



# The University of Edinburgh

## College of Humanities & Social Science

[www.hss.ed.ac.uk](http://www.hss.ed.ac.uk)

For Undergraduate University Students who want to spend a semester or a year at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland

Religious Studies Special  
Interest Programme  
For Visiting Students

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES SPECIAL INTEREST PROGRAMME

Founded in 1583 under a royal charter granted by James VI, the University of Edinburgh is Scotland's premier research university, one of the leading research universities in Britain and Europe, and Scotland's largest university offering programmes of study in a wide variety of disciplines. The School of Divinity, also known as New College, is one of the largest single site centres for the study of religious studies in the UK. New College prides itself on being an international community which brings together people of many backgrounds and cultures, religious and secular, in a welcoming environment to study and learn.

New College is founded on a thriving five hundred year tradition of creative thought and practice with special emphasis on the integral part religion plays in human society and culture. Questions about the nature of religion for those who study and practise it are explored along with the many phenomena of religion, such as beliefs, myths, rituals, ethics and social structures.

The Religious Studies Programme provides an insight into the various religious traditions which

have shaped contemporary culture and involves the application of various academic disciplines, such as languages, literary studies, philosophy, history, anthropology, ethics, sociology and theology.

Students normally take 60 credits per semester and can choose from the following options, bearing in mind that significant background study is required for Honours-level (3rd year) courses\*.

## Courses and Credit

Over the course of an academic year, undergraduate students in the College of Humanities and Social Science at the University of Edinburgh take a full course load of 120 credits (60 credits per semester). This will generally mean taking 6x20 credit courses (3 per semester) over the course of the year, although in some areas (notably Psychology) 10 credit courses still exist.

We have a vast array of courses available from 1st year to 3rd year (Honours) level (please note that strict pre-requisite study requirements apply to 3rd year/Honours courses) for you to choose from, from Archaeology to Religion and History of Art to Philosophy. These subjects are taught within the 10 Schools that make up the College.

Visiting Students to the College usually consult the online Course Finder to select their courses from the vast array available. This is fairly straightforward for those who have firm ideas of what they wish to study or who have to study certain courses (i.e. from their Major) in order to achieve transfer credit. For other applicants however, the sheer choice of courses can be bewildering.

The College of Humanities and Social Science have therefore set up a series of Visiting Student Programmes to help you to select areas you are interested in. In most cases you will be able to “pick and mix” from a number of recommended courses to make up your full course load, substituting the recommended 1st or 2nd year course for a 3rd year (Honours) course if you are appropriately qualified.

(\*Please note that, in general, you may be qualified for an honours level course if you have achieved at least B or above in 3 courses in the same subject area – e.g. Politics – at your home institution. Contact the Visiting Student Office for a list of Honours courses and if you have any queries about eligibility.\*)



# RELIGIOUS STUDIES SPECIAL INTEREST PROGRAMME

## Study Plan as follows:

### \*IM9991 Early Development of Islamic Law (20 credits - semester not set)

This Honours course covers the development of Islamic law - the key outward expression of Islam - from its earliest beginnings in the revelation of the Qur'an and the practice, or sunna, of the Prophet through to its fullest expression in the books of the classical schools of law.

### U02843 Religion 1A: Religion in the Contemporary World: Judaism, Christianity and Islam (20 credits – semester 1)

This introductory course provides an overview of three historically related religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam with a focus on their modern expressions and social contexts, as well as the relationships between historical and contemporary studies of these religions.

### U02842 Religion 1B: Religion in the Contemporary World: Indigenous Religions and the Religions of Asia (20 credits – semester 2)

This introductory course provides an overview of indigenous religions and the religions of Asia with attention to the connections between them historically and thematically.

### U02972 Religion 2A: Making Sense of Religion: Phenomenological, Historical and Cultural Approaches to the Study of Religion (20 credits – semester 1)

A review of the philosophical and theological roots of the phenomenological method in the study of religions, its key proponents and methodological stages and its relationship to social scientific and historical approaches.

### U02844 Religion 2B: Religion and Society: Social Scientific Approaches to the Study of Religions (20 credits – semester 2)

The course provides an introduction to sociological, social anthropological and psychoanalytical perspectives on religion and religions. Students will be introduced to the development of theory and practice in these disciplines. Attention will be drawn to the contributions and limitations of key contributors to these theories and practices. Emphasis will be placed in the tutorials on the writings of these key figures as well as on secondary issues.

