



## Course syllabus

Faculty Board of Humanities and Social Sciences  
School of Cultural Sciences

1RK100 Religionsvetenskap, allmän kurs I, 30 högskolepoäng  
The Study of Religions, general course I, 30 credits

**Main field of study**

Religious Studies

**Subject Group**

Religious Studies

**Level of classification**

First Level

**Progression**

GIN

**Date of Ratification**

Approved by the Board of the School of Cultural Sciences 2009-11-02

Revised 2010-08-09. English translation added.

The course syllabus is valid from spring semester 2011

**Prerequisites**

General entry requirements.

### Expected learning outcomes

Overall expected learning outcomes for the entire course:

On completion of the course, students should be able to:

- differentiate between a scientific outlook on religion and a confessional-religious perspective, and demonstrate knowledge, both verbally and in writing, in a way that emphasizes religions' diversity and change over time;
- demonstrate knowledge of general concepts, dogmas, rituals, texts and ideohistorical trends (both past and present) within a range of religious traditions;
- identify problems, describe general methods, and apply basic terminology;
- differentiate between the different roles religion plays on society, group and individual levels (both past and present), with regard to ecological, economical, social and cultural conditions;
- demonstrate knowledge of religious tendencies, as well as some alternative philosophies to religion, in a modern, globalised world.

Expected learning outcomes for Module 1, *Introduction to the study of religion*

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- briefly account for, and compare, the different ways in which to scientifically

study religion and, in this respect, differentiate between a scientific-humanistic outlook on religion and a confessional-religious perspective;

- briefly account for the essential elements of Norse Paganism, for example, myths, rituals and ideologies, and relate them to social, economical and cultural conditions in Norse Pagan societies;
- apply simpler methods of interpretation to images and texts found in religious material, and conduct source criticism of religious material;
- through practical exercises, apply critical thinking and gender perspectives to religious phenomena and statements;

#### Expected learning outcomes for module 2, *Religions in Asia*

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- from a scientifically critical approach, briefly account for general concepts, central texts, prominent religious figures, dogmas, institutions and rituals (both past and present) within Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Chinese religion;
- demonstrate, both verbally and in writing, an awareness of the diversity of religious expressions and historical variability within Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Chinese religion (both past and present);
- discuss and evaluate (either verbally or in writing) literary, journalistic and popular-cultural works that are connected to Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Chinese religion;
- demonstrate the ability to critically examine, evaluate and discuss the course content and course literature from a gender perspective.

#### Expected learning outcomes for module 3, *Judaism, Christianity and Islam*

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- from a scientifically critical approach, briefly account for general concepts, central texts, prominent religious figures, dogmas, institutions and rituals (both past and present) within Judaism, Christianity and Islam;
- demonstrate, both verbally and in writing, an awareness of the diversity of religious expressions and historical variability within Judaism, Christianity and Islam (both past and present);
- discuss and evaluate (either verbally or in writing) literary, journalistic and popular-cultural works that are connected to Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

#### Expected learning outcomes for module 4, *Religions in the contemporary world*

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- demonstrate brief knowledge of theories concerning the conditions and roles of religions in a modern, globalised world;
- demonstrate knowledge of ideological alternatives to religion in modern times;
- demonstrate knowledge of key concepts and phenomena within new spiritual movements;
- conduct a small field research and orally present the results to others;

## Content

The course contains the following modules (mandatory elements will be specified by the teacher):

### ***Module 1 Introduction to the study of religions 4.5 credits***

Religious Studies is an interdisciplinary subject in which humanistic and scientific, as well as social scientific, perspectives are used. The course provides an introductory orientation to these perspectives. General concepts are introduced and applied in the example Norse Paganism.

### ***Module 2 Religions in Asia 7.5 credits***

This module concerns the origins of Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Chinese religion, along with their historical development to the present day. Theological conceptions, institutions and ritual acts are dealt with, and religious traditions and institutional changes are analyzed. Particular emphasis is placed on the diversity and variation of religions.

### ***Module 3 Judaism, Christianity and Islam 12 credits***

This module concerns the origins of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, along with their historical development to the present day. Theological conceptions, institutions and ritual acts are dealt with. Changes in religious traditions and institutions are analyzed. Particular emphasis is placed on the diversity and variation of religions.

### ***Module 4 Religions in the contemporary world 6 credits***

This module deals with the conditions for articulating religious beliefs, exercising religious acts and organizing religious groups in a modern, secular society. Phenomena such as religious modernism, fundamentalism and various forms of politicized religion are discussed.

New religions in today's society are analyzed and discussed against the backdrop of secularization theories. This module also deals with non-religious ideologies.

### **Type of Instruction**

Teaching is in the form of lectures, group work, "blended learning" and seminars. The teacher will determine which components of the course are mandatory. Written and/or oral assignments, as well as study visits, are a part of the course.

### **Examination**

The course is assessed with the grades Fail (U), Pass (G) or Pass with Distinction (VG).

In order to receive the grade of Pass, the expected learning outcomes must be achieved. In order to receive a final grade of Pass with Distinction for the entire course, the student must receive the grade of Pass with Distinction in at least 19 of the 30 higher education credits.

Students at Linnaeus University are entitled to have the course grade translated into the 7-step ECTS scale. A request to have the grades translated must be made to the teacher at the start of the course.

