

COURSES OFFERED

Core courses:

- Foundations of Religious Studies: History and Theories :

Foundational theories explaining religion – comparative sociological psychological anthropological phenomenological – their respective founding “fathers’ and their historical era.

-Core Concepts in Religious Studies

Overview of the concepts central to the study of religion such as religion belief ritual myth texts scriptures God supernatural beings and events evil salvation afterlife.

-Research Methods for Religious Studies

Basic methodological tools and concepts for conducting research in Religious Studies.

Track 1: RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Required course:

-Geography and History of Religion

Geographical and historical overview of religion since earliest records to the contemporary world. Religious demographics, growth and disappearance of religions, involvement in governance and daily life, conflicts and reconciliation, modern secularization and globalization.

Elective courses :

-Religion, Power & Politics

Historical analysis of interactions between religious traditions and political thought and institutions. Political aspects of religion, whether religion can be freed from politics and *vice versa*, and how religion works to legitimate or undermine political power.

-Religious Ethics of War & Peace

Ethics of war from religious and secular points of view framed by pacifist, militarist, realist and just war theory. Scriptural passages on war & peace drawn from diverse religious traditions.

-Religion and Healing

Religious concepts of physical and mental health and religious belief and practice as diagnostic and healing methods for both physical and mental illness: tribal healers, prayer, meditation, yogic practice; academic and medical science theory.

-Religion and Cognitive Sciences

Introduction to the cognitive studies of religion and its application on the study of Buddhism.

-Religion and Science

History of science and its historical interactions with the major religions of the world, Buddhism Christianity Hinduism and Islam.

-Theistic Traditions: Christianity, Islam and Hindu

History, basic teachings and practices of major religious traditions of the world Christianity and Islam. Also discusses how their communities have developed in different parts of the world in the contemporary period.

-Women in Religious Traditions

Status and role of women in major religious traditions: how women are described in sacred scriptures, and how these have been interpreted and adapted in different societies.

-Independent Studies in Religious Studies

Researching and writing a research paper connected with Religious Studies. The subject of the research paper will be determined by consultation between the student and professor.

Track 2: BUDDHISM and SOCIETY

Required course:

-Introduction to the Academic Study of Buddhism: History and Principles

History of the study of Buddhism as an academic discipline in the West. Methodological perspectives that have been employed by major Western Buddhologists, especially how they differ from 'theological' and apologetic approaches

Elective courses:

-Issues in Contemporary Buddhist Society

Socio-interactive side of Buddhism: Buddhist institutional responses to economic, cultural, political, and ethical issues. Presentation and self-presentation of Buddhism in media and various levels of adaptation of Buddhism to modern world.

-The Buddhist Temple and Theravada Society

How Theravada temples are imbedded in all levels of Theravada social life from teaching the dhamma through performing religious rituals to hosting local fairs. Also compares traditional Theravada temple social engagement with Western concepts of socially engaged Buddhism

-Buddhism and Visual Representations

Surveys artistic and popular visual representations of Buddhism. Various artistic styles, periods, iconography, techniques of production, contemporary Buddhist iconography presented through modern media: television, internet, and billboards

-Buddhism in Southeast Asia

Historical survey of Buddhism in Southeast Asian, interaction with Brahmanism and the final dominance of Theravada Buddhism, the decline of Buddhism in Indonesia and Malaysia.

-Buddhism in East Asia

A social history of Buddhism in China, Korea, and Japan up to the present time. Interaction and assimilation of Buddhism with the local traditions, the position it has come to assume in the contemporary Chinese, Korean, and Japanese societies.

-Buddhism in the West

Development of Buddhist communities outside Asia, especially in Europe and North America. Attention to the extent of adaptation they have made to the host cultures.

-Thai Buddhism

Buddhism in Thailand: early introduction, the competition between Hindu, Theravada, and Mahayana religions, the final establishment of Theravada Buddhism, interaction with local religions, challenges contemporary Thai Buddhism faces in growing Thai consumerism and a global world

-Independent Studies in Buddhist Studies

Researching and writing a research paper in Buddhist Studies. The subject of the research paper will be determined by consultation between the student and professor

Track 3: BUDDHISM and ISLAM

Required course:

-Dynamism of Inter-religious Encounters

History and academic study of inter-religious relations. Development of discourse on inter-religious relations. The efforts of dialogue notably between Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam.

