

Religion Studies

Department Home Page

The religion studies department is committed to the academic investigation of religion as an intrinsic and vital dimension of human culture. The scholarly study of religion is an integral facet of a liberal arts education. The student of religion is engaged in the critical and interpretive task of understanding patterns of religious thought and behavior as aspects of the human cultural experience.

Religion studies is interdisciplinary in that it draws upon humanistic and social scientific modes of inquiry. These include historical, philosophical, sociological, anthropological, and psychological perspectives. Religion studies is a cross-cultural, comparative discipline concerned with the character and significance of the major religious traditions of the world. The student of religion confronts ethical problems and basic issues of value and meaning raised by modern multicultural and technological society.

Professors. Dena S Davis, JD (University of Virginia); Michael L. Raposa, PhD (University of Pennsylvania); Lloyd H Steffen, PhD (Brown University); Benjamin G. Wright, III, PhD (University of Pennsylvania)

Associate Professors. Jodi Eichler-Levine, PhD (Columbia University); Hartley Lachter, PhD (New York University); Monica R. Miller, PhD (Chicago Theological Seminary); Robert Thomas Rozehnal, PhD (Duke University)

Assistant Professors. Khurram Hussain, PhD (Yale University); Annabella Pitkin, PhD (Columbia University)

Emeriti. Alice L. Eckardt, MA (Lehigh University); Norman J. Girardot, PhD (University of Chicago); Kenneth L. Kraft, PhD (Princeton University); Laurence J. Silberstein, PhD (Brandeis University); Lenore E. Chava Weissler, PhD (University of Pennsylvania)

MAJOR IN RELIGION STUDIES

The major in religion studies consists of 32 credit hours of coursework (eight courses). Requirements include:

- In consultation with a major advisor from the departmental faculty, students will devise a balanced plan of study responsive to individual needs and interests. The curriculum for each major will demonstrate exposure to a diversity of approaches to the interdisciplinary, trans-cultural field of religion studies.
- At least four courses at the 100 level or above.
- REL 374 Seminar for Majors

The department recommends that in consultation with a major advisor, students concentrate in one of the major religious traditions, or in a comparative or thematic approach to the study of religion. The concentration should include at least four courses. Language study appropriate to the concentration is also desirable.

Students are particularly encouraged to consider a joint or double major with another major field from any of the three colleges at the university.

DEPARTMENTAL HONORS

Religion studies majors are admitted to honors by invitation of the departmental faculty toward the end of the student's junior year. To be eligible, a student must have attained at least a 3.25 average in his or her major program by the end of the junior year. Upon admittance to honors, the student will work out a special program of studies for the senior year with the major advisor, culminating in the writing of a senior essay.

MINOR IN RELIGION STUDIES

The minor in religion studies consists of a total of 16 credits. The specific courses to be taken by each student are to be decided upon jointly by the student and the departmental advisor. Ordinarily, the student will be expected to take one introductory course unless specifically exempted by the department chair.

Courses

REL 001 Sacred Scriptures in Religious Traditions 4 Credits

An encounter with the different sacred books of the world's major religions. Both the books and differing attitudes in these traditions towards sacred books are examined. Books investigated include the Bhagavad Gita, the Analects of Confucius, the Qur'an and the Jewish and Christian Bibles.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 002 (HMS 002) Death and Dying: Religious and Ethical Perspectives 4 Credits

Introduces students to the study of religion, world religious traditions and ethics through an exploration of death and dying. Rituals, practices and texts focused on death provide the basis for comparative study of Asian and Western religious approaches to the meaning and mystery of death as it confronts individuals and communities. Attention will also be given to moral justification for deaths brought about by human actions (i.e., killings). Specific issues include suicide, war deaths, abortion, euthanasia and state-sponsored execution.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 003 (PHIL 003) Global Religion, Global Ethics 4 Credits

Introduction to philosophical and religious modes of moral thinking, with attention given to ethical issues as they arise cross-culturally in and through religious traditions. The course will reference the United Nations Millennium Goals to consider family life and the role of women, social justice, the environment, and ethical ideals. Particular focus varies but may include one or more of the following: abortion and reproductive health, the death penalty, religiously motivated violence, and problems of personal disorder (heavy drinking, anorexia, vengeance).

