

Food and Faith: A Two-Year Study on the Impact of Service-Learning and Community Engagement Practices in a General Education Religion Course

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Abstract

Identifying pedagogies that promote critical thinking, ethical leadership, and collaboration is essential to prepare students for a complex world and to achieve institutional goals. Service-Learning and Community Engagement (SLCE) is a vital pedagogy that integrates academic inquiry with real-world application to promote civic learning outcomes, enhancing student success, employability, institutional and departmental appeal, and knowledge democratization, while supporting underserved students (COPIIL, 2021; Wright & Wall-Bassett, 2023). SLCE pedagogy offers a powerful way to demonstrate the real-world relevance of religious studies, aligning program goals with civic learning outcomes and underscoring the discipline's role in cultivating engaged, informed citizens (Wright et al., 2018). This two-year study assessed the impact of SLCE pedagogy in a religion General Education course, Food and Faith. This study reveals significant gains in civic engagement, civic skill efficacy, civic responsibility, and 21st-century competencies—all of which align closely with the civic and ethical goals of religion programs. Notably, 68.8% of students expressed interest in further SLCE courses, and 61.8% found it more beneficial than other university courses. These findings underscore the potential of SLCE pedagogy in religion to generate transformative social impact and reinvigorate liberal arts education, particularly when supported by institutional backing.

Keywords: Civic Learning; Religion Pedagogy; Service-Learning Community Engagement; Twenty-First-Century Skills; High-Impact Pedagogy; Food and Faith; Social Impact

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As technological advances accelerate and ecosocial crises intensify, the role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in fostering meaningful social transformation has become increasingly urgent (AACU, 2007; Wright et al., 2022). Educating for social transformation is not only a moral imperative—it is in the best interest of HEIs. Shifting from lecture-based teaching to pedagogies that foster critical thinking, ethical leadership, and collaboration better prepares students for a complex world while advancing key institutional goals like student success, employability, and public trust in the liberal arts. Thus, identifying and assessing these pedagogies is essential. High-impact pedagogies like SLCE foster civic learning (Brindle & Clayton, 2021), which aligns strongly with the goals and civic learning competencies expected in US religion departments (e.g., social responsibility, democratic engagement, value clarification, communication, critical thinking, and ethical reasoning; see Appendix A). High-impact practices also boost perceived academic, practical, and overall learning, and may enhance religious literacy in supportive contexts (Valentine et al., 2021). This study examines the impact of integrating SLCE into a General Education religion course. Specifically, it assesses how SLCE impacts students' civic engagement, civic skill efficacy, sense of civic responsibility, and their development of key 21st-century competencies.

SLCE pedagogies enhance student success in HEIs, which is evident in strengthened retention and persistence—critical priorities for most HEIs (Wright & Wall-Bassett, 2023). High-impact SLCE experiences also increase students' self-confidence and skill competency (which positively correlates with GPA), and encourage persistence toward graduation (Lockeman & Pelco, 2013). Students involved in SLCE programs are more likely to align their values with their academic studies, resulting in a stronger sense of meaning, agency, and motivation to complete their education (Yeh, 2010).

Increasingly, employers expect graduates with the skills and mindsets to solve complex problems (Millican & Bourner, 2011). These include civic learning competencies such as communication,

critical thinking, ethical judgment, teamwork, resilience, self-management, and the practical application of knowledge. Notably, younger employers prioritize civic-related outcomes and experiences compared to older employers (Fisher et al., 2018). This suggests that combining a liberal arts education and active applied learning experiences gives graduates a competitive edge in hiring (COPIL, 2021). Campuses should prioritize equity in access to and success in experiences to foster civic learning, as it directly affects students' prospects and purpose (Thompson, Clark, Walker, & Whyatt, 2013; Qenani, MacDougall & Sexton, 2014; Finley, 2021).

SLCE pedagogies can help revitalize public perception of the liberal arts, particularly in fields like religion facing declining enrollment. As students gravitate toward career-oriented programs (Irvin et al., 2023), religion struggles to show value in a skills-driven market (Jensen & Vargas-O'Bryan, 2024). Yet SLCE approaches build civic and professional competencies, aligning with program goals and highlighting the discipline's real-world relevance. Religion also faces a unique challenge in public perception. Post-Enlightenment religious studies programs embrace empirical inquiry and inclusivity, often contrasting with confessional approaches. This tension is particularly pronounced in regions like the Bible Belt, and can make religious programs seem disconnected from career prospects. SLCE pedagogy offers a powerful way to demonstrate the real-world relevance of religious studies, aligning program goals with civic learning outcomes and underscoring the discipline's role in cultivating engaged, informed citizens. Scholars increasingly underscore the significant yet frequently overlooked role of religion in shaping society (Walker et al., 2021; Pew Research Center, 2022), positioning religion programs as promising platforms for social transformation through SLCE pedagogies.

While interest in innovative pedagogies is growing within religious studies (Jensen & Vargas-O'Bryan, 2024), few publications assess how well these approaches, particularly SLCE, achieve their intended outcomes. Most literature uses a variety of pedagogical approaches interchangeably (e.g.,

experiential learning, community service, and service-learning). Several studies highlight students' interactions with diverse religious institutions and support dialogical pedagogy for exploring and analyzing religious theories (Locklin et al., 2012). Others have combined community service with reflective activities to deepen students' awareness of inequality and poverty, underscoring the personal relevance of these issues (Seider, 2011). Both pedagogical approaches provide valuable contributions and are influential comparative and contemplative pedagogies (Kinane, 2019; Jensen & Vargas-O'Bryan, 2024). These pedagogies are enhanced by incorporating reciprocity, community action, and student autonomy—key elements of Paulo Freire's problem-posing approach (1970) and effective SLCE, as illustrated in this case study.

SLCE is part of the broader CCE movement and, in its various forms, serves as a high-impact practice—especially for underserved students—when it offers direct experience with course concepts and opportunities to address real community issues (Lapan, 2022; Wright & Wall-Bassett, 2023). High-impact SLCE programs are characterized by reciprocity, autonomy, and applied learning, which can be distilled into four key elements: a) evidence-based project design that fosters supported autonomy, allowing students to apply classroom learning in real-world contexts and direct learning trajectories; b) structured reflection on service experiences; c) reciprocal partnerships with community stakeholders as co-educators and co-learners; and d) the development of practical solutions that drive social transformation (Kuh, 2008). Embedding these foundational components into SLCE course design strengthens three core civic learning outcomes that align with many religion program goals. It deepens civic knowledge through values clarification and understanding of social systems, including religious concepts; cultivates civic skills like critical thinking, communication, and project implementation; and fosters civic dispositions such as social responsibility, civic identity, democratic engagement, and commitment to the common good (Billig et al., 2005; Bringle & Clayton, 2021).

Method

Study Design

The current study used a pre-post design. From Fall 2022 to Fall 2024, the course was offered each semester, totaling 21 sections with 16 to 24 students each, taught by six instructors. In the Fall of 2024, data from an asynchronous course was included. Pre- and post-surveys contained identical measures to assess students' outcomes. The pre-survey also gathered demographic information, while the post-survey assessed students' perceptions of SLCE courses. The pre-survey was completed within the first two weeks, and the post-survey in the final two weeks of the semester.

Participants

All students enrolled in the course (N=491) were invited by email to complete the pre and post-surveys via Qualtrics. Overall, 397 students completed at least one survey and 172 students completed both. Respondents were racially and ethnically diverse: 50% were White, 28% were Black, 15% were multiracial, 3.5% were Hispanic/Latinx, and 2% were Asian. Regarding gender identity, 59% of students identified as female, 39% as male, and 0.5% as non-binary. Approximately 36% of students were first-generation college students. Regarding class rank, approximately 28% of students were freshmen, 34% sophomores, 22% juniors, and 15% seniors. The average GPA was 3.15, SD = .85 (bottom quartile < 2.8, top quartile > 3.8).

