RELIGIOUS STUDIES
What can I do with this major?

**AREAS**
- International aid and relief organizations
- NGO's (Non-governmental Organizations), e.g. Amnesty International
- Nonprofit and not-for-profit organizations, e.g. Vital Voices or Habitat for Humanity
- Federal government agencies with an international focus, e.g. Peace Corps, USAID and the Foreign Service (State Department)
- Private voluntary organizations
- Humanitarian organizations, e.g. International Red Cross and CARE
- Religious organizations, e.g. World Vision
- National Security Council
- United Nations
- Think tanks

**EMPLOYERS**
- Many international organizations value the historical and contemporary context of religions and cultures that one learns in religious studies.
- Learn one or more foreign languages.
- Plan to study, volunteer or intern abroad more than one time if possible.
- Seek cultural experiences on campus and get involved with the international student population.
- Join relevant student organizations such as Amnesty International and gain leadership roles.
- Develop excellent research, writing, communication and organizational skills.
- Participate in an international service learning experience or go on a mission trip.
- Federal international jobs require careful observation of a formal hiring procedure. Apply for a federal government internship.
- Government work in the foreign service requires passage of the Foreign Service Exam and adherence to a list of requirements.
- Research the international organization/agency’s structure and function.
- Volunteer at relevant local social service agencies to gain experience and demonstrate interest.
- Develop good working knowledge of international humanitarian law.
- Demonstrate your depth of dedication, willingness to adapt, and coping mechanisms to combat stress and difficult situations.
- Develop skills in the areas of organizing groups, efficiency and the ability to calm people.
- Earn a graduate degree in an area of interest to open more job opportunities. Religious studies provides a good background for a variety of graduate programs.

**STRATEGIES**
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREAS</th>
<th>EMPLOYERS</th>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Secondary schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Private, public or religiously affiliated colleges and universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Affairs Administration</td>
<td>Schools of theology/seminaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multicultural Programming</td>
<td>Organizations such as Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Campus Crusade for Christ, Muslim Student Association, Hillel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Programs/Study Abroad Administration</td>
<td>Buddhist Monasteries, e.g. Chuang Yen Monastery</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Library/Information Sciences</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Religious Life Programming</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Campus Ministry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**EMPLOYERS**

- Secondary schools
- Private, public or religiously affiliated colleges and universities
- Schools of theology/seminaries
- Organizations such as Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Campus Crusade for Christ, Muslim Student Association, Hillel
- Buddhist Monasteries, e.g. Chuang Yen Monastery

**STRATEGIES**

- Earn a doctorate degree for teaching and research in colleges and universities. Earn a master's degree in a relevant field for positions in student affairs administration or library/information sciences.
- Earn certification/licensure to teach in public secondary schools. Choose a double major in an area such as history.
- Complete Master of Divinity plus additional training for campus ministry.
- Master of Divinity and Ph.D., D.Min. or Th.D. usually required for teaching, research and administration in seminaries and schools of theology.
- Seek campus leadership positions such as Peer Mentor, Resident Assistant or Orientation Leader.
- Volunteer to assist a faculty member with research. Develop relationships with faculty to secure strong recommendations.
- Maintain a strong grade point average to gain admittance into graduate school.
- Learn to speak a second language if planning to pursue a graduate degree in religious studies. Choose a language that will be particularly relevant to your interests.

**BUSINESS**

- Human Resources:
  - Training and Development
  - Recruitment
  - Equity and Diversity Functions
- Sales
- Management

**EMPLOYERS**

- Insurance firms
- Retail stores
- Banks
- Staffing agencies
- Service industries
- Other large corporations

