

About the Department of Religious Studies

Religious Studies has been an important feature of the UC Davis academic community for decades. The department faculty covers several key areas including Islam, South Asian religions, Judaism, secularism, and ethics. Its distinguished faculty, with an international reputation, has received national and international grants and honors, and multiple teaching awards.

The strength of the Religious Studies department lies in its commitment to examining religion in the contemporary world, balanced with the critical study of religion's historical roots. The department has developed important relationships with several departments across campus. These cross-disciplinary connections inform the department's interest in exploring religion's links to cultural variations in ethics, language, media, embodiment and modernity. The department's commitments to advanced interdisciplinary research and teaching have recently been bolstered by the launch of a new Graduate Group in the Study of Religion, a doctoral program that welcomed its inaugural class in Fall 2013.

Support the Religions of India Initiative

Please consider making a gift to support the Religions of India Initiative. *All gifts are fully tax deductible.*

Please direct your enquires to:
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You can learn more about the Religions of India Initiative and the Department of Religious Studies at:
religions.ucdavis.edu/giving/rst-india-studies-initiative
(530) 752-1219

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Religions of India Initiative



DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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About the Religions of India Initiative

The Religions of India Initiative envisions its contributions to the academic study of Indian religious traditions and practices in a manner that will bring the University community and the Indian-American community into a fruitful conversation. Thus, we chart two intersecting paths:

ONE that builds support for scholarly research on India's religious traditions at the university, and brings the community to the campus, & **TWO**, through community outreach events such as workshops and lectures to bring the knowledge produced within the university to the broader community.



The Religions of India Initiative is supported and advised by the advisory council. The current members are:

Prof. Catherine Chin
Prof. Archana Venkatesan
Prof. Hemant Bhargava
Mr. Panchapakesan Kasiviswanathan

Mr. William Mattu
Dr. Rajiv Pathak
Dr. Hemant Vaidya



The Religions of India Initiative has four main goals:

1. to build financial support for fellowships for exceptional Undergraduate Research on India undertaken by Religious Studies Majors. This will encourage students to take up the study of India seriously. It will support innovative, original research at the undergraduate level and will prepare students for graduate work.

2. to build financial support for fellowships recognizing exceptional Graduate Research on India undertaken by a Religious Studies Ph.D. candidate. This is instrumental in attracting the best graduate students to our Ph.D. program, and will ensure that UC Davis becomes a hub of new and cutting edge work being done on India.

3. to engage in community outreach through an endowed lecture series that will support annual events and lectures about India. This is an important component of the initiative as it enables us to give back to the community, and to bring new and innovative scholarship on India from outside the University to the broader public.

4. to create a pioneering Creative Arts Residency Program for Indian artists, musicians, poets and dancers (both short-term and long-term)

The Creative Arts Residency Program will enable us to invite leading artists from India to UC Davis on a short term or long term basis. Artists in residence will lead workshops, host lecture-demonstrations, and offer guest lectures in courses, and actively participate in the life of the community and the university.

The Religions of India Initiative's long term goal is to establish an Endowed Chair in the Study of Indian Religions at UC Davis.