



Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy of Religion

Program Overview

The Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy of Religion at the Universidad Católica Americana (UNICA) represents an integral educational proposal that unites the philosophical tradition of critical reason with the systematic study of the religious phenomenon in its multiple dimensions — conceptual, existential, linguistic, and ethical.

Within the biblical and ecclesial tradition, the *Philosophy of Religion* serves as the intellectual bridge that enables faith to give reason for itself (*Logos*), examining the rationality of religious beliefs, the validity of their arguments, and the coherence of their claims about God, humanity, and the cosmos. It is not confined to a single confession but rather explores the religious fact as a constitutive element of human existence.

This vocation for the faith–reason dialogue is renewed in the contemporary context through metaphysics, comparative ethics, and analytic philosophy—disciplines that seek to understand the essence of the divine, the meaning of religious language, the problem of evil, and the pluralism of beliefs.

UNICA's *Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy of Religion* provides an interdisciplinary formation that combines logic, fundamental theology, history of religions, and analytic philosophy—preparing professionals capable of:

- Understanding and evaluating the main arguments for and against the existence of God.
- Participating in public debate on ethics, science, and faith through rigorous philosophical reasoning.
- Supporting interreligious and intercultural dialogue processes by understanding the philosophical roots of diverse worldviews.
- Leading research and teaching projects in the field of philosophy and religion.

Thanks to its virtual and hybrid modality, the program is accessible to students from various contexts, who may conduct research seminars and teaching practices in their home regions or at partner institutions. Likewise, its bilingual (Spanish–English) format opens doors for intellectual dialogue in multicultural and international settings.

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Through this degree, UNICA reaffirms its commitment to the mission of the Church and society: to form teachers and professors for seminaries and Catholic schools who are witnesses of faith through reason, in the spirit of the Gospel and the Church's Social Doctrine.

Justification

The *Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy of Religion* is fundamentally relevant to the life and mission of the Church, serving as an intellectual tool for dialogue with culture, science, and other spiritual traditions.

1. **Formation of Priests:** It is essential for contemporary apologetics. A priest trained in this discipline is equipped to understand and respond to the challenges of secularism, atheism, and scientism. It enables him to defend the rationality of faith and to address the existential questions of his community (suffering, the meaning of life) with deep conceptual rigor.
2. **Formation of Committed Laity:** Laypeople, immersed in an environment of pluralism and skepticism, need tools for discernment. This degree equips them to be cultural dialogue agents, capable of articulating the truth of Christianity in contemporary philosophical language, promoting religious freedom and critical thinking in public life.
3. **Pastoral and Interfaith Leaders:** This discipline facilitates genuine ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, grounded in knowledge of other worldviews. It enables pastoral leaders to understand the philosophical and anthropological roots of various religions (and atheism), ensuring that unity or cooperation efforts rest on mutual intellectual respect and a shared pursuit of the transcendentals—Truth, Goodness, and Beauty.

Institutional Identity

The Universidad Católica Americana (UNICA) is an ecclesiastical institution of Christian-Catholic inspiration, committed to holistic formation in the light of the Gospel and the living tradition of the Church. It integrates faith and reason, fosters spiritual life, and prepares its students for intellectual, social, and pastoral service in contemporary society.

Mission

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To train graduates in *Philosophy of Religion* with academic, ethical, pastoral, and spiritual competencies—equipped to research, teach, and communicate the truth about the religious phenomenon and the rationality of faith, promoting the faith–reason dialogue in fidelity to the Church’s evangelizing mission.

Vision

To be recognized as a leading Catholic university in the formation of philosophers and experts in comparative religion, with significant impact on research, public ethics, and interreligious dialogue throughout the Americas and the world.

Core Values

Truth, Charity, Excellence, Holiness, Unity, and Service.

Program Technical Sheet

Field	Description
Program Name	Bachelor’s Degree in Philosophy of Religion
Academic Level	Undergraduate / Bachelor’s Degree
Duration	8 semesters (curricular structure organized by semesters)
Total Credits	160 credits (average of 20 per semester)
Modality	Virtual and hybrid (synchronous/asynchronous classes, intensive research seminars, and ethics/debate practices)
Language Offering	Spanish / English / Bilingual (depending on student selection)
Location	State of Texas, USA
Degree Awarded	Bachelor of Philosophy of Religion — Universidad Católica Americana (UNICA)

Admission Requirements (Profile and Documentation)

- High School Diploma or equivalent GED recognized by educational authorities.
- Certified transcripts / secondary academic record.
- Personal essay (motivation letter on the relationship between faith, reason, and the religious phenomenon).
- Admission interview (academic and vocational/intellectual).

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- One pastoral or academic recommendation.
- Demonstration of language proficiency according to the chosen modality (see language section).
- For international students: compliance with applicable immigration and visa regulations.
- The university may include additional requirements according to institutional and accreditation standards.

Purpose of Formation

To train professionals in *Philosophy of Religion* with a solid metaphysical foundation and a profound understanding of religious traditions, capable of researching, teaching, and engaging in public debate about truth, the meaning of life, and the existence of God.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion, the graduate in *Philosophy of Religion* will be able to:

- Analyze fundamental questions in the philosophy of religion, including theistic and atheistic arguments.
- Apply logic and philosophical reasoning to the study of religious statements and experiences.
- Integrate philosophical reasoning with the data of Revelation in Natural Theology.
- Design and lead research and teaching projects on ethics, religion, and culture.
- Promote dialogue with atheism, agnosticism, and various religious traditions.
- Develop reading and comprehension skills for philosophical and religious texts in their original languages (Latin/Greek/Hebrew).
- Critically evaluate the influence of religion on politics, science, and society.

