

# DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

St Joseph's Theological Institute offers two programmes in Religious Studies:

- ❖ a two-year Diploma in Religious Studies (Dip. [Religious Studies])
- ❖ a three-year Bachelor of Arts degree in Religious Studies (B.A. [Religious Studies])

The Religious Studies programmes are designed to meet following objectives:

- To provide students with a broad education in the study of Religion and the major World Religions, especially focussing on those religions encountered in Southern Africa and the African continent.
- Having achieved an in-depth understanding of what we understand by religion and its various manifestations, the student then proceeds to specialize in Catholic Theology.
- To provide the necessary knowledge and skills for those wishing to engage in professional contexts where a sound knowledge of religion is required.
- To situate the Catholic Tradition within the wider context of religion as well as to gain an in-depth knowledge of the various religious traditions that constitute our religious and social reality in Africa as this has become increasingly important.

It is towards these goals that the programmes in Religious Studies are geared. Having a background in these disciplines will also make our graduates more employable both in Church and Society.

## Curriculum Overview

The Modules offered in both the Diploma in Religious Studies and the B.A. (Religious Studies) programmes include:

**Religious Studies:** the academic and scientific study of religion as it informs cultures and societies and gives shape to personal identity.

**World Religions:** a study of the World and Traditional Religions encountered in Southern Africa.

**Catholic Theology:** the believers critical reflection on their own faith and its implication for daily life.

**Social Sciences:** the sciences which help to guide and facilitate reflection in both the study of Religion and Theology.

## **BACHELOR OF ARTS IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

### **BA (Religious Studies)**

Qualification Type	Programme ID	NQF Exit Level	Field	Minimum Credits	DoE Registration
National First Degree	50167	7	007 Human & Social Sciences	390	19.11.2004

#### **For Whom Is This Programme?**

This programme will be especially useful for those who wish to engage, or are already engaged in contexts of non-ordained professional ministry in church or society, e.g., Religious Education, Catechesis, Chaplaincy work, Formation ministry, Health workers, Development workers, Faith-Based Advocacy, NGO's etc. or those who would like to explore a deeper understanding of religion and the Catholic faith.

#### **Programme Admission Criteria**

The B.A.(Religious Studies) requires a matriculation exemption of 21 points or its equivalent.

Students who have successfully completed the two-year diploma programme in Religious Studies with an aggregate mark of 65% or more will be permitted to enrol for the third year of the degree programme.

Students registering for the BA (Religious Studies) must have proficiency in English (the medium of education) and have obtained a Senior Matriculation Exemption or its equivalent.

The Exemptions Committee will offer further guidelines in accordance with regulations from SAQA and also in terms of RPL.

#### **Programme Duration**

Students are required to attend lectures on a full time basis. Under normal circumstances the BA (Religious Studies) degree requires three years of full time study. Students who wish to study on a part-time basis are also accommodated.

#### **Credit Components:**

Students are expected to successfully complete all the modules that are offered. However, because of the fact that some students do not complete their studies in an unbroken sequence, because others come from institutions where they have done part of their studies, and because the sequence of modules taught at the Institute changes from time to time due to unforeseen circumstances, it is accepted that not all students will be able to take all the possible modules. The minimum number of Credits necessary for a student to graduate is as follows:

Foundational Modules:	78
Core Modules:	232
Elective Modules:	80
Total Credits for Degree:	390

## MODULE DESCRIPTIONS

### FOUNDATIONAL MODULES

#### **HUM 101a – ENGLISH AND STUDY SKILLS I (LRSS I)**

(NSH: 52L0T0P0S88H18R0F2A16W14C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIMS:**

- The main purpose of this course is the improvement of academic and general writing skills in English. By the end of the semester, the students will be able to:
  - Identify topic sentences and supporting, limiting and transitional sentences.
  - Write topic, supporting, limiting and transitional sentences to form effective, well-structured, coherent paragraphs.
  - Identify and eliminate wordiness (tautologies and redundancies) in their own writing and in that of others.
  - Use effectively transitional words (indicating time, adding information, showing similarities and differences, contradicting or qualifying, introducing examples, providing emphasis, showing cause and effect, demonstrating condition, showing concession, summing up or concluding) to create coherence in essays.
  - - Identify accurately simple and compound subjects and verbs, phrases and clauses (main and subordinate), sentence types (simple, compound, complex, compound complex) with the purpose of eliminating sentence fragmentation. This learning outcome will also form a basis for accurate subject/verb agreement and pronoun referencing which will be covered in the second semester.

