

Bible & Religion

www.goshen.edu/bibrelphil

Philosophy of the major

The Bible and religion major is designed to provide students with an introduction to biblical studies and the academic study of the Christian tradition while affirming their faith and orienting them toward the value that the Anabaptist tradition places upon the Bible and the church.

The major requires courses on the content and methods of biblical study, church history, theology, ethics and philosophy that culminate in a senior seminar. This major will be of particular value to students contemplating either graduate study in Bible, religion or theology, or a calling in Christian ministry, and can also provide a strong foundation for active participation in congregational life no matter a student's future occupation.

Disciplines within the major

In addition to the Bible and religion major, the department offers a concentration in youth ministry. We describe this concentration as "an apprenticeship in ministry" because its defining feature is frequent field experiences and internships in various congregations and settings that extend throughout the degree. Besides core courses in the major, youth ministry students take courses in worship and pastoral skills and in adolescent development and pedagogy.

Most Bible and religion majors are enrolled in a second major or a significant minor. Whenever possible, the department adviser allows individual modifications to the design of the major in order to facilitate completion of the degree within four years.

Minor in Bible and religion

The minor in Bible and religion contains the core of the major in order to provide students with a strong foundation to complement their study of other traditions and for faith development and service to the church. Students take courses in both Testaments, Christian thought and ethics. With the permission of the adviser, some adaptations of the minor requirements are allowed in order to render the program of study as meaningful and useful to the student as possible.

Minor in youth ministry

The minor in youth ministry contains the core of the concentration and is designed to complement a degree in teacher education or social work for those preparing to become youth pastors. A minor in youth ministry as a stand alone program prepares a student to work as a youth sponsor and provides students with theory and skills for working with young people, within the broader theological context in which to ground current or future congregational or ministry work.

Ministry Inquiry Program

All students are encouraged to take part in the Ministry Inquiry Program sponsored by GC career services. MIP students spend a summer working and living with a congregation in order to explore their call to a church vocation and the various facets of congregational life.

Middle East Seminar

The Middle East seminar provides intensive study of the geography, history and archaeology of the Middle East. Following an orientation period on campus, the two-week seminar includes travel to Israel and Jordan.

Facilities related to Bible, religion and philosophy

- All of the professors in the department have their offices in Wyse Hall on third floor. Most Bible, religion and philosophy classes are also held in this building.
- The Mennonite Historical Library, located on the third floor of the Good Library, offers students the largest collection of Anabaptist literature worldwide.
- Mennonite churches send pertinent documents and artifacts to the Mennonite Archives, located in Newcomer Center. Students and community members utilize the resources in the archives for information and research.
- Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary is located 15 minutes away in nearby Elkhart. The AMBS library has numerous collections pertaining to GC Bible and religion classes. GC students can research and check out materials from their library.

Typical plan of study

First year

Reading the Bible or Knowing the Bible
Religious History of the Americas
Introduction to Philosophy
Literature and Writing
Modern language

Second and third years

Hebrew Prophets
Mennonite history
Biblical or modern language
Jesus and the Gospels
Ethics and Morality
Christian Faith
Bible and religion electives
Biblical or modern language
SST

Fourth year

An advanced theology class such as Liberation Theology
Internship
Senior Seminar
Bible and religion electives

The department does not prescribe a set plan of study. Instead each student and adviser carefully maps out a course of study best suited to the student's interests, vocational goals and plan of study for a second major or a minor. Language study is strongly encouraged, though it is not a prerequisite nor required by the department for graduation. Students pursuing a career in service or the church are encouraged to study Spanish and at least one biblical language. Students considering pursuing graduate work are encouraged to study German if their interest lies in theology, and German, Greek and Hebrew if they are interested in biblical studies.

What graduates are doing

Graduates typically follow four paths after graduation: Service, seminary, graduate school or ministry, often as a youth pastor. The Bible and religion major prepares students with the sort of analytic skills and grasp of the foundations of the Christian tradition needed in a broad spectrum of vocations. The following is a list of some of the occupations of current graduates:

- pastor
- service worker
- professor
- hospital chaplain
- teacher
- reporter
- public relations consultant
- lawyer
- farmer
- computer analyst
- musician
- ceramist
- business administrator
- business executive
- translator
- church administrator

Faculty

Jo-Ann A. Brant, Ph.D.; chair, professor of Bible, religion and philosophy; B.A., University of Alberta, 1980; M.A., 1986, Ph.D., 1991, McMaster University.

Keith Graber Miller, Ph.D.; professor of Bible, religion and philosophy; B.A., Franklin College, 1981; M.Div., Goshen Biblical Seminary, 1988; Ph.D., Emory University, 1994.

Paul Keim, Ph.D.; associate professor of Bible, religion and philosophy; B.A., Goshen College, 1978; M.Div., Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 1985; Ph.D., Harvard University, 1992.

Robert E. Yoder, M.Div.; assistant professor of youth ministry; B.S., Eastern Mennonite College, 1994; M.Div., Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 2001.

Current adjunct faculty

Dean J. Johnson, M.A.; Plowshares director and assistant professor of peace, justice and conflict studies and theology; B.S. Manchester College, 1996; M.A. Bethany Seminary, 2000; Ph.D. candidate, Illif School of Theology and University of Denver (Colo.)

Malinda Berry, M.A.; adjunct professor of religion; B.A. Goshen College, 1996; M.A., Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 2000; Ph.D. candidate, Union Theological Seminary, New York, N.Y.