

Religion

The religion curriculum at California Lutheran University challenges students to engage in the academic study of religion and to explore the religious questions that people have asked throughout history, such as the existence and nature of God, the meaning of life, how we should live, and what awaits us after death. While the primary focus of the religion curriculum is the Christian tradition, courses are also offered in the other major religious traditions of the world as well as in biblical languages.

The religion degree program at CLU provides a solid grounding in religion, which supports the liberal arts emphasis of the University and prepares students for the myriad religious issues they will face in life. It also prepares students for graduate study in religion and a variety of ordained and non-ordained ministries in the various denominations of the Christian church, such as Christian education, church music, counseling and missionary service.

Opportunities exist for students to do internships and independent studies, allowing them to explore areas of potential career interest, and students majoring in religion graduate from CLU well-prepared for seminary study. In addition, Lutheran students are eligible for the Associate in Ministry program for lay persons who are certified by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Bachelor of Arts in Religion

36 credits minimum.

REL 100	Introduction to Christianity	4
REL 435	Faith and Reason-Capstone	4
Select one of the following:		4
REL 310	Exploring the Old Testament	
REL 311	The Old Testament: Torah	
REL 312	Old Testament: Prophets	
REL 313	Old Testament: Writings	
REL 315	Biblical Hebrew I	
REL 316	Biblical Hebrew II	
Select one of the following:		4
REL 320	Exploring the New Testament	
REL 323	Paul and His Letters	
REL 324	Jesus	
REL 325	Biblical Greek I	
REL 326	Biblical Greek II	
REL 327	Revelation and Apocalypse	
Select one of the following:		4
REL 331	Christianity in the Roman World	
REL 332	Medieval and Reformation Christianity	
REL 333	World Christianity Since 1600	
REL 334	Christianity in America	
REL 335	Martin Luther	
Select one of the following:		4
REL 340	Exploring Christian Theology	
REL 341	Varieties of Christian Theology	
REL 344	God in Christian Thought	
REL 345	Christ and Salvation	
REL 346	Science and Christian Theology	
REL 347	Liberation and Theology	
Select one of the following:		4
REL 350	Contemporary Christian Ethics	
REL 351	Global Ethics	
REL 352	Environmental Ethics	
REL 353	Violence, Religion and Ethics	
REL 354	Theology and Business Ethics	
REL 356	Sexual Ethics	
Select one of the following:		4
REL 360	Jews and Judaism	

REL 370	Introduction to the Study of Global Religions	
REL 371	Western Religions	
REL 372	South Asian Religions	
REL 374	Women and Religion	
Religion Elective Course (lower or upper division)		4
Total Hours		36

Minor in Religion:

20 credits minimum;

REL 100	Introduction to Christianity	4
Two courses in at least two different 300-level religion areas		8
Two Religion Elective Courses		8
Total Hours		20

Courses

Lower Division

REL 100. Introduction to Christianity. (4).

This study of Christianity explores the formation and structure of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and New Testament and the development of Christianity from the first century to the present, including its theological and ethical traditions.

REL 282. Selected Topics. (1-4).

REL 285. Interim Travel Course. (1).

REL 291. Integrative Seminar in Vocation and Leadership. (2).

Through reading, group discussion, community engagement, and personal reflection, this course equips students to situate their own vocations and leadership styles in the context of communities to which they belong. Prerequisite: Permission of the Instructor.

Upper Division

REL 300. Exploring Biblical Traditions. (4).

This course will trace the development of religious consciousness in human experience, examine the foundations of Judaism and Christianity in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, explore the rise and expansion of Christianity in its unity and diversity, and explain its core beliefs and practices.

REL 310. Exploring the Old Testament. (4).

This introduction to the literature and setting of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible emphasizes selected writings and themes. Attention is given to the historical and cultural context and the challenge of interpreting these writings in the 21st century.

REL 311. The Old Testament: Torah. (4).

An examination of the first five books of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible, focusing on selected passages and themes, the historical and cultural context of their composition and the challenge of interpreting them in the 21st century.

REL 312. Old Testament: Prophets. (4).

