



COURSE CREDITS

The programme consists of 14 taught courses (70 credits all-together) and a dissertation (10 credits). The two-year programme is divided into four semesters with courses amounting to 20 credits per semester.



DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME

For normal entry, the duration of the MA in Religious Studies programme is two years, consisting of four semesters of five months each. The first and third semesters begin in July and run until December, and the second and the fourth semesters run from January until June.



COURSEWORK

By the end of the two years (four semesters), students will take 14 core courses (70 credits). During each course, they will have online lectures (live and recorded), group discussions and tutorials, workshops, reading and writing assignments. Students' academic progress is assessed via weekly reading assignments and discussion sessions/tutorials, as well as mid-term assessment (quizzes and essay) and a final exam at the end of the semester.



DISSERTATION

Students are also required to write a dissertation (10 credits) at the end of the programme. Students start working on their dissertation proposal and then the dissertation itself in the fourth semester. A multi-disciplinary approach will also be encouraged. The dissertation should be around 8,000-12,000 words. Research skills will be taught in the first year and second year so that the student is familiar with the writing and research methods required. A research supervisor/subject expert will guide each student.



WANT TO DISCUSS MORE?



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MA IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

MA in Religious Studies, with a focus on Islam, is designed to prepare Christians for ministry in an increasingly diverse world. This programme is offered in partnership with the North East Christian University (NECU) in Dimapur (Nagaland), India, through the Centre for Advanced Religious Studies (CARS). OCRPL partners with NECU/ CARS to offer an affordable MA degree in a flexible online format. This is particularly suitable for those in ministry, those who cannot take large amounts of time off work or those who are unable to relocate for a duration of study.

The degree is recognised by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and registered under the Nagaland Government Act 2012 (Act No.4 of 2013), North East Christian University, Nagaland, India.

PROGRAMME BREAKDOWN



Post Graduate Research and Study Skills

- 5 credits

This course is designed to help new students develop good study habits and critical thinking skills in order to enhance academic studies. It will also enable students to read, comprehend and respond effectively to various types of literary texts. Students will learn to appreciate and critique pieces of writing, exploring issues raised in theological and academic texts.



Understanding the Bible for Theology and Ministry

- 5 credits

Understanding the Bible for Theology and Ministry is a detailed course which examines the significance and meaning of the Bible, its interpretation, and the implication that it has for today's context. The course teaches some important guidelines in the exegesis of Biblical passages, showing how to understand a passage as it was originally read and providing practical insight into transferring the meaning of Scripture to a contemporary context.



Introduction to Quranic Arabic

- 5 credits

This is a foundation in Qur'anic Arabic, enabling the students to read and write the Arabic script, to transliterate Arabic words, to learn the Arabic vocabularies and grammar, and to create a base to enable further advanced study of the language.



Research methodology in the study of religion

- 5 credits

Students will be introduced to Ninian Smart and his 'Seven Dimensions of Religion.' They will learn and critically examine the following approaches to the study of religion: Historical approach, Textual approach, Sociological approach, Anthropological approach, Phenomenology of religion, Philosophical and Theological approaches, Confessional approach/ Christian approach to the study of religion, and Empathetic approach.



Introduction to Islam

- 5 credits

This course serves as an introduction to Islam, one of the main world religions. It provides an overview of major themes in Islamic studies: a brief history of Islam; beliefs and practices; sources of Islam and diversity in Islam.



Introduction to Indigenous Religions

- 5 credits

This course will help students understand the origin, developments, and major characteristics of Indigenous Religions, and to know their values and ongoing influences on various societies and cultures.



Understanding Christian Theology in the Context of Other Religions

- 5 credits

This course will provide a good understanding of Christian doctrine, such as revelation, Scripture, God, Church, etc. – in relation with other faiths, especially with the prevalent faith in their context.



History of Islam from pre-Islamic Arabia to the Present Day

- 5 credits

The course provides a survey of Islamic history starting from pre-historic Arabia and the life of Muhammad until Islam in our present day.



Living Islam: introduction to Islamic practices and beliefs

- 5 credits

This is an introductory course for Islamic beliefs and practices in Islam. Students will learn about key articles of belief in Islam such as God, angels, books, prophets, the Day of Resurrection and predestination. In addition, students will also study other tenets of Islamic faith such as tawhid (oneness of God), shirk (partnership/ idolatry) and bid'ah (innovation).



Islamic scripture and tradition (Qur'an, hadith and tafsir)

- 5 credits

This course is designed to introduce students to the foundational sources of Islam – the Qur'an and hadith, as well as the science of interpretation of the Qur'an – tafsir. By reading the primary texts and supplementing with secondary literature for historical context, considering theology and development of ideas, students will gain an advanced understanding on how Muslims approach and interpret their Scripture and Traditions.