#### **HUM 101b – ENGLISH AND STUDY SKILLS II (LRSS II)**

(NSH: 52L0T0P0S88H18R0F2A16W14C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIMS:**

- The main purpose of this course is the improvement of academic and general writing skills in English. By the end of the semester, the students will be able to:
  - Identify topic sentences and supporting, limiting and transitional sentences.

- Write topic, supporting, limiting and transitional sentences to form effective, well-structured, coherent paragraphs.
- Identify and eliminate wordiness (tautologies and redundancies) in their own writing and in that of others.
- Use effectively transitional words (indicating time, adding information, showing similarities and differences, contradicting or qualifying, introducing examples, providing emphasis, showing cause and effect, demonstrating condition, showing concession, summing up or concluding) to create coherence in essays.
- Identify accurately simple and compound subjects and verbs, phrases and clauses (main and subordinate), sentence types (simple, compound, complex, compound complex) with the purpose of eliminating sentence fragmentation. This learning outcome will also form a basis for accurate subject/verb agreement and pronoun referencing which will be covered in the second semester.

### **HUM 222 – PSYCHOLOGY I**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S54H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** The module aims to introduce the students to a basic psychology of the human person as a basis for an anthropological theology and pastoral ministry. It seeks to develop a “Psychological mindedness” about human experience and faith, and to encourage a deepened personal reflection.

### **RST 101 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF RELIGION**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** To explore basic concepts and categories that arise in the study of religion such as Religious Experience, Religious Language, Ritual, Symbolism and Myth, and Religion and Culture.

### **RST 102 THEORY AND METHOD OF RELIGION**

(NSH: 39L0T0P13S70H18R0F3A16W14C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** To enable the students to demonstrate an understanding of the nature of religion and the various theories and scientific methods used in the study of religion. The aim will be to develop the ability to identify and understand the significance of the theoretical perspectives present in any academic study of religion and to provide the student with the necessary insights to apply these theories and methods to their own study of religion.

### **RST 103 INTRODUCTION TO WORLD RELIGIONS**

(NSH: 30L9P13S72H18R0F2A16W14C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** To enable the students to demonstrate an understanding of the major world religions by exploring the history, world-view, beliefs, practices and values that make these religions meaningful to its followers.

### **RST 104 CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY I**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** To introduce the students to the central methods of enquiry in the discipline of theological reflection as well as exploring the fundamental themes in Christian theology: Human Experience, Revelation, Faith, Tradition and a Theological Anthropology.

### **RST 105 OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES I**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** To provide the learners with the necessary conceptual framework and analytical tools to read, study and understand Old Testament literature from within its historical and cultural setting.

### **RST 106 NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES I**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S28H21R5A16W8C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** To provide the students with the necessary conceptual framework and analytical tools to read, study and understand New Testament literature from within its historical and cultural setting.

### **RST 107 ACADEMIC LITERACY AND COMPUTER SKILLS I**

(NSH: 26L0T13P0S41H18R0F2A16W12C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** This course explores basic academic literacy and computer skills in order to enable the students to work effectively in an academic environment. The course content includes: proficiency in the use of English in an academic context and the relevant language functions needed for success in the academic environment; ability to manage time effectively, taking notes during lectures and writing papers; access

information from libraries; ability to use a computer word processing package; and the ability to access the internet and use it as a research tool.

## **TPT 226 – PASTORAL COUNSELLING I**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires TST 101 (Introduction to Theology), TMT 101 (Fundamental Moral Theology) and TST102 (Christian Anthropology)

**AIM:** This module provides knowledge and practice of basic skills in pastoral counselling. Issues of attending, effective listening, awareness of feeling, emotions and content are considered, as are skills of concreteness, genuineness, respect, accurate empathy, problem solving, confrontation, conflict resolution and referral. The relationship of personal growth and the Christian message are points of integration in these skills.

## CORE MODULES

To the core modules listed here may be added a selection from the core modules in the Philosophy and Theology programmes according to the needs of the student and after approval by the Head of Department.

### **HUM 121 – HISTORY OF CIVILIZATIONS**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S54H18R0F3A16W8C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** This module examines some of the major civilizations of the ancient world and the influence that they have had on the modern world in which we live. The module begins with the transition of people from hunter-gatherers to settled farmers. Selected civilizations from those of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Crete, Greece, Rome, China and India, plus the Inca, Aztec and Maya in the Americas will then be studied. This examination will be mainly descriptive and historical with some analysis as to why these civilizations prospered and waned. Of particular importance will be the invention of writing and how it became a vehicle for the preservation, dissemination and the growth of knowledge and the development of thought and human progress.

