

# Theology & Religious Studies

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Theology and Religious Studies are academic disciplines and essential branches of knowledge in a liberal education. They provide an opportunity for one to explore religious commitment, the relationship between faith and reason, and religion and culture. Wheeling Jesuit also offers a minor in Catholic Studies that majors are encouraged to consider pursuing.

Graduates will be able to:

1. Show how religion fills a vital role in the way people view their world.
2. Recognize the ethical implications of religion.
3. Use critical skills for the interpretation of texts, rituals, religious art and other forms of religious experience.
4. Foster spiritual growth and care for human life that such growth includes.

## Requirements for Theology and Religious Studies Major

In order to earn a major in theology/religious studies, students must:

A. Complete the following in Theology and Religious Studies:

RST 106	The Religious Quest <b>or</b>	
RST 107	Catholicism	(3 crs)
RST 203	World Religions <b>or</b>	
RST 303	Studies in Living Religious Traditions	(3 crs)
RST 200	Introduction to the Old Testament	(3 crs)
RST 204	Jesus the Christ	(3 crs)
RST 305	Christian Morality Today	(3 crs)

B. Take **ONE** course from three of the following groups:

a)	RST 206	The Church in the Modern World	(3 crs)
	RST 207	Christian Marriage	(3 crs)
	RST 304	The Quest for God	(3 crs)
	RST 306	Christian Ritual and Worship	(3 crs)
	RST 307	Studies in Church History	(3 crs)
b)	RST 201	Introduction to the New Testament	(3 crs)
	RST 202	The Gospels	(3 crs)
	RST 300	Studies in the Old Testament	(3 crs)
	RST 301	Studies in the New Testament	(3 crs)
	RST 302	Paul's Letters	(3 crs)
c)	RST 208	A Theology of War and Peace	(3 crs)
	RST 209	Issues in Sexual Morality	(3 crs)
	RST 230	Catholic Social Thought	(3 crs)
	RST 308	Issues in Bioethics	(3 crs)
	RST 309	Religion and Economic Justice	(3 crs)



d)	RST 401	Contemporary Theological Trends and Issues	(3 crs)
	RST 402	Action and Contemplation in Christian Life	(3 crs)
	RST 403	Great Theologians: Past & Present	(3 crs)
	RST 404	Religion and Science	(3 crs)

C. Complete **SIX** other theology electives.

\* Additional courses are listed under the Catholic Studies Minor.

## Special Notes on Major Requirements:

1. All majors will complete 42 credits in theology, 9 of which simultaneously fulfill the core requirements.
2. If approved by the department, senior theology majors may elect to write a thesis under the guidance of a faculty member from Theology/Religious Studies and defend the thesis orally.
3. French or German is recommended for majors.

## Requirements for Minor

To earn a minor in Theology and Religious Studies, students must:

A. Complete the following courses:

RST 106	The Religious Quest <b>or</b>	
RST 107	Catholicism	(3 crs)
RST 203	World Religions <b>or</b>	
RST 303	Studies in Living Religious Traditions	(3 crs)
RST 305	Christian Morality Today	(3 crs)

B. Complete **THREE** other theology electives.

## Core Fulfilling Courses

1. RST 106 or RST 107 (prerequisite for all other RST courses)
2. All other courses except RST 484.\*
3. RST 305 Christian Morality Today (juniors and seniors only)

\***Note:** Courses numbered 400 are advanced and require of non-majors permission of the instructor for admission.

## Course Descriptions

### RST 106 The Religious Quest (3 crs)

An introduction to how people address such “religious” issues as faith, doubt, deity, good, evil, community, salvation and worship. Particular attention is given to ways of interpreting the Bible, and how this sacred literature addresses the lives of its many readers.

### RST 107 Catholicism (3 crs)

An introduction to the great religious questions within the context of Catholicism. Ecumenism and Catholicism’s relation to other religions will be a component. This course is recommended for Catholic students.