### U00140 Biblical Texts in Translation 1 (20 credits – semester 2)

This course provides both an introduction to biblical exegesis and a detailed reading of two important biblical texts: Genesis and Mark's Gospel.

### DV0045 Hebrew 1 (20 credits – semester 2)

This is an introductory course to Biblical Hebrew.

### DV0047 New Testament Greek 1 (20 credits – semester 2)

This course provides an introduction to the grammar and vocabulary of the Greek New Testament.

### U02151 Islamic History 1a (20 credits – semester 1)

This course is an introduction to the religious, political, social and cultural history of the Islamic world from 600 to 945. It covers the emergence of Islam, the career of the Prophet Muhammad, the Muslim conquests, and the early Islamic world empire. Particular attention is paid to the evolution of the proto-Sunni/Shi'ite divisions and their differing views on Islamic government.

### IM001 Arabic 1 (40 credits – full academic year)

The course introduces the basic structures of Arabic grammar and is designed to teach students to understand, speak and write modern standard Arabic to an advanced elementary / low intermediate level.

### U02437 Indian Civilisation 1 (20 credits – semester 1)

This course provides an introduction to the early development of Hindu culture. The political and social history will be studied within the context of religion, literature and art.

### U03910 Christian Ethics: Sources (20 credits – semester 1)

Students will be introduced to philosophical, biblical and theological approaches to Christian ethics. They will discover the distinctive resources of Christian theological ethics for describing flourishing and sustaining Christian worshipping communities. They will explore the distinctiveness of the moral life of the Church, and its significance for contemporary moral dilemmas.

### U00517 Christian Theology 1 (20 credits – semester 2)

An introduction to themes and methods in the study of theology which explores different ways of understanding revelation and authority; the doctrine of God; creation and Providence; human nature and sin; the person and work of Christ; the Church and its worship; the Christian life; the challenge of religious pluralism; eschatology. Students engage with key figures that have shaped the development of Christian theology, and consider the way theology interacts with disciplines such as philosophy, science, art and religious studies.

### U00512 History of Christianity as a World Religion 1A (20 credits – semester 1)

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### U00511 History of Christianity as a World Religion 1B (20 credits – semester 2)

Semester One provides students with a comprehensive view of the global Christian movement and considers the period from its Middle Eastern and European origins in theological and sociological/political terms to the Inquisition (50.CE to 1500). Semester Two provides students with a comprehensive view of the global Christian movement from the Reformation to the present. (1500 CE to present), including mission and ministry in Africa, Latin America, Asia and North America, as well as following changes in Europe

### \*U03409 'The 'Jew' in the Text': Representations of the Holocaust and Jewish Identity (20 credits – semester 1)

This Honours course explores the development of modern anti-Semitism from the 19th century onwards as well as the multiple factors that led to the Holocaust, the genocide of Jews in Europe. Further, the aim is to study responses to the Holocaust, both at the time of the unfolding events and in their aftermath. Thus the course splits into three distinct but interrelated parts. The first part will consider the development of



Students relaxing in the Meadows  
beside George Square

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES SPECIAL INTEREST PROGRAMME

## Study Plan continuation:

modern anti-Semitism and introduce approaches to the study of anti-Semitism. The second part of the course will focus on historical approaches to the Holocaust, while the third part of the course introduces responses to the Holocaust in a variety of media (e.g. religious texts, literature, film, museums) and considers the significance of the Holocaust for the (religious) identities of contemporary Jews.

### \*U00145 African Voices in the Study of Religions (20 credits – semester 1)

This Honours course analyses selected foundational African scholars who have contributed to the academic study of religions, how they appropriated or transformed Western concepts and in what ways they suggest uniquely African approaches.

### \*U03730 Chinese Religions: Confucianism, Daoism and “popular” religion (20 credits – semester 1)

This Honours course provides an introduction to the history of and a critical examination of the academic study of Confucianism, Daoism and “popular” religion in China.

### \*U00513 Christianity in Asia: Past Patterns and Present Processes (20 credits – semester 1)

This Honours course examines the process of

Christian expansion to and integration in Asia over the last 2000 years, particularly in East, South-East and South Asia. It will concentrate on the power, purpose and response of the missionized and the missionizing, each of whom have both agendas and agency, the interaction of Christianity with various local religious traditions and expectations and the indigenisation of Christianity in modern movements in Japan, China, India, Philippines, etc.