### **HUM 222 – PSYCHOLOGY I**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S54H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** The module aims to introduce the students to a basic psychology of the human person as a basis for an anthropological theology and pastoral ministry. It seeks to develop a “Psychological mindedness” about human experience and faith, and to encourage a deepened personal reflection.

### **HUM 227 - CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R2A16W8C)

**Admission :** Requires RST 102 (Methods in the Study of Religion)

**AIM:** The purpose of this module is to provide students with a basic understanding of Cultural Anthropology and some of its philosophical underpinnings.

## **HUM 323 - PSYCHOLOGY II**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S54H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires HUM 222 (Psychology I)

**AIM:** The course will deepen the examination of psychology already started in the introduction to Psychology course. There will be a closer look at the main psychological theories of Freud and Jung, as well as those of the vocational psychology of Rulla.

## **RST 121 - AFRICA'S RELIGIOUS HERITAGE**

(NSH: 30L9P13S72H18R0F2A16W14C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 103 (World Religions)

**AIM:** Enable students to demonstrate an understanding of Africa's religious world-view and how this world-view connects with various cultural and social practices. Special attention will be given to the various understandings of the nature of God; spiritual beings, spirits and the Living Dead; kinship and the individual in traditional African societies; rites and passages of initiation and its communal meaning; traditional healers and their functions within the society; the social formation of the household and continuities and change in Africa's religious heritage.

## **RST 125 - COMPARATIVE SPIRITUALITIES**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S44H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission :** Requires RST 103 (World Religions)

**AIM:** This module is an exploration and analysis of selected themes in the major World religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism) and reflects what each religion understands by spirituality.

## **RST 129 - CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY II**

(NSH: 52L0T0P0S68H24R0F1A16W14C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 104 (Christian Theology I)

**AIM:** Building on Systematic Theology I this module explores the Christian understanding of God and Jesus Christ.

## **RST 133 - CHRISTIAN ETHICS**

(NSH: 46L0T6P0S80H24R3A16W14C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** Introduces the students to the major concepts, questions and areas of debate in the field of fundamental moral theology and to enable the students to engage in a

critical manner in a process of moral reasoning that is consistent with the Catholic tradition and helpful in making sense of the moral questions that arise in our local contexts. Special attention will be given to two specific areas of morality. The first explores the Christian and Catholic moral teaching on human sexuality as well as moral questions surrounding these. The second deals with an analysis of the ethical dimensions of selected contemporary bio- medical issues. The focus throughout the module will be on present-day moral questions.

### **RST 222 - ISLAM**

(NSH: 39L0T0P13S72H18R0F2A16W14C)

**Admission :** Requires RST 103 (World Religions)

**AIM:** Building on the module World Religions, this module aims to deepen the students understanding of Islam, both as a religion and a civilization, by exploring topics such as; Islamic doctrines and law; gender issues; Islamic government; the debate between secularism and traditionalism in contemporary Islamic societies and Islam in South Africa.

### **RST 230 - CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY III**

(NSH: 52L0T0P0S64H24R3A16W14C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 104 (Christian Theology I) and RST 129 Christian Theology II

**AIM:** To enable students to demonstrate an understanding of the nature of the church; its mission in the world today; questions of authority and ministry; and ecumenism in light of their conciliar understandings and the African context.

### **RST 231 - OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES II**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S28H21R5A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 105 (Old Testament Studies I)

**AIM:** To explore the historical and cultural contexts in which the books of the Old Testament were written, how and when these texts were composed and consider various methods for studying these ancient texts.

### **RST 232 - NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES II**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S28H21R5A16W8C)

**Admission :** Requires RST 106 (New Testament Studies I)

**AIM:** To introduce learners to the social contexts and selected literature of the New Testament.

## **RST 235 - HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY**

(NSH: 46L0T6P0S80H24R3A16W14C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** To gain understanding of the historical development of Christianity starting with the Acts of the Apostles and concluding with the shifts that occurred in Catholicism in the wake of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).

