



Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology

RHIB32, History of Religions: A Historical and Thematic Introduction, 7.5 credits

Religionshistoria: En historisk och tematisk introduktion, 7,5 högskolepoäng
First Cycle / Grundnivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by The Pro Dean of First and Second Cycle Studies at The Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology on 2026-06-08 (U 2026/397). The syllabus comes into effect 2026-09-01 and is valid from the spring semester 2027.

General information

The course is offered as a freestanding course. It can be included in a first or second cycle degree.

Language of instruction: Swedish and English
Elements in other Scandinavian languages may occur.

Main field of study *Specialisation*

History of Religions G1F, First cycle, has less than 60 credits in first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, students shall be able to

Knowledge and understanding

- demonstrate a broad understanding of the emergence and development of the academic discipline History of Religions,
- identify and describe central scholarly positions and changes in approaches to the study of religion,
- account for how the development of new methods has influenced the formation of History of Religions as an academic discipline,

Competence and skills

- independently discuss and analyze connections between key stages in the development of the discipline History of Religions,
- apply basic theoretical perspectives to the history of Religious Studies,

Judgement and approach

- discuss and take a basic critical position on different theoretical approaches within the academic study of religion,
- evaluate and critically reflect on the emergence of the academic discipline History of Religions in relation to gender and minority issues.

Course content

The course provides a historical overview of the academic discipline History of Religions. Through thematic studies in the history of the discipline and close engagement with classical works, students become acquainted with important stages in the emergence and development of the field. The historical overview is approached through close readings of historical and contemporary studies of ancient religions – for example Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman religion – as well as the religions of minorities and Indigenous peoples, such as African, Native American, or Sámi religions. Students are introduced to, and invited to critically engage with, central debates that have shaped the academic study of religion and the development of the discipline. The course applies a range of critical perspectives – including postcolonial, gender-critical, and historical-critical approaches – and provides a broad introduction to methods and theories in History of Religions.

Course design

The teaching consists of lectures and seminars.

Assessment

The assessment is based on a written take-home exam.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

Grades

Grading scale includes the grades: Fail, Pass, Pass with distinction

For a grade of Pass on the whole course, the student must have been awarded a grade of Pass for the written take-home exam. For a grade of Pass with distinction on the whole course, the student must have been awarded a grade of Pass with distinction for the written take-home exam.

Entry requirements

General entry requirements and successful completion of at least 15 credits within Religious Studies: Level 1 (REVA10/ÄRED11), of which at least 10 credits must consist of Modules 2 and 4. Alternatively, general eligibility and successful completion of at least 15 credits within Islamic Studies: Level 1 (ISLA11) or at least 15 credits within

Jewish Studies: Level 1 (JUDA12/JUDA13), or the equivalent.

Further information

- The course is offered at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University.
- The course is also included as module 1 of RHIB14, History of Religions: Level 2.
- The credits allocated for course content that in whole or in part is commensurate with another course can only be credited once for a degree.