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 005 Spiritual Exercises in Religious Traditions 4 Credits

Explores a variety of religious disciplines developed in various traditions, ranging from the practice of yoga and the martial arts to various forms of prayer, meditation, and asceticism.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 006 Religion and Ecological Crisis 4 Credits

Past and present responses to nature in world religions. Contemporary topics include the animal rights debate, ecofeminism, and the development of environmental ethics. Is "the end of nature" at hand? Why is the environment a religious issue?

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 009 Spiritual Journeys 4 Credits

A comparative survey of spiritual traveling—from overland pilgrimages to inward journeys in search of truth. Through autobiographies, diaries, poetry and films, students encounter the experiences of seekers from diverse religious traditions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 010 (ASIA 010, PHIL 010) Intro to Buddhism: Love Death and Freedom 4 Credits

This course will introduce students to Buddhist practices, philosophical systems, and cultural forms, from Buddhism's Indian origins to its spread in East Asia and Tibet. Students will explore how Buddhists have approached the problem of death, the possibility of freedom, and the forms of social and individual love and concern. Course materials include poetry, biographies, philosophical writings, art and film.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 011 (GS 011) Introduction to World Religions 4 Credits

Living and working in a globalizing 21st century requires an understanding of diverse religious and cultural identities. In this course, students will be introduced to the history, ideas, and practices from a wide variety of the world's religious traditions.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 012 (ASIA 012) Mountains, Buddhas, Ancestors: Introduction to East Asian Religions 4 Credits

This course explores the principal religions of East Asia, including Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, and Shamanic Traditions. What is each tradition's view of human potential? How is ultimate reality depicted and experienced? What do home altars, boisterous festivals, and silent meditation halls have in common? Several primary texts are read in translation.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 013 (GS 013) Religion and Food 4 Credits

This course explores the complex connections between religion and food. We will examine food-related rituals, including Jewish Passover seders, Christian communion, and Hindu puja; the role of gastronomy in forming religious and ethnic identity; and the global ethics of food and sustainability. We will also probe the notion of food itself as sacred. Are "foodies" engaging in their own sort of sacred actions? How does food connect with the sublime? The class will include tastings and outings as scheduling permits.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 014 "Virtual" Religion 4 Credits

The contemporary world is replete with social phenomena that resemble religious thought and practice – sports fandom, trekkies, nationalistic rituals, online gaming, military camaraderie and codes, environmental activism, etc. In this course we will explore and discuss many of these "virtually" religious phenomena through the lens of the study of religion.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 025 (AAS 025) Introduction to Black Religions and Hip-Hop 4 Credits

Rapper KRS ONE once stated that, "Rap is something you do and Hip-Hop is something you live." This course thinks through the global evolution of Hip-Hop culture and the public and academic study of Black Religions as responses to structural and historical inequality and the search for meaning in culture by considering themes of resistance, constraint, power, the body, deviance, and morality over and against race, class, gender, and sexuality from a range of academic and cultural sources.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 044 (GS 044) Religious Fundamentalism in Global Perspective 4 Credits

This course will explore the rise of fundamentalist religious movements and their involvement in violent conflicts. Topics to be considered will include the relationship between fundamentalist religious ideologies and terrorism, and the kinds of responses that fundamentalist religious movements present to the development of a global marketplace and the spread of secular nationalisms.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 056 (ASIA 056, MLL 056) Monkey Business 4 Credits

The search for immortality by Monkey, kongfu master and mischievous monk, is one of the most popular tales in Asia. A combination of comedy and religious quest, the traditional novel "Journey to the West" is filled with tricks and lively storytelling that teach without preaching. The class will read the entire novel looking carefully at the social context of its production but also its timeless lessons for transcendence.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 060 (ASIA 060) Religions of South Asia 4 Credits

A thematic introduction to the foundational religious traditions of South Asia: Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Islam. Students explore the social and spiritual dimensions of these religious worlds through scripture, ritual practices, narrative and teaching traditions, music and art.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 062 (GS 062) Explorations in Dialogue 4 Credits

Course critically investigates inter-religious dialogue, an important issue in the contemporary academic study of religion. Focus will be on the problem of inter-religious encounter; religion and globalization; different models of dialogue; and the questions of power and identity. At least two traditions will be put into conversation for any proposed offering (e.g., Christian-Buddhist, Jewish-Muslim, Jewish-Christian).

