



## Course syllabus

Faculty of Arts and Humanities  
Department 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 2009-11-02

Revised 2016-03-22 by Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

The course syllabus is valid from autumn semester 2016

### **Prerequisites**

General entry requirements.

## Objectives

Overall intended learning outcomes for the course as a whole:

After completing the course, the student should be able to:

- distinguish a scientific approach to religions from a confessional perspective and in this regard demonstrate an awareness of a perspective that accentuates the diversity and development of religions, in speech and in writing;
- account for basic concepts, dogmas, rituals, texts and ideas in history and in present times within a selection of religious traditions;
- identify problems, describe some basic methods, and apply basic terminology within religious studies;
- distinguish the different roles of religions on the levels of society, groups and individuals in history and present times, with regard to environmental, economic, social and cultural conditions;
- account for some religious tendencies and some ideological alternatives to religion in a modern, globalised world.

Intended learning outcomes for Module 1, *The study of religions – an introduction*

After completing the module, the student should be able to:

- in general terms account for and compare different scientific approaches to religious studies and discern a humanistic scientific approach to religions from a confessional perspective;
- generally account for essential elements in Norse religion and Zoroastrianism, such as myths, rituals and world views, and relate these to social, economic and cultural conditions;
- apply simple methods for interpreting images and texts and critically review religious sources;
- in practical exercises apply critical thinking and a gender perspective on religious phenomena and assertions.

Intended learning outcomes for Module 2, *Asian religions*.

After completing the module, the student should be able to:

- from a scientific critical point of view generally account for basic concepts, central texts, prominent religious figures, dogmas, institutions and rituals in history and present times within Hinduism, Buddhism and China's religions;
- in speech and writing demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of religious manifestations and historical development within Hinduism, Buddhism and China's religions in history and present times;
- analyse parts of religious documents related to Asian religions and discuss their application today;
- discuss and assess works of fiction and journalistic and popular works related to the content of the module;
- demonstrate the ability to critically examine, assess and discuss the course content and course literature from a gender perspective.

Intended learning outcomes for Module 3, *Judaism and Islam*.

After completing the module, the student should be able to:

- from a scientific critical point of view generally account for basic concepts, central texts, prominent religious figures, dogmas, institutions and rituals in history and present times within Judaism and Islam;
- in speech and writing demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of religious manifestations and historical development within Judaism and Islam in history and present times;
- analyse parts of Jewish and Muslim religious documents and discuss their application today;
- discuss and assess works of fiction and journalistic and popular works connected to the content of the module.

Intended learning outcomes for Module 4, *Christianity*.

After completing the module, the student should be able to:

- from a scientific critical point of view generally account for basic concepts, central texts, prominent religious figures, dogmas, institutions and rituals in history and present times within Christianity;
- in speech and writing demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of religious manifestations and historical development within Christianity in history and present times;
- analyse parts of Christian religious documents and discuss their application today;
- discuss and assess works of fiction and journalistic and popular works connected to the content of the module.

Intended learning outcomes for Module 5, *Contemporary religions and ideologies*

After completing the module, the student should be able to:

- generally account for some theories within religious studies regarding the conditions and roles of religions in a modern, globalised world;
- account for some ideological alternatives to religion in modern times;
- account for central concepts and phenomena within new religious movements;
- analyse parts of documents from new religious movements and discuss their application;
- conduct a minor field study and present its results to others orally.

## Content

Religious studies is an interdisciplinary subject in which perspectives from both the humanities and the social sciences are used.

### ***Module 1 The study of religions – an introduction 6 credits***

In this module, basic concepts, methods and theories within religious studies are introduced, and these are applied to Norse religion and Zoroastrianism. Participation in seminars is compulsory.

### ***Module 2 Asian religions 6 credits***

This module provides a general overview of the origins of Hinduism, Buddhism and Chinese religions and their historical developments until today. Theological ideas, institutions and rituals are discussed. Religious traditions and institutional changes are analysed. The diversity and variation of the religions are specifically accentuated. Participation in seminars is compulsory.