### RST 200 Introduction to the Old Testament (3 crs)

A survey of the religious traditions of ancient Israel reflected in the diverse types of literature of the First (Old) Testament, with emphasis on their historical context, development over time and contemporary relevance.

### RST 201 Introduction to the New Testament (3 crs)

A study of the Second (New) Testament literature in its historical and cultural context, with special emphasis given to the development of beliefs about Jesus, the Christian community, its relationship to contemporary society and the relevance of this literature for today.

### RST 202 The Gospels (3 crs)

An introduction to the definition and development of “gospel” including comparative study of the evangelists, their literary styles, contexts and interests; their uniqueness and relationship to each other; and their perspectives on Jesus.

### RST 203 World Religions (3 crs)

A study of the origins, history and beliefs of the major Western and Eastern religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, with an emphasis on interreligious understanding.

### RST 204 Jesus the Christ (3 crs)

A study of the person and meaning of Jesus as presented in scripture and as understood throughout the Christian tradition.

### RST 206 The Church in the Modern World (3 crs)

A presentation of the Church’s understanding of itself, its membership, ministry and mission to the world, with emphasis on the teachings of the Second Vatican Council.

### RST 207 Christian Marriage (3 crs)

Psychological, sociological and experiential reflections on marriage as a way of life examined in the light of insights offered by the Christian tradition and its understanding of marriage as a Christian sacrament; reflections on moral issues related to marriage.

### RST 208 A Theology of War and Peace (3 crs)

A study of the Christian tradition’s teachings about war and peace and of their impact on contemporary issues, such as the use of nuclear weapons, pre-emptive wars, terrorism and humanitarian interventions.

### RST 209 Issues in Sexual Morality (3 crs)

A critical study of current efforts to reexamine the Christian tradition’s views on sexual morality; a detailed analysis of select topics such as premarital sexuality, homosexuality, pornography and gender roles in today’s world.

THEOLOGY/RELIGIOUS STUDIES - Recommended Course Sequence								
	Freshman		Sophomore		Junior		Senior	
FALL	FYS 101	1	MOL	3	RST 305	3	RST Electives	6
	ENG 105/110	3	Science	3	RST Group C	3	Electives	6
	MOL	3	Global Persp.	3	PHI 205	3	FAS	2
	SSC Core	3	RST 200	3	RST Elective	3		
	RST 106/107	3	RST Group A	3	RST Group D	3		
	HIS 110	3						
	Semester total	16		15		15		14
SPRING	LIT 120	3	RST 204	3	RST Elective	3	RST Elective	3
	MOL	3	LIT 250	3	FAS 101	1	Electives	9
	MAT/CSC	3	Science	3	RST Elective	3	RST 484	3
	RST 203 or 303	3	PHI 105	3	Electives	9		
	HIS 120	3	RST Group B	3				
		Semester total	15		15		16	
	Total Credits	31		30		31		29 121

**RST 210 Religion and Literature (3 crs)**

An examination of significant religious issues as they are reflected in literature. Topics treated might include spiritual awakening, decision-making, suffering and death, prayer.

**RST/POS 230 Catholic Social Thought (3 crs)**

An introduction to the basic principles of Catholic Social Thought, e.g., subsidiarity, the preferential option for the poor, solidarity and the common good and an examination of how this differs from other forms of social and political thought.

**RST/POS 310 Catholicism and Modernity (3 crs)**

An exploration of the interaction between Catholicism and modern political philosophy, focusing upon the major issue of the relationship between church and state.

**RST 300 Studies in the Old Testament (3 crs)**

An in-depth study of specific literary forms (law, history, prophets, writings), theological themes (war and peace, deuteronomic history, messianic expectations), or historical problems (conquest of Canaan, Exile) in the Old Testament.

