University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	Contemporary Directions in Religious Studies I, PG_00200710		
Field of study	Religious Studies		
Date of commencement of studies	October 2026	Academic year of realisation of subject	2026/2027
Education level	Master's studies	Subject group	Obligatory subject group in the field of study
Mode of study	full-time studies	Mode of delivery	at the university
Year of study	1	Language of instruction	Polish
Semester of study	1	ECTS credits	3.0
Learning profile	academic	Assessment form	credit
Conducting unit	Division of Religious Studies -> Institute of Anthropology -> Faculty of History -> Rector		
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor	dr Andrzej Migda	
	Teachers	dr Andrzej Migda	

Lesson types	Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
	Number of study hours	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30
	E-learning hours included: 0.0						

Learning activity and number of study hours	Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan	Participation in consultation hours	Self-study	SUM
	Number of study hours	30	5.0	40.0	75

Subject objectives	The course aims to familiarise students with contemporary trends in the study of religion, taking into account different theoretical perspectives, methodological approaches and approaches used in religious studies. Participants will become familiar with current theories of religion and their application in the analysis of current religious and social phenomena in different cultural contexts. During the course, students will analyse religion (religiosity, spirituality) as a phenomenon in constant change, shaped by, among other things, scientific and technological development, economic change, globalisation and increased intercultural contact. By discussing selected concepts of religion and examining specific examples of religious and social phenomena, the class will provide an understanding of the dynamics of contemporary religiosity. By combining theory with the analysis of practical cases, the course will enable students to critically reflect on the role of religion in today's globalised world.

Learning outcomes

Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
[RELMU2_U02] Is able to independently plan and pursue lifelong learning, continuously developing knowledge and critical analytical skills.	K2_U02 independently acquires knowledge and expands critical thinking skills	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU4] test/exam - oral or written [SU8] observation of student's independent or team work
[RELMU2_K01] Knows the scope of their knowledge and skills and understands the need for continuous professional development and personal growth.	K_W08 has extensive knowledge and understanding of the subject and methodological specificity religious studies and its relationship to other sciences.	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SK4] test/exam - oral or written
[RELMU2_W07] Possesses broad knowledge and understands the subject matter and methodology of religious studies as well as its relationships with other academic disciplines.	K _W06 has comprehensive knowledge and advanced knowledge of the main subjects theoretical positions in contemporary religious studies	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written [SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion
[RELMU2_W02] Possesses an in-depth knowledge of Polish-language terminology used in religious studies.	K2_U05 writes essays and monographic studies based on independently selected literature, taking into account the contemporary state of knowledge in the field of religious studies.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written [SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion
[RELMU2_U05] Prepares written papers, multimedia presentations and other academic materials based on independently selected literature, taking into account the current state of research in religious studies.	K _W02 knows advanced religious terminology in Polish	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report [SU4] test/exam - oral or written

Subject contents

Introduction to contemporary religious studies; Key theories and methodologies in contemporary religious studies; Religion as an experience of the sacred; Theories of secularisation and desecularisation; New religious movements and non-institutional spirituality; Religion in cultural contexts; Religiosity and the mind: A cognitive perspective; Mystical experiences and neuroscience; Hybridisation and glocalisation of beliefs; Virtual rituals and online communities; Digital spirituality (religion in social media, AI and faith); Religious fundamentalisms and radicalisation; Conflict and interreligious dialogue; Ethics in religious research - challenges in fieldwork; Qualitative research (interviews, participant observation).

Prerequisites and co-requisites

Assessment methods and criteria

Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
oral examination	55.0%	55.0%
Project for the course credit	45.0%	45.0%

Recommended reading

Basic literature	Literature required for final course credit (passing the exam). ONLY selected passages indicated in the course: Rodrigues H., Harding J. S., Introduction to the Study of Religion, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London New York 2009. Other items from the literature were compiled in Polish.
Supplementary literature	Literature required for final course credit (passing the exam). ONLY selected passages indicated in the course. The books and articles necessary for the course have been developed in Polish.
eResources addresses	

Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed

- Contemporary trends in the study of religion - diverse theoretical and methodological perspectives in religious studies.
- Current theories of religion - their application in the analysis of religious and social phenomena in different cultural contexts.
- Religion as a dynamic phenomenon - the impact of science, technology, globalisation and economic and social change on religiosity.
- Theories of secularisation and desecularisation - transformations of religiosity in the modern world.
- New religious movements and non-institutional spirituality - alternative forms of religiosity.
- Religion and culture - analysis of beliefs in cultural context, hybridisation and glocalization.
- Cognitive and neuroscientific approaches to religion - mystical experiences, mind and belief.
- Religion in the digital world - virtual rituals, online communities, AI and spirituality.
- Fundamentalisms and radicalisation - religious conflict and inter-religious dialogue.
- Methodology of religious studies research - research ethics, qualitative methods (interviews, participant observation)

Work placement

Not applicable