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 073 (JST 073) The Jewish Tradition 4 Credits

Judaism is both a textual tradition and a lived religion. Students read basic Jewish texts—Bible, Talmud, Midrash—and study the ways Jews sanctify the life cycle through rites of passage, and the round of the year through the festival cycle.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 075 The Christian Tradition 4 Credits

Introduction to the Christian tradition from its early variety and subsequent classical definition in the church councils up to the enlightenment. Special emphasis will be placed on the multiform interpretations of the Christian message.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 077 (ASIA 077, GS 077) The Islamic Tradition 4 Credits

A thematic introduction to Islamic history, doctrine and practice. Topics include: Qur'an; prophecy and sacred history; ritual practices; community life; legal interpretation; art and aesthetics; mysticism; politics and polemics.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 079 Religion and Fantasy Literature 4 Credits

A survey of the religious themes that entered fantasy literature in the 1950s in the works of C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien, and the humanist resistance to those themes in works by J. K. Rowling, Philip Pullman, or others.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 081 (JST 081) Jewish Mysticism 4 Credits

This course will examine both the history and the central texts and ideas of the Jewish mystical tradition. We will read a broad range of texts, including the ancient Sefer Yetzirah or Book of Creation, the Zohar, the works of Isaac Luria and his disciples, and the writings of some of the 18th and 19th century Hasidic rabbis. We will also explore the contemporary emergence of Kabbalah and the activities of the Kabbalah Center in contemporary America.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 099 Special Topics 1-4 Credits

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

REL 102 (AAS 102, ENGL 102, JST 102) Promised Lands: Jewish and African American Children's Literature 4 Credits

In the Hebrew Bible, Psalm 137 asks, "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" For Jews, blacks, and black Jews, this was and is a poignant question. This course examines how these two rich, often overlapping and interacting groups tell their stories in literature for children and young adults, with a particular focus on the mediation of traumatic pasts. What does it mean to imagine promised lands beyond such pasts—and can they be reached?

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 110 (ASIA 110, MLL 110) Drinking and Immortality 4 Credits

This class explores modes of transcendence and their expression in literature and art, but most especially poetry. The primary focus is the role of drinking alcoholic beverages in traditional Chinese society and religion, but also on other modes and what is meant by the search for immortality - and the use of inner versus outer alchemy - will be examined.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 111 (JST 111) Jewish Scriptures/Old Testament 4 Credits

The religious expression of the Hebrews, Israelites, and Jews as found in the Jewish Scriptures (TANAK/Christian Old Testament). Near Eastern context of Hebrew religion, the Patriarchs, the Exodus, the monarchy, prophecy, Exile and Return. Emphasis on historical, literary, critical problems, and newer socio-historical methods.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 112 (JST 112) The Beginnings of Judaism and Jewish Origins: Jewish Diversity in the Greco-Roman World 4 Credits

The variety of approaches to Judaism in the period following the Babylonian exile through the second century C.E. The literature studied will include Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 114 (CLSS 114, JST 114) Christian Origins: New Testament and the Beginnings of Christianity 4 Credits

Early Christianity from its beginnings until the end of the second century. Coverage includes the Jewish and Hellenistic matrices of Christianity, traditions about the life of Jesus and his significance, and the variety of belief and practice of early Christians. Emphasis on encountering primary texts.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 115 (PSYC 115) Religion And Psychology 4 Credits

A study of the origins, development and consequences of religion from a psychological perspective. Attention will be given to classic and contemporary sources, with a focus on major psychoanalytic theorists of religion (Freud, Jung, Erikson); psychological analyses of religious experience (e.g., Wm. James, Victor Frankl); and the diverse cultural and religious forms that structure the connection between religion and psychology (e.g., Buddhist psychology, Japanese Morita therapy).