Examination forms that may occur are oral and written examinations, continual evaluation during the course, oral presentations and written assignments. Students who do not turn in examination assignments will receive the grade of Fail.

For students who fail to earn a Pass grade at the first examination opportunity, a maximum of four additional examination opportunities will be provided.

### **Course Evaluation**

Teaching is continually evaluated throughout the semester. Course evaluation is carried out at the end of the course. The evaluation is compiled, reviewed with the students and archived according to departmental protocol.

### **Required Reading and Additional Study Material**

#### ***List of references Module 1 - Introduction to the study of religions 4.5 credits***

Klausen, Søren Harnow. *Vad är vetenskap*. Natur och kultur. (chapters 2-6) 180 pages. 2006.

Steinsland, Gro. *Fornnordisk religion*. Natur och kultur. 2007 (selected ca 250 pages).

Svensson, Jonas & Stefan Arvidsson (red.). *Människor och makter. En introduktion till religionsvetenskap*. Högskolan i Halmstad. 200 pages. 2010.

Articles and stencilmaterial. 50 pages

***List of references Module 2 - Religions in Asia 7.5 credits***

Obligatory reading

Adler, Joseph A. *Chinese religion*. Routledge, 128 pages. Latest edition.

Hellman, Eva. *Hinduiska gudinnor och kvinnor. En introduktion*. Nya Doxa. 80 pages. Latest edition.

Jacobsen, Knut. *Buddhism. Kultur, historia, tradition*. Natur & Kultur, 318 pages. Latest edition.

Jacobsen, Knut. *Hinduismen. Historia, tradition och mångfald*. Natur & Kultur, 393 pages. Latest edition.

Stausberg, Michael. *Zarathustra och zoroastrismen*. Nya Doxa, 140 pages. Latest edition.

Documents

Links to onlinematerial will be assigned by the teacher

Literature for discussion literature/education and outreach

Kerouac, Jack. *Dharma Bums*. Penguin. 224 pages. Latest edition.

O'Yeah, Zac. *Guru. En resa i underlandet*. Ordfront. 375 pages. Latest edition.

Articles in accordance with the teacher's instruction

***List of references Module 3 - Judaism, Christianity and Islam 12 credits***

Obligatory reading

Ford, David F., *Theology: a very short introduction*, Reissue, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, Latest edition

Groth, Bente. *Judendomen. Kultur, historia, tradition*. Natur & Kultur. 344 pages. Latest edition.

Hjärpe, Jan. (red.) *99 frågor om islam och något färre svar* Leopard. 173 pages. Latest edition.

Hjärpe, Jan. *Islam – lära och livsmönster*. Norstedts Förlag. 136 pages. Latest edition.

Olivestam, Carl E. *Från kyrka till wellbeing. Handbok i kyrkokunskap*. Student literature. Latest edition (selected ca 200 pages).

Otterbeck, Jonas, *Samtidsislam: unga muslimer i Malmö och Köpenhamn*, Carlsson, Stockholm, 229 pages. Latest edition.

Rasmussen, Tarald & Einar Thomassen. *Kristendomen. En historisk introduktion*. Artos & Norma bokförlag AB. Latest edition (selected ca 200 pages).

Westerlund, David, *Islam eller kristendom?: nutida polemik och konflikter bland kristna och muslimer*, 1. uppl., Dialogos, 159 pages, Latest edition.

Documents

*Bibel 2000. Bibelkommissionens översättning*. Liber (or other publishers). Latest edition. On the net: bibeln.se.

*Koranens budskap*. M.K Bernströms översättning. Proprius förlag AB. Latest edition.  
On the net:  
www.koranensbudskap.se

Literature for discussion literature/education and outreach

Enquist, Per Olov. *Lewis resa*. Norstedts Förlag. 597 pages. Latest edition.

Froman, Ingmari *Islam, brudar och paljetter*, Ordfront, 209 pages. Latest edition.

Gardell, Jonas. *Om Jesus*. Norstedts Förlag. 368 pages. Latest edition.

Solomin, Nina. *OK, amen. Om kärlek och fientlighet i chassidernas New York*. Wahlström & Widstrand. 325 pages. Latest edition.

Articles in accordance with the teacher's instruction

***List of references Module 4 - Religions in the contemporary world 6 credits***

Hammer, Olav. *På spaning efter helheten – New Age en ny folktro?* Wahlström och Widstrand, 389 pages. Latest edition.

Klausen, Søren Harnow. *Vad är vetenskap?* Natur och kultur. Latest edition.  
(Chapters 1 and 7. 63 pages)

Raudvere, Catharina & Olav Hammer (red.) *Med gudomlig auktoritet. Om religionens kraft i politiken*. Makadam. 271 pages. Latest edition.

Svanberg, Ingvar & David Westerlund (red.) *Religion i Sverige*. Dialogos. Latest edition (selected ca 200 pages)

Documents

Dawkins, Richard. *Illusionen om Gud*. Pocketförlaget. 412 pages. Latest edition.

Hammar, KG & Ami Lönnroth. *Jag har inte sanningen, jag söker den*. Ordfront. 208 pages. Latest edition.

Marx, Karl & Fredrich Engels. *Kommunistiska manifestet*. Nixon. 108 pages. Latest edition.

Articles in accordance with the teacher's instruction. Ca 50s.