### ***Module 3 Judaism and Islam 6 credits***

This module provides a general overview of the origins of Judaism and Islam and their historical developments until today. Theological ideas, institutions and rituals are discussed. Changes in religious traditions and institutions are analysed. The diversity and variation of the religions are specifically accentuated. Participation in seminars is compulsory.

### ***Module 4 Christianity 6 credits***

This module provides a general overview of the origins of Christianity and its historical development until today. Theological ideas, institutions and rituals are discussed. Changes in religious traditions and institutions are analysed. Religious diversity and variation are specifically accentuated. Participation in seminars is compulsory.

### ***Module 5 Contemporary religions and ideologies 6 credits***

This module deals with conditions for formulating religious ideas, practising religious acts and organising religious groups in our modern, secular society.

Phenomena such as religious modernism, fundamentalism and different kinds of politicized religion are discussed. New religious movements in today's society are analysed and discussed in the light of theories of secularization. Modern, non-religious ideologies are also discussed. Participation in seminars is compulsory.

The teacher will inform the students about compulsory parts of the teaching.

## Type of Instruction

Teaching is delivered in the form of lectures, seminars, group work and educational visits.

## 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 student must achieve the objectives. Grading criteria for the grade of Pass with Distinction will be specified when the course starts.

In order to receive the grade of Pass with Distinction on the course as a whole, the student must have received the grade of Pass with Distinction in three of the four modules 2, 3, 4 and 5.

## **Examination**

*Depending on number of students, Module 1 is examined through:*

1. An oral examination in group or a take-home examination.
2. Attendance at seminars.
3. Contributions to discussion fora on topics indicated by the teacher in the online study environment of the course. The contributions are graded.

*Module 2 is examined through:*

1. A written examination.
2. Attendance at seminars.
3. Contributions to discussion fora on topics indicated by the teacher in the online study environment of the course. The contributions are graded.
4. Participation in discussion fora regarding additional literature.

*Module 3 is examined through:*

1. A written examination.
2. Attendance at seminars.
3. Contributions to discussion fora on topics indicated by the teacher in the online study environment of the course. The contributions are graded.
4. Participation in discussion fora regarding additional literature.

*Module 4 is examined through:*

1. A written examination.
2. Attendance at seminars.
3. Contributions to discussion fora on topics indicated by the teacher in the online study environment of the course. The contributions are graded.
4. Participation in discussion fora regarding additional literature.

*Module 5 is examined through:*

1. A take-home examination.
2. Attendance at seminars.
3. Contributions to discussion fora on topics indicated by the teacher in the online study environment of the course. The contributions are graded.

For all modules, absence from seminars must be complemented in writing.

For students who do not pass the first examinations, retake examinations are provided in accordance with local regulations at the university.

## **Course Evaluation**

At the end of the course, a course evaluation is conducted and compiled into a report, which is made available to students. The report is presented to institutional bodies and the programme council concerned, and is archived by the institution responsible for the course.

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

***List of references Module 1 - The study of religions – an introduction 6 credits***

### Required reading

Arvidsson, Stefan. *Varför religionsvetenskap?: en ämnesintroduktion för nya studenter*. Studentlitteratur. 148 p. The latest edition.

Gilhus, Ingvild Sælid & Thomassen, Einar (2011). *Antikens religioner: Mellanösterns*

och Medelhavsområdets religioner. Stockholm: Norstedts. The latest edition.

Klausen, Søren Harnow. *Vad är vetenskap? Natur & kultur*. (chapters 26) 180 p. The latest edition.

Steinsland, Gro. *Fornnordisk religion*. Natur & kultur. The latest edition. (ca 250 p. in selection).

Svensson, Jonas & Stefan Arvidsson (eds.). *Människor och makter. En introduktion till religionsvetenskap*. Halmstad University. 200 p. The latest edition.

#### Documents

Links to online material provided by the teacher

Articles provided by the teacher

### ***List of references Module 2 - Asian religions 6 credits***

#### Required reading

Jacobsen, Knut. *Buddhism. Kultur, historia, tradition*. Natur & Kultur, 318 p. The latest edition.