Materials

Academic Engagement

Students completed a 15-item measure to assess their academic engagement, adapted from The Center for Youth and Communities (2011). Students rated statements on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*). Items assessed behavioral aspects of engagement (e.g., "I pay attention in class") and emotional aspects (e.g., "My classes are interesting to me").

Civic Engagement

Students reported on the frequency of their participation in civic engagement activities using a

7-item scale adapted from Caswell et al. (2011). Items focused on how often students completed civic activities (e.g., “How often do you do things to make the community a better place?”, “How often do you help to address community problems?”). Items were rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*every day*).

Civic Responsibility

Students’ civic responsibility was assessed using 8 items from Caswell et al. (2011). These items measured the extent to which students felt it was generally important to be involved in solving community problems (e.g., Being concerned about community issues is an important responsibility for everybody.”) and their own personal sense of responsibility to their community (e.g., “Helping other people is something that I am personally responsible for.”). Items were rated on a 6-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*).

Civic Skill Efficacy

Students’ efficacy in their civic skills was assessed with a 9-item measure adapted from Caswell et al. (2011). Items asked students to report on their ability to utilize specific skills to address community issues (e.g., “Create a plan to address the problem”, “Identify individuals or groups who could help you with the problem”, “Express your views about the problem to others in writing”). Items were rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (*I definitely can’t*) to 5 (*I definitely can*).

Twenty-First Century Skills

We adapted a 14-item measure from The Center for Youth and Communities (2011) to examine students’ twenty-first-century skills. This measure requires students to report their ability to engage in twenty-first-century skills, including writing, working as a team, being a leader, researching, and using technology (e.g., “I am good at being the leader of a group”). Items were rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Perceptions of SLCE

The research team created five questions to assess students’ perceptions of the SLCE course

modality. We assessed how much students enjoyed the course more than other courses, whether they found it more beneficial than other courses, and whether the SLCE component of the course required more work than other courses (all rated on a scale of 1-*strongly disagree* to 5-*strongly agree*). Students were also asked if they would be interested in taking another course taught with a SLCE approach. They answered on a scale of 1 (*definitely not*) to 4 (*definitely yes*). Finally, students provided an estimate of the number of hours they believed they had spent working on their project.

Course Design

Dr. Catherine Wright designed Food and Faith as an introductory-level SLCE General Education religion course. See Table 1 for the student learning outcomes and Figure 1 for the course scaffolding. This course employed innovative evidence-based solutions to address the challenges it faced (Kwon et al., 2014; Valentine, 2021; Rafiq et al., 2024). To address the limited familiarity of religion adjuncts with the interdisciplinary course content, Wright created a ready-to-use curriculum, including a Canvas shell with assessment tools and an interactive e-textbook aligned with the semester format (Wright, 2023). Second, Dr. Candace Lapan, a trained SLCE facilitator, designed a SLCE training workshop for instructors and directed the data collection and analysis. The facilitator was affiliated with a campus-based initiative, The Collaborative for the Common Good (CCG), that recruited and supported stakeholders while developing programs and spaces for community engagement and collaborative projects (Wright et al., 2022). For additional details, see: <https://www.wingate.edu/life-at-wingate/common-good>.

Table 1: SLOs

Student Learning Outcomes	Description
Remembering	Recognize the cultural, political, ecological, and economic significance of food and faith
Understanding	Plan, Shop for, and prepare low-cost, nutrient-rich snacks and meals
Applying	Engage in meaningful dialogue with peers, faculty, and community members about differences through the lens of table fellowship and food justice
Analyzing	Critically evaluate scholarship on food and faith, reflecting on its relevance to real-world context
Self-Reflection & Evaluating	Examine the relationship between individual food choices, personal interaction with nature, religious commitments, and broader food systems
Creating	Participate actively in community-engaged, experiential learning activities and assessments

The course was structured into three modules: personal engagement, local communities, and a global perspective, to support key learning outcomes. In Module 1, students explored religious creation stories, language, gardening, memory, and identity, while also exploring their own food habits, media use, and nutrition trends. They also developed technical and communication skills using tools like Canva and Google Docs, practiced persuasive writing and citation, and engaged in peer feedback. Playful, food-themed conversation starters aimed to foster social connection, critical thinking, and cultural awareness, preparing students for the collaborative work in Module 2, where they examined global religious traditions and co-created presentations on food-related rituals,

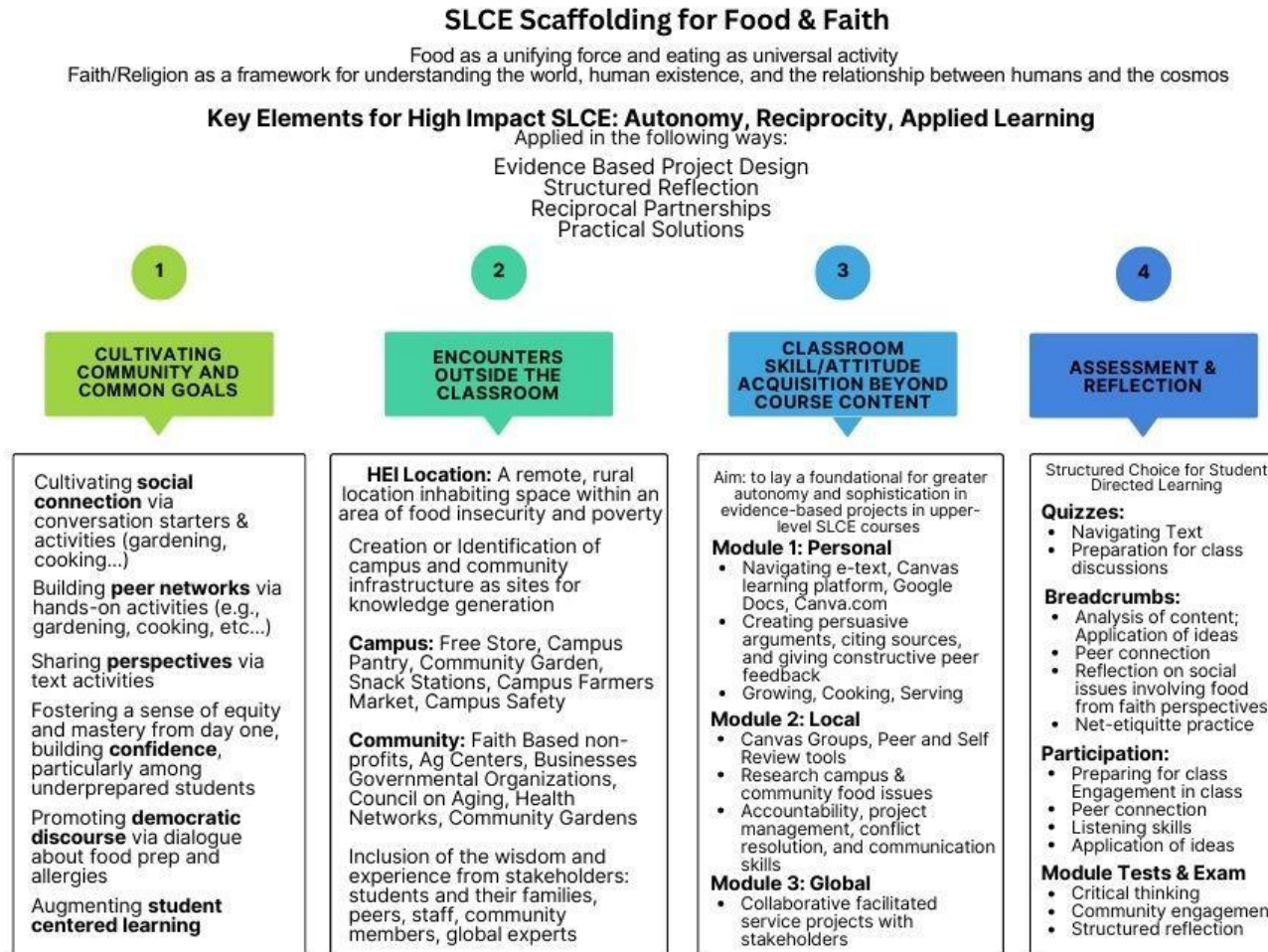
norms, and practices. Peer and self-assessment tools reinforced religious literacy, accountability, project management, and communication skills. Module 3 connected religion with global food issues, such as industrialized agriculture, climate change, and animal welfare. Throughout the modules, assessment tools and service projects with campus and community partners translated course content and religious literacy into meaningful action. Student autonomy was supported through structured choices in projects and prompts. Reciprocity was enhanced through stakeholder participation as co-instructors and reflective assessments helped students recognize these partners as co-creators of knowledge and agents of mutual learning.

