

# 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); Jodi Eichler-Levine, PhD (Columbia University); Michael L. Raposa, PhD (University of Pennsylvania); Robert Thomas Rozehnal, PhD (Duke University); Lloyd H Steffen, PhD (Brown University); Benjamin G. Wright, III, PhD (University of Pennsylvania)

**Associate Professors.** Khurram Hussain, PhD (Yale University); Hartley Lachter, PhD (New York University); Monica R. Miller, PhD (Chicago Theological Seminary)

**Assistant Professors.** Christopher Mark Driscoll, PhD (Rice University); Annabella Pitkin, PhD (Columbia University)

**Emeriti.** Norman J. Girardot, PhD (University of Chicago); 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 (ETH 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 (ETH 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 007 What Is Religion? 4 Credits

The word "religion" is fairly recent in origin, its linguistic roots unclear, and the phenomena that it has been used to designate both vast and amorphous. This course explores some of the most prominent attempts to define "religion," definitions produced both by religious thinkers and by critics of religion. We will examine some of the methods used by scholars to study religion. Finally, we will ask how the meaning of the word may be shifting in a modern, secular age.

**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 across Asia and globally. 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 015 Engineering the Impossible 4 Credits**

Good intentions do not always lead to good results. Engineering the Impossible turns to religious studies to think through the most amazing technological successes and the social, ecological, and economic costs associated with scientifically and technologically engineering the impossible. Topics include the technological singularity, internet privacy, eugenics, and cutting-edge military research and development, this course is for anyone who might ever have to ask the question: "Sure, we can make that happen, but should we?"

**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 032 Religion of Disney 4 Credits**

In its vast scope, power, various forms of consumer products, and enormous intellectual property holdings (including Star Wars and the Marvel Cinematic Universe, as well as its recent acquisition of 20th Century Fox), the Walt Disney Company has tremendous influence over modern American--and global--society. This course uses the rubric of "religion" to investigate both the fan culture surrounding Disney and its many properties, and the company's corporate aspirations, structure and ethos.

**Attribute/Distribution:** HU

**REL 036 (WGSS 036) New Black Godz 4 Credits**

From celebrity self-defining agents of material abundance (Jay Z) to those posthumously made gods after tragically succumbing to socially-sanctioned sacrifice (Breonna Taylor), "New Black Godz" explores black icons at the center and margins of promise and peril. Following hip hop and black expressive cultures' signifying on gods, we explore means/modes of black godz' creative manipulation of identity and social difference, and ingenuity of transmuting "problem" status into creative ingenuity at the crossroads of social mobility and the limits of escape.

**Attribute/Distribution:** HU

**REL 040 Is God Dead? Past, Present, Future 4 Credits**

Is God Dead? Some people think so. Do you? Come decide for yourself. This course looks at the idea of god in Western philosophy and theology, with particular attention to death of god movement(s), and the changing shape of these movements in light of culture wars and identity politics. The course surveys key thinkers to ask questions about the origins, functions, and future of god and gods in the contemporary world. Posed as an ongoing question-Is god dead?

**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 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 066 Religion and the Paranormal 4 Credits**

UFOs. Cattle Mutilations. Demonic Possession. Telepathy. Is any of this stuff real? What does real mean, anyway? Ask an "experienter" and the answer is surely yes, but ask a skeptic and it is all make believe. Following weekly case-studies, students will leave the class with the ability to critically compare various beliefs, and with awareness of the relationship between experience, belief, and what we know about the world.

**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 080 Religion and Violence 4 Credits**

In this course we will explore the relationship between religious ideology with acts of violence. By examining a wide range of different instances of religious violence among Christians, Jews and Muslims, along with their accompanying ideologies, we will consider the relationship between religious affiliation, communally shared modes of discourse, and violent conflict.

**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 088 Religion and Science Fiction 4 Credits**

This course explores major concepts in religion studies through science fiction literature, television, and film. Themes to be covered include (but are not limited to): Utopias/Dystopias, Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality, Alternative Worlds, Human and PostHuman Futures, God and Technology. Our investigation of these themes will rely on a wide variety of sources designed to enlighten and illustrate the many different ways both religion and SciFi deal with questions of meaning, identity and the nature of reality.