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 116 (HMS 116, PHIL 116) Bioethics 4 Credits

Moral issues that arise in the context of health care and related biomedical fields in the United States today, examined in the light of the nature and foundation of moral rights and obligations. Topics include: confidentiality, informed consent, euthanasia, medical research and experimentation, genetics, and the distribution of health care.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 119 (ASIA 119, GS 119) The Podcast and the Lotus 4 Credits

Buddhism is increasingly a global phenomenon. Contemporary Buddhist teachers stay in touch with students via podcasts, WeChat, Twitter and Facebook. Buddhists from Singapore, Tibet, Japan, Mexico, Taiwan or Pennsylvania now meet via new technology. This class asks, how is Buddhism now a global religion? what effect has this had? How is Buddhism a "modern" religion? Students explore issues of conversion, modernity, globalization, new technology, migration and travel. Sources include autobiography, film, travel writing, political essays, interviews, social media, ethnography.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 121 (JST 121) Sources for the Life of Jesus: the Jewish and Christian Context 4 Credits

Ancient sources that claim to provide information about Jesus of Nazareth. Approaches taken to Jesus' life and career; early Christian interpretations of the significance of Jesus; methodology in assessing evidence for the historical Jesus and his message.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 122 (JST 122) Archaeology and the Bible 4 Credits

In this course we will examine the way that archaeological work can inform the study of the Bible. One important consideration is how archaeological data have been used either to confirm or falsify the biblical texts. We will look at how archaeologists work and how archaeological data and the Bible intersect. We will examine in detail several archaeological sites in order to understand better the difficulties in interpreting the material remains that archaeologists dig up.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 123 (JST 123) Armageddon: Endtime Thinking in Judaism and Christianity 4 Credits

Thinking about how the world will end was an important feature of certain types of ancient Judaism. Early Christianity took over many of these ideas, and they became fundamental to later Christian theologies, including many that continue to be advocated today. This course will look at ancient Jewish and Christian texts that speak about the end of the world and will trace some of them through more contemporary developments in these two religious traditions.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 124 (PHIL 124) Philosophy Of Religion 4 Credits

A critical look, from a philosophical perspective, at some fundamental problems of religion: The nature of religious experience and belief, reason and revelation, the existence and nature of God, the problem of evil, and religious truth.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 125 Comparative Religious Ethics 4 Credits

How have thinkers within the three major Abrahamic traditions handled ethical questions and dilemmas throughout history? This course will focus on many issues including but not limited to violence and pacifism, debates concerning revelation versus reason, the different accounts of justice and peace, the nature of scripture and the divine. We will look comparatively both within and across these traditions.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 129 (JST 129, PHIL 129) Jewish Philosophy 4 Credits

Consideration of how major Jewish thinkers from the first to 21st centuries confronted questions at the intersection of religion and philosophy: the existence and nature of God, free will, evil, divine providence, miracles, creation, revelation, and religious obligation.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 138 (JST 138, WGSS 138) Sex, Gender, Jews 4 Credits

How do Jews of all genders tell their stories? What are the varied Jewish approaches to sexuality? How have feminist movements affected Jewish rituals? In this course, we will consider how religion, gender, sexuality, race, and class intersect in the lives of Jews, with a particular focus on North America. Topics and will include: Jewish women's memoirs; the voices of LGBTQ Jews; recent innovations in Jewish ritual and leadership; Jewish masculinities; and the gendering of Jewish children's literature, among others.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 139 (ANTH 139, JST 139) Jewish Folklore 4 Credits

Examines the transformation of folk and popular Judaism from the Old World, through the period of immigration to America, to ethnic and later forms of American Jewish culture. Attention paid to concept of folklore revivals and their meanings. Four case studies: folk tales and storytelling, klezmer music, life-cycle rituals, and food.

