.
WCourses followed by (WC) also satisfy the UNIFI Written Communication category.
HCGourses followed by (HCG) also satisfy the UNIFI Human Condition: Global category.

Religious Studies Major

The Religious Studies major requires a minimum of 120 total hours to graduate. This total includes UNIFI/General Education requirements, 36 hours of coursework in the major, plus electives to complete the minimum of 120 hours.

The Religious Studies major is designed to provide depth and breadth in the study of religion, emphasizing the beliefs and practices of the major world religions, as well as focused study of the multiple ways that religions shape and reflect the world around us. The major is also flexible, so that students can take courses of interest to them. Courses in the study of religion give students an opportunity to become reflective and respectful global citizens in our increasingly diverse world.

In planning the Religious Studies major, we have listened to employers. The major prioritizes learning goals that enable students to learn about religion and achieve outcomes that employers value. We know that employers want to hire college graduates who have strong communication and critical thinking skills and who can interact empathetically and effectively with persons from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Because the major is organized around learning goals, students always know exactly why they are taking each class. As they explore religion, they also see that each class is helping them to become college graduates who possess knowledge and skills valued by employers.

Study of Religion Major - Learning Goals and Courses

What is a learning goal?

A learning goal is a set of skills or body of knowledge that a student should expect to acquire, or expand their mastery of, by completing a particular major.

Having established "learning goals" allows majors in Religion to know exactly why they are taking each class. These learning goals...
divide the classes taken by majors in Religion into categories that are easily understood and that guide the student through the major and the learning process.

**Learning Goal 1:**
Majors in the Study of Religion demonstrate an ability to reflect critically and empathetically on the subject.

**Courses support Learning Goal 1:**

A. **Religion and Culture**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELS 2600</td>
<td>Religion and the Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS/PHIL 3110/ CAP 3194</td>
<td>Perspectives on Death and Dying</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 3150</td>
<td>Women and Christianity *</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 3400</td>
<td>Religion and Race</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 3500</td>
<td>Religion and Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 4230/5230</td>
<td>Religion in America *</td>
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B. **Textual and Analytical Explorations of Religion**

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELS 2001</td>
<td>Old Testament and Other Hebrew Scriptures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS 2002</td>
<td>New Testament and Early Christian Writings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS/PHIL 2140</td>
<td>Philosophy of Religion *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS 3200</td>
<td>Religion and Law</td>
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</tbody>
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**Learning Goal 2:**
Majors in the Study of Religion have knowledge of the beliefs, practices, and worldviews of major living religions.

**Courses support Learning Goal 2:**

A. **Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion**

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELS 2100</td>
<td>Hinduism and Buddhism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS 2110</td>
<td>Confucianism, Daoism, and Zen</td>
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One course from the following:

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELS 2120</td>
<td>Judaism and Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS 2130</td>
<td>Christianity</td>
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B. **Interactions Within and Among Religions**

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<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELS 1040</td>
<td>The Power of Myth: (Topic)</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 1060</td>
<td>American Religious Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS/PHIL 2220</td>
<td>Faith and Reason: Philosophy in the Middle Ages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS 3180</td>
<td>Religion and Politics: (Topics)</td>
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**Learning Goal 3:**
Majors in the Study of Religion have skills that are highly valued by employers; they are able to relate their major to their career and to their future goals.

**Courses support Learning Goal 3:**

**Writing Enhanced Courses**

Two writing enhanced courses are required. Students must take at least two courses marked with an asterisk (*) for the Study of Religion major.

**Senior Seminar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELS 4490</td>
<td>Professional Development Seminar</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through thoughtful reflection and critical discernment, students synthesize their work in the major, clarifying what they have done and linking their achievements with life goals, while they also explore how deep learning outcomes in the major offer preparation for a career, graduate or professional school.

**Electives:** in order to reach 36 hours, students can choose from courses not used above or from the following courses in Religion. All courses 3000 level or higher (including any RELS 3159 course) that do not already fulfill other requirements for the major are considered Electives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELS 1020</td>
<td>Religions of the World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS 1510</td>
<td>Religion, Ethics, and Film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS 3080/5080</td>
<td>Individual Readings in Religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 4186/5186</td>
<td>Studies in Religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 4600</td>
<td>Internship in Religion</td>
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and not more than two courses from:

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELS/PHIL 2550</td>
<td>Environmental Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS/PHIL 2570</td>
<td>Good Sex: The Ethics of Human Sexuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS 1540</td>
<td>Ethics in Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS/PHIL 3510/ CAP 3173</td>
<td>Bio-Medical Ethics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total hours 36

**Pre-Theological Emphasis**

Students preparing for ministry or for graduate professional education in theology at a seminary or divinity school, regardless of major, are advised to consult with the pre-theological advisor, who will help them to know the requirements of individual schools and to plan an undergraduate program appropriately designed for their professional interests.