## **RST 274 - CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 104 (Christian Theology I) and RST 129 (Christian Theology II)

**AIM:** A fundamental introduction to Christian sacramentality. Beginning with insights from anthropology and ritual studies, it will explore the theoretical and dynamic aspects of the sacraments, with particular reference to the Roman Catholic Church in the context of sub-Saharan Africa and with close attention to critical historical study.

## **RST 323 - HINDUISM**

(NSH: 30L9P13S72H18R0F2A16W14C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 103 (World Religions)

**AIM:** Building on the introductory study of Hinduism in RST 103 World Religions, this course focuses on diversity and regional variation within Hinduism with special emphasis on the contemporary persistence of traditional values and practices. A special interest in this course will be contemporary South African Hinduism.

## **RST 324 - INTERFACES OF FAITHS IN AFRICA**

(NSH: 10L0T0P16S44H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 103 (World Religions) and RST 121 (Africa's Religious Heritage)

**AIM:** To explore how the three major religions of Africa; Traditional African Religions, Christianity and Islam, interact on the social, political and religious levels in three geographically diverse African countries. Having gained insights into how these religions interact in these countries students may gain some insights on how to analyze the interaction of different religions in their contexts and be able to offer solutions to problems that do and may develop in the interaction in their own contexts.

## **RST 326 - COMPARATIVE RELIGIOUS ETHICS**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 103 (World Religions)

**AIM:** This course examines the ethical worldviews of Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion in a comparative manner. This course provides the students with an understanding of the essential features of these ethical frameworks and how these important religious traditions shape the daily lives and influence the social attitudes of their adherents.

## **RST 327 - RELIGION AND GENDER: WOMEN IN THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 102 (Methods in the Study of Religion) and RST 235 History of Christianity)

**AIM:** To enable the student to demonstrate understanding of the role that gender plays in the shaping of religious beliefs and practises. This module will focus on the Christian tradition and seeks to examine the attitudes of Jesus towards women and their role in the life of the church during New Testament times; the growth of patriarchal attitudes in the writings of the Church fathers and their impact on theology and spirituality; evaluate the contributions of some important women in the history of the Christian community; explore selected themes in feminist theology; reflect on the meaning of spirituality in the lives of Christian women and to evaluate the contributions African women are making to feminist theology and spirituality.

## **RST 328 - NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** This course is designed to provide an opportunity for the student to develop a general sociological understanding and perspective with which to evaluate, interpret, and understand new religious movements and their impact on established religious communities and society at large.

## **RST 336 - RELIGION IN PUBLIC LIFE**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 326 (Comparative Ethics)

**AIM:** To explore the relationship between a religious inspired vision of the common good and the specific dynamics of shaping public policy in a secular state. Both historical and contemporary issues that influence the relation between religion and public policy in South Africa will be explored. These include religion - state relations,

religious freedom, the grounds and limits for religious intervention in public policy, questions of social justice and religious pluralism.

### **RST 337 - ACADEMIC LITERACY AND COMPUTER SKILLS II**

(NSH: 26L0T13P0S41H18R0F2A16W12C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 107 (Academic Literacy and Computer Skills I)

**AIM:** This module provides the students with critical thinking and writing skills, skills in information retrieval, and the ability to use audio-visual and information technology to present information.

### **TPT 224 - CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

(NSH: 52L0T0P6S66H24R3A16W14C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** To introduce the student to catechetics, the art and science of religious education. It includes a definition of Christian education, an overview of the history of catechetics, catechesis for various age groups, and cultural and social adaptations.

### **TPT 327 – PASTORAL COUNSELLING II**

(NSH: 13L0T0P13S40H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires TPT 226 (Counselling I)

**AIM:** This module provides information and insight into areas of need which are likely to be encountered in pastoral ministry and to introduce approaches in counselling appropriate to these needs. The opportunity to practice through appropriate role-play. Provide opportunity and guidance in researching an area of pastoral need of the student's own choice.

### **RST 339 - RESEARCH PAPER (B.A. RST)**

(NSH: 0L8TOP0S108H0R0F0A16W24C)

**Admission:** Requires successful completion of B.A. (RST) modules.

**AIM:** The student will be expected to write a research paper on a chosen topic of religious interest, subject to the approval of the Department of Religious Studies. The paper should be of between 6,000-7,000 words and will be done under the guidance of a supervisor appointed by the Head of Department.

The Research Paper will endeavour to help the student to learn research methods, to address religious and social issues in a methodical, informed and scientifically appropriate fashion and to display an ability to integrate knowledge and skills gained in the study of different religious traditions.