Results

Data Analytic Approach

Tables 2 and 3 contain all descriptive statistics. Student background data suggested that students were largely unfamiliar with the SLCE approach, as only 7.2% noted that they had taken an SLCE course before. We initially tested mixed ANOVA models including instructor as a between-subjects factor, but there were no significant effects of this variable, so it was dropped from the analysis. Thus, all outcome variables were analyzed using a paired samples t-tests to compare pre- and post-survey scores for each measure. Cases with missing data were excluded from analysis. Individuals with missing data were more likely to identify as Black, $\chi^2(5, N = 389) = 20.16, p < .001$, to be a freshman or senior, $\chi^2(3, N = 397) = 10.74, p < .05$, and to have a lower GPA, $t(333) = -3.47, p < .001$. There was no difference in missing data rates based on gender or first-generation student status. Inferential data for the main outcomes can be found in Table 4.

Figure 1: SLCE Scaffolding



For more details, see the following website [omitted for blind review] and CCG White paper at LINK [omitted for Blind review]

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for all pre- and post-outcome variables.

Measure	Pre			Post		
	Mean	N	SD	Mean	N	SD
Academic Engagement	3.1903	175	.43487	3.2011	175	.42906
Civic Engagement	2.4294	178	.80002	2.6814	178	.76920
Civic Skill Efficacy	4.3929	179	.76431	4.5518	179	.78310
Civic Responsibility	4.3326	177	.75104	4.4809	177	.75371
21 st Century Skills	3.1087	172	.41910	3.2182	172	.41255

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for post-only outcome variables.

	Mean	N	SD		
Number of hours spent on project	5.3535	312	5.95		
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
More enjoyable than other courses	3.1%	5.5%	17.2%	42%	32.2%
More beneficial than other courses	3.1%	6.5%	28.6%	40.6%	21.2%
Required more work than other courses	2.1%	10.4%	37.9%	31.8%	17.7%
Would take another SLCE course	3.4%	5.5%	22.3%	42.2%	26.6%

Table 4: Results of pairwise comparisons of pre- and post

	Paired Differences					Significance		
	Mean Difference	SD	Std. Error Mean	95% CI		t	df	Two-Sided p
				Lower	Upper			
Academic Engagement	.01077	.42485	.03212	-.05261	.07416	.335	174	.738
Civic Engagement	.25201	.75441	.05655	.14042	.36360	4.457	177	<.001
Civic Skill Efficacy	.15891	.64077	.04789	.06440	.25342	3.318	178	.001
Civic Responsibility	.14831	.71639	.05385	.04204	.25457	2.754	176	.007
21 st Century Skills	.10950	.39215	.02990	.05048	.16852	3.662	171	<.001

***Note:** Bolded values represent statistically significant differences.

Academic Engagement

There was no significant change in students' academic engagement over the course of the semester, $t(174)=0.34, p=0.73, d=.02$.

Civic Engagement

As compared to the beginning of the term, students reported spending more time giving back to their communities, $t(177)=4.45, p<.001, d=.33$.

Civic Skill Efficacy

As compared to the beginning of the semester, students reported feeling more adept at the skills necessary to address community problems, $t(178)=3.31, p=.001, d=.24$.

Civic Responsibility

Students reported an increased sense of responsibility to their communities across the semester, $t(176)=2.75, p<.007, d=.20$.

21st-Century Skills

Students at the end of the semester reported significantly higher levels of 21st-century skills, $t(171)=3.66, p<.001, d=.27$.

SLCE Perceptions

Students' perceptions of the SLCE course were rather positive. Most students (74.2%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed the course more than other courses. Likewise, most students (61.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that the course was more beneficial for them than other courses. Approximately half of the students agreed or strongly agreed that the course required more work than courses taught without an SLCE approach. On average, students reported spending about 5.35 hours ($SD=5.95$) on their SLCE projects. Finally, most students (68.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that they would take another course with an SLCE component.

Discussion

The current study demonstrates that SLCE practices in an undergraduate religion class significantly improved civic engagement, civic efficacy, civic responsibility, and 21st-century skills.

Such gains suggest strengthened competencies in value clarification, personal integrity, applying knowledge, social responsibility, democratic engagement, and ethical citizenship. Additionally, improvements in 21st-century skills demonstrate the achievement of the goal of fostering effective communication, collaboration, and ethical reasoning, which are recurring religion program goals, including Wingate University's (see Appendix A). Research suggests that improvements across all four assessed domains boost students' marketability and professional readiness, key priorities for religion programs. Additionally, there was no significant change in students' ratings of academic engagement. While this study did not assess gains in conceptual understanding of religion, incorporating other content-specific measures could help track improvements in religious literacy.

One possible mechanism for developing these skills was course content and scaffolding. The modules (see Figure 1) begin with a universally shared experience: eating. This could help underprepared students entering post-secondary education to develop their voices, thus increasing the chances of success for all. This foundation of belonging and intellectual engagement serves as a scaffold for civic learning outcomes and academic success (Siegel-Stechler et al., 2025). Student-centered learning and focused instruction on academic and civic skills within each module may be key to fostering civic responsibility and 21st-century competencies. Students also explored the role of food in civil rights movements, reflected on their personal growth, and facilitated peer collaboration in teaching lessons. The freedom to choose how to express and apply these skills may enhance 21st-century competencies, such as creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration.

Given SLCE's emphasis on autonomy, a key mechanism is empowering students to engage with knowledge sources beyond traditional texts and lectures. In this course, choice is intentionally woven throughout the curriculum rather than confined to a culminating project. Autonomy emerges through discussions and assessments, enabling students to connect course content with

their interests and lived experiences. Students deepen their learning on campus through journaling, service events, application projects, and interviews with campus staff. Choice (and reflection on their choices) is embedded throughout these experiences. For example, students select the prompts and green space to engage, are encouraged to leverage their skills during service activities, and conduct research to assess the needs and cultural significance of the food prepared for local seniors. Off-campus activities require students to engage with community partners, analyze media, and conduct interviews with local stakeholders. These elements integrate key SLCE features—reciprocity, autonomy, and applied learning—with traditional scholarship.

Surprisingly, measures of academic engagement did not show improvements throughout the semester. One possible explanation is that the measure was too broad. Indeed, the measure assessed overall academic engagement (e.g., “My classes are interesting to me”) and not specifically tailored to the course (“*This class* is interesting to me” or “*religion classes* are interesting to me”). Students would likely need more sustained SLCE experiences in their undergraduate careers to see a broad change in academic engagement. More proximal measures of academic engagement in religion general education classes may have been better to capture improvement in students’ academic engagement (e.g., Lapan et al., 2022).

Interestingly, although students reported that this course involved more work, many wanted to take another SLCE course. This suggests that perceived workload was not a barrier to their enrollment in SLCE courses. It is possible that students perceived the workload as contributing positively to their academic, personal, and civic growth.