**STRATEGIES**

- Learn how to sell your religious studies major to business employers that value employees who understand and tolerate cultural diversity.
- Double major or minor in Business.
- Gain related experience through internships or summer and part-time jobs.
- Get involved in relevant student organizations and seek leadership roles.
- Develop good computer skills and learn how to use spreadsheet, presentation and database software.
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<th>STRATEGIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td><strong>COMMUNICATIONS AND ARTS</strong>&lt;br&gt;Writing&lt;br&gt;Editing&lt;br&gt;Publishing&lt;br&gt;Television/Film&lt;br&gt;Radio&lt;br&gt;Advertising&lt;br&gt;Public Relations&lt;br&gt;Sales&lt;br&gt;Commercial Art&lt;br&gt;Website Design&lt;br&gt;Museum Work:&lt;br&gt;  - Curatorship&lt;br&gt;  - Exhibition Design</td>
<td>Secular publishing houses&lt;br&gt;Secular radio, television and film producers&lt;br&gt;Newspapers&lt;br&gt;Denominational boards/agencies&lt;br&gt;Interdenominational organizations&lt;br&gt;Denominational publishing houses of books and magazines&lt;br&gt;Local churches, synagogues and mosques&lt;br&gt;Advertising and public relation agencies&lt;br&gt;Museums&lt;br&gt;Galleries</td>
<td>Plan to complete one or more internships in this area to prepare for a professional job and to build a network.&lt;br&gt;Take courses in English, journalism, art history or photography depending upon interest area.&lt;br&gt;Develop excellent writing skills.&lt;br&gt;Work for the campus newspaper, radio station or tv station.&lt;br&gt;Submit articles for publication in religious and nonreligious papers and journals.&lt;br&gt;Learn desktop publishing techniques.&lt;br&gt;Obtain specialized technical training such as a double major or minor in Broadcasting or Graphic Design for work in those fields.&lt;br&gt;Develop a portfolio of writing samples.&lt;br&gt;Consider moving to larger metropolitan areas for more job opportunities and be willing to relocate often for promotions.&lt;br&gt;Consider freelance positions to work in journalism.&lt;br&gt;Earn a graduate degree to qualify for work in museums.</td>
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<td><strong>SOCIAL SERVICES</strong>&lt;br&gt;Case Management&lt;br&gt;Counseling&lt;br&gt;Rehabilitation&lt;br&gt;Adminstration&lt;br&gt;Vocational Training&lt;br&gt;Volunteer Services&lt;br&gt;Programming&lt;br&gt;Advocacy&lt;br&gt;Crisis Services (pregnancy, housing, etc.)&lt;br&gt;Church-based Organizing/Community Development&lt;br&gt;Fundraising&lt;br&gt;Grant Writing&lt;br&gt;Law</td>
<td>Nonprofit and social services organizations including United Way, Red Cross, Goodwill Industries, Salvation Army, etc.&lt;br&gt;Immigrant and refugee service providers&lt;br&gt;Migrant service providers&lt;br&gt;Hospitals and hospices&lt;br&gt;Residential treatment facilities&lt;br&gt;Correctional institutions&lt;br&gt;Shelters&lt;br&gt;Nursing homes&lt;br&gt;Youth organizations and camps including YMCA, YWCA, Young Life, etc.&lt;br&gt;Churches, synagogues and mosques&lt;br&gt;Lobby agencies</td>
<td>Volunteer with local organizations to gain experience working with a wide variety of people from various backgrounds.&lt;br&gt;Obtain excellent interpersonal and oral and written communication skills.&lt;br&gt;Plan to earn a graduate degree in counseling, social work or psychology to provide therapy or counseling to clients.&lt;br&gt;Complete an internship or part-time job in an organization of interest to gain experience and develop contacts.&lt;br&gt;Find ways to develop fundraising and grant writing skills. These are valued by nonprofit agencies.&lt;br&gt;Learn a language such as Spanish to work with immigrant and migrant populations.&lt;br&gt;Earn a joint degree in Divinity and Law to work in legal fields related to religious freedom issues.</td>
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### AREAS

#### RELIGIOUSLY AFFILIATED AREAS

Clergy and Other Religious Leaders Including:
- Buddhist, Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, Islamic, Hindu, Greek Orthodox

Vocation as Monk or Nun

Chaplaincy:
- Military
- Institutional

Mission Work:
- Church Development
- Community or Agricultural Development
- Educational
- Medical
- Metropolitan
- Evangelism

Local Ministries Including:
- Youth Ministries
- Adult Ministries
- Leisure Ministries
- Counseling/Recovery
- Religious Education
- Day Care, Children and Adult
- Food Bank/Emergency Ministries
- Family Life Center Management

Music-Oriented Ministries

Religious Camp Administration

### EMPLOYERS

- Local churches, synagogues, mosques
- Religious organizations
- Religious communities, e.g. convents and monasteries
- Religious retreat centers, Christian and Buddhist
- Denominational boards and agencies
- Monasteries
- All branches of military service
- Hospitals, hospices
- Homes for children, youth, senior citizens
- Correctional institutions
- Police and fire departments
- Missions boards
- Local churches
- Evangelical organizations e.g. Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
- Religious-based camps and youth programs

### STRATEGIES

Obtain general knowledge of practices, procedures, guidelines and doctrine of one's faith.

Possess understanding of human spiritual and social needs.

Research requirements to enter leadership in the faith you want to pursue. Master of Divinity and denominational ordination are required for most clergy positions, for example.

Possess high moral and ethical standards.

Develop leadership ability and self discipline.

Obtain excellent written and verbal communication skills.

To become a chaplain, obtain ordination and two years' service in local church or after acceptance into branch of military service, attend chaplaincy school.

Obtain any needed advanced degrees, certification or licensing in area of interest for missions.

Seek related experience by participating with missions groups.

Obtain travel and cultural experience with group of interest. Foreign language skills are a plus.

Develop fundraising skills and contacts.

People interested in religious vs. secular work possess deep faith, want more than filling one's own personal needs and desire to make a difference.

May be more opportunities for specific ministries in urban areas and large religious institutions.

Obtain experience and contacts through extensive involvement in campus organizations or local religious institutions. Leadership on the local, state and regional level is crucial.

Seek camp experience to improve organization and counseling skills as well as network within the denominational/organizational structure.

Learn to work well with people of all different backgrounds and socioeconomic status.

Earn dual degrees where appropriate, e.g. music.
GENERAL INFORMATION

- Religious studies equips students with an understanding of global issues and trends in both historical and contemporary contexts. This understanding of multiculturalism and interculturalism is valued by a wide variety of employers in many industries including education, government and business.
- Student who seek international careers may find that religious studies provides a good background in global issues.
- Many transferable skills such as analyzing and synthesizing data, research, communication skills and critical thinking are associated with the religious studies degree.
- People who major in religious studies may or may not consider themselves "religious." Expertise in religious ideas can be a plus for secular work environments as well as more traditional religious ones.
- An undergraduate degree prepares students for professional and graduate study in business, law, medicine, counseling, higher education and other fields. Be sure to check for prerequisite classes needed to enter various graduate programs.
- Obtaining relevant experience through internships or volunteer experiences is critical to finding employment opportunities. Dual majors or minors can also help open the door in some fields.