An examination of the prophetic books of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible, focusing on selected passages and themes, the historical and cultural context of their composition and the challenge of interpreting them in the 21st century.

REL 313. Old Testament: Writings. (4).

An examination of Wisdom Literature, Psalms and other writings in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible, focusing on selected passages and themes, the historical and cultural context of their composition and the challenge of interpreting them in the 21st century.

REL 315. Biblical Hebrew I. (4).

A two-semester sequence of study leading to a reading knowledge of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. Basic Hebrew grammar and vocabulary are studied in conjunction with questions of cosmology, the understanding of history and the theological perspective of ancient Israel. (cross-listed with HEBR 315 & HEBR 316).

REL 316. Biblical Hebrew II. (4).

A two-semester sequence of study leading to a reading knowledge of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. Basic Hebrew grammar and vocabulary are studied in conjunction with questions of cosmology, the understanding of history and the theological perspective of ancient Israel. (cross-listed with HEBR 315 & HEBR 316).

REL 320. Exploring the New Testament. (4).

A survey of the New Testament writings in their first century Mediterranean cultural setting that explores how early Christian communities adapted Jewish Tradition and society, as well as the ideas, cultures, and beliefs of ancient Greece and Rome.

REL 323. Paul and His Letters. (4).

An introduction to the study of Paul's letters and theology in relation to his social world, using historical and literary approaches.

REL 324. Jesus. (4).

Who is Jesus? This course begins with the four gospels and asks how each writer understands Jesus in the first century Jewish and Roman worlds. Students then study art and literature from around the world to ask how Jesus is understood in different cultural and political perspectives today.

REL 325. Biblical Greek I. (4).

A beginning study of biblical Greek that builds a foundation in the essentials of grammar, vocabulary, and translation. Includes readings in Mark and Philippians, as well as (in the second semester) discussion of theological implications.(Cross-listed with GREE 325 & GREE 326).

REL 326. Biblical Greek II. (4).

A beginning study of biblical Greek that builds a foundation in the essentials of grammar, vocabulary, and translation. Includes readings in Mark and Philippians, as well as (in the second semester) discussion of theological implications.(Cross-listed with GREE 325 & GREE 326).

REL 327. Revelation and Apocalypse. (4).

An introduction to the book of Revelation in the New Testament, and other apocalyptic themes in literature from the Prophets to the present times. This course explores the social and political dimensions of apocalyptic literature in particular situations around the globe.

REL 331. Christianity in the Roman World. (4).

A survey of the emergence, growth, and development of the Christian movement from the time of the apostles to the disintegration of the Roman Empire in the West and to the fall of Constantinople in the East. This course will focus on Christianity as actually experienced and practiced by its earlier adherents in the multinational context of empire, and will look at textual, artistic, and material sources of evidence to gain a sense of the Christian past. (cross-listed with HIST 331).

REL 332. Medieval and Reformation Christianity. (4).

A survey of the development of Christianity in the post-Roman West, focusing on the rise of papacy, the development of distinctive Western Christian practices and doctrines, and the important role of the church in shaping European society. Special attention will be given to ways the medieval church handled difference and dissent, and to the reform movements of the later Middle Ages and the Protestant and Catholic reformations they brought about. (cross-listed with HIST 332).

REL 333. World Christianity Since 1600. (4).

A survey of the history of post-Reformation Christianity as it spread beyond Europe and became truly a global religion, with special emphasis on regional variations, issues of class and gender, and the challenges of modernity. Much of the course will focus on Christianity as variously experienced in the tumultuous 20th century, and in this will underscore both continuities and the rich diversity in the modern and postmodern Christian communities that exist throughout the world today. (cross-listed with HIST 333).

REL 334. Christianity in America. (4).

This course will trace the historical development of Christianity in America from its early encounter with Native American religions to its contemporary encounter with other global religions. Beginning with Spanish, French and English colonial empires, emphasis will be placed on the arrival of diverse religious refugees, the rise of uniquely American religious groups and the relation of Christianity to various socio-political movements and to the diversity of persons and cultures represented in American public life today. (cross-listed with HIST 335).

REL 335. Martin Luther. (4).

