Religion & Philosophy

Religion & Church Leadership Degree

Comparative Religion & Philosophy Degree

Religion & Church Leadership

The Religion and Church Leadership major is an interdisciplinary degree designed to help students develop the skills and knowledge necessary for successful ministry, lay or professional, in the Christian church. Students will take a core set of classes helping them establish a solid foundation in biblical studies. They will also choose from a variety of electives in religion, providing further background in Bible and Christian history and thought. Along with the Religion classes, students will take courses from other disciplines selected to round out their knowledge of cultural and social dynamics as and of ethics. Finally, students will learn the fundamental skills in communication and management in order to help them develop skills necessary to succeed in leading ministry programs.

CMU has a chapter of Theta Alpha Kappa, a national honor society for Religious Studies and Theology (advisor: Dr. Daryl Jefferies).

Comparative Religion & Philosophy

The Comparative Religion and Philosophy program provides a route for students who are interested in the ideas and practices that have shaped our world. Students will learn about worldviews, ethics, history and ritual practices from around the globe. They will also learn methods for comparing across this religious and philosophical landscape. The major is useful to students who are interested in international business, politics, law, and global travel.

CMU has two pre-law chapters: Phi Alpha Delta is the national pre-law fraternity, and the Pre-Law Club is for upperclassmen who plan to enter the law profession (advisor: Dr. John Carter).

Minors

Religion Minor (18 hours)

Electives in Religion (15 hours)

One (1) from the following:

RL201  Old Testament (3)
RL202  New Testament (3)

Religion and Church Leadership Minor (18 hours)

RL201  Old Testament (3)
RL202  New Testament (3)
RL205  Introduction to Church Leadership (3)
RL268/368  Internship or Field Experience (3)

Elective in Religion

Philosophy Minor (18 Hours)

PL306  Ethics and the Professions (3)

One (1) from the following:

PL101  Introduction to Logic (3)
PL105  Introduction to Philosophy (3)

One (1) from the following:
PL303     Classical to Medieval Thought (3)
PL304     Modern to Contemporary Thought (3)

Three (3) from the following:
PL225     Philosophy of Religion (3)
PL310     Ethics and Leadership (3)
PL311     The Study of Knowledge (3)
PL314     World Religions Today (3)

Religion Courses

RL122 Religion and the Human Adventure. 3 hours. This is an introduction to the ways in which religion provides meaning and purpose for human life. The course includes a study of a variety of religious traditions, beliefs, and practices. Prerequisite to all upper-level courses in Religion.

RL190 Special Topics. 1-3 hours. This is an introductory course on a topic not included in the regular curriculum. Prerequisite: Instructor's permission.

RL201 Old Testament. 3 hours. This is a survey of Old Testament literature, concentrating on the faith of Israel and its relevance for today. Fall.

RL202 New Testament. 3 hours. This is a survey of New Testament literature, concentrating on the faith of the early church and its relevance for today. Spring.

RL205 Introduction to Church Leadership. 3 hours. This course provides the practical framework for developing and executing leadership skills in a church setting. It is designed, in particular, to assist students pursuing the Religion and Church Leadership major but can be of use to other students as well. The course does not meet the Common Core leadership requirement and does not meet the Tier Two Humanities requirement.

RL225 Philosophy of Religion. 3 hours. This is a study of the nature of religion and of the relation of philosophy to theology. Attention is given to such problems as the existence of God, knowledge of God, faith, religious language, evil, immortality, and eschatology. Cross-listed with PL225. Prerequisite: RL122. Odd-numbered years.

RL260 Special Problems. 1-5 hours. This is an independent study or research on a subject of interest to an individual student. Prerequisite: Instructor's permission.

RL268 Internship and Field Experiences. 1-3 hours.

RL290 Special Topics. 1-3 hours. This is an intermediate-level course on a topic not included in the regular curriculum. Prerequisite: Instructor's permission.

RL301 Mission and Message of Jesus. 3 hours. This is a study of the four gospels—using the tools of critical scholarship—to understand Jesus and his teachings and the faith of the early Christian community which produced these writings. Prerequisite: RL122. Even-numbered Falls.

RL302 Paul and the Early Church. 3 hours. This is a study of the Pauline epistles, of the Acts of the Apostles, and of non-orthodox Christian traditions that sought expression during the formative years of Christianity. Prerequisite: RL122. Odd-numbered Falls.

RL303 The Prophets. 3 hours. This is a study of the origins of Old Testament prophecy and of the contributions to the religion of Israel by Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others. Prerequisite: RL122. Odd-numbered Springs.

RL310 Biblical Literature and the Ancient World. 3 hours. This is a survey of the archaeological records and of the material history of the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Palestine, with emphasis on their religions. Special attention will be given to the archaeological backgrounds of the Old and New Testaments and of the development of biblical faith in relation to its historical and cultural contents. Prerequisite: RL122.