The Research Paper will be marked by the supervisor and also by an External Examiner proposed by the Head of Department and appointed by the Academic Dean in consultation with QUAAC.

## ELECTIVE MODULES

The following is a sample of some of the Elective Modules available for the Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies. However, all modules taught at the Institute are open as Electives for this qualification, with the guidance and prior permission of the Head of Department.

### **HUM 125 - AFRICAN HISTORY**

(NSH: 31L0T0P8S59H18R0F3A16W12C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** The module intends to present an overview of the history of the continent of Africa. A fresh look at the events and characters that have shaped the continent from the origins of humanity to the end of South African apartheid will be taken.

The rise and fall of African civilizations, empires and kingdoms will be studied, leading to an objective study of the injustices of slavery and colonialism. A step further will be taken to study the winds of independence on the continent. There will also be a general assessment of the aftermath of independence, going on to an epoch which many have termed the >African Renaissance=.

### **HUM 227 - CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R2A16W8C)

**Admission :** Requires RST 102 (Methods in the Study of Religion)

**AIM:** The purpose of this module is to provide students with a basic understanding of Cultural Anthropology and some of its philosophical underpinnings.

### **HUM 228 - AFRICAN LITERATURE**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** To introduce the student to key writers in Anglophone and Francophone Africa, focusing on the novel as a vehicle for ideas and drawing out the common themes and illustrating them by examining selected texts.

## **HUM 324 - SOCIOLOGY**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S54H12R2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** The objective of this module is to introduce learners to the science of sociology. Through the study of human society from the perspective of social relations and systems, politics, economics and organized religion, the module focuses on the importance of understanding human behaviour manifested in groups and societies.

## **PHI 103 – GENERAL ETHICS**

(NSH: 39L0T0P0S68H24R0F3A16W12C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** The course intends to introduce the students to a wide variety of historical and contemporary approaches to ethics. By examining theories such as relativism, subjectivism, natural law and utilitarianism, the students will be encouraged to discover the strengths and weaknesses of differing ethical approaches, and to recognize that, for an ethical theory to be successful it needs to have a proper understanding of human nature.

## **PHI 107 – APPLIED ETHICS**

(NSH: 39L0T0P0S68H24R0F3A16W12C)

**Admission:** Requires PHI 103

**AIM:** The course will examine some contemporary ethical issues which are of significance in South Africa, and in the whole world community. Among the topics to be examined will be those of abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, and the ecology. Also treated are issues of gender and sexual orientation, racism, affirmative action, and animal rights.

## **RST 275 - INTRODUCTION TO LITURGY**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S40H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 104 (Christian Theology I) and RST 129 (Christian Theology II)

**AIM:** To introduce the subject of liturgy so that students are better able to understand the history, theology, terminology and theory of liturgy.

## **PHI 213 - CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN THINKERS**

(NSH: 31L0T0P8S59H18R0F3A16W12C)

**Admission:** Open

**AIM:** The course will examine some of the most significant work on such issues as identity and being, time and history, method and evaluation, race and racism, postcolonial experience and liberation in contemporary African philosophers. Among those whose work will be examined are Anthony Appiah, Franz Fanon, Kwame Gyekye, John Mbiti, Kwame Nkrumah, among others.

## **RST 371 - ANTHROPOLOGY OF RELIGION**

(NSH: 18L0T0P8S42H12R0F3A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 101 (Introduction to the Study of Religion) and RST 102 (Methods in the Study of Religion)

**AIM:** A systematic and historical introduction to the discipline of Anthropology of Religion in order to introduce the student to the central methods of enquiry and research of this discipline, a historical overview of the main thinkers who shaped this discipline, a critical understanding of the central concepts and theories of the discipline, and the main contemporary questions shaping this discipline.

## **TSP 101 - HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY**

(NSH: 26L0T0P44H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 125 (Comparative Spiritualities)

**AIM:** To explore and understand something of the richness of the living tradition of Christian spirituality from the first centuries of the Church to the present through a study of major themes and the writings of significant persons.

## **TST 276 - THEOLOGY OF INCULTURATION**

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S46H12R0F2A16W8C)

**Admission:** Requires RST 104 (Christian Theology I), RST 129 (Christian Theology II), and HUM 227 (Cultural Anthropology)

**AIM:** The purpose is to develop an understanding of the inculturation process and to present some theological models and tools required to avoid Ethnocentrism, division, syncretism and sectarianism.