

ÄRED12, Religious Education 2, 30 credits

Religionskunskap 2, 30 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 included in the Teacher Education Programme at Lund University.

Language of instruction: Swedish

Instruction is primarily in Swedish, but teaching in English may occur.

Main field of study *Specialisation*

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

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, the student shall be able to

Knowledge and understanding

- account for different ways to describe, analyse and take a position on ethical problems and on learning and teaching about this,
- account for the importance of identity, its different dimensions and how it is shaped and developed by different factors,
- account for the content of school syllabi with regard to the parts of religious education that the course deals with,
- account for didactic models and concepts that can be used to reflect on how the course's different themes can be addressed in school,
- 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,
- demonstrate a broad understanding of the social functions and political significance of religions in historical and contemporary contexts in relation to current theoretical perspectives,
- account for and provide examples of historical and contemporary expressions of the relationship between politics and religion in relation to modernization, globalization, gender relations, and migration,
- account for discussions concerning the concepts of religion and politics in different historical and social contexts,
- explain the characteristics of an academic paper in relation to other genres and forms of writing, such as journalistic reporting or political opinion pieces,

Competence and skills

- discuss and critically assess ethical theories,
- discuss different modes of action based on ethical concepts and theories,
- compare and analyse different theories about identity,
- use didactic concepts and adapt didactic models to the different areas and learning outcomes covered in the course,
- use a didactic analysis to independently design content and working methods in religious instruction in relation to groups' and individuals' learning as well as in relation to school policy documents
- 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,
- compare selected influential religio-political movements,
- critically analyze debates concerning religion and politics in a multi-religious and multicultural Europe, with particular focus on Sweden,
- analyze how religious traditions and historical events have been used to legitimize political and/or ideological positions in historical and contemporary contexts,
- produce a short academic paper on the theme of religion and spirituality,
- formulate a research problem with a clear aim and research question,
- use terminology and perspectives from Religious Studies in relation to religiosity and spirituality,
- identify, select, and critically evaluate scholarly literature in the field,
- present and discuss the subject in writing using correct and academically appropriate language,
- use an academically accepted system for citations, references, and bibliographies,

Judgement and approach

- take informed positions on practical ethical problems,
- express a specialised awareness about the meanings created in encounters between the religious education teacher and pupil with regard to questions raised in religious education, especially ethical issues and issues of identity,
- express the importance of knowledge, respect and perceptiveness in meetings with pupils with different cultural backgrounds and perspectives on life,
- assess and reflect on their own teaching in religion by relating it to their intentions, the pupils' learning and policy documents,
- 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,
- critically evaluate claims and representations concerning religion and politics in contemporary media and public debate,
- critically engage with theoretical perspectives on religious change, modernization, colonialism, globalization, and migration,
- critically engage with the content of religio-political statements,
- distinguish between applying a scholarly perspective and an insider religious perspective to a topic within religion and spirituality.

Course content

The course consists of four modules:

1. Ethics, Identity and Education, 7.5 credits
2. History of Religions: A Historical and Thematic Introduction, 7.5 credits
3. The Political Power of Religion in Past and Present, 7.5 credits
4. Religion, Spirituality, and Academic Writing, 7.5 credits

Module 1 consists of two components: 1. Ethics didactics and 2. Didactic perspectives on identity. In the module, ethical problems and views and questions about identity are analyzed and discussed. Subject didactics is integrated in all components with reflection, discussion, and exercises that address the roles of teacher and pupil, learning outcomes, learning, teaching, and assessment.

Module 2 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 module 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.

Module 3 examines the interplay between religion and politics in relation to processes of social change in historical and contemporary contexts. Drawing on critical and contextual perspectives, the module analyzes European and global experiences of the political dynamics of religion, as well as religion as a theme in contemporary public debates and political practices. What do we mean by "religion" and "politics", and how are these related to each other both as concepts and as social phenomena? How do they relate to historical and contemporary processes such as Hellenization, state formation, imperialism, the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, modernization, colonialism, nationalism, globalization, transnational migration, postmodernity, and populism? What does "political religion" mean in different forms and contexts, and what issues are connected to discussions of religious extremism and fundamentalism? A particular focus of the module is Swedish society as an arena for diverse religious and political interests, both historically and in the present, in relation to discussions of religio-cultural diversity, marginalization, and racism.

Module 4 trains students to undertake an independent assignment to be presented in the form of a short academic paper. The module aims to introduce and develop academic writing skills. It begins with an introduction to terminology and perspectives used within the study of religion to understand different forms of religiosity and spirituality.

Course design

The teaching of Module 1 consists of lectures and seminars. Attendance at the module's seminars (around six) is compulsory. Some absence can be compensated for in writing according to the teacher's instructions. If absence exceeds 20 % of the seminars in the course, students may compensate for it through attendance at the same course component next time the course is offered.

The teaching of Module 2 consists of lectures and seminars.

The teaching of Module 3 consists of lectures and seminars.

The teaching of Module 4 consists of lectures and supervision.

Assessment

Module 1 is assessed through two individual written assignments.

Module 2 is assessed through a written take-home exam.

Module 3: The assessment is based on three written assignments and oral presentations of them at three seminars.

Module 4: The assessment is based on a minor paper of approximately 40,000 characters, including spaces, a cover sheet, table of contents, and bibliography, and on a final defence seminar.

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

Module 1: The grades awarded for the first written assignment are Pass or Fail. The grades awarded for the second written assignment are Fail, Pass or Pass with distinction. For a grade of Pass, the student must have been awarded at least the grade of Pass on both assignments. For a grade of Pass with distinction, the student must also have been awarded the grade of Pass with distinction on the second assignment.

Module 2: For a grade of Pass on the module, 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 module, the student must have been awarded a grade of Pass with distinction for the written take-home exam.

Module 3: For a grade of Pass on the module, the student must have been awarded a grade of Pass for all written assignments. For a grade of Pass with distinction on the module, the student must also have been awarded a grade of Pass with distinction for at least two of the written assignments.

Module 4: For a grade of Pass on the module, the student must have been awarded a grade of Pass for the paper. For a grade of Pass with distinction on the module, the student must have been awarded a grade of Pass with distinction for the paper.

For the grade of Pass on the course, students must have been awarded at least the grade of Pass on all modules. For the grade of Pass with distinction on the course, the student must also have been awarded this grade on at least two of the modules.

Entry requirements

To be admitted to the course, students must have passed at least 15 credits of Religious Education 1 (ÄRED11) or the equivalent.

Further information

- The course is offered at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University.
- The course replaces ÄRED02, Religious Education 2.
- The number of credits allocated for course content that is shared in whole or in part with another course can only be credited once for a degree.