A seminar course introducing the life and thought of Martin Luther (1483-1586), based on lectures, films, and close reading and discussion of his works. The course aims to provide students with a working knowledge of Luther's main teachings and their impact, and to put both his ideas and his legacy in historical context.

REL 340. Exploring Christian Theology. (4).

A survey of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, including their biblical roots, classical formulations, challenges posed by the modern world and some contemporary reformulations.

REL 341. Varieties of Christian Theology. (4).

A study of some contemporary currents in Christian theology, such as evangelical theology, the various liberation theologies (feminist, black, Latino, Latin American), and the recent scientific theologies.

REL 344. God in Christian Thought. (4).

An examination of traditional and contemporary Christian understandings of God, including the person and attributes of God, God's creative work, the divine-human relationship, sin, and the traditional problem of evil.

REL 345. Christ and Salvation. (4).

A study of traditional and contemporary understandings of the historical person of Jesus, his identity as the Messiah/Christ, and his role in God's saving work.

REL 346. Science and Christian Theology. (4).

An examination of the historical and contemporary relationships that have existed between modern science and Christian theology through study of particular areas of convergence, examples of conflict and integration, and the scientific, philosophical and theological issues involved.

REL 347. Liberation and Theology. (4).

An introduction to theologies of liberation in Latin America and in Ventura County, this course asks how social, economic, and political readings of the Bible can be used to dominate and liberate communities.

REL 350. Contemporary Christian Ethics. (4).

An introduction to contemporary Christian ethics; its relationship to the Bible and Christian communities; and thinking on such important personal and social issues as sexual behavior, human reproduction, racial and ethnic relations, the taking of human life, poverty and economic issues, and the environment.

REL 351. Global Ethics. (4).

A variety of issues have arisen which need to be examined from global perspective: political repression, social change, terrorism and war, economic globalization, immigration, human rights, health, and the environment. This course examines these issues from the perspectives of global religions, ethics, social theory, and social movements.

REL 352. Environmental Ethics. (4).

The care of the earth demands that we address complex issues such as patterns of consumption and production, population growth, the rights of animals, plants and land as well as the rights and responsibilities of persons, businesses, and nations. The course examines historical, political, socio-economic, philosophical and religious perspectives.

REL 353. Violence, Religion and Ethics. (4).

A study of various forms of violence, such as sexual and domestic violence, political repression, terrorism and war. The course examines religious justification of and resistance to violence, using cases from diverse locations and religions.

REL 354. Theology and Business Ethics. (4).

This course applies ethical theory to business decisions within the context of theological reflection. With a strategic focus, the course will investigate the relationship between theological ethics and the economic concerns of managers. The course is particularly designed to help students become effective ethical agents by developing the skills to apply ethical principle to strategic business decisions. (cross-listed with BUS 354).

REL 356. Sexual Ethics. (4).

A study of sexual ethics from religious and philosophical perspectives, moving from an examination of understandings of gender, sexuality, and sexual identities to discussion of issues such as marriage and family; contraception, abortion and reproductive technologies; sexual violence, and HIV/AIDS.

REL 360. Jews and Judaism. (4).

A study of the elements of traditional Judaism in biblical, rabbinic and modern times.

REL 370. Introduction to the Study of Global Religions. (4).

A consideration of themes, issues, types of figures and phenomena from the religions of the world, selected to illustrate the ways in which the religious traditions are shaped by and in turn effect processes of globalization that inform the human experience historically and in the present.

REL 371. Western Religions. (4).

Drawing on the religious traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, students will examine the varieties of the religious experience, historically and comparatively represented by adherents of these three religious communities.

REL 372. South Asian Religions. (4).

Drawing on the religious traditions of South Asia (modern India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, students will consider the varieties of the religious experience, historically and comparatively represented by the adherents of these religious communities.

REL 374. Women and Religion. (4).

A consideration of women and women's issues within the context of the study of world religious traditions.

REL 375. Islam. (4).

