



## Tiedekunnan profiili ja tehtävä

Tiedekunta on uskonnollisiin ja vakaumusellisiin katsomuksiin sitoutumaton tiedeyhteisö. Tiedekunta kouluttaa uskontojen, maailmankatsomusten ja arvojen asiantuntijoita. Tehtävämme on harjoittaa korkeatasoista akateemista tutkimusta ja opetusta uskontoon ja teologiaan liittyvissä historiallisissa, käsitteellisissä ja kulttuurisissa kysymyksissä.

Tiedekunnassa tutkitaan uskontojen yksilöllistä, kulttuurista ja sosiaalista merkitystä historiasta nykypäivään. Tutkittu, syvälinen tieto auttaa ymmärtämään merkittäviä Euroopan ja koko maailmanlaajuisia muutoksia, kuten monikulttuurisuutta, uskonnollisia ääri-ilmiöitä, uskontojen välisiä suhteita, moniarvoisuutta ja hyvinvoinnin tulevaisuutta.

## Faculty profile and mission

The Faculty of Theology at the University of Helsinki is a non-denominational academic community. The faculty educates experts in religious traditions, worldviews and values. Our mission is to offer best scholarly expertise in historical, conceptual, and cultural issues related to religion and theology.

We are committed to conducting research into individual, cultural and social significance of religion in past and present in order to generate in-depth understanding of major changes in contemporary Europe and globally, such as multiculturalism, religious extremism, inter-faith dialogue, value pluralism and the future of welfare.

## Areas of Distinction (Painoalat)

*The Faculty is known for its high-quality, competitive research on international scale. Its expertise and results are widely utilized in society at large. In the distinctive areas, the faculty's research has been found to be of top quality by international evaluations.*

### *Religious Interaction in the Middle East and the Greco-Roman World*

The Centre of Excellence (CoE) "Changes in Sacred Texts and Traditions" identifies major cultural changes in the Middle East, studying how they have influenced the Jewish and Christian biblical traditions – and how these texts have shaped the culture of the Middle East. The CoE "Reason and Religious Recognition" studies the peaceful religious exchange in the Greco-Roman world, aiming to find processes of mutual acceptance amidst of doctrinal and societal disputes. Ritual and socio-cognitive studies of Greco-Roman religious world supplement the work in this field.



#### *The Contribution of Theology to the Modernity*

Theological currents of the early modern period, such as *via moderna*, the Reformation and religious printing, are intensively studied. New research in philosophy of religion deals with the intellectual processes of post-Kantian modernity, such as theodicy and pragmatism. The CoE “Reason and Religious Recognition” focuses on the modern issues of human rights, toleration, mutual recognition and ecumenism. Research on the encounter between Islam and modern Western thought is growing. With the help of both CoEs, the study of Judaism and Islam is strengthened.

#### *Well-Being, Values and Sustainability*

Cooperation in care and the power of compassion in professional life are among the Faculty’s prominent research undertakings. These studies pay attention to contemporary religious life, values and voluntary work. The meaningful life-course of people in welfare societies is investigated with the view of both the elderly and the young. Discussions on well-being and human rights are important in social ethics. Ecotheology and other global issues of sustainability, such as justice in health care, increasingly shape this field.

#### *Religious Change in Finland and Europe*

One special task of the Faculty is to study Finnish religious phenomena. Domestic issues are approached in the context of broader European developments that demand new methodological and theoretical insights. The study of body and gender in Finnish religious identities, religion and the media, the religion of immigrants, Finnish religious pluralism and its relations to global developments are among research ventures of this kind.

#### *Religion in the Structures of Society and Culture*

Religious and theological movements are increasingly studied with the view of their political and cultural contexts, employing different historical and contemporary methodologies. Religious convictions, symbols and practices are seen as root causes that prompt and explain societal change. Interdisciplinary co-operation is vital in such undertakings.

*While these areas of distinction identify both the existing track record and the promising new ventures in our research, they also contribute to the “Religion, Conflict, and Dialogue” programme and other interdisciplinary teaching activities in the faculty. In this and other programmes, issues of globalization, gender and religious pluralism, Islamic theology and Jewish studies need increasing expertise that accompanies research-based teaching.*

### **Strategically prioritized key research areas for 2017:**

- Religious Interaction in the Middle East and the Greco-Roman World
- Religion, Toleration and Ecumenism
- Religion and Well-Being
- Global Religion, Sustainable Society and Religious Changes in Finland