**RST 301 Studies in the New Testament (3 crs)**

An in-depth investigation of specific issues in New Testament studies, such as the deuterio-Pauline writings, apocalypticism, the New Testament church and its ministry, or of New Testament writers.

**RST 302 Paul's Letters (3 crs)**

A survey of the letters traditionally associated with the Apostle Paul, with attention to Paul's life, ancient literary genres, major elements in Paul's thought, the unity of some letters and non-Pauline authorship of others, their role in the development of the early Christian churches and their relevance for today.

**RST 303 Studies in Living Religious Traditions (3 crs)**

An introduction to the historical, cultural and theological aspects of one of several religious traditions other than Catholic Christianity (e.g. Protestant or Orthodox Christianity, Judaism, Islam, American Indian). An examination of its history, its beliefs and practices and its lived-reality today.

**RST 304 The Quest for God (3 crs)**

An exploration of questions about the existence and nature of God as they have been treated in Christian history and shaped by 20th century concerns: a Christian trinitarian understanding of God contrasted to the concept of divinity in other religious traditions.

**RST 305 Christian Morality Today (3 crs)**

A study of contemporary efforts to rethink the Christian framework of moral decision-making: an analysis of love, freedom, conscience, sin and natural law and of the use of these terms in resolving current moral problems. (Juniors and seniors only.)

**RST 306 Christian Ritual and Worship (3 crs)**

A study of the ritual responses of human beings to divinity, with specific focus on the Christian ritual response; an analysis of the Christian Eucharistic liturgy, festal celebrations, special liturgies like weddings and funerals, sacred time and space, and popular religious practices.

**RST 307 Studies in Church History (3 crs)**

A study of the history of the Christian Church focusing either on a comprehensive overview of its history or on a particular period or theme in its development.

**RST 308 Issues in Bioethics (3 crs)**

An analysis of the impact of Christianity's vision of life on current issues in bioethics, such as caring for the dying, abortion, medical experimentation, organ transplants and the new procreative technologies.

**RST 309 Religion and Economic Justice (3 crs)**

A careful review of the controversies surrounding theological and official Catholic documents critical and supportive of democratic capitalism; a study of the use of "justice" language and of the philosophical and theological assumptions underlying such uses in these documents.

**RST 312 Religion and Film (3 crs)**

An examination of select films which present religious issues in a way that stimulates the religious imagination and theological reflection. The films may be organized around a theme (e.g., suffering, death and hope; the sacramentality of everyday life; the quest for God; religious commitment and moral decision-making) or around a selection of filmmakers whose films reveal various religious interests.

**RST 401 Contemporary Theological Trends & Issues (3 crs)**

Intensive study of new developments and current issues in theology and church life with a view to understanding their origins and implications. (Permission of instructor required.)

**RST 402 Action and Contemplation in Christian Life (3 cr.)**

Reflections on the understanding of ministry and vocation in contemporary Christian life; the role of the laity in the Church; a survey of different spiritualities that undergird these ministries. (Permission of the instructor required.)

**RST 403 Great Theologians: Past and Present (3 crs)**

Intensive study of major theological figures, their development, influence and significance for the Church and intellectual history (e.g., St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Luther, St. Teresa of Avila, Ignatius of Loyola, Martin Buber, Karl Rahner). (Permission of instructor required.)

**RST 404 Religion and Science (3 crs)**

An examination of the numerous issues raised by the relationship between religion and science with special attention devoted to the writings of major theologians and scientists who have dealt with these issues. (Permission of instructor required.)

**RST 460 Theology of Communication (3 crs)**

Study of the theology of social communication and its application to communication concepts, skills and communication work—including a critical evaluation of current trends in the reporting of religion and other religious communication. Writing intensive. Prerequisites: 2.0 or better in the completed English and theology cores or permission of instructor.

**RST 484 Senior Thesis (3 crs)**

Independent research and preparation of a thesis written under the supervision of a department member or person designated by the department on a topic chosen by the student with the approval of the department.