Attribute/Distribution: SS

REL 140 (GS 140) Globalization and Religion 4 Credits

This course examines the complexity of globalization and its multi-layered impact on religious identity and piety. Though comparative in methodology and historical framework, the class will give special attention to Islam and Hinduism in South Asia. Topics include: European colonialism; Orientalism and its legacy; religious nationalism; Islamophobia; and the Internet and mass media.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 141 (PHIL 141) Medieval Islamic Philosophy 4 Credits

The medieval era was the golden age of Islamic civilization. Science, mathematics, theology, philosophy, logic, jurisprudence, and many other disciplines flourished during that time. Islamic scientific and philosophical thoughts were greatly influenced by the Greek intellectual tradition, and in turn the Islamic intellectual tradition influenced European thoughts during the Middle Ages and beyond. The course is an introduction to medieval Islamic philosophy. There is no indigenous Islamic philosophy other than medieval Islamic philosophy. Reading selections include works by al-Kindi, al-Razi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), al-Ghazali, Ibn al-Fayl, and Ibn Rushd (Averroes). The goal is to attain a thorough understanding of the reading selections instead of covering a large number of treatises.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 143 (GS 143) Religious Nationalism in a Global Perspective 4 Credits

Religion has become a renewed political force on the world stage in recent years. This course will focus on how religion has often provided both the ideological language and the organizing principles for many modern nationalisms. Our exploration of this topic will take the form of case studies from various parts of the world, including but not limited to Pakistan, Israel, No. Ireland, India, Iran and USA.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 145 (ASIA 145, GS 145) Islam and the Modern World 4 Credits

Examines how numerous Muslim thinkers-religious scholars, modernists, and Islamists-have responded to the changes and challenges of the colonial and post-colonial eras. Special emphasis is placed on the public debates over Islamic authority and authenticity in contemporary South Asia.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 147 (ASIA 147, GS 147) Pilgrims, Bandits, Traders, Nuns: Traveling Religious Identities in Asia 4 Credits

This course examines religious networks linking Chinese, Tibetan, Himalayan, and Inner Asian people, places, and institutions to Asia and the world. We explore examples of 19th, 20th century and present day transnational religious identities, emerging from trade, religious travel and pilgrimage, refugee migrations, labor migrations, and modern day leisure travel. We consider religious identity, nationalism, transnationalism, and globalization, using literary, historical, and ethnographic sources, and film, video, and popular media.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 148 (GS 148) Islam Across Cultures 4 Credits

Explores the Muslim world's diversity and dynamism in multiple cultural contexts-from the Middle East and North Africa, to Asia and America-through literature, ethnography, and films. Topics include: travel and trade networks; education; women and gender; Islam and cultural pluralism; colonialism; and identity politics.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 149 Modern Islamic Ethics 4 Credits

This course will focus on developments in Islamic thinking and ethics that emerge from the modern encounter between Muslim societies and the West. We will discuss Islamic modernism and fundamentalism through short primary texts from a variety of modern Muslim thinkers.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 152 (JST 152) American Judaism 4 Credits

Diverse cultural and social forms through which American Jews express their distinct identity. Is American Jewry an example of assimilation and decline or creative transformation? What, if anything, do American Jews share in common? Compatibility of Judaism with individualism, pluralism, and voluntarism. How have the Holocaust and the State of Israel shaped the self-understanding of American Jewry?

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 154 (HIST 154, JST 154) The Holocaust: History and Meaning 4 Credits

The Nazi Holocaust in its historical, political and religious setting. Emphasis upon the moral, cultural and theological issues raised by the Holocaust.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 156 (JST 156) Judaism and Comic Books 4 Credits

Is The Thing Jewish? What does Superman have to do with the bible? Do Orthodox Jewish girls fight trolls? In this course, we will closely examine comic books and graphic novels in order to expand our understanding of what Jewishness might mean. With a POW! and a BAM!, we will consider many topics "from Krakow to Krypton," including American Jewish history, how representations of Jews are gendered, global Jewish traditions, monsters and mutations, biblical adaptations, and more!

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 157 (HIST 157) Europe in the Age of the Reformation 4 Credits

The breakup of the religious culture of medieval Christian Europe in the reformation movements of the sixteenth century. The origins and varieties of Protestantism; the intersection of religious ideas and politics in Germany, Switzerland, Britain, France, and the Netherlands; the "wars of religion" and the emergence of the European state system.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 159 Roman Catholicism in the Modern World 4 Credits

A survey of the various intellectual, cultural, political and ecclesiastical developments that have shaped contemporary Roman Catholic life and thought.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 161 (GS 161, JST 161) Globalization in the Ancient Mediterranean 4 Credits

We often think of globalization as a modern phenomenon. Yet as early as the twelfth century BCE, transportation, trade, political and religious networks tied the Mediterranean basin together. This course will examine in three periods-the Late Bronze Age, the Hellenistic period, and the Roman period-how these networks were organized and how they affected a range of Mediterranean and Near Eastern peoples. We will use some modern approaches to globalization as analytical tools for understanding the ancient world.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 162 (ASIA 162) Zen Buddhism 4 Credits

History, doctrines, and practices of Zen Buddhism in China, Japan, and the West. Monastic life, notable Zen masters, Zen's cultural impact, and enlightenment. Current aspects of the Zen tradition. (Optional meditation workshop.)

