



Please note that this is not your admissions letter.

Welcome to the University of Gävle and the Master Programme in Religious Studies, 120 credits

This welcome letter gives you a brief introduction to the Master Programme in Religious Studies, a distance study programme, and some useful information about your studies at the University of Gävle.

An introductory session for your programme is held on **29th of August, 10:15-12:00** in room 32:108. Your physical presence is not required as this will be broadcast via videoconference. Here you will receive a short introduction to your programme by me, **Jari Ristiniemi**, your programme director. For questions about the programme you can contact me via e-mail: jri@hig.se or telephone: **+46 (0)26-64 89 86**.

You take your place on the programme by registering for the programme's first courses. You will find instructions on how to do this below.

If you have any problems or questions regarding registration, please contact your Faculty on: [kurs-
aue@hig.se](mailto:kurs-
aue@hig.se). If you fail to register in time you will lose your place on the programme.

If you have been admitted or placed on a waiting list in the first admissions round you have to reply to the Notification of Selection Results you received via universityadmissions.se to keep the place you have been offered. If you have been admitted in the second admissions round you do not have to reply to the Notification of Selection Results, however, if you are not intending to start the programme, it is important that you decline the offer. That way your place can be offered to someone else. You can decline your offer via "My pages" at universityadmissions.se.

Introduction Day for International Students

The International Office at the University of Gävle welcomes you to the Introduction Day for International Students on **24-25 of August**. All international students are encouraged to participate. At the introduction day, you will receive information regarding rules and procedures, as well as practical information about studying and living in Sweden. For further details, please visit hig.se/newstudent.

Please send an e-mail to studentcentrum@hig.se to confirm your attendance at the introduction day.

Get Started with Your Studies!

To get started with your studies please follow these three steps. More information at hig.se/newstudent.

- 1 Activate Your Computer Account**
You can activate your computer account via hig.se/computeraccount two weeks before the semester starts. Your computer account consists of a username and a password and gives you access to the University web services.
- 2 Register for Your Courses**
You must be registered on a course to attend lectures and sit exams. Course registration normally opens one week before the course start date. You will lose your place on the course if you do not register in time. Please register for your course via the Student Portal at studentportal.hig.se

3

Log in to Blackboard

The Blackboard platform is a web-based learning management system where you will find your course material. You can access Blackboard the day after you register for your course. [Log in to Blackboard](#).

Programme information

At the University of Gävle you have the unique possibility to study Religious Studies at master's level. Here, we study the interaction between individual, society and culture during different historical epochs. The influence of religion on current politics, the relationship between aesthetics/art and religion, the relationship between mentality and forms of organisation, as well as different forms of action strategies for a sustainable society, are all issues in focus.

The Master Programme in Religious Studies includes four specialisations, you choose one of these during the second semester: Ethics and leadership; Religion in post-secular society; Environment, health and working life; Religion and folklore in the past and in the present.

A great majority of the world's population say that they are followers of different religious traditions. At the same time, religion is heatedly debated in media. The picture is complex and demands specific tools to avoid simplified assumptions: How can we understand the development of terror organisations like the Islamic State, compared to the parallel growth of Muslim feminism and the struggle for civil rights in the Middle East? How about Syria, is Syria the last secular state in the middle of the growing conservative Islam? How about the scientific worldview, does it really offer an alternative to religious world-views? What kind of leadership does the world need today? The spiritual leadership, what is it? How about the burn-out phenomenon, what is its genesis and how to cope with it? How do indigenous African religious traditions view the human/nature interaction?

As a student on the master programme, you will be offered the opportunity to pose the above-like questions and learn more about diverse religious phenomena. We explore a variety of religions like Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, as well as expressions of "New Age" like Spiritism and shamanism. The religious ways of living are all expressed in a multitude of ways, for example as beliefs, rituals, codes concerning food and dressing, politics, gender roles, and different art genres. The master programme studies these phenomena from historical, contemporary, behavioural and existential perspectives. All are used to understand the interaction between individual, society and culture in today's local/global world. The diminishing influence of traditional religion in different contexts and religious change are also studied. In addition, we also ask the question if there is a difference between what we call religion and spirituality, and if they are related.

This is a modified distance programme. Lectures are given in real time, participation is voluntary and desirable. It is possible to take part in teaching later on www.vicom.se.

Contact Information

If you, after having read the information provided in this letter, still have questions about the programme, you can contact me via e-mail iri@hig.se or telephone +46 026 - 648986.

For other, study-related questions, please contact the Student Centre at studentcentrum@hig.se.

General Information

Library

The library is located in the middle of campus and is open to everybody. You need to visit the library to activate your entrance card as a library card. You can reach all digital resources such as e-books and e-journals after logging in with your computer account. You can read more about the library services at hig.se/biblioteket

Campus

A map of the campus area is available at hig.se/newstudent

HIG Card

This card works as an entrance card and gives you access to doors and computer rooms. The card also works as a library card as well as a copy card. You can get the card at the reception desk at the Student Centre.

IT Support

This is where you turn to if you encounter any problems regarding your computer account or any other IT related problems. The IT support is open for visits 09.00-15.00 in building 22, Monday to Friday. You can also contact them by telephone +46 26 64 88 00 or email itsupport@hig.se

Course syllabus and Reading List

Find your course syllabus at hig.se/syllabuses

Course Schedule

Registered students at the University of Gävle will find their personal course schedules in the Student Portal. If you are not registered, you may find course schedules through our online schedule search service at schema.hig.se

Student Accommodation

You need to apply for accommodation yourself. Please remember to do it in good time before your arrival. You can find information about how to apply for student accommodation at hig.se/newstudent

The Student Centre

At the Student Centre you will meet knowledgeable staff that can assist you in just about anything regarding your studies at the University of Gävle. The Student Centre is located in building 22. You will also find a café in this area and a TV display showing the daily timetabling. You can contact the Student Centre by email at studentcentrum@hig.se

Student support

Sometimes you need help to manage your studies and student life. At the University of Gävle we have several support functions to help you deal with various study-related situations, such as, for example, study counselling, student health, and support for disabled students. For more information about student support at the University of Gävle, please visit hig.se/studiestod