Limitations

Several important limitations to this study, stemming from its design, present potential alternative explanations for the current findings. First, given that complete data was only obtained for some students, there is the possibility of self-

selection effects, such that students who had a better experience in the course were more likely to complete both pre- and post-measures. Indeed, we observed systematic demographic differences in participants who had complete versus incomplete data, suggesting this could be a concern. There may also be other confounding variables (e.g., personality, cognitive ability) that account for the observed changes over the course of the semester. Improvements observed over the course of the semester may also be attributed to maturation effects (i.e., students would have improved in these skills regardless of their SLCE experience). Finally, our sample was limited by our specific institutional context (i.e., a small private liberal arts institution), and we are uncertain whether these findings can be generalized to other populations.

Future Directions

It is prudent for future research to employ more complex designs to better assess the cause-and-effect relationships between SLCE practices and student outcomes. For example, researchers could implement a Randomized Control Trial design with control classrooms that teach the same religious content, but do not use SLCE practices. Additionally, researchers could measure the frequency and fidelity of implementation with which instructors utilized SLCE practices and use that variation to predict student outcomes. Such studies could also help pinpoint which aspects of SLCE experiences are most closely related to changes in students’ outcomes. Incorporating religious literacy questions into the survey would provide a clearer assessment of how SLCE practices enhance students’ understanding of religious concepts. Assessment of richer qualitative data from students might also help illuminate the most impactful experiences and understanding of religious concepts.

Since religion departments may represent an underutilized site for civic learning, one future direction would be to design complementary upper-level SLCE courses to facilitate further growth in civic knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Concurrently, designing and implementing large-scale studies to assess the longitudinal impact of numerous SLCE experiences would be beneficial.

Given the limited research on SLCE practices in religion and the preliminary data presented here, further investigation is necessary to explore how SLCE can effectively enhance student outcomes across subfields within the field of religion.

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Dr. Candace Lapan is a Developmental Psychologist and Associate Professor at Wingate University. Her research examines the development of children's academic self-perceptions and social biases. Informed by her postdoctoral training at the University of Virginia, she investigates the impact of service-learning and community engagement (SLCE) practices on student achievement. As W'Engage Coordinator at Wingate University, she leads community engagement initiatives, including faculty training to conduct SLCE courses and community-engaged scholarship. She is an active social justice advocate, helping to establish DEI initiatives, teaching SLCE courses on LGBTQ+ issues, and publishing work on the experiences of LGBTQ+ people in higher education.

Rickie Sarratt is an accomplished leader, educator, and leadership coach with over 25 years of experience in various sectors, including business, higher education, and ministry. A certified John Maxwell Team speaker and trainer, he specializes in helping individuals and organizations maximize their potential through strategic leadership development. Rickie serves as an adjunct professor at Wingate University and is the founder and pastor of Innov8tion Point, a non-denominational church. With a background in IBM, Bellsouth, and Siemens, among others, he has successfully led teams, improved operational efficiency, and implemented strategic changes. Rickie holds a Master of Arts in Christian Thought from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and is pursuing a Doctor of Education in Higher Education Executive Leadership. He is also an author, with his first book, Leadership Inside Trajectory, published in 2021.

Appendix A

Selection of Various Types of Institutions from 2021 Dataset from National Center for Educational Statistics (https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22_312.10.asp) and Princeton Review Website (<https://www.princetonreview.com/college-search/?e>)

Terms that are highlighted are those aligned with Civic Learning as outlined by Bringle and Clayton (2021)

Institution	Size (2023-24 enrollment)	Title of Religion Department	Key terms in Religion Program Goals	Website Link to Information	Example of Course Description
Washington University in St. Louis (MO)	Private, 4 year 8,267 Enrolled	John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics; Religious Studies	...supporting and enhancing outstanding scholarly research on the historical and contemporary intertwining of religion and politics; ...exploring the deepest questions about human life through the lens of religion; an interdisciplinary center for the study of religion in the twenty-first century. Religious studies, as a discipline, brings together researchers from fields as diverse as anthropology, literary studies, history, political science, and archaeology ... studying past and current events with a critical, but open, mind ; curriculum covers diverse subjects including U.S. politics, the Middle East, atheism, the FBI, health, eastern philosophies, and more.	https://religiousstudies.wustl.edu/ ; https://arts.washu.edu/explore-academics/john-c-danforth-center-religion-and-politics#:~:text=Established%20in%202010%2C%20the%20John,of%20religion%20and%20U.S.%20politics.	L23 Re St 102 Thinking About Religion: Nearly everyone has had some experience with something they would call "religion," from at least a passing familiarity through the media to a lifetime of active participation in religious communities. But what do we actually mean when we use the word? What is a religion? What does it mean to call something a religion, or "religious"? And what does it mean to study religion, given the slipperiness of the concept itself? This course offers an introduction to the academic study of religion through a consideration of these questions: What is religion, and how can we study it? Do we need an answer to the first question to pursue the second? Why, and toward what ends, might we undertake such study? We will also consider what is at stake in our investigation and inquiry into religion—for the inquirers, for the subjects of inquiry, and for society more broadly—and what kind of lens the study of religion offers us on ourselves, our neighbors, and society. L23 Re St 2010 Religion and American Society: This course explores religious life in the United States in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Comprehensive coverage of such a diverse landscape is not our goal. Rather, we will focus on some of the basic social categories that organize our society and that make religion a social phenomenon. How do religious belief and practice relate to race, class, or gender? How do we understand the role of religion in relation to region and space? How can we understand the many different stories that Americans tell about their own country as a special-even sacred-place? Major themes include religion and race; nation, land, and migration; religion, class, and money; evangelicalism and the religious right; business, class, and prosperity; religion and gender; religious nationalism; and the enduring challenges of religious multiplicity in the U.S.
Grinnell College (IA)	Private, 4 year, 1775	Religious Studies	When you study the world's religious traditions, you learn about the histories, literatures, practices and beliefs that have shaped human societies. You study rituals and festivals that organize perceptions of time and place, disciplines that develop modes of attention, and ideas of holiness, justice, love, and beauty through which human beings have expressed their highest ideals. You develop tools to understand the complex ways that people across history and around the world oppose oppression, justify violence, understand their bodies, and give meaning to their lives. We empower each other to engage personally, intellectually, and practically with the full richness of human life. Religion is at the heart of that richness. Religious studies is the interdisciplinary inquiry into how local, national, and global communities live together and engage in big questions of meaning. PLOs: Describe the context around the development of religions, specifically how religious peoples and ideals both have shaped—and are shaped by—the experiences and histories of individuals, communities, nations, and regions; Use key concepts from the field of religious studies to analyze lived experiences, including one's own. Responsibly represent the experiences of others in such an analysis.	https://www.grinnell.edu/academics/majors-concentrations/religious-studies/major ; https://www.grinnell.edu/academics/centers-programs/cta/assessment/outcomes/religious-studies	REL 258 - Religion and Food: Eating is Believing; REL 240 - Religion is Everywhere;
Wingate University (NC)	Private, 4 year, 2464	Religious Studies	Wingate University's mission is to cultivate educated, ethical, and productive global citizens, rooted in a Judeo-Christian heritage, with a focus on Faith, Knowledge, and Service. The study of religion, ethics, and philosophy provides a strong foundation for interpersonal relationships, civic engagement, and professional achievement.	https://www.wingate.edu/academics/undergraduate/religious-studies-major	Global Perspectives in Ethics; Food and Faith

