The Religious Studies Department strongly encourages its students to study abroad through the Education Abroad Program. The study of religion is cultural in content; it shouldn’t be restricted to classrooms and books. Take advantage of one of UCSB’s best opportunities and spend a year in another country. Imagine studying in a country where you can visit sacred places and see rituals being practiced while you study the history and language. With over 130 programs to choose from in more than 35 different countries, the possibilities are vast. Whether you go for a summer, a semester, or a year, you can still plan your courses so that you will graduate on time. What are you waiting for?

**Why study abroad?**

The study of religion should be considered in terms of human experience, experience that varies across time and place. Studying abroad will not only provide you with a unique life experience, it will broaden your perspective, knowledge, and skills necessary to be effective professionally and personally in our rapidly changing global world.

Religious studies majors have the opportunity to study in the places where many of the world’s religions began. You can visit the bodhi tree where Buddha found enlightenment during your semester abroad in Delhi, India. Study the religions of ancient Rome in the ornate rooms of the Palazzo Maffei-Marescotti, a renaissance palace owned by the Vatican in Rome, Italy. Study Shintoism in Japan where you can visit the temples and see the rituals being practiced.

Exposure to other cultures can help students gain new perspectives and achieve a greater understanding of the world in which we live. It is also an opportunity to put one’s critical thinking and reasoning skills to the test in a whole new setting.

**Where should I study abroad?**

Many EAP courses are taught in English, in places as diverse as Denmark, Israel, Sweden, Turkey, Barbados, India, Ghana, Hong Kong, France, and South Africa, as well as the more obvious UK, New Zealand, Canada and Australia. There are also plenty of courses taught in the native language of the host country, including Chinese, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Japanese, and are excellent choices for students who have a grounding in those languages. Additionally, EAP offers intensive Language and Culture programs, such as: a summer in Sweden, a semester in Denmark or a full-year in Japan, among many other options.

**When should I study abroad?**

While it is possible for religious studies
students to go abroad at almost any point in their academic careers, the particular quarter, semester, summer or year that you study abroad depends on what courses you plan to take. Students interested in Language and Culture programs, or in fulfilling major preparation and General Education requirements, can participate as early as their sophomore year.

Students wishing to do an immersion program in a non-English-speaking country should complete six quarters of the language, or the equivalent, prior to departure.

Transfer students are eligible to participate in EAP as early as their first quarter at UCSB. Visit the EAP web site for more information. Plan ahead and consult with your department advisor.

What classes should I take?

All EAP students automatically earn UC credit for the work they complete abroad. However, the application of credit to major requirements is subject to the discretion of the department and approval of the college. It is best to plan early for study abroad.

Some of the courses from which students in Religious Studies have benefited in the past include: “Islam & Christianity in Africa” and Women in African Indigenous Religions" (Ghana); “Thinking About Evil” and “Ghost, Death & the Afterlife” (England); “Messiahs in Conflict: Early Christianity and Judaism” and “Egyptian Fingerprints in the Bible” (Israel); and “Hinduism & Buddhism in South Asia” and "Religion & Society in Modern Japan” (Japan).

Keep in mind that at least 20 units of upper-division major coursework (or 12 upper-division minor units) must be completed in residence at UCSB along with other residence requirements.

Consult an advisor in the College of Letters & Science for more information.

How do I get started?

Begin by identifying your goals for study abroad and then consult the EAP web pages (eap.ucsb.edu) to identify appropriate EAP programs. To find programs which offer particular disciplines or to search courses taken by EAP students over the last 5 years by subject, keyword and/or location, explore the resources found under Program Search and Course Catalog on the EAP web site: eap.ucsb.edu/

Navigate to host universities’ web sites on the available links to learn more about the schools and their departments.

Stop by the EAP office at 2431 South Hall. Peer advisors who have recently returned from studying abroad as well as staff advisors are eager to answer your questions.

Go see your department undergraduate advisor and a College of Letters & Science advisor to discuss major, general education, residence and other requirements.

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