Jacobsen, Knut. *Hinduismen. Historia, tradition och mångfald*. Natur & Kultur, 393 p. The latest edition.

Poceski, Mario. *Introducing Chinese Religions*. Routledge. Senaste upplagan. eller Poceski, Mario. *Chinese Religions: The Ebook*. Journal of Buddhist Ethics Online Books.

Svanberg, Ingvar & David Westerlund (eds.) *Religion i Sverige*. Dialogos. The latest edition (ca 30 p. in selection)

Articles provided by the teacher.

#### Documents

Links to online material provided by the teacher

#### Works of fiction/popular literature for discussion

Works of fiction (or the equivalent) are chosen in consultation with the teacher.

### ***List of references Module 3 - Judaism and Islam 6 credits***

#### Required reading

Groth, Bente. *Judendomen. Kultur, historia, tradition*. Natur & Kultur. 344 p. The latest edition.

Olsson, Susanne & Simon Sorgenfrei. *Islam: en religionsvetenskaplig introduktion*. Liber. The latest edition.

Otterbeck, Jonas. *Samtidsislam*. Carlssons. Latest edition. 229s.

Svanberg, Ingvar & David Westerlund (eds.) *Religion i Sverige*. Dialogos. The latest edition (ca 40 p. in selection)

#### Documents

*Bibel 2000. Bibelkommissionens översättning*. Liber (or other publisher). The latest edition. Online: bibeln.se.

*Koranens budskap*. M.K Bernström's translation. Proprius förlag AB. The latest edition. Online: [www.koranensbudskap.se](http://www.koranensbudskap.se)

#### Works of fiction/popular literature for discussion

Works of fiction (or the equivalent) are chosen in consultation with the teacher.

Articles provided by the teacher.

#### ***List of references Module 4 - Christianity 6 credits***

##### Required reading

Berntson, Martin, Bertil Nilsson, Cecilia Wejryd. *Kyrka i Sverige: introduktion till svensk kyrkohistoria*. Artos. The latest edition. 410 p.

Ehrman, Bart D. *Did Jesus Exist? The Historical Argument for Jesus of Nazareth*. HarperCollins. 361 p. Latest edition. Selections, ca 200 p. OR Boyarin, Daniel. *The Jewish Gospels: The Story of the Jewish Christ*. The New Press. Latest edition. 200p.

Woodhead, Linda. *Christianity: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press. Latest edition. 130s.

##### Documents

*Bibel 2000. Bibelkommissionens översättning*. Liber (or other publisher). The latest edition. Online: [bibeln.se](http://bibeln.se).

#### Works of fiction/popular literature for discussion

Work of fiction (or the equivalent) is chosen in consultation with the teacher.

Articles provided by the teacher.

##### Additional Study Material

Svanberg, Ingvar & David Westerlund (eds.) *Religion i Sverige*. Dialogos. The latest edition.

#### ***List of references Module 5 - Contemporary religions and ideologies 6 credits***

##### Required reading

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

Klausen, Søren Harnow. *Vad är vetenskap?* Natur & kultur. The latest edition. (Chapters 1 and 7. 63 p.)

Thurfjell, David, *Det gudlösa folket: de postkristna svenskarna och religionen*, Molin & Sorgenfrei Förlag, Stockholm. The latest edition. 295 p.

##### Documents

Dawkins, Richard. *Unweaving the Rainbow*. Houghton Mifflin. Latest edition.

Hammar, KG & Ami Lönnroth. *Jag har inte sanningen, jag söker den*. Ordfront. 208 p. The latest edition.

Marx, Karl & Fredrich Engels. *Kommunistiska manifestet*. Nixon. 108 p. The latest

edition.

Articles provided by the teacher.

Additional study material

Svanberg, Ingvar & David Westerlund (eds.) *Religion i Sverige*. Dialogos. The latest edition (ca 200 p. in selection)