<p>University of Pennsylvania (PA)</p>	<p>Private, 4 year, 28,038 (2890 online)</p>	<p>Department of Religious Studies</p>	<p>Religion is a major aspect of every human culture. In all civilizations in the world, religion helps shape the institutions of law and government, influences family and parenting practices, plays a major role in attitudes toward medicine and science, and resonates in the creative work of artists and writers. At an individual and collective level, it helps provide answers to some of the biggest questions and dilemmas of human existence. The study of religion is a diversified and multi-faceted discipline focusing on the study of specific religious traditions and the general nature of religion as a phenomenon of human life, including the cultures around the world and ancient as well as modern, in an inquiry that involves a variety of textual, historical, phenomenological, social scientific, theological, philosophical and artistic methodologies.</p>	<p>https://rels.sas.upenn.edu/undergraduate-program</p>	<p>RELS 0050 Gender, Sexuality, and Religion: What does it mean to be a gendered individual in a Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Christian, or Buddhist religious tradition? How important are gender differences in deciding social roles, ritual activities, and spiritual vocations? This course tackles these questions, showing how gender - how it is taught, performed, and regulated - is central to understanding religion. In this course we will learn about gendered rituals, social roles, and mythologies in a range of religious traditions. We will also look at the central significance of gender to the field of religious studies generally. RELS 0080 Religion and Sports: Professional football player Tim Tebow used to publicly kneel in prayer before almost every game. Elite runner Mo Farah rescheduled his Ramadan fast in 2011 when the Muslim month of fasting coincided with the world championships. What happens when religion and sports meet? Can a sport really be a religion? How do sports communities grapple with questions of equity and power, particularly in Philadelphia? By the end of this course you will be able to articulate a sophisticated answer to these two questions and be better prepared to understand and interpret the role of sports in society today. RELS 0088 Penitentiaries to PILOTS: Religion and Institutions in Pennsylvania: This first-year seminar examines how religion works on, in, and through institutions such as penitentiaries, residential facilities for Native children, private universities, for-profit corporations, and public schools. Focusing on the State of Pennsylvania and the City of Philadelphia as examples of broader national trends, we investigate the fraught religious history of many local educational, correctional, and cultural institutions.</p>
<p>Elmhurst University (IL)</p>	<p>Private, 4 year, 2850</p>	<p>Religious Studies</p>	<p>SLOs: Comprehend significant aspects of religion through the critical examination of classical primary texts and related artifacts; Examine historic and contemporary expressions of religion with intellectual integrity and spiritual sensitivity; Analyze the nature and importance of one’s own convictions about faith, meaning and values while at the same time respecting the commitments of others; Examine the religious basis for, and be committed to, personal integrity, benevolent service and social justice; Describe central characteristics of our multicultural, interdependent and global human family</p>	<p>https://www.elmhurst.edu/academics/departments/religious-studies/learning-outcomes/; https://www.elmhurst.edu/academics/departments/religious-studies/courses/</p>	<p>Christian Social Ethics: A study of selected contemporary moral problems such as racism, poverty and hunger, war and peace, and sexual and familial relationships. An examination of the moral adequacies of fundamental Christian convictions; Ministry: Calling and Practice: This course will introduce students to the long history of ministry in the Christian tradition, beginning with the biblical bases for a “calling.” It is designed especially for students who are interested in exploring a call to Christian ministry or vocation in preparation for work as a pastor, priest, chaplain, religious educator, scholar or administrator, or in other ministries; Serving Society: Faith Perspectives: In this interdisciplinary course, students will acquire wide-ranging knowledge of how religious principles and faith have informed engagement with society and have motivated pursuits of humanitarian and religious service through history.</p>
<p>Johns Hopkins University (MD)</p>	<p>Private, 4 year, 32,049 (14,847 online)</p>	<p>Religious Studies, including the Leonard and Helen R. Stulman Jewish Studies Program and the Program in Islamic Studies, along with a broader focus on religion through its Interfaith Center and Spiritual Care and Chaplaincy</p>	<p>Islamic Studies Minor: cross-disciplinary perspectives across history, anthropology, philosophy, history of science, history of art, Near Eastern studies, and others ... Our aim is to educate our students about Muslims and Islam in historical and comparative perspectives, and in the context of their co-existence with followers of many other faiths. Jewish Studies Minor: interdisciplinary undergraduate minor... opportunity to explore more than three millennia of Jewish culture and civilization... ... study of cultures and civilizations in which Jews and Judaism play an important role, such as Christianity, Islam, or modernity.</p>	<p>https://krieger.jhu.edu/islamic/#:~:text=Address:-,Program%20in%20Islamic%20Studies,Artwork%20Credit:%20Hamid%20Rahmanian;https://krieger.jhu.edu/jewishstudies/#:~:text=Culture%20and%20Civilization-,The%20Leonard%20and%20Helen%20R.,from%20biblical%20to%20contemporary%20times.</p>	

<p>New York University (NY)</p>	<p>Private, 4 year, 58,226 (4757 online)</p>	<p>Department of Religious Studies</p>	<p>...explore religious practice as an important aspect of social life in three ways. 1) Students study the theories and methods by which religion is analyzed, 2) learn empirically about religion in different times and places, 3) approached as lived practices, religions present us with a valuable lens through which many realms in social life can be examined</p>	<p>https://as.nyu.edu/departments/religiousstudies/about.html#:~:text=The%20Department%20of%20Religious%20Studies,historical%2C%20legal%20and%20literary%20work</p>	<p>RELST-UA 422 Living a Good Life: Greek and Jewish Perspectives : Key questions: Does living well require acquiring knowledge and wisdom? What is the place of moral responsibility in the good life? Is the good life a happy life, or does it require sacrificing happiness? Does religion lead to living well or does it hinder it? What is friendship and how does it contribute to the good life? Study of primary texts by Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, Avot, Maimonides, Spinoza, and Hermann Cohen. RELST-UA 428 Creating a Good Society: Christian and Jewish Perspectives: This course explores Greek, Christian and Jewish responses to the problem: How does one create a good society? Central questions to be explored include: What is the best form of government? What economic system is ideal? Should the government actively promote a vision of the good life or leave it to individual to decide the good for themselves? Should the government prioritize the freedom, equality, or happiness of its inhabitants? What role should religion and nationhood play in society? What models of education should the government promote? How does gender inform these considerations? The course will focus on careful analysis of primary texts. Thinkers to be studied include: Plato, Maimonides, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Wollstonecraft, Mendelssohn, Marx, Hess. Having first taken the course: Living a Good Life: Greek and Jewish Perspectives is highly desirable.</p>
<p>Vanderbilt University (TN)</p>	<p>Private, 4 year, 7,152 Enrolled</p>	<p>Department of Religious Studies</p>	<p>Religious ideas and worldviews are built into every human culture, from history to ethics to social movements. In the Department of Religious Studies, you'll engage in cutting-edge research and learning about the traditions, rituals, places, practices, and beliefs that give orientation to human life and help communities address the big questions that face us all. The Department of Religious Studies approaches religion as a fundamentally human experience. Our courses investigate religious traditions through an array of disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, history, theology, literature, and art. Students studying religious studies gain a broad understanding of religions around the world, as well as deep knowledge of a single tradition, region, or theme.</p>	<p>https://as.vanderbilt.edu/religious-studies/; https://as.vanderbilt.edu/religious-studies/major-minors/#:~:text=Explore%20and%20Discover.Islamic%20studies%2C%20and%20Arabic%20language.</p>	<p>RLST 3921: Ethics and Ecology Relationships among humans, nature, and the sacred. Focus on understandings of our 'dominion' over non-human nature. The role of religion in shaping attitudes and behaviors regarding the environment. Topics include eco-centered ethics, 'creation care,' reliance on fossil fuels, and alternative sustainable scenarios.</p>
<p>Loyola Marymount University (CA)</p>	<p>Private, 4 year, 7,273 Enrolled</p>	<p>Theological Studies</p>	<p>Theological Studies come to appreciate both the intrinsic value of religious inquiry and the role of religion in building a more just world. Grounded in the Roman Catholic tradition, the Department of Theological Studies invites students to analyze questions of faith, the divine, and ultimate meaning in the context of religious thought and practice</p>	<p>https://bellarmine.lmu.edu/theologicalstudies/</p>	<p>Migration and the Border: Description: In this course, students study migration and the border, coming to terms with the empirical reality of contemporary immigration while constructing their own theological or ethical response. The course begins with an interlacing of phenomenological (i.e., experiential), historical, social scientific, and cultural approaches to the study of migration, that is, the movement of peoples both across and within political borders. Students then critically examine borders as a historical and contemporary social phenomenon, tracing their political evolution alongside the nation-state as well as the psychology they shape and are shaped by. The second half of the class will be devoted to biblical and other historical texts that treat migration and movement, followed by a deep engagement with the social ethics and theology of migration in Christian tradition, with brief comparison to Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, and indigenous religious approaches to migration.</p>
<p>Emory University (GA)</p>	<p>Private, 4 year, 7,407 Enrolled</p>	<p>Department of Religion</p>	<p>Religion shapes the lives of individuals in ways that relate in many different ways to culture, law, health, politics, and art. These influences are not always mutual, visible, and at times even desirable. During the early decades of Emory University at Oxford, research and teaching of Religion focused primarily on the study of theology. Currently, our department is a place where scholars of all ages and ranks raise a host of different questions about the central role of religion in everyday life.</p>	<p>https://religion.emory.edu/</p>	<p>Religion in the News: An exploration of diverse ways of being religious (for example, in thought, action, community, and experience) as they are displayed in several traditions and cultures. You can't understand the world today without reference to religion. Every day, religion is in the news. There are religious "extremists" and "terrorists" and religious arguments about abortion, vaccines, and civil and human rights. There are arguments about religious symbols such as the Ten Commandments or cartoons of Muhammad. American Presidents are sworn in with their hand on a Bible. Hindu nationalists have transformed Indian politics, and a monk in Myanmar is known as the "Buddhist bin Laden." This course discusses aspects of Indigenous American Religions, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism in the context of contemporary issues such as the Coronavirus pandemic, campus protests, terrorism, presidential elections, and race in.</p>