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 166 (ASIA 166, GS 166) Religious Nationalism in South Asia 4 Credits

This course explores the conflation and conflict of religion and politics in one of the most complex, dynamic and volatile regions on the planet (South Asia). Through literature, film and scholarly writings, students will examine the history of cooperation and conflict between the Muslim and Hindu communities in South Asia-from the movements for national independence to twenty-first century identity politics.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 167 (ASIA 167) Engaged Buddhism 4 Credits

Examines a contemporary international movement that applies Buddhist teachings and practices to social, political, and environmental issues. Topics include: important thinkers, forms of engagement, and areas of controversy.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 168 (ASIA 168) Buddhism in the Modern World 4 Credits

Explores contemporary Buddhism in Asia, America, and Europe. Topics include the plight of Tibet, Buddhist environmentalism, and the emergence of a socially engaged Buddhism. How are Westerners adapting this ancient tradition to address present-day concerns?

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 171 (SOC 171) Religion And Society 4 Credits

An introduction to the sociology of religion. Covers classical and contemporary approaches to defining and studying the role of religion in society. Emphasis on understanding religious beliefs and practices in the United States, the sources and contours of religious change, and the effects of religion on individuals and society. Specific topics include religious fundamentalism, religious conversion, religious practices and authority, secularization, religion in public life, religion in social change, religious terrorism, and the ways in which religion impacts our personal health, educational attainment, and family life.

Attribute/Distribution: SS

REL 172 (ASIA 172) Tibetan Buddhism and Society 4 Credits

This course examines the history, rituals, practices and art of the Tibetan Buddhist world, and the interaction of Tibetan Buddhism with the Tibetan Bon religion and Tibetan Islam. Students will explore film, autobiography, visual arts, and religious writings, asking, How has Tibetan Buddhism shaped Tibetan societies, as well as neighboring cultures in East Asia and Inner Asia? In what ways is Tibetan Buddhism now a global religion?

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 174 (JST 174) Contemporary Theology 4 Credits

Major 20th century movements within Christian and Jewish theology understood as responses to the problems of modern times. May be repeated for credit as the subject matter varies.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 177 (JST 177, THTR 177) Jews and the Broadway Musical 4 Credits

The history of American musical theater is deeply interwoven with the history of American Jews. This course examines how Jews have taken part in musical theater on multiple levels—as composers, lyricists, producers, and performers, among other roles. It also examines how Jews are depicted in Broadway musicals, with particular attention to gender and ethnicity.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 180 (HIST 180) Religion and the American Experience 4 Credits

The historic development of major American religious groups from colonial times to the present; their place in social and political life, and the impact of the national experience upon them.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 182 (WGSS 182) Sex and Gender in the Bible 4 Credits

The Bible is often invoked—and often simplistically—as an authoritative source in contemporary discussions about the role of women and what kinds of human sexual expression is acceptable. This course will examine how sex and gender are constructed in different biblical periods and biblical books. We will see that things are not nearly as simple as they are often made out to be.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 184 (WGSS 184) Religion, Gender and Power 4 Credits

Gender differences as one of the basic legitimations for the unequal distribution of power in Western society. Feminist critiques of the basic social structures, cultural forms, and hierarchies of power within religious communities, and the ways in which religious groups have responded.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 185 (HIST 185, JST 185) Modern Jewish History 1800-2000 4 Credits

This course examines the emergence of distinct forms of Jewish culture in the modern age that challenge or depart from traditional Jewish sources and authority. Included are an examination of Freud's psychology, Chagall's paintings and Woody Allen's films.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 187 Science, Technology, and the Religious Imagination 4 Credits

