



# Rhodes College

—1848—

## RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Rhodes' Department of Religious Studies promotes the academic study of religion by offering courses that explore the diverse aspects of religious traditions. Particular emphasis is given to the origins, history and relevance of religion in contemporary life. Rhodes students often choose to take courses in Religious Studies in order to investigate areas of personal interest, fulfill Rhodes' basic requirement in humanities and acquire valuable career and interpersonal skills in critical thinking about human problems, ethical awareness and commitment and cultural and religious diversity. Religious Studies majors graduate from Rhodes fully qualified to enter seminary and to prepare for religious vocations. Some graduates have chosen to pursue advanced degrees in religion and to follow academic careers, while others have entered the fields of business, counseling, publishing, social work, law and medicine.

### Curriculum

#### Major:

Bachelor of Arts, Religious Studies

#### Minor Available

Religious studies courses are grouped into three categories: Biblical Studies, Theology and Ethics and History of Religions. A student must complete courses in each of these categories in order to fulfill the requirements of the Religious Studies major: 12 courses are required for a major and seven for a minor. The Department of Religious Studies also encourages students to investigate interdisciplinary majors that allow students the opportunity to design individual programs of study and explore areas of complementary concern. Most of the courses taken to satisfy the college's basic humanities requirement on the Life track are offered in the Department of Religious Studies.

### Faculty

The faculty of the Department of Religious Studies mentor and teach approximately 20 Religious Studies majors per graduating class. These faculty members have a wide range of experience and represent many areas of specialization.

**Stephen R. Haynes**, Professor of Religious Studies; Ph.D., Emory University. Specialties: *Religion and politics, holocaust studies, religion and literature.*

**Stephen L. McKenzie**, Professor of Religious Studies; Th.D. Harvard University. Specialties: *Old Testament, Hebrew.*

**Gail P. C. Streete**, Professor of Religious Studies; Ph.D., Drew University. Specialties: *Biblical studies, classics, women and religion, ascetical theology.*

**Luther Ivory**, Associate Professor of Religious Studies; Ph.D., Emory University. Specialties: *Ethics, M.L. King, Jr., African American religion.*

**John Kaltner**, Associate Professor of Religious Studies; Ph.D., Drew University. Specialties: *Biblical studies, Islam.*

**Mark W. Muesse**, (Chair) Associate Professor of Religious Studies; Ph.D., Harvard University. Specialties: *Theology, world religions; Buddhism and Hinduism.*

**Tom Bremer**, Associate Professor of Religious Studies; Ph.D., Princeton University. Specialties: *History of religion in the Americas.*

**Ryan Byrne**, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies; Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University. Specialties: *Hebrew Bible, archaeology of ancient Israel, Near Eastern studies.*

**Patrick Gray**, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies; Ph.D., Emory University. Specialties: *New Testament, Greco-Roman philosophy.*

**Kendra G. Hotz**, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies; Ph.D., Emory University. Specialty: *Christian theology.*

**Bernadette McNary-Zak**, Associate Professor of Religious Studies; Ph.D., University of Toronto. Specialties: *Early Christianity, Gnostic and Hellenistic thought, asceticism, Catholic studies.*

**Milton C. Moreland**, Associate Professor of Religious Studies; Ph.D., Claremont Graduate University. Specialties: *New Testament, Christian origins, archaeology.*



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**Michelle Voss Roberts**, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies; Ph.D., Emory University. Specialties: *Medieval Christianity, feminist theology, comparative theology, Hinduism.*

**Harry K. Danziger**, Part-time Instructor of Religious Studies; M.A. and Ordination, Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion. Specialty: *Jewish studies.*

**Craig Jordan**, Part-time Instructor of Religious Studies; D.Min., Vanderbilt University. Specialties: *Pastoral counseling, hospital chaplaincy.*

## Faculty Research

Department faculty members are also actively involved in research and publication within the disciplines of Religious Studies. Some recent publications and projects of department members include:

**Thomas Bremer:** *Blessed with Tourists: The Borderlands of Religion and Tourism in San Antonio* (University of North Carolina Press, 2004)

**Patrick Gray:** *Godly Fear: The Epistle to the Hebrews and Greco-Roman Critiques of Superstition* (SBL, 2004); and *Teaching the Bible: Practical Strategies for Classroom Instruction* (SBL, 2005)

**Stephen R. Haynes:** *The Bonhoeffer Phenomenon: Portraits of a Protestant Saint* (Fortress, 2004) and *The Bonhoeffer Legacy: Post-Holocaust Perspectives* (Fortress, 2006)

**John Kaltner:** *Inquiring of Joseph: Getting To Know a Biblical Figure through the Qur'an* (Liturgical Press, 2003) and *Islam: What Non-Muslims Should Know* (Fortress, 2003)

**Steven L. McKenzie:** *How To Read the Bible: History, Prophecy, Literature—Why Modern Readers Need To Know the Difference and What It Means for Faith Today.* (Oxford University Press, 2005)

**Mark W. Muesse:** *The Great World Religions: Hinduism* (The Teaching Company, 2003) and *Religions of the Axial Age* (The Teaching Company, 2007)

**Gail Streete:** *The Strange Woman: Sex and Power in the Bible* (Westminster John Knox, 1997)

## Outside the Classroom

The Department of Religious Studies sponsors supervised learning experiences in the form of internships that Rhodes has established with various Memphis area religious, social and health agencies. Recently, students have participated in internships with social agencies, correctional institutions, churches and hospitals. The department also offers a unique chaplaincy internship program at a local hospital. At Rhodes, most student internships are not paid jobs, but course credit is earned. In addition, the department annually awards the Joseph R. Hyde Award in Religious Studies to a rising senior to allow the student to pursue a Religious Studies project during the summer prior to his or her senior year. Recent winners have pursued research projects in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Middle East. In recent years, students have represented the department by presenting papers at scholarly conferences.

## Graduates

### 58% take full time jobs.

Recent religious studies graduates have taken full-time positions with Teach For America, counseling centers, churches and social agencies.

### 39% pursue graduate degrees.

In the last few years, Rhodes graduates have experienced a 100% acceptance rate into graduate programs of divinity at such institutions as Harvard Divinity School, Yale Divinity School, University of Chicago Divinity School, Vanderbilt, Johns Hopkins, Princeton Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, University of Missouri, Auburn University, Washington University, Union Seminary in Virginia and University of Virginia.

### 3% take positions outside their field of study.

### For more information

Please contact the Department of Religious Studies at (901) 843-3664 or Admissions at 1-800-844-5969. Information is available via the Internet at [www.rhodes.edu](http://www.rhodes.edu).