Brown University (RI)	Private, 4 year, 7910	Religious Studies	a commitment to developing skills and habits of thought that enable students to interpret and engage with a complex world , past and present, near and far, familiar and unfamiliar, natural and social. Religious Studies fosters such scholarly capacities and skills as close reading (of texts and other social and material data), excellence in writing and verbal expression , interpretation of the past from written and physical evidence, interpretation of contemporary society by not only studying it directly but by applying knowledge of other times and other places..... By exploring the public and private concerns that religions engage—for example, the nature of community and solitude , suffering and death, good and evil—students discover new ways of interpreting the complex world in which they live .	https://religious-studies.brown.edu/about#:~:text=The%20Department%20of%20Religious%20Studies,the%20various%20manifestations%20of%20religion.	Happiness and the Pursuit of the Good Life What is happiness, and how does it relate to the "good life," or a life well-lived ? This is an age-old question, and in this course we will investigate religious and philosophical answers alongside insights drawn from modern positive psychology. A major goal of the course is to give you intellectual tools that will help you to construct a meaningful life . Areas of study will include value determination; gratitude; status and wealth; and mindfulness. The Religious Lives of Everyday People For centuries, scholars have looked to religious institutions, theological doctrines, and sacred texts to explain religion's form and function in culture and society. And while this approach has enabled scholars to neatly prescribe what counts as religious, it's also caused them to ignore the ways people's daily faith practices make a mess of this work. Drawing on sub-fields in religious studies, anthropology, and sociology, this course explores how formal ideas of religion expand when confronted with the normality of everyday life . From cooking and talking to prayer and devotion, the "religious" and "non-religious" things people do tell us a lot about how religion animates and is animated by lived experience, and how porous the boundary is between the "sacred" and "profane". Religion, Sex, Citizenship An exploration of the relationship between religion, sex, and citizenship with a focus on the United States. What has been the role of religion in the creation of sexual norms in United States history? How has this relationship changed over time, in relation to intersecting systems of class and race? What are "family values" and where did they come from? What is secularism, and does it promote sexual freedom? This course takes up questions like these, anchoring its inquiry in interdisciplinary feminist theories of gender and sexuality. Linking theoretical texts to a range of grounded contexts—from Court rulings on religious freedom, to fights over sex education in schools, to militarized sexual violence, to capitalism's regimes of gendered labor—students will develop critical vocabularies for analyzing intimacies between religion, sex, and politics in American empire.
University of Notre Dame (IN)	Private, 4 year, 8,968 Enrolled	Department of Theology	our students grow to become critical thinkers, excellent writers, and more well-formed men and women ; Encounter the great questions of life : What is truth? What is justice? What happens after death? Moral theology: Moral theology/Christian ethics is that branch of theological inquiry that studies in a systematic way the practical implications of God's revelatory intervention in Jesus Christ. It is concerned with the kind of people we ought to be and the kinds of actions we ought to perform or avoid. In pursuing its task, moral theology must draw upon every available source of understanding: scripture, tradition, relevant human sciences (such as psychology, sociology, economics), and human reason.	https://theology.nd.edu/	
Northwestern University (IL)	Private, 4 year, 8846	Department of Religious Studies	Religion shapes, and is shaped by, every other dimension of human society . It is impossible to fully understand politics, law, history, or science without understanding religion. SLOs: Majors will gain the skills to interpret, describe, and compare religious phenomena within diverse historical, social, and cultural contexts; Majors will be able to interpret and analyze the intersections of religion and other dimensions of culture (e.g., science, politics, ethics, race, gender, class, art/architecture, and popular culture); Majors will become practiced in critical thinking, making and supporting effective arguments (both orally and in writing), interpreting social theory in relationship to the study of religion, conducting research, evaluating primary resources, and organizing projects ; Majors will have opportunities to work both independently and collaboratively in the course of earning their degree.	https://religious-studies.northwestern.edu/ ; https://religious-studies.northwestern.edu/courses/2024-2025/ay-24-25-class-schedule.html	REL 101-7-21 LEARNING SPACES, LEARNED BODIES: This is a College Seminar on the relationship between the body, space, and learning. While education and college are often presented as primarily intellectual activities, we will pay attention to the spatial and bodily dynamics that shape how we create, share and access knowledge . Students will learn to ask how the body shapes and is shaped by its learning environment through categories like gender/sex and sexuality, race/ethnicity and religion, ability and access, and how fields like architecture, design, technology and media influence the enterprise of learning; REL 349-21 WHAT IS CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM?: In this course, students will explore the religious, social, and political dimensions of Christian nationalist movements. We will consider the U.S. case in historical and ethnographic perspective, and contextualize it amid global comparative examples .
Boston College (MA)	Private, 4 year, 9,575 Enrolled	Theology Department	The Theology Department provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary for reasoned reflection on their own values, faith, and tradition, as well as on the religious forces that shape our society and world .	https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/morrissey/departments/theology.html ; https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/morrissey/sites/PULS/E/courses.html	Person & Social Responsibility: The course requirements include ten to twelve hours per week of community service . In light of classic philosophical and theological texts, students in this course address the relationship of self and society, the nature of community, the mystery of suffering and the practical difficulties of developing a just society .

