

THE MAJOR IN

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES



UC DAVIS

A MAJOR FORCE IN HUMAN EXPERIENCE



*Illuminated Koran*

## Why Study Religion?

It is impossible to open a newspaper, listen to the radio, or watch television without being bombarded by debates about the religious and ethical dimensions of cloning, animal rights, terrorism, capital punishment, and a host of other issues that fiercely divide the public both in this country and abroad.

Religion is a major force in human experience. It has shaped the world's history, literature, art, culture, politics, ethics, and economics. Religion has proven to be one of the greatest threats to world peace and prosperity, but has also laid the foundation for human rights, social justice, toleration, and world peace. Since moral and ethical issues are at the heart of every religious tradition, encouraging students to discuss them in an academic setting is of the greatest importance in creating educated, thinking individuals.

## What Students think:

Here are a few comments excerpted from student course evaluations:

*"Religious Studies courses have forced me (in a good way) to read a lot about different religions and it has exposed me to new ideas, which I never thought were out there. I wish I could go back four years and change my major to Religious Studies."*

*"Studying religion has enlightened my mind and allowed me to dig deeper into what I believe. It has allowed me to discover a part of myself that I have never felt before."*

*"Religious Studies classes remain the most interesting and provocative classes offered (on campus). Religion penetrates every aspect of human culture."*



*North Cross, Aheny, Ireland*



*Tibetan "Wheel of Life" detail*

## What are Religious Studies courses like at UC Davis?

The Religious Studies Program offers courses in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Chinese and Japanese religions. In addition, the program has developed cross-cultural courses dealing with religious symbols, myths, and rituals as they appear in written texts, art and architecture, theater, and film as well as thematic courses dealing with religious attitudes to the body, religion and violence, and the rise of fundamentalism.

Did you know that Islam is the fastest growing religion on the planet with over a billion followers? Understanding Islam and the questions of modernity is crucial to anyone living and working in the 21st century.

QUESTIONS? Contact us at: [religions.ucdavis.edu](http://religions.ucdavis.edu)

THE MAJOR IN

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES



UC DAVIS

PREPARATION FOR A SUCCESSFUL CAREER

## What can I do with a Religious Studies Degree?

Because critical thinking, writing, and reading skills are essential in any field, students who major in Religious Studies are well prepared to enter a variety of careers, including the health professions, law, business, government, and teaching. In an increasingly global society university graduates cannot know where their life and careers may take them. But wherever students end up, knowledge of the religious traditions of the people with whom they interact is essential. As we have learned from the events of 9/11 as well as from our own political debates, religion is a potent force in the world today. Here are a few examples of what our alumni are doing now:

- Janice, Class of 1982, Grant Writing Consultant
- Alan, Class of 1993, Rancheria Tribal Treasurer
- Lori, Class of 2004, College Registrar

Our top-rated Internship and Career Center can help you in finding internships that will provide experience to help you choose a professional path. Many prospective employers come to UC Davis every year to recruit graduating seniors because of the high-caliber performance of our scholars.

## Food for Thought:

How true is Dan Brown's Da Vinci Code? Who was Mary Magdalene? Did she really marry Jesus? Why are so many people upset by the idea that Jesus married?

As the mother religion of Christianity and Islam, why is the knowledge of Judaism critical to understanding the history of the three religions and the conflicts between them?

What does it mean when a religion claims it is the source of exclusive truth? Is this claim possible in a pluralistic society?

Why have fundamentalist and conservative religions flourished as never before, while more liberal denominations like Unitarianism have actually declined?



Shiva Vinadara Dakshinamurti

## What are the Religious Studies Faculty like at UC Davis?

The Religious Studies faculty is recognized for its dedication to students and teaching. Majors are encouraged to write an honors thesis, which gives them the opportunity to work closely with faculty on a project of their own choice. Because we are one of the smaller majors on campus, majors in Religious studies have the opportunity to get to know the faculty and students in their major.

## Davis is a great place to be.

The Sacramento Valley is one of the fastest growing regions in the state. It provides tremendous opportunity to integrate academics with practical experience in the public and private sectors through internships in the greater Sacramento area. An additional benefit to living in the Davis community is the variety of social and cultural activities that are in easy reach of every resident.



RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT UC DAVIS - MUCH MORE THAN YOU THINK!