Elective courses:

-Buddhist-Muslim Relations: Past and Present

Survey of historical and contemporary Buddhist-Muslim encounters, changing trends in their relations. Diversity found in their mutual perceptions, in their socio-political contexts

-Buddhism and Islam: A Comparative Study

Comparative analysis of major beliefs and practices of Buddhism and Islam, major points of comparison and possible connection between Buddhist and Muslim teachings.

-Issues in Contemporary Buddhist-Muslim Relations (workshop)

Central issues surrounding contemporary Buddhist-Muslim relations, examining incidents involving Buddhists and Muslims, as well as various peace-building initiatives and efforts of dialogue between the two communities.

-Sectarianism and Religious Reform Movements in Buddhism and Islam

History and contemporary status of the doctrinal and sectarian developments and reform movements in Islam and Buddhism.

-Independent Studies in Buddhism & Islam

Researching and writing a research paper connected with Buddhism and Islam. The subject of the research paper will be determined by consultation between the student and professor.

Thesis

Conduct original research on the selected topic in the chosen major approved by the advisory committee, submit the completed thesis and publish research in standard journals or conference proceedings.

PROGRAM CALENDAR

Program calendar (18 month period)

(Academic year I)

First Semester : August – December

Core courses :

- Foundation of Religious Studies: History and Theory
- Core Concepts in Religious Studies
- Research Methods for Religious Studies

Second Semester: January - May

Required course & elective courses

- Track 1/2/ 3: One required course
- Track 1/2/ 3: Two elective courses

Summer session: May – July

- Track 1/2/3: Two elective courses
- Thesis

(Academic year II)

First Semester: August – December

- Thesis

Second Semester : January – February

- Thesis

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

Applicants should have at least a Bachelor's degree in sciences, social sciences, humanities or education. Applicants from non-English speaking countries are required to submit a document indicating the level of their English proficiency. Normally, **A TOEFL score of no less than 500, or its equivalent**, is necessary in order to keep a normal pace with the class lectures and discussions, and to manage a heavy reading load. Application for admission to the Program may be made through either of these two channels:

1) Mahidol University Selection Process (for Thai applicants)

Applications must be submitted to the **Faculty of Graduate Studies**. The selection process involves a written examination and an interview.

Please visit the website: www.grad.mahidol.ac.th for further details and application form.

2) College of Religious Studies Selection Process (for International applicants)

Applications must be submitted to the M.A International Program, College of Religious Studies. The selection process involves review of the application materials with the optional of written examination and interview. Along with a completed application form and two references, applicants must also include transcripts of their undergraduate or graduate course work and pre-proposal for their Master's theses. Completed application forms and accompanying documents must **reach the program by mid - July**

An application form can be downloaded from the website : www.crs.mahidol.ac.th

Only application form may be submitted through email

SCHOLARSHIPS

Applicants are advised to seek their own financial support. Some potential sources of funding include bilateral and multilateral agencies such as the United Nations, Ford Foundation, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), UNESCO, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank's Graduate Scholarship Program, and etc.

TUITION, FEES AND OTHER EXPENSES

The tuition and fees for the entire program (18 months) is Baht 172,600.- (approx.US\$ 5,760.-) which includes: University education service fee, course registration fee for the entire program, University health insurance fee for two academic years and thesis registration fee.

In addition, the recommended expenses: estimated amount of US\$ 600 for student's thesis preparation, US\$ 300 for book allowance for the entire program and US\$ 600 for monthly stipend.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

It is the responsibility of the admitted applicants to acquire **a non-immigrant visa** at the nearest Thai Embassy or Consulate to enter Thailand for study

ACCOMMODATION

A variety of accommodation with facilities can be found in apartments near the campus. Residence for Buddhist monk students can be arranged at the College monastic housing and training center.

Contact Address:

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