Impact of the scientific and technological culture on the Western religious imagination. Roots of science and technology in religious ideas and images. Ways of knowing and concepts of experience in religion and science.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 188 Religion and Literature 4 Credits

Religious themes in the modern novel or the spiritual autobiography. Melville, Tolstoy, Camus, Updike, Walker, and Morrison; or Woolman, Tolstoy, Malcolm X, Wiesel, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Kukai.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 192 (ASIA 192, PHIL 192) Lehigh in Japan: Kyoto I 3 Credits

This is one of 2 courses that will be part of an intensive international summer school course to take start Summer 2016 in Kyoto University. Students will study aspects of Western and Japanese philosophical thought in a small group led by local and international speakers. Participants in the class will also be local and international. Students will be expected to attend all classes for a number of hours over a period of two weeks.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 193 (ASIA 193, PHIL 193) Lehigh in Japan: Kyoto II 3 Credits

A second component of the Philosophy summer school in Kyoto will involve a series of excursions to galleries, museums, temples, shrines, stores, and restaurants. Students can expect to develop their understanding of both Japanese aesthetics and the way in which the philosophical systems present in Japan have influenced the Japanese aesthetic sensibility. Students will be required to submit a series of shorter pieces of writing and a final project.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 213 (CLSS 213, HIST 213) Ancient Roman Religion 4 Credits

Religious experience of the Roman people from prehistory to end of the empire. Nature of polytheism and its interactions with monotheism (Christianity, Judaism). Theories of religion. Emphasis on primary source materials.

Attribute/Distribution: SS

REL 220 (ASIA 220) Poet, Meditator, King: Classics of East Asian Religion 4 Credits

Classic texts of East Asia and an introduction to the traditions they represent. What do these texts teach about reality, humanity, divinity, virtue and society? How is the path of personal and social transformation presented?

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 221 (ASIA 221) Topics in Asian Religions 4 Credits

Selected thematic and comparative issues in different Asian religious traditions. May include Buddhism and Christianity, religion and martial arts, Asian religions in America, Taoist meditation, Zen and Japanese business, Buddhist ethics. (H/S).

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

REL 222 Topics In Western Religions 4 Credits

Selected historical, thematic, and comparative issues in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 224 (PHIL 224) Topics in the Philosophy of Religion 4 Credits

Selected problems and issues in the philosophy of religion. Must have completed one HU designated course in Philosophy.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 225 Topics in Religion and Ethics 4 Credits

Analysis of various moral problems and social value questions. Possible topics include: environmental and non-human animal ethics; medical ethics; drug and alcohol abuse; spiritual meaning of anorexia.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 226 (HMS 226) From Black Death to AIDS: Plague, Pandemic, Ethics and Religion 4 Credits

An investigation into the way religion and morality shape interpretations of plague and pandemics. Three specific pandemics are examined: the bubonic plague of the 14th century, the 1918 influenza pandemic, and the current global AIDS crisis. Moral issues provoked by institutional, political and social responses to pandemic disease are also considered.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 228 Theories Of Religion 4 Credits

What is religion? Does it have a universal, cross-cultural and trans-creedal essence? Drawing on numerous academic disciples, the course engages the major issues and most influential authors in the academic study of comparative religions.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 230 (JST 230) Kabbalah: Jewish Mystical Tradition 4 Credits

Explores the history of the quest to know God, through mystical experience or theosophical speculation, as found in Jewish tradition. Examines such issues as the tensions between institutional religion and personal religious experience, between views of God as immanent in the world or transcending it, and between imagery for God and religious experience of God.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 231 (JST 231) Classic Jewish Texts 4 Credits

Many people know that the Hebrew Bible ("Old Testament") is a foundational scripture for Judaism. Fewer are familiar with the post-biblical Jewish classics. Yet these works shaped the understanding of God, the identity of the Jewish people, and the vision of history and of the ethical life that inform Judaism today. As students read the Talmud, Midrash, and traditional prayer-book, they will become familiar with the wisdom of the rabbinic sages, and the central concepts of Judaism.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 241 (PHIL 241) Critics Of Religion 4 Credits

A seminar devoted to an analysis of the critiques of religion in the writings of Benedict Spinoza, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Michel Foucault and William E. Connolly.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 247 (ASIA 247, GS 247) Islamic Mysticism 4 Credits

Sufism, the inner or 'mystical' dimension of Islam, has deep historical roots and diverse expressions throughout the Muslim world. Students examine Sufi doctrine and ritual, the master-disciple relationship, and the tradition's impact on art and music, poetry and prose.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 251 (CLSS 251) Classical Mythology 4 Credits

Myth, religion and ritual in ancient Greece and Rome. Emphasis on primary sources; introduction to ancient and modern theories of myth. Cross-cultural material.