**Minors**

**Ethics Minor**

The Ethics minor is intended to provide students of diverse major fields of study a way to focus and develop their interest in ethics both by offering them a core of courses essential to an understanding of the field of ethics and by advising them in the selection of courses that enable them to develop depth and detail in theoretical, professional and applied ethics.

**Ethics Core--Required:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 2500</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Religious Studies:
- **RELS 3500** Religion and Ethics 3

### Introductory Courses: select one of the following: 3
- **RELS 1020** Religions of the World
- **RELS 1060** American Religious Diversity

### Philosophy or Religious Studies:
- **PHIL/RELS 1540** Ethics in Business (can count in introductory, applied, or elective categories, but only one)

### Philosophy:
- **PHIL 1040** Justice and the Good Life: Philosophical Perspectives

### Applied Ethics: select one of the following: 3
- **PHIL 1560** Science, Technology, and Ethics (STE) (Can also count as an elective, but not as both)
- **PHIL/RELS 2550** Environmental Ethics (Can also count as an elective, but not as both)
- **PHIL/RELS 2570** Good Sex: The Ethics of Human Sexuality (Can also count as an elective, but not as both.)
- **PHIL/RELS 3510** Bio-Medical Ethics (Can also count as an elective, but not as both)

### Management:
- **MGMT/PHIL/RELS 3974** Business, Ethics, and Society (Can also count as an elective, but not as both)

### Electives: select one of the following: 3
- **MGMT 3100** Legal and Social Environment of Business

### Communications:
- **COMM 3236/3237** Ethics in Communication
- **COMM 4217/5217** Freedom of Speech

### Special Education:
- **SPED 4180/5180** Interdisciplinary Study of Disability

### History:
- **HIST 3110** Conflict and Justice in History: (Topic)
- **HIST 4170/4171** U.S. Environmental History
- **HIST 4260/4261** United States Women’s History

### Philosophy:
- **PHIL 3320** Political Philosophy
- **PHIL 3360** Intellectual Vices and Virtues: Theory and Practice

### Philosophy or Religious Studies:
- **PHIL/RELS 3110** Perspectives on Death and Dying

### Political Science:
- **POL COMP 3125** Politics of Nonviolence
- **POL THRY 3160** Classical Political Theory
- **POL THRY 3161** Modern Political Theory

### Psychology:
- **PSYCH 2201** Psychology of Gender *
- **PSYCH 2203** Social Psychology *

### Sociology:
- **CRIM 3314** Ethics in Crime, Law and Justice *

### Technology:
- **TECH 1015** Introduction to Sustainability

### Total Hours 15

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*These courses have additional prerequisites as follows:
- MGMT 3974/5974 has a prerequisite of MGMT 3100.
- PSYCH 2201 has a prerequisite of PSYCH 1001.
- PSYCH 2203 has a prerequisite of PSYCH 1001.
- CRIM 3314 has a prerequisite of SOC 1000; CRIM 2022.

## Philosophy Minor

### Philosophy:
- **PHIL 1040** Justice and the Good Life: Philosophical Perspectives 3

### One course in the history of philosophy: 3
- **PHIL 2210** Dawn of Western Thought: Ancient Philosophy
- **PHIL/RELS 2220** Faith and Reason: Philosophy in the Middle Ages
- **PHIL 2230** The Age of Reason: Philosophy in the Renaissance and Enlightenment
- **PHIL 2240** The Limits of Reason: Modern Philosophy

### Electives in philosophy (PHIL xxxx) 12

### Total Hours 18

## Religious Studies Minor

### Select one of the following: 3
- **RELS 1020** Religions of the World
- **RELS 1060** American Religious Diversity

### Electives: 15 hours of RELS xxxx courses 15

### Total Hours 18

## Program Certificates

The University of Northern Iowa makes available, in addition to traditional programs, the opportunity for students to earn program certificates. Program certificates provide an alternative to programs leading to a degree, a major, or a minor; they certify that an individual
has completed a program approved by the university. For information on the following program certificates, contact the Department of Health, Recreation and Community Services or the Office of the Registrar, which serves as the centralized registry.

**Religious Literacy Certificate**

The Certificate in Religious Literacy emphasizes the ways that religion interacts with many different areas of social, cultural, and political life, and will be beneficial to those preparing for careers in a wide variety of fields, including—but not limited to—health, education, business, social work, law, politics, criminology, psychology, family services, and communications. Using the American Academy of Religion’s guidelines for teaching and learning religious literacy in K-12 schools and in higher education, UNI's Religious Literacy Certificate provides students with content knowledge and transferable skills based in the academic study of religion.