In this introductory course, students learn the history of Islam from the Prophet Mohammed and the roots of the religion in Arab culture, to the spread of Islam as a global religion across many cultures. Students will analyze the variety of social, political, and cultural ways in which Muslims live out their faith around the world and in the U.S. Global Emphases may change year to year but will include 3-5 different geographical areas such as: Egypt, Asia, Turkey, Africa, Spain, Indonesia, and Europe.

REL 379. Sikh Tradition: a Case Study in Global Religions. (4).

The Sikh religion, or Sikhism, offers students an educative example of how a religious tradition emerges in the full light of history to become one of the youngest of the "world religions". In this course, students will share in the tradition's intellectual, spiritual, and cultural heritage while exploring the question of how to study religions. By the course's end, students will be able to recapitulate major moments in the tradition's history, and also offer informed comment on its future.

REL 380. Jesus in Film and History. (4).

A study of the historical person of Jesus through readings in the gospels, historical Jesus research from the past two centuries, and the various cinematic portraits of Jesus from the silent picture era to the present.

REL 381. Religion, Identity, and Culture. (4).

This course explores the interaction of religion and culture in the United States. We will examine uses of religious symbols and narratives in the formation of personal, gender, ethnic and cultural identities, through analysis of memoirs and novels.

REL 382. Religion and Public Life. (4).

In modern democracies there is often a provision for religious freedom alongside an exception that the public be secular. Students will explore religious freedom and freedom of conscience in light of the First Amendment and Anglo-Protestant bias. Governed by seminar practices of writing, speaking, and listening, students will examine case studies and constitutional debates; describe and assess the practice of religion in public life; and explain the dynamics of religious pluralism and secularization. Prerequisite: REL 100.

REL 390. Exploring Church Vocations. (4).

This course is designed for students interested in exploring the possibility of lay or ordained ministry in the church on either a professional or voluntary basis. Its primary focus is on the theory and practice of youth and family ministry, and the theology and art of oral communication in religious settings.

REL 391. Children, Youth, and Family Ministry. (4).

Through course readings, practica, guest speakers, and self-reflection, students will be introduced to the theologies, approaches, and organizational models of ministry with children, youth, and families. Students will investigate the analyses of others through written assignments and exams and will construct their own articulations of the purpose and practice of ministry. By hosting guest speakers, practicing theological skills, and locating resources, students will relate their own identities and leadership styles to the identities and leadership styles of fellow classmates and scholar-practitioners. Prerequisite: REL 100.

REL 392. Liturgy and Worship. (4).

An introduction to the Christian liturgical tradition, particularly that of Western Christianity. It will include some comparison with non-Christian religious customs, and will give importance to the development of worship in the Protestant traditions. The course's approach is historical, but it may also include some practical training if appropriate to student needs. Christian hymnody and liturgical music will also be introduced, with an emphasis on the distinctive Lutheran contributions in those areas. (cross-listed with MUS 392).

REL 412. Christian Art in the Middle Ages. (4).

Students survey the religious art of the Middle Ages - primarily Christian, but also some early Jewish and Islamic developments - identifying significant works of architecture, sculpture, and painting, while exploring Christian concepts and beliefs, liturgy and worship. Students consider art in relation to cultural needs, examining works in historical, religious social, economic, and political contexts. Students become familiar with visual forms, styles, narratives, and symbols of Christian art, as well as with broader, unifying themes shared by different cultures. The course content covers twelve centuries and geographically spans the Western edges of Europe to the Middle East. We also pay attention to instances of cultural exchange (the circulation of ideas, art forms, and artists through Europe and the Middle East). (cross-listed with ART 412).

REL 435. Faith and Reason-Capstone. (4).

Team-taught by professors in philosophy and religion, the course is an interdisciplinary exploration of the perennial tensions and cross-fertilizations between faith and reason, including examination of arguments for and against God's existence, the problem of evil, the nature of religious language, and the relationship between science and religion. It serves as the capstone for philosophy and religion majors and a senior seminar in the honors program. It is also open to juniors and seniors from all disciplines. (cross-listed with PHIL 435 and HNRS 435) (Spring).

REL 482. Selected Topics. (4).

REL 485. Travel Seminar. (2-4).

REL 490. Independent Study. (1-4).

REL 492. Internship. (1-4).

(graded P/NC only).