Attribute/Distribution: SS

REL 254 (ASIA 254, ES 254) Buddhism and Ecology 4 Credits

Buddhism's intellectual, ethical, and spiritual resources are reexamined in light of contemporary environmental problems. Is Buddhism the most green of the major world religions? What are the moral implications of actions that affect the environment?

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 262 Critics of Modernity 4 Credits

Many modern thinkers find modernity and its forms of social organization and politics to be deeply troubling. Including both religious and non-religious critiques, this course will explore the varying meanings of modernity and how these thinkers challenge such meanings. Critics including but not limited to Gandhi, Hannah Arendt, Reinhold Niebuhr, Sayyid Qutb, Alasdair MacIntyre and Ruhollah Khomeini.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 300 Apprentice Teaching 1-4 Credits

REL 317 (ENGL 317) Topics in Jewish Literature 4 Credits
Selected topics in Jewish literature, which may include: Contemporary Jewish Literature, Philip Roth's Complaint, and Jewish Women Writers.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 335 (ANTH 335) Religion, Witchcraft And Magic 4 Credits

Addresses broad questions about supernatural beliefs as systems of meaning and as practical and moral guides, with a focus on theoretical explanations for supernatural beliefs and the function of religious specialists in the social organization of cultures.

Attribute/Distribution: SS

REL 337 (ANTH 337, ASIA 337) Buddhism and Society 4 Credits

In this course we approach Buddhism as a lived tradition rather than as a textual tradition. We examine how Buddhist practices are integrated into local traditions and how religious practices become part of the larger social, political, and value systems. Societies examined may include Thailand, Nepal, Japan, China, and the United States. Students will develop a comparative framework that includes Theravada, Tibetan, and Zen Buddhism.

Attribute/Distribution: SS

REL 347 (AMST 347, PHIL 347) American Religious Thinkers 3-4 Credits

An examination of the writings of key figures in the history of American religious thought (such as Edwards, Emerson, Bushnell, Peirce, James, Royce, Dewey and the Niebuhrs). Attention will be directed both to the historical reception of these writings and to their contemporary significance.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 350 Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective 4 Credits

This research seminar attempts to identify the conditions under which religious parties arise and become influential, how religion influences popular understandings of secular politics and the extent to which religion is a necessary feature of modern public discourse. These topics are explored through country specific cases from around the world.

Attribute/Distribution: SS

REL 361 Fieldwork 1-4 Credits

Opportunity for students to work, or observe under supervision, religious organizations or institutions. Consent of chair required.

Attribute/Distribution: ND

REL 371 Directed Readings 1-4 Credits

Intensive study in areas appropriate to the interests and needs of students and staff.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: ND

REL 374 Seminar for Majors 4 Credits

A capstone seminar for departmental majors. Considers the methodologies of religious studies and assesses current issues in the field. Offers opportunities for in-depth work on a particular tradition under the guidance of a faculty member. Offered in spring semester.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

REL 375 (SOC 375) The Christian Right In America 4 Credits

What do we know about the Christian Right? Who are they? What do they believe? Where do they come from? Seminar explores answers to such questions through a focus on the history of the Christian Right as well as its ideologies and beliefs, the people who are a part of it, and its evolving relationship to the American political system.

Attribute/Distribution: SS

REL 389 Honors Project for Eckardt Scholars 1-8 Credits

Opportunity for Eckardt Scholars to pursue an extended project for senior honors. May be repeated for credit up to a maximum 12 credit hours. Transcript will identify department in which project was completed. Consent of department required.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

REL 391 Senior Thesis in Religion 4 Credits

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: ND