**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 106 (ETH 106, HMS 106, PHIL 106) Bioethics and the Law 4 Credits**

Students in this course will learn something about the foundations and (nontechnical) workings of the American system of justice, and will combine that understanding with a focus on various topics in bioethics, from the "right to die" to gene-patenting. A key point will be the understanding that, as science and medicine continually move forward, there are always new challenges to existing legal understanding. How should the law respond to new questions, e.g. inheritance rights of posthumously conceived children?

**Attribute/Distribution:** HU

**REL 107 (HMS 107, PHIL 107) Bio-Ethics and the Family 4 Credits**

From reproduction to dying, this course will focus on how ethical issues in science and medicine highlight the role of the family. Issues include assisted reproduction and the role of gamete donors; genetic testing and the problem of misattributed paternity; the locus of decision making when patients are terminal or in pvs. Should our individual-orientated medical culture move toward a more family-oriented perspective?

**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 (ETH 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 126 (POLS 126) Religion, Law and Constitution 4 Credits**

An examination of the relationship of religion to American law and the United States Constitution. Course will focus on Supreme Court decisions involving the "establishment" and "free exercise" clauses of the First Amendment. Attention will also be given to the intellectual, historical, religious and theological background behind the American experiment in "church-state" separation, including the thought of Roger Williams, the Founders (Washington, Jefferson, Madison), and contemporary analysts (e.g., M. Nussbaum).

**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 130 (ASIA 130, MLL 130) Monkey Business 4 Credits**

Read and discuss in English the premodern Chinese enlightenment odyssey, the Journey To The West, featuring the famous mischievous and magical martial arts master, the Monkey King. Familiarize yourself with a cultural icon that has entertained and inspired since the 16th century and continues to inspire spin-off dramas, comics, acrobatic and TV shows, movies, and video games.

**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 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 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 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 (ETH 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 151 (HMS 151, JST 151, PHIL 151) Judaism, Medicine, and Bioethics 4 Credits**

This class traces the relationship between Jews and medicine from 1100 to 2020. How does Jewish religion and culture cultivate an affinity for the healing arts? How does Jewish law, ethics, and culture inform contemporary bioethics?

**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 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 169 (ASIA 169) Enlightening Lives: Buddhist Auto/Biography in Asia and the US 4 Credits**

How do Buddhists imagine a "good life"? Buddhist biographies, autobiographies, poems, paintings, and films from Asia and the US reveal how Buddhists describe an ideal human life, addressing love, art, war, religious awakening.

**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 173 (ASIA 173, WGSS 173) Sex, Celibacy and Sainthood: Gender and Religion in East Asia 4 Credits**

This course explores themes of sexuality, celibacy, gender, and sainthood in East Asian religions. We will pay special attention to the experiences of religious women from many walks of life and time periods, from traditions including Buddhism, Daoism, and shamanism. Through film, poetry, autobiography, philosophical writing, visual art, and descriptions of visionary experience, students will encounter Buddhist and Daoist nuns, lay women, mothers, shamanic healers, oracles, activists, and royalty, from Tibet, Korea, Japan, China, and the U.S..

**Attribute/Distribution:** HU

**REL 174 (JST 174) Modern 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.

**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 historical development of major religious groups in this country from colonial times to the present. Their place in social and political life, and the impact of the national experience upon them. Emphasis on religious freedom and pluralism, and the church/state relationship.

**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 example 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 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 216 (ETH 216, HMS 216, PHIL 216) Research Ethics 4 Credits**

Research with human and animal subjects carries with it a host of ethical and legal obligations. Topics include the history of human subjects research; ethical use of placebo studies; the ethics of research in developing countries; whether there is an ethical obligation to volunteer to be a research subject.

**Attribute/Distribution:** HU

**REL 220 (ASIA 220) Poet, Mediator, 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. Student must have completed at least one Philosophy course at the 100-level.

**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 (ETH 226, HMS 226) From Black Death to Covid-19: Plague, Pandemic, Ethics and Religion 4 Credits**

An investigation into the ways religion and morality shape interpretations of plague and pandemics. Three specific pandemics are examined: the bubonic plague of the 14th century, the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic, and the current global Covid-19 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 disciplines, 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 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 254 (ASIA 254, ES 254, ETH 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.

**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