Guilford College	Private, 4 year, 1680	Religious Studies and Ethics Department	Studying religion at Guilford is an inherently interdisciplinary endeavor that takes the individual student as its starting point in order to draw forth each student's creative, critical and ethical energies...The program's curriculum opens hearts and minds to new ideas while preparing students for a variety of careers by nurturing a range of skills. These skills include critical and creative thinking , competency in oral communication , confidence reading a range of texts, analytical writing , and leadership and role modeling within communities . In studying religion and ethics, students engage critically, compassionately, and cross-culturally with the major issues facing individuals, cultures, and the world...Students in Religious Studies and ethics courses learn through seminar discussions, lectures, role-playing, film analysis, individual reading, writing, student collaboration , and internships focused on social service and action ... Learning Goals: Skills, Self and Society: hone critical reflection ... locate themselves within historical, social, and cultural contexts ... receive a solid foundation for careers that emphasize critical thinking , close-reading, strong written and oral communication, analysis , and a robust understanding of human belief and behavior ... engage critically, compassionately and cross-culturally with the major issues facing individuals, cultures and the world	https://www.guilford.edu/academics/departments/religions-studies ; https://catalog.guilford.edu/catalog/academic-departments-majors/religious-studies/	PECS 468: Religion, Spirituality, and Social Change: Analyzes the role of religion and spirituality in motivating and sustaining struggles for social change . The course aims to develop an understanding of the current thinking about the intersection between religion and conflict; an ability to comparatively articulate the practical problems encountered by social movement activists/third party professional engaged in both religious and secular attempts at peace; and an appreciation of the interconnection between the body and mind, the seen and the unseen, the sacred and the profane.
University of New Mexico (NM)	Public, 4 year, 22,228	Religious Studies Program	Religious Studies is one of the oldest humanistic disciplines and teaches critical reading and thinking skills that are essential to a liberal arts education...Learning Outcomes ... Students learn to identify ethical and political issues related to religion, as present in public dialogue and debate; Students learn to express their thoughts in writing and discussion , so that they are clearly understood by peers and instructors; Students learn to demonstrate constructive dialogue about the role religions play in public life and in relation to social inequalities and social change ; Students learn to analyze the morals and ethics of different religious traditions.	https://religious-studies.unm.edu/degrees/index.html ; https://religious-studies.unm.edu/degrees/learning-outcomes.html	Religion, Life, and Culture; Religion in the Americas; Religion Health and Medicine
East Carolina University (NC)	Public, 4 year, 28,021 (8218 online)	Religious Studies & Philosophy and Religious Studies	Enhances cultural awareness , which is increasingly vital in our ever more interconnected world; Informs students in their quest for meaning in life by probing the big issues in human life and action ; Allows students to combine their study of religion with a major or minor in another program, enabling them to broaden their educational experience and acquire a more immediately marketable skill ; Helps students to think analytically and communicate effectively . DESCRIPTION: Religion is a social phenomenon that has great influence on human experience. Across the world history, religious values have, on the one hand, given human meaning and these traditions have laid the foundation for human relations as documented in human rights, democracy, social justice movements , interfaith interaction, tolerance and peace. On the other hand, religious ideologies have fueled conflict and encouraged insecurities such as acts of terrorism and ethnic cleansing, leading to dislocation and migration of populations and in some cases economies and general welfare of people have been destroyed. This is what great United States Secretaries of the State have said regarding the significance of studying religion. Philosophical questions inquire into the nature of things. Studying these questions calls for a great deal of reflection. ...Studying philosophy involves sharpening our reasoning skills by studying how we reason, and rewards us with deeper, more rigorous understanding of ourselves, our world, and the other things and creatures in it . Sharpened reasoning is valuable wherever it is applied, whether to philosophical issues, or to problems in the natural sciences, applied sciences, social sciences arts, or humanities. That these reasoning skills may be applied to issues in any of these areas indicates their value: they contribute to living a better life , since they can be applied in the workplace, whatever that may be, as well as in personal decisions.	https://philosophy-religion.ecu.edu/ ; https://religionprogram.ecu.edu/	RELI 3690 - Religion and Gender; RELI 2340 - Religion and Science; RELI 3700 - Religion and Social Issues; PHIL 1180 - Introduction to Critical Reasoning; PHIL 1175 - Introduction to Ethics
University of Arkansas (AR)	Public, 4 year, 29,068 (3258 online)	Religious Studies	Students of religion should know the historical development of religious traditions, understand and critically engage the ethical and intellectual teachings of various religions, and comprehend the roles that religion plays in different cultures and societies.	https://religious-studies.uark.edu/index.php	Islam and Politics; Philosophy and the Christian Faith
University of Kentucky (KT)	Public, 4 year, 30,390 (3447 online)	Minor in World Religions	The minor in World Religions explores the diversity of religious practices and beliefs and the place religious traditions have in a complex, globalized world	https://worldreligions.as.uky.edu/	CLA 191/HIS 191: Christianity, Culture, and Society: A Historical Introduction

Iowa State University (IO)	Public, 4 year, 30,708 (1108 online)	Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies	Religion and pop culture. Environmental ethics. Moral problems in medicine. In Iowa State’s Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, you’ll discover some of the university’s most thought-provoking courses... build the research, analytical writing, critical thinking , and problem-solving skills sought by employers from every industry – and prepare you to make a difference in the world.	https://philrls.iastate.edu/	Religion and Popular Culture: Popular culture is awash with gods, sacred figures, cults, myths, and rituals. Introduction to cultural representations of diverse religions and how popular culture can function like a religion. Focus on video games, board games, and film. Religion and Society: Religion as a human construction, institution, activity, and identity . Connections between religion and other social institutions and processes. Religion, Law and Justice: A study of the role of religion in law and justice with a focus on the United States. Examines the history of religious freedom, key contemporary legal cases, and how religious-oriented justice movements engage ethics and the law. Catholic Social Thought: Examines biblical roots of and major developments in Catholic social thought. Contemporary issues such as human rights, economic justice, the environment, and war and peace will be treated using principles of Catholic ethics, social analysis , official church documents, and contributions of notable theologians and activists.
Oregon State University (OR)	Public, 4 year, 33,193 (10,888 online)	Religious Studies	Courses emphasize skills in critical thinking, argumentative and expository writing, cultural literacy, citizenship, and global diversity. SLOs: Critical Thinking Skills : Acquire and further develop core humanities skills of critical thinking, textual analysis, expository and persuasive writing, and organized research, that displays academic knowledge of religious studies. Citizenship Skills : Articulate the roles of religiosity in a secular democratic society and cultivate characteristics of engaged citizenship. Global Literacy Skills : Demonstrate sufficient familiarity with three classical world religions, including knowledge of at least one religious cultural tradition outside of European/American culture. Methodological Skills : Utilize various disciplinary approaches – historical, literary, philosophical, religious, ethical – to articulate the concept and meaning of “religion” and the nature of its academic study. Problem-Solving Skills : Apply scholarly methods to understand how religious communities address concrete issues such as environment, gender, violence, and secularity.	https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/shpr/religion/religious-studies-academic-programs ; https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/shpr/religion/learning-outcomes	*QUESTS FOR MEANING: WORLD RELIGIONS; *RELIGIOUS ETHICS AND MORAL PROBLEMS *UNITED STATES RELIGION AND SOCIAL REFORM *WORLD VIEWS AND ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES
University of Wisconsin, Madison (WI)	Public, 4 year, 47,016 (1459 online)	Religious Studies	understand the many roles that religion plays in human life ...Religious studies can also engage a variety of professional disciplines in analysis of how religion functions in economic, educational or political contexts, healthcare and scientific research, to name some examples. Some ways of studying religion emphasize understanding religions on their own terms, other ways use comparative methods to discern differences and similarities between religions. Students of religion also study ways that people use religious resources to make meaning outside the boundaries of religious institutions and identities . Above all, the field of religious studies requires a willingness to explore different ways of interpreting human life and diligent effort to develop understanding of how religious ideas, symbols, rituals and spaces serve as resources for people in a variety of contexts as they make sense of and live out their lives in the world . Thus, religious studies provides important preparation for thinking, communicating and functioning professionally and personally in a complex, multidimensional world .	https://guide.wisc.edu/courses/relig_st/ ; https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/letters-science/religious-studies/religious-studies-bs/	RELIG ST 102 — EXPLORING RELIGION IN SICKNESS AND HEALTH: It asks questions such as, How do religious peoples understand and live in sickness and health? How do people connect physical well-being to spiritual well-being? Medicine to meaning-making ? How does looking at religion in sickness and health provide insight into its roles in a variety of cultures and contexts, globally and locally? How do health and religion connect particularly in situations of social marginalization and immigration? How does religion impact understandings of health and sickness beyond the borders of specific religious communities? RELIG ST 201 — RELIGION IN/AND EVERYDAY LANGUAGE: An introduction to the study of religious language and the role of religion in everyday language . Through discourse analytical and linguistic ethnographic tools, explore ritual speech and magic, prayer, song, sermons, conversation, social media, etc., across several religious traditions. RELIG ST/ENVIR ST 270 — THE ENVIRONMENT: RELIGION & ETHICS: What are sources on which members of religious communities draw in order to understand and address environmental change? Explores how religious persons and communities confront global environmental questions and challenges today , with case studies drawn from culturally and religiously plural societies such as India and Indonesia. Introducing diverse varieties of Christianity, Islam, and Hindu and Buddhist systems, gives overview of some approaches in the environmental humanities related to philosophy, history, sociology and anthropology, and ethics.

