



Exploring the big questions

The study of religion at Earlham College encompasses matters of faith, action, human existence and the crises that have faced civilizations throughout history. Religion majors choose this study for diverse reasons. Some students are interested in the rich traditions of the world's religions, while others are drawn to the study as a way to explore questions of life's meaning, purpose and worth. It is this balance between intellectual exploration of religion and personal seeking that allows all students to explore the big questions of life: Why are we here? What are we supposed to do? What is good? What is evil?

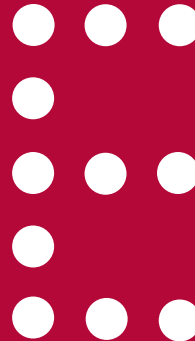
Seminary courses right next door

Earlham's religion students have the additional opportunity to take graduate-level courses at the neighboring Earlham School of Religion, which is affiliated with the Quakers, and Bethany Seminary, affiliated with the Church of the Brethren.



Earlham Facts

- Founded in 1847 by the Society of Friends, Earlham is rooted in the ideals of Quakerism.
- 1,200 undergraduate students representing 44 states and 71 countries
- Male 44%, Female 56%
- 12:1 student-to-faculty ratio
- More than 64 percent of every graduating class participates in an off-campus study program.
- Earlham graduates are well prepared for further study; nearly half of Earlham alumni graduating in the last 10 years enrolled in graduate or professional school.



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Earlham welcomes all who come to seek for truth in a diverse community that accords respect to every individual. Each is asked to contribute to the understanding of all.

Religion

@ Earlham College



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Low student-faculty ratio

At Earlham, students benefit from studying at a liberal arts college with a low student-faculty ratio. Class sizes allow students to get to know one another. While there is no one dominant mode of teaching, lively discussion plays a role throughout all our Religion courses. In addition, faculty collaborate with students in various research projects funded by grants from the Ford and Knight Foundations.

Finding purpose in many places

Graduates of Earlham's Religion Department have gone on to a variety of fields of study and work. Some prepare for the ministry at a seminary or divinity school, while others have worked throughout the world for social service agencies. Some students enter graduate school to prepare for careers in teaching and a number become interested in counseling. Others have gone into such diverse fields as medicine, banking, publications, public relations and library science.

Asking significant questions: A look at the program

Many of the Religion courses at Earlham focus on Western Christianity, including biblical traditions, Quakerism and peace studies. Other courses deal with the religions of the world: Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, the religions of Africa, the African Diaspora, ancient Greece and East Asia in their historical and cultural contexts. Students learn to ask the significant questions in both a sympathetic and critical spirit about their own and other cultures and worldviews using the tools of history, literature, theology, philosophy, biblical studies and social sciences. Such study also explores theories of religion and the role religion plays in current events.

For more information about Earlham College's Religion Department, visit www.earlham.edu/religion.



Off-campus opportunities for Religion majors

Off-campus study opportunities include the Philadelphia Center, an experiential education program that provides for professional exploration, intellectual development and personal growth. Other off-campus programs in which students and faculty have participated include those in Africa, England, Japan, Jamaica, India, Tibet and other Great Lakes Colleges Association programs.

Quaker archives

Earlham boasts one of the best collections of Quaker archives in the country including printed materials, manuscripts, archival materials and microforms. The printed materials include virtually every significant Quaker publication since 1650. With the manuscript holdings, they document Quakerism not only in North America but also in Africa, the Caribbean, East Asia and Latin America.



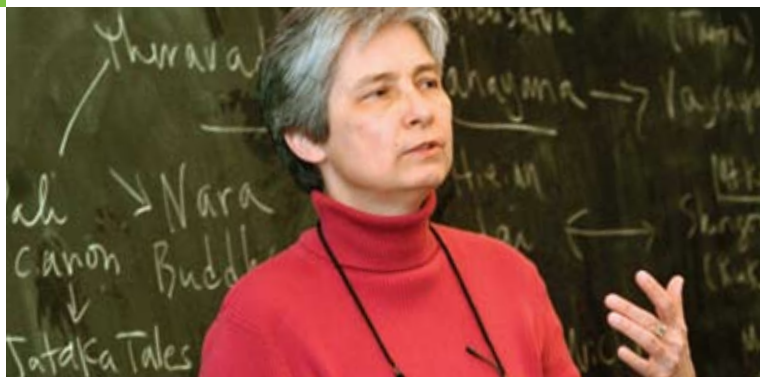
"My experience studying religion at Earlham was characterized above all by phenomenal teaching: instructors who knew their subjects well but nevertheless delighted in introducing students to the basics, and who shared the difficult process of studying religion and learning new material with us. At Earlham, studying religion was always relevant to the deep challenges and questions facing contemporary communities of faith, and the professors never assumed that there were simple or easy answers.

"So, it is a natural outgrowth of that education that has me now studying and teaching religion with a particular focus on how churches can learn from scientists and activists to respond to the destruction of biodiversity in our world today."

— Kevin J. O'Brien '99
Assistant Professor of Religion
Pacific Lutheran University
Tacoma, Washington

"Studying religion at Earlham is as fulfilling spiritually as it is intellectually. In our classes, not only do we study religious theory, world religions and their scriptures, and the place of religion in the world today, but we are constantly encouraged to bring our own experiences and interpretations into discussions and to use what we learn to further our own spiritual growth. Even if I choose a career that doesn't directly involve religious studies, I know I'll be using what I've gained in my religion classes for the rest of my life."

— Anne Ruleman '09
Athens, Tennessee



"Over the years, our graduates have told us that they appreciate the balance between classroom learning and personal religious seeking. Scholarly research and spiritual practices are both valued. Because we are a small department, we are able to work with our students on an individual basis as their understanding of religion expands and deepens. This is one of the joys of being at Earlham."

— Mary Garman, Ph.D.
Professor of Religion