

# Philosophy & Religion Program

## Purpose Statement

The Department of Philosophy and Religion offers courses that train students to think logically, grapple with the most important ethical issues facing humanity, and critically reflect upon philosophical and religious traditions that for millennia have deeply shaped how human beings have understood their lives as a whole in relationship to all that exists. In so doing, students will rationally analyze their own worldviews, while at the same time understanding more deeply and with greater empathy the worldviews of others. Travel courses offered through the program superbly complement the rest of the curriculum for this purpose. The department offers a Philosophy and Religion: Pre-Law major and a traditional Philosophy and Religion major. It also offers a Philosophy and Religion minor and a Peace Studies minor.

## Philosophy and Religion: Pre-Law Major

Data indicate that students of philosophy and religion consistently score highly on the LSAT (Law School Admissions Test) and possess high rates of admission to law school. By combining the study of philosophy, religion, and law, this unique major furnishes students with outstanding preparation for law school. The major teaches skills in logical reasoning, analysis and synthesis of texts, inference to the best explanation from a set of data, persuasive public speaking, and constructive writing—skills whose practice constitute the core of what lawyers do. The major explores highly provocative, hot-button philosophical and religious issues at the heart of current legal discourse in the United States.

Students who complete the Philosophy and Religion: Pre-Law major should demonstrate the ability to:

- Critically engage the Western philosophical tradition as it addresses fundamental questions about the nature of reality, the meaning of our experience, and the purpose of life.
- Understand the world's major religious traditions and the diverse ways each is interpreted, with a special emphasis on how these traditions help shape both the human experience of the world around us and our response to it.
- Engage in logical reasoning: deductive, inductive, and abductive.
- Articulate how the American legal system works.
- Score well on the LSAT (Law School Admissions Test).

### Required Philosophy and Religion Courses (39 hours)

**G-PR 101** God and People in Ancient Israel: Hebrew Bible Foundations (3 hours) **or** **G-PR 102** Jesus: New Testament Foundations (3 hours)

**G-PR 104L** Ethics (4 hours)

**G-PR 107** Critical Thinking (3 hours)

**G-PR 201** Introduction to Philosophy (3 hours)

**G-PR 203** Science and Religion (3 hours)

**G-PR 215** History of Philosophy (3 hours)

**G-PR 302** Religion and Politics (3 hours)

**G-PR 306** World Religions (3 hours)

**G-PR 310** Religion and Law (3 hours)

**G-PR 360** Modern Logic (3 hours)

**PR 375B** Junior Seminar: LSAT Prep (3 hours)

**PR 432** Philosophy of Law (3 hours)

**PR 475** Senior Seminar/Thesis (2 hours)

### Required Supporting Courses (15 hours)

**G-CM 140** Public Speaking (3 hours)

**BA 215** Business Law (3 hours)

**SO 275** Criminal Justice (3 hours)

**CM 325** Conflict Communication (3 hours)

**CM 330** Persuasion and Social Influence (3 hours)

*Total: 54 hours*

## Philosophy and Religion Major

The practical benefits of the Philosophy and Religion major are many. It provides students with an ultimate set of transferable skills that they can apply to nearly any profession. These skills include critical thinking and reasoning, solid oral and written communication, and understanding and empathy across widely diverse cultures. This major enables students to move directly into the job market after graduation, taking positions in writing, publishing, event planning, humanitarian assistance, government, management, museums, the arts, hospitality, the service industry, and many other fields. The major prepares students to pursue graduate study/professional school in philosophy, religious studies, theology, ministry, business (particularly international business), counseling, social work, education, journalism, and several other disciplines. Whatever their career path, students will find their study of philosophy and religion empowering them to live with a deeper sense of purpose, a surer sense of their vocation, and greater appreciation for values such

as peacemaking, stewardship, and service that contribute to the well-being of the world.