University of Arizona (AR)	Public, 4 year, 48,274 (8727 online)	Religious Studies	<p>Religion is central to the human experience.</p> <p>Religion has been a central force in world history, and it continues to play a powerful role in the human experience. The dynamic traditions of world religions, the role of religion in global politics, the relationship of religion and science, and the religious dimensions of art and culture, are among the many issues that draw students to the study of religion at the University of Arizona... The Religious Studies major provides students with a broad understanding of human diversity, the complexities of social and cultural systems of thought, and the human pursuit of meaning. Combined with core academic skills in written and oral communication, the Religious Studies major prepares students to become independent thinkers and problem solvers in the twenty-first century. Mission: To teach twenty-first century skills in religious literacy, intercultural competence, and critical thinking for thriving in a globalized world.</p>	https://religion.arizona.edu/	<p>RELI 150B1 – Religion and Popular Culture</p> <p>This course introduces the study of religion and popular culture. It explores how religion is represented in popular cultural forms, and how social conceptions of "religion" and "popular culture" change over time. Students will examine how differing definitions of religion, culture, and taste intersect with historical and contemporary categories of class, gender, ethnicity, and race. RELI 211 – Life After Death in World Religions and Philosophies: This course focuses on one Big Question: "How do afterlife beliefs affect the way we live?" It builds connections among the humanities [Religious Studies and Philosophy], the social sciences [Anthropology, Psychology, and Law], and the natural sciences [Medicine] to explore the ways in which religious afterlife beliefs are approached from multiple disciplinary perspectives. Students will analyze a variety of religious afterlife beliefs through case studies, problem-based assignments, and reading/writing genres from the six disciplinary perspectives in order to tackle the Big Question as it relates to their personal, academic, and/or career aspirations. RELI 336 – Spirituality, Psychology, and the Mind Ever wonder why you believe what you believe? Ever been puzzled as to why other people believe such outrageous things? Spirituality, Psychology, and Mind (SPM) investigates the nature of beliefs and practices from a multidisciplinary perspective. We will explore different ways of studying and understanding religious beliefs and spirituality through psychological, sociological, biological, philosophical, and humanist lenses. This course aims to build connections between different ways of knowing to foster critical thinking and perspective-taking.</p>
University of South Florida (FL)	Public, 4 year, 49,708 (9813 online)	Department of Religious Studies	<p>Write Clearly. Speak Thoughtfully. Think Critically. Join Religious Studies. Students who take our courses gain a thorough knowledge of, and appreciation for, various religions and their pervasive and multifaceted role in shaping world history, literature, art, culture, politics, and economics. Such knowledge and appreciation are essential for informed citizenship in our increasingly globalized world...Skills: Critical thinking, reading, writing, and speaking; The ability to evaluate different methods of conducting research.; Literacy about various religious and ethical traditions.; The ability to work effectively and collaboratively with people of different ages, genders, races, ethnicities, nationalities, cultures, religions, and sexual orientations.; The ability to work in teams and to exercise leadership.</p>	<p>https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/departments/religious-studies/index.aspx; https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/departments/religious-studies/undergraduate/index.aspx; https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/departments/religious-studies/undergraduate/why-religious-studies.aspx</p>	REL 2166 - Introduction to Religion and Ecology; REL 3063 - Religion and Social Justice
University of Washington, Seattle Campus (WA)	Public, 4 year, 52,434 (1336 online)	Comparative Religion Program	The comparative religion major introduces students to broad theoretical issues in the academic study of religion, and encourages them to explore these issues through mastering details of the textual canons, historical traditions, social contexts, and cultural forms of religion	<p>https://jsis.washington.edu/programs/undergraduate/comparative-religion/?_gl=1*1qfo2pk*_gcl_au*ODAYNDezNjQ0LjE3NDMwNDU0NzA.#track-social</p>	The Making of the Twenty-first Century; Religion, Identity and Cultural Pluralism; Israel: Dynamic Society and Global Flashpoint; Religion, Violence and Peace: Patterns Across Time & Tradition; Comparative Study of Death;
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (IL)	Public, 4 year, 56,607 (11,822 online)	Department of Religion	Religion impacts us all; John Kerry: 'We ignore the global impact of religion at our peril';	<p>https://religion.illinois.edu/academics/undergraduate-programs/undergraduate-major-and-minor-requirements</p>	Religion and Society in the West: Introduction to classic writers and texts in Western religious and social thought from antiquity to the Enlightenment, with emphasis on their social and historical contexts; Philosophy of Religion
Ohio State University, Main Campus (OH)	Public, 4 year, 61,677 (5186 online)	Center for the Study of Religion	Our work at Ohio State emphasizes the dynamic aspects of religious systems and the importance of studying them within carefully nuanced understandings of the larger social and cultural contexts in which they exist. We seek to understand the sympiosis that exists between religions and other social and cultural systems , and view religion as an embedded phenomenon, one that cannot be studied apart from its surroundings.	<p>https://religion.osu.edu/courses/religious-studies-major; https://religion.osu.edu/#:~:text=Welcome%20to%20The%20Center%20for,contexts%20in%20which%20they%20exist.</p>	COMPSTD 4822: Native American Identity; JEWSHST 2201: Introduction to Jewish Culture, Thought, and Practice; RELSTDS 4873: Contemporary Religious Movements in Global Context (cross-listed as INTSTDS 4873); AFAMST 4342: Religion, Meaning, and Knowledge in Africa (cross-listed as RELSTDS 4342); RELSTDS 3678: Religion and American Culture;

Texas A&M University, College Station (TX)	Public, 4 year, 72,530 (3374 online)	Religious Studies Minor in Department of Global Languages and Cultures	Explore the many ways people experience and articulate the sacred through the minor in religious studies. You'll gain perspective on the complexity of religious thought and practices in world cultures. This minor will help you understand the significance of religion at individual, interpersonal, social and cultural level. Skills: The religious studies minor emphasizes several skills that are important to success in the workplace and as a citizen of the world: Critical thinking, Problem solving, Cultural understanding, Written, oral and visual communication.	https://artsci.tamu.edu/global-lang-cultures/academics/undergraduate/minors/religious-studies-minor.html ; https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/course-descriptions/rels/	RELS 200 Religions of the World; RELS 202 Religion in America; RELS 257/COMM 257 Communication, Religion and the Arts; RELS 312 Contemplation in the Modern World; RELS 350 Religions, Utopias, and Happiness; RELS 367 Christianity and American Identity;
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