**Required:** (Choose 2)  
- RELS 1020  Religions of the World  
- RELS 1040  The Power of Myth: (Topic)  
- RELS 1060  American Religious Diversity  

**Electives:** select two of the following  
- RELS 2001  Old Testament and Other Hebrew Scriptures  
- RELS 2002  New Testament and Early Christian Writings  
- RELS 2600  Religion and the Public Schools  
- RELS 3180  Religion and Politics: (Topics)  
- RELS 3200  Religion and Law  
- RELS 3400  Religion and Race  
- RELS 4230/ HIST 4250/5250  Religion in America  

**Total Hours**  
6  
12  

**Youth Work in Religious Settings Certificate**

The Youth Work in Religious Settings Certificate interdisciplinary program is jointly offered by the Recreation, Tourism and Nonprofit Leadership program within the Department of Health, Recreation and Community Services and the Department of Philosophy and World Religions. The Youth Work in Religious Settings Certification Program prepares students for work in a variety of religious organizations and contexts.

**Required:**  
- Philosophy and World Religions:  
  - RELS 1020  Religions of the World  
- Recreation, Tourism and Nonprofit Leadership:  
  - RTNL 2150  Foundations of Youth Work  
  - RTNL 3120  Programming for Recreation, Tourism and Nonprofit Leadership  
  - RTNL 3340  Prevention & Intervention Programs in Youth Work  

**Electives:** 6 hours of RELS xxxx courses  

**Total Hours**  
18  

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**Department of Philosophy and World Religions**

**Philosophy, B.A.**

Learning Goal 1: Skills: Philosophy majors will demonstrate proficiency in analyzing evaluating, writing, and constructing arguments.

1-A: Logical Reasoning: Philosophy majors will be able to analyze, evaluate, and construct arguments using techniques of both formal and informal logic.

1-B: Reading for Arguments and Assumptions: Philosophy majors will be able to read numerous complex philosophical texts and proficiently (1) identify the author's thesis, (2) reconstruct the author's argument for the thesis, (3) identify explicit and implicit assumptions in the argument, and (4) evaluate the argument by identifying its logical strengths and weaknesses.

1-C: Analytic Writing: Philosophy majors will be able to produce written documents with clarity and rigor.

Learning Goal 2: Ethical Reasoning: Philosophy majors will use their understanding of ethical theories to think through moral problems in a principled and systematic way.

2-A: Philosophy majors will be able to explain some of the major ethical theories.

2-B: Philosophy majors will be able to reconstruct philosophers’ arguments for their theories.

2-C: Philosophy majors will be able to identify some of the strengths and weaknesses of major ethical theories.

2-D: Philosophy majors will be able to illustrate how major ethical theories can be applied to practical issues.

Learning Goal 3: History of Philosophy: By reading key texts from the rich Western philosophical tradition, Philosophy majors will gain useful conceptual tools, increase their flexibility of mind, and improve their ability to view issues from multiple perspectives.

3-A: Philosophy majors will be able to explain key views of the major figures in the history of philosophy.

3-B: Philosophy majors will be able to reconstruct philosophers’ arguments for their views.

3-C: Philosophy majors will be able to analyze philosophers’ arguments for their views and identify some of their strengths and weaknesses.

Learning Goal 4: Philosophy majors will investigate fundamental conceptions of what it means to be a person and to engage in essential human activities.

4-A: Through reading key philosophical texts, philosophy majors will be able to explain important philosophical views of what it is to be human.

4-B: Through reading key philosophical texts, philosophy majors will be able to explain important philosophical views of basic human practices (language, knowledge, science, religion, politics, art, etc.).

Learning Goal 5: Philosophy majors will be able to relate their major to their career and to their future goals.
5-A: Philosophy majors will be able to relate their major to their career and to their future goals, and demonstrate skills that are highly valued by employers.

**Religious Studies, B.A.**

**GOAL #1:** Majors in the Religious Studies reflect critically and empathetically on the subject.

To demonstrate that they have fulfilled this goal they are able to:
- differentiate between devotional practices and the academic study of religion, examine the meanings and functions of religion in human life and/or think critically about themselves and their place in the world.

**GOAL #2:** Majors in the Religious Studies have knowledge of the practices, beliefs, values, and worldviews of major religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.

To demonstrate that they have fulfilled this goal they are able to:
- describe similarities and differences among traditions, explain diverse religious viewpoints within each tradition, identify the impact of religions on a local, national, and/or global scale, and/or describe examples of important religious disagreements, controversies, or issues.

**GOAL #3:** Majors in the Religious Studies have skills that are highly valued by employers; they are able to relate their major to their career and to their future goals.

To demonstrate that they have fulfilled this goal they are able to:
- explain and interpret a variety of texts, produce professional-quality documents for a variety of audiences, identify and use quality resources to conduct research on religion, competently and comfortably present research or ideas orally, and/or work effectively in teams. They can also persuasively explain to prospective employers outside the field of religion how what they have learned in the study of religion will enable them to be excellent employees who can do a variety of different tasks competently.