African Religions  We will explore indigenous, traditional, and contemporary African religious expressions and belief systems, seeking insight into the reasoning, practices and expressions of African religions. Finally, we will explore the interface between African religions and gender, modernity, and Islam & Christianity.

IRST 281-01  MWF 11–11:50  Fr Uzukwu

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam  This course will familiarize you with basic history, teachings, and practices of the three Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and acquaint you with knowledge and skill necessary for healthy and enduring dialogue between peoples of these different faith traditions.

IRST 283-01  TR 10:50–12:05  Dr Iwuchukwu

Medieval Philosophy  A sampling of Christian and Islamic thought from late antiquity through the 13th century, with emphasis on the continuity, development, and fruitful interplay of the Platonic and Aristotelian traditions. We will weigh the difficulty of assimilating this complex pagan heritage within the context of revealed religion and consider how medieval thinkers worked toward a solution in connection with such themes as knowledge, God’s existence, the problem of evil, the relation between divine and natural causes, and the soul.

IRST 301-01  MWF 11–11:50  Dr Bonin

Terrorism  Transnational violence perpetrated by non-state actors against civilians has become the most pressing security issue in the modern era. This sort of violence—terrorism—is studied here in all its facets: motivations, organization, funding, tactics and goals. Kinetic as well as soft-power counter-terror strategies are reviewed from the policy, legal, and moral perspectives, among others.

IRST 407-01  R 6–8:40  Fr Sawicki

SOME OTHER COURSES WE TEACH

Native American Philosophy
The Jewish Experience in America
The Politics of Immigration
Thomas Aquinas
Religious Diversity and Dialogue
Zen Philosophy
Sociology of Religion
Islamic Philosophy
Comparative Theology

CONTACT US

IRST is directed by Dr Marinus Iwuchukwu (Theology; iwuchukwum@duq.edu). Dr Gita Maharaja (McAnulty College; maharaja@duq.edu) assists the program with advising.
WHY INTERRELIGIOUS STUDIES?

Whatever your field or your career path, and whether in your professional or your personal life, you’ll inhabit a world of increasing religious diversity—and religions, as forms of human community, are at least as important as race, ethnicity, and nationality. Join us in coming to understand this diversity and learning how to foster healthy, peaceful, and mutually enriching relations among religions.

We offer a minor open to all undergraduates across the University, designed to equip you to work for, with, or on behalf of employers, colleagues, clients, customers, students, or patients of different religious persuasions.

REQUIREMENTS

Students of Interreligious Studies take 15 credits from at least two but preferably three disciplines. You may earn three of your 15 credits through an internship with one of our community partners. Six of the credits should be earned in two of the following:

- IRST/THED 203 Hinduism and Buddhism
- IRST/THED 264 Religion & Global Conflict
- IRST/THED 283 Judaism, Christianity and Islam
- IRST/THED 325 Religious Diversity and Dialogue
- IRST/THED 202-01 W 6–8:40 Dr Vasko
- IRST/THED 210c-02 TR 10:50–12:05 Dr D. Scheid
- IRST/THED 232-02 MWF 1–1:50 Dr Baird
- IRST 260c-01 TR 9:25–10:40 Dr Adams
- IRST 264-01 TR 9:25–10:40 Dr A. Scheid

COURSES OFFERED IN FALL 2021

Christina, Embodiment, & Violence  We will examine the writings and experiences of persons in the Christian tradition, with particular attention to religious justifications for violence and discrimination and to the role that theology and faith communities have played in conditioning and resisting violence here and abroad. One challenge is understanding that violence is often culturally constructed, condoned, and even supported. We will try to untangle the ways in which race, class, gender, and imperialism work together to perpetuate violence against marginalized persons and communities. Such investigation necessitates careful consideration of the dynamics of power and privilege, accompanied by critical awareness of our own place within the existing hierarchies in the U.S.

Psychology, Religion, & Spirituality  An exploration of psychological perspectives on religious experiences, beliefs, and practices. The course will consider religious/spiritual approaches to phenomena such as meaning-making, self and others, consciousness, relationship, love, suffering, death, faith, reason, Spirit/God/Mystery (by whatever name), socio-political ramifications of doctrine, social engagement and justice, the natural world, meditative/contemplative practices, and personal and cultural transformation.

Buddhist–Christian Dialogue  We will explore some key reasons for and approaches to Buddhist–Christian dialogue, with emphasis on Zen Buddhism and Catholic Christianity. After a brief introduction to each religious tradition and to their founders, Buddha and Jesus, we will turn to contemporary figures and what Buddhists and Christians have learned from each other through dialogue. There will be a particular focus on @ meditative practices and @ addressing climate change. We will partner with the Zen Center of Pittsburgh and engage regularly in various meditations during class.

Religion & Global Conflict  A foundation in religious ethics related to conflict and its resolution, exploring the ways religion can motivate both violence and peace-building. We will examine the teachings of Christianity and Islam on warfare, and address major religions as well as indigenous traditional religious practices on post-conflict reconciliation, peace-building and conflict resolution. We will look at present and past conflicts involving Nigeria, Uganda, South Africa, the Philippines, India, the Middle East, Europe, and the U.S.

Faith and Atheism  An examination of the claims which atheists make against faith and the response made by believers to these arguments.