Students who complete the Philosophy and Religion major should demonstrate the ability to:

- Critically engage the Western philosophical tradition as it addresses fundamental questions about the nature of reality, the meaning of our experience, and the purpose of life.
- Understand the world's major religious traditions and the diverse ways each is interpreted, with a special emphasis on how these traditions help shape both the human experience of the world around us and our response to it.
- Engage in logical reasoning: deductive, inductive, and abductive.
- Bring the study of philosophy and religion to bear on their quest to understand the meaning and purpose of their own lives.

### **Core Courses (33 hours)**

**G-PR 101** God and People in Ancient Israel: Hebrew Bible Foundations (3 hours) **or** **G-PR 102** Jesus: New Testament Foundations (3 hours)

**G-PR 106L** Spiritual Pathways (3 hours)

**G-PR 107** Critical Thinking (3 hours)

**G-PR 201** Introduction to Philosophy (3 hours)

**G-PR 215** History of Philosophy (3 hours)

**G-PR 302** Religion and Politics (3 hours) **or** **G-PR 310** Religion and Law (3 hours)

**G-PR 306** World Religions (3 hours)

**G-PR 350** Philosophy of Religion (3 hours)

**G-PR 360** Modern Logic (3 hours)

**PR 375A** Junior Seminar: Philosophy and Religion (1 hour)

**PR 431** Islamic Traditions (3 hours) **or** **PR 432** Philosophy of Law (3 hours)

**PR 475** Senior Seminar/Thesis (2 hours)

### **Electives (9-10 hours from the following)**

**G-PR 102** Jesus: New Testament Foundations (3 hours) **or** **G-PR 101** God and People in Ancient Israel: Hebrew Bible Foundations (3 hours)

**G-PR 104 or G-PR 104L** Ethics (3 hours if **G-PR 104**; 4 hours if **G-PR 104L**)

**G-PR 202** Christian Traditions (3 hours)

**G-PR 203** Science and Religion (3 hours)

**G-PR 204** Peacemaking: Religious Perspectives (3 hours)

**G-PR 302** Religion and Politics (3 hours)

**G-PR 310** Religion and Law (3 hours) **or** **G-PR 302** Religion and Politics (3 hours)

**PR 432** Philosophy of Law (3 hours) **or** **PR 431** Islamic Traditions (3 hours)

*Total: 42-43 hours*

## **Philosophy and Religion Minor**

The minor comprises 18 hours of coursework.

### **Requirements**

**G-PR 106L** Spiritual Pathways (3 hours)

**G-PR 201** Introduction to Philosophy (3 hours)

plus a minimum of 12 more hours of any courses with a **PR** prefix.

## **Peace Studies Minor**

Peace Studies is an interdisciplinary field of study that seeks understanding of the causes of human conflict and violence. It then strives to develop methods for resolving conflicts nonviolently and for promoting peace through justice at all levels of human society and in human relationships with the natural environment. The minor can complement any number of majors, for example, Political Science, History, or Environmental Stewardship, especially for those students seeking to couple their major field and professional training to values of social justice and peacemaking.

Students who complete a minor in Peace Studies should demonstrate the ability to:

- Understand some of the most important causes and consequences of interpersonal, societal, and international conflict and violence.
- Understand a variety of methods for conflict resolution and peacemaking that address these causes and promote the well-being of human communities and of the planet on which we live.

The minor comprises 18 hours of coursework.

### **Core Courses (12 hours)**

**G-PS 125** International Relations (3 hours)

**G-PR 204** Peacemaking: Religious Perspectives (3 hours)

**G-PS 215** Global Peace Studies (3 hours)

**CM 325** Conflict Communication (3 hours)

**Electives (at least 6 hours from the following)**

**G-PR 104** Ethics or **G-PR 104L** Ethics (3 hours if **G-PR104**; 4 hours if **G-PR104L**)

**G-NS 141** Environmental Science (4 hours)

**G-ET 201** Social Entrepreneurship (3 hours)

**G-SO 202** Minorities in the U.S. (3-4 hours)

**SO 206** Social Problems (3-4 hours)

**G-CM 221** Intercultural Communication (3 hours)

**CM 240** Gender Communication (3 hours)

**G-PR 302** Religion and Politics (3 hours)

**NS 404** Environmental Ethics (2 hours)