### \*U03717 From Primitive to Indigenous: The Academic Study of Indigenous Religions (20 credits – semester 1)

This Honours course examines the history of and approaches to the academic study of Indigenous Religions in relation to traditional academic teaching of the so-called world religions and includes in-depth case studies of the indigenous peoples of Alaska and Zimbabwe.

### \*DV0111 Metaphysics and Morality (20 credits – semester 1)

This Honours course provides a sound grasp of how metaphysics and morals are related in contemporary thinking. It explores key issues in the ethical thinking of Hegel, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and MacIntyre, together with theological commentaries where relevant.

### \*U02656 New Age Religion (20 credits – semester 1)

A study of the diffuse field of western popular religion known as ‘New Age’ or ‘Holistic’

spirituality, through a range of empirical case studies: historical, ethnographic and textual. This Honours course explores the sociodemographic base of New Age religion in the context of Christian congregational decline and the pluralisation of religions in western culture.

### \*U03724 Revelation, Reason & Experience as Sources of Religious Knowledge in Islam (20 credits – semester 1)

An overview of three major traditions in the formation of Islamic thought (7th-13th century CE): scripturalism, scholastic theology, mysticism.

### \*U03411 A People Apart? Explorations in Modern Jewish Thought (20 credits – semester 2)

This Honours course considers different aspects of Jewish Thought and Culture. An historical overview of modern Jewish Thought is presented, including an in-depth study of selected Jewish thinkers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the issues they have raised for understanding contemporary Judaism.

### \*DV0123 Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religions (20 credits – semester 2)

This Honours course provides an anthropological perspective on religion, with particular reference to Hindu, Buddhist and popular traditions in India.

**\*DV0130 Shamanism**  
(20 credits – semester 2)

This Honours course examines different approaches to the study of shamanism, including definitions, characteristics and typologies, with a particular focus on Arctic shamanism, and concluding with a study of neo-shamanism in contemporary Western society.

**\*DV0127 Indigenous Religions: Sub-Saharan Africa**  
(20 credits – semester 2)

This Honours course provides an examination of the major beliefs, practices and rituals of selected indigenous groups in West, East and Southern Africa.

**\*U03736 The Body in Islam**  
(20 credits – semester 2)

This Honours course seeks to chart the cultural history of the human body in Islam. Emphasis is laid both on how the body has been inscribed with claims to power and on how it has been used to resist power. Introductory methodological reflections are followed by discussions dealing with the human body in theology and law, Islamic mysticism (.ufism), the Muslim eschatological imagination, and Muslim and Western visual arts.



# FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACTS



Portobello Beach, Edinburgh



George Square, Edinburgh



Princes Street Gardens & Scott Monument, Edinburgh

Many Students choose to travel widely in Scotland and Europe, expanding their knowledge of other cultures, traditions, languages and history

## Admissions

### College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Visiting Student Admissions Office  
David Hume Tower  
George Square  
Edinburgh EH8 9JX

E: [HSSvisitingstudents@ed.ac.uk](mailto:HSSvisitingstudents@ed.ac.uk)  
T: 0044 131 650 3572/4094  
W: [www.hss.ed.ac.uk/AcademicAdmin/VisitingProgramme/](http://www.hss.ed.ac.uk/AcademicAdmin/VisitingProgramme/)

### Visiting Student Prospectus

57 George Square  
For prospective students who want to study at Edinburgh for up to one year, the guide includes general information about courses and you can also download an application from here:

[www.ed.ac.uk/studying/visitingstudent/](http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/visitingstudent/)

## General Information

### International Office

57 George Square  
Edinburgh EH8 9JU  
T: 0044 131 650 4296  
E: [StudyAbroad@ed.ac.uk](mailto:StudyAbroad@ed.ac.uk)  
W: [www.international.ed.ac.uk](http://www.international.ed.ac.uk)

### Accommodation Services

T: 0044 131 667 1971  
E: [accommodation@ed.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@ed.ac.uk)  
W: [www.accom.ed.ac.uk](http://www.accom.ed.ac.uk)

### Disability Office

T: 0044 131 650 6828  
E: [disability.office@ed.ac.uk](mailto:disability.office@ed.ac.uk)  
W: [www.disability-office.ed.ac.uk](http://www.disability-office.ed.ac.uk)

For general information on Edinburgh and the University visit [www.ed.ac.uk/explore](http://www.ed.ac.uk/explore)