IZIFUNDO NGEZENKOLO
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
GODSDIENSTSUDIES

WHAT is Religious Studies?
The Department of Religious Studies is committed to the open, plural, intercultural and interdisciplinary study of religion and religions in South Africa and the world.
We offer an approach that recognises the importance of creative and critical thinking about religion in a changing and culturally diverse South Africa. Most importantly, we aim to provide an understanding of religion that challenges and stimulates our students. To achieve these goals, we offer excellent courses, a focused and flexible undergraduate major, and a substantial postgraduate programme leading to Honours, Masters and Doctoral degrees in Religious Studies.

WHAT kinds of things will I be learning about in my first year?
The Department offers exciting introductory courses in the study of religion. Our courses are designed to introduce students to the religions of the world by focusing on the religious and spiritual traditions of Africa and Asia as well as new religions like the Hare Krishna movement and ‘New Age’ spiritualities. Our courses also introduce students to the ancient traditions of the Near East (Mesopotamia, Egypt and Persia) as well as the religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

WHAT can I do with Religious Studies?
Our graduates from the Department of Religious Studies have gone on to pursue careers in fields such as education, government, community work, journalism and market research.

Insight in some topical issues in contemporary societies such as social conflict & cohesion.
Core courses for the major in Religious Studies include the following fields of study:

- Religion and Society
- Psychology of Religion
- The ‘death of God’ and Modernity
- Religion, Sexuality & Gender
- Religion Conflict & Violence
- Thinking about Religion in the Social Sciences
- Religions Past and Present
- Judaism, Christianity and Islam
- African Religious Traditions
- Religion and Media

“Religious Studies gives you the skills to see things from many points of view. I now have the ability to challenge stereotypes and understand them.”

WHAT students say about Religious Studies

Gordon Oliver (Masters student)

I’m delighted to be a student again, at the age of 74 completing the circle of my education. I left school at the age of 15½ years, being required to leave after writing Junior Certificate. I did my Bachelor’s and Honours in my late 50s and 60s at UNISA and I always dreamt about being a UCT student because of its international reputation. I felt a close affinity to UCT due to its prominence in the struggle. Religion has been at the centre of my life, always a changing journey. I’m thrilled to be able to do a Master’s in Religious Studies, writing on Liberal Religion.

Ra Tiedemann-Nkabinde (PhD student)

I applied for the PhD programme at UCT because it appeals to my particular interests in the study of contemporary Islam in Africa and the role of Muslim actors in the public sphere. The Department of Religious Studies offers me access to a renowned and unrivalled source of knowledge both in terms of the outstanding academics involved in the programme and also the excellent resources.