Department of Religious Studies
College of Arts and Letters

101 Exploring Religion
Fall, Spring. 3(3-0) R: Not open to seniors. Religion and religions as historical phenomena. Non-textual and textual religions. Theories of the origins and functions of religion. Exemplary voices from various traditions examined in their historical and doctrinal settings.

150 Introduction to Biblical Literature
Fall. 3(3-0) R: Not open to seniors. A critical survey of biblical texts, including the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament, and writings found in the Apocrypha/Deuterocanon, that combines historical and literary analysis with attention to the ancient religious context of this literature.

175 Religion in Film
Fall. 3(3-0) R: Not open to seniors. Film representation of religions and spiritual traditions through their representations in film.

205 Myth, Self, and Religion
Fall, Spring. 3(3-0) The mythic quest for meaning, identity, value, and transcendence as seen through religious biography and literary narrative. Myth and its role in relation to religious symbols and life-cycle rituals. Cross-cultural perspective on religious world views and the interpretation of myth as a sacred narrative.

215 The Sound Of World Religions: Music, Chant, and Dance
Fall of even years. 3(3-0) Introduction to the lived experience of world religions through investigation of their sacred songs.

220 Religion in America
Fall. 3(3-0) History, themes and issues of religions in America from precolonial times to the present.

221 Islam in North America
Spring of odd years. 3(3-0) RB: REL 101 R: Not open to freshmen. History, major themes and issues in history of Islam in North America from colonial times to the present.

230 Shamanism, Trance and Sacred Journeys
Fall. 3(3-0) Shamanic practice in different cultural and religious contexts. Ecstatic, cosmological, and performative dimensions. Healing, sacred knowledge, spiritual journeys, sacred space, presence in world religions, patterns of pilgrimage, theoretical debates regarding shamanism.

240 Music and Spirituality in North America
Spring. 3(3-0) Historical and thematic survey of the interplay of religion and music in North America.

260 Philosophy of Religion
Fall. 3(3-0) Interdepartmental with Philosophy. Administered by Religious Studies. RB: REL 101 or PHIL 200. Key concepts, themes, and questions in the philosophy of religion.

275 Magic and Mysticism: Western Esoteric Traditions and Practices
Fall. 3(3-0) Surveys the history of Western esoteric traditions in Europe, England and North America including alchemy, magic, Jewish and Christian mysticisms, and secret or semisecret groups like Freemasonry. Transdisciplinary investigation of religion, science, literature, art and history.

290 Independent Study
Fall, Spring. 1 to 4 credits. A student may earn a maximum of 12 credits in all enrollments for this course. R: Approval of department. Special projects arranged by an individual student and a faculty member in areas supplementing regular course offerings.

291 Special Topics in Religious Studies
Fall, Spring. 3 credits. A student may earn a maximum of 6 credits in all enrollments for this course. Special topics supplementing regular course offerings, proposed by faculty on a group basis.

301 Methods and Theories in the Study of Religion
Spring. 3(3-0) Introduction to prominent methods and theories through which religions and religious phenomena can be understood.

306 Native American Religions
Spring. 3(3-0) R: Not open to freshmen. Indigenous forms of spirituality among the Native American peoples. Materials from myth, ritual, ceremonial life, and art as ways of obtaining and sharing religious knowledge. Pervasive spiritual and cosmological themes.

310 Judaism

320 Christianity
Spring of even years. 3(3-0) R: Not open to freshmen. Origins and historical development of Christianity. Rituals, institutional forms (Eastern Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant). Monastic and mendicant movements. Major doctrines and their development. Contemporary status and role.

325 East Asian Buddhism
Spring. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement RB: REL 101 Buddhist traditions of East Asia, including China, Tibet, Korea, and Japan, as well as Mahayana and Vajrayana.

330 Islam

331 Islam and Gender
Spring of even years. 3(3-0) R: Not open to freshmen. Relationship between Islam and gender as presented in sacred texts. Traditional and diverse modern interpretations and responses of Muslims.

335 East Asian Religions
Spring. 3(3-0) RB: REL 101 R: Not open to freshmen. Religious traditions of East Asia, including China, Korea, and Japan.

340 Hinduism
Fall. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Not open to freshmen. Historical, philosophical and doctrinal development. Vedic Sacrifice, Upanishads, Samkhya-Qoga and Vedanta, Vaishnavism, Shivaism, Shaktism, and modern Hinduism.

345 Religions of South Asia
Spring of odd years. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Not open to freshmen. Historical, philosophical, and doctrinal development of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, North Indian Islam, and Sikhism.

350 Buddhism in South Asia

355 Southeast Asian Religions
Fall. 3(3-0) R: Not open to freshmen. Southeast Asia as a religious and cultural crossroads. The historic mix of Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, and Chinese religions. Diversity of indigenous animistic religions. Past and present relations between religions and the state.

360 African Religion
Spring of odd years. 3(3-0) R: Not open to freshmen. Variant forms of the religions of Africa. Indigenous African religions examined through their mythology, rituals, symbols, and social consequences. Islam and Christianity. Interaction between religion and politics.

365 Evangelicalism in the U.S.
Fall. 3(3-0) History, culture, beliefs, and practices of American evangelicalism.

375 Religion and U.S. Literature
Spring of odd years. 3(3-0) R: Not open to freshmen. Religion in works of American literature seen in historical context.

380 New Religions
Fall of odd years. 3(3-0) RB: REL 220 or REL 275 R: Not open to freshmen. New religious movements, groups and individuals seen historically. Major controversies.

412 Jewish Mysticism
Fall. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement RB: Completion of Tier I Writing requirement R: Open to undergraduate students. Introduction to the doctrines, ritual practices, and history of Jewish mysticism.

413 Jewish Philosophy
Fall. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement RB: Completion of Tier I Writing requirement R: Open to undergraduate students. Introduction to the history of Jewish philosophy.
420 Birth of Christianity (W)  
Spring. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Not open to freshmen or sophomores.  
The historical setting and types and meaning of the text of the New Testament explored through various techniques of historical, literary, and textual analysis.

430 The Qur’an and Its Interpreters (W)  
Spring of odd years. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Open to students.  
The historical setting, types and topics of the Quranic text, and an overview of the history of its interpretation.

432 Modern Muslim Thought (W)  
Spring. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement RB: REL 330 R: Not open to freshmen.  
Representative Muslim thinkers and intellectual trends from the 19th century to the present. Focus on issues such as social order, the role of Islamic law, pluralism and gender.

435 Muhammad and Early Muslim Community (W)  
Fall of even years. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement RB: REL 330 R: Not open to freshmen.  
Historical-critical approach to Muhammad’s life and the history of the early Muslim community. Significance of this life-story for Muslims past and present.

441 Bhakti Hinduism (W)  
Fall of odd years. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Not open to freshmen.  
Historical, philosophical, and doctrinal development of Bhakti Hinduism (devotional Hinduism) of Northern India from the 12th to the 18th century.

451 Modern Hindu Thought (W)  
Fall of even years. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Not open to freshmen.  
Historical, philosophical, and doctrinal development of Hinduism after the 1