RL331 History of Christianity I. 3 hours. This is a study of the Christian church from the close of the apostolic age to the Reformation; attention is centered on the emergence of Christian theology, on the evolution of ecclesiastical institutions, and on Christian biography. Prerequisites: RL122 and Sophomore standing.

https://www.centralmethodist.edu/academics/catalog/clas-catalog/majors-courses/religion.pdf
RL332 History of Christianity II. 3 hours. This is a study of selected topics in the history of the Christian church from the Reformation to the present; attention is centered on theological developments, on changes in ecclesiastical structures, and on Christian biography. Prerequisites: RL122 and Sophomore standing.

RL335 History of American Methodism. 3 hours. This is a study of the development of English Methodism with focus of the Methodist movement in America. Students consider the influences of major American historical events on the church and the church's influence on historical, political, and social developments in America. Prerequisite: RL122.

RL336 Thanatology. 3 hours. This is a cross-cultural study of many aspects of the phenomena of death and dying, and of the associated rituals and processes accompanying them. Prerequisite: RL122. Even-numbered years.

RL360 Special Problems. 1-5 hours. This is an independent study or research on a subject of interest to an individual student. Prerequisite: Instructor's permission.

RL368 Internship and Field Experiences. 1-3 hours.

RL390 Special Topics. 1-3 hours. This is an advanced course on a topic not included in the regular curriculum. Prerequisite: Instructor's permission.

RL480 Religion Capstone. 3 hours. This course is open only to Seniors majoring in Religion, except by division chair's permission.

Philosophy Courses

PL101 Introduction to Logic. 3 hours. This introduction to the study of logic gives attention to both the analysis of formal arguments and to the examination of arguments in ordinary language. Special attention is given to induction and informal fallacies. Fall.

PL105 Introduction to Philosophy. 3 hours. Students explore the nature of philosophy and its methods, including the problems of knowledge, reality, ethics, aesthetics, and religion. Fall.

PL225 Philosophy of Religion. 3 hours. This is a study of the nature of religion and of the relation of philosophy to theology. Attention is given to such problems as the existence of God, knowledge of God, faith, religious language, evil, immortality, and eschatology. Cross-listed with RL225. Prerequisite: RL122. Odd-numbered years.

PL260 Special Problems. 1-5 hours. This is an independent study or research on a subject of interest to an individual student. Prerequisite: Instructor's permission.

PL268 Internship and Field Experiences. 1-3 hours.

PL290 Special Topics. 1-5 hours. This is an intermediate-level course on a topic not included in the regular curriculum. Prerequisite: Instructor's permission.

PL303 Classical to Medieval Thought. 3 hours. This is a comprehensive survey of the philosophical ideas and thought systems of Europe which have influenced our conceptions of experience and reality. Emphasis is on the contributions of the Greeks and on the contributions of medieval thought. Prerequisite: PL105. Even-numbered years.

PL304 Modern to Contemporary Thought. 3 hours. This is a comprehensive survey of the philosophical ideas and thought systems of Europe which have influenced our conceptions of experience and reality. Emphasis is on the modern and contemporary development of rationalism, empiricism, idealism, process philosophy, existentialism, logical positivism, and linguistic analysis. Prerequisite: PL105 or Junior standing. Even-numbered years.

PL306 Ethics and the Professions. 3 hours. After an introduction to ethics, ethical theories, and the art of critical thinking about ethical issues, students will examine ethical issues specific to their chosen professions. Emphasis in the past has been on ethics and the sciences (medicine, experimentation, genetics), the environment (corporation vs. individual rights, responsibilities to animals and to the environment), and philosophy of law (justice, equality, rights, responsibility, and punishment). Emphasis is on case studies. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing. Alternating years.

PL310 Ethics and Leadership. 3 hours. Leadership uninformed by character is likely empty at best and disastrous at worst. Thus, the course will examine leadership styles and the ethics of leadership as a consequence of or a derivative of adequate character and a strong sense of personal responsibility. The course will examine “good” relativism, the relation of character and virtue, leadership responsibilities, and personal responsibility. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing. Alternating semesters.
PL311 The Study of Knowledge. 3 hours. Students explore the areas of knowledge, belief, and truth. Students will be introduced to concepts such as skepticism and justification. Students will explore what counts as knowledge and how these issues affect the areas of morality, science, math, and society. Alternating years.

PL314 World Religions Today. 3 hours. This is a study of the theoretical, practical, and sociological expressions of religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Cross-listed with RL314. Prerequisites: RL122. Odd-numbered years.

PL360 Special Problems. 1-5 hours. Independent study or research on a subject of interest to an individual student. Prerequisite: Instructor's permission.

PL368 Internship and Field Experiences. 1-3 hours.

PL390 Special Topics. 1-5 hours. This is an advanced course on a topic not included in the regular curriculum. Prerequisite: Instructor's permission.

PL480 Major Readings. 3 hours. (Capstone) This course is open only to Seniors majoring in Philosophy, except by division chair's permission.