Competencies

- **Generic:** Critical thinking, oral and written communication, intellectual leadership, teamwork, intercultural sensitivity, and digital literacy.
- **Specific:** Metaphysics of the Supreme Being, Theistic Logic, Ethics of Belief, History of Religious Thought, Religious Language, Natural Theology.



Language Offering and Requirements

The program is offered in three modalities: Spanish, English, and Bilingual. Language certification requirements are equivalent to those of other programs (TOEFL/IELTS, DELE, or institutional proficiency tests).

Curriculum by Semester (8 semesters — 160 credits)

Semester	Code	Course	Credits	Description	Prerequisites
1	REL-101	Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion	6	The meaning of the discipline, its central problems, and its relationship with theology.	None
	REL-102	Logic and Theory of Argumentation	6	Principles of valid reasoning, construction, and evaluation of arguments.	None
	REL-103	Latin I and Philosophical Terminology	4	Basic grammar for reading philosophical and ecclesial sources.	None
	REL-104	History of Ancient Philosophy and Hellenism	4	The origins of Western thought and its connection with early Christianity.	None
		Total Credits:	20		
2	REL-201	Metaphysics: Being and the First Principle	6	Ontology, causality, substance, and the search for the First Principle.	REL-101
	REL-202	Epistemology: Faith and Reason (<i>Fides et Ratio</i>)	6	Nature, limits, and justification of philosophical and religious knowledge.	REL-102
	REL-203	Greek Koiné I (Basic)	4	Introduction to the language of the New Testament and the first philosophers.	REL-103
	REL-204	Introduction to Fundamental Theology and Revelation	4	Revelation as God's act and its historical manifestation.	None
		Total Credits:	20		
3	REL-301	Natural Theology I: Arguments for the Existence of God	6	Critical study and evaluation of cosmological, teleological, and ontological arguments.	REL-201
	REL-302	Philosophical Anthropology and Religious Experience	6	The human being as a religious subject, transcendence, and existential meaning.	REL-201
	REL-303	Philosophical Ethics and the Problem of Evil	4	Foundations of morality, free will, and theodicy.	REL-202

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	REL-304	Medieval Philosophy and Islamic/Jewish Thought	4	Philosophical dialogue of faith in the Middle Ages (Maimonides, Averroes, Aquinas).	REL-104
		Total Credits:	20		
4	REL-401	Philosophy of Religious Language and Truth	6	The meaning of statements about God, symbolism, and analogy.	REL-301
	REL-402	History of Religions (East: Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism)	6	Philosophical study of the great Eastern religious traditions.	REL-304
	REL-403	Philosophy of Science and Criticism of Theism	4	Naturalism, critical rationalism, and the conflict between science and religion.	REL-202
	REL-404	General Elective I	4	Elective course in humanities or social sciences.	As applicable
		Total Credits:	20		
5	REL-501	Philosophy of Religion in the 20th Century and Postmodernity	6	Analysis of Kierkegaard, Heidegger, analytic philosophy, and critiques of foundationalism.	REL-401
	REL-502	Religious Pluralism and the Exclusivity of Truth	6	Perspectives on religious truth: exclusivism, inclusivism, pluralism.	REL-402
	REL-503	Ethics of Religion and Freedom of Conscience	4	Belief, fundamentalism, and tolerance in public life.	REL-303
	REL-504	Debate and Philosophical Analysis Practice I	4	Development of argumentation skills on religious controversies.	REL-302
		Total Credits:	20		
6	REL-601	Philosophy of History and Eschatology	6	The meaning of human history, progress, the end of time, and hope.	REL-501
	REL-602	Social Doctrine of the Church and the Pluralistic Society	6	Analysis of Catholic Social Teaching as an ethical response to modern challenges.	REL-503
	REL-603	Methodology of Philosophical Research	4	Design, structure, and writing of philosophical research.	REL-403
	REL-604	Teaching Practice and Interreligious Seminar II	4	Intensive experience in teaching philosophy and dialogue.	REL-504
		Total Credits:	20		
7	REL-701	Philosophy of Religion and Secularism	6	Critique of religion (Marx, Nietzsche, Freud) and philosophical responses.	REL-501
	REL-702	History of Religions (West: Judaism and Islam)	6	Philosophical-historical study of the Abrahamic non-Christian religions.	REL-502



	REL-703	Greek Koiné or Hebrew II (Advanced)	4	Reading and translation of biblical or philosophical texts in selected language.	REL-203
	REL-704	Advanced Elective on Author/Topic in Philosophy of Religion	4	Monographic course (e.g., Lonergan, Habermas and Religion, Hindu Philosophy).	As applicable
		Total Credits:	20		
8	REL-801	Integrative Seminar and Thesis	10	Development and defense of original research in Philosophy of Religion.	REL-601
	REL-802	Professional Ethics and Deontology of the Philosopher	6	Ethical principles in teaching, consulting, and conflict mediation.	REL-602
	REL-803	Phenomenology of Religion and Mystical Experience	4	Study of the experience of the sacred, the numinous, and mysticism.	REL-702
		Total Credits:	20		

Methodology and Evaluation

- **Mixed methodology:** Synchronous/asynchronous classes, reading seminars of primary sources (texts in Latin/Greek, in translation or original), logic and argumentation workshops, structured debates, and field practices in interreligious dialogue centers.
- **Continuous evaluation:** Logic exercises, source analysis and translation, argumentative essays, critical reading reports, original philosophical research, and thesis defense.
- **In bilingual modality:** Social and linguistic competencies are evaluated in both languages.

Institutional Remarks and Regulatory Compliance

The university will adapt documentation and admission requirements according to the laws of the State of Texas and the current authorization and accreditation conditions applicable to religious institutions and virtual/hybrid programs.