



Reasons to choose our program...

Western Michigan University's comparative religion graduate programs are designed for those who, whether they are religious or not, want to know more about religion, the role and significance of religion in societies today and in the past, and the ways in which academics think about and analyze religion and related concepts. Program offerings include:

The **Master of Arts in Comparative Religion** (M.A.) is designed to provide students with a strong foundational knowledge of a number of religious traditions, of the principal classical works in the field of Comparative Religion, of the central issues of theory and method that underlie the religious studies discipline, and with training on how to teach courses on religion.

The **Master of Arts in Spirituality, Culture and Health** (M.A.) promotes an advanced understanding of the impact of culture, spirituality and religious belief on patient-provider relationships, and on the process of healing in the context of the current health care environment in the United States. This program is offered online.

The **Graduate Certificate in Spirituality, Culture and Health** is based upon a cultural understanding of the body, illness and health, and emphasizes practical tools for addressing religious, spiritual and cultural diversity in health and human services settings. This program is offered 100 percent online.

Additionally, the department has established an agreement for a 4+1 partnership with the **Department of Religion at Kalamazoo College**, **Department of Religion at Grand Valley State University**, and the **Department of Religious Studies at Albion College**.



This agreement allows students in the religion program at Kalamazoo College, GVSU, and Albion College to transfer up to 12 credit hours of work towards their master's degree in comparative religion at WMU.

Points of Pride

- WMU has the oldest comparative religion program and the only department with a graduate program in comparative religion in the state of Michigan.
- The faculty in the department are among the best in the country. They maintain a strong record of publication in their areas of expertise and are active in national and international conferences and organizations.
- Faculty and graduate students have conducted research, collaborated with fellow academics, taught, and organized conferences and seminars in many regions of the world, from Detroit to Japan, Croatia, Morocco and Iceland.
- Our spirituality, culture and health programs offer some of the first credentials of their kind in the country.

Comparative Religion

Teaching, Research and Program Focus Areas

Our faculty have expertise in the following areas:

- Islam
- Japanese religion
- Medieval Christianity and religions of pre-Christian Europe
- Popular culture and religion
- Religion and health
- Religion in the United States

Industry Highlights

Graduates go on to work in the fields of health and human services, non-profit and non-governmental organizations and higher education. Graduates also regularly go on to law school and prestigious Ph.D. programs in the social science and humanities. The deadline for funding consideration is Feb. 15.

Funding

The department regularly provides full or partial funding through graduate assistantships. We strive to make teaching opportunities available to graduate students to prepare them for their future careers in academia.

Admission

Domestic Application Deadlines

Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis, allowing students to begin coursework in the fall, spring and summer semesters.

International Application Deadlines

Fall: April 1

Spring: Aug. 1

Summer: Jan. 15

Department of Comparative Religion

wmich.edu/religion

(269) 387-4393



Dr. Stephen Covell
Department Chair
s.covell@wmich.edu

Dr. Cynthia Visscher
Faculty Specialist and Advisor for Spirituality, Culture
and Health Programs
cynthia.j.visscher@wmich.edu

Western Michigan University est. 1903

Offering over 100 world class advanced degree programs and holding Carnegie Foundation classification as a higher research doctoral university, the institution has consistently appeared in the U.S. News & World Report as one of America's best national universities. Graduate students make up 21 percent of the total student body and have been awarded nearly \$52 million in financial assistance. WMU enjoys a rich 60+ year history of graduate education.

Kalamazoo, Michigan

The community offers a vibrant cultural atmosphere mixed with a variety of outdoor recreational activities. The city of Kalamazoo is located midway between Detroit and Chicago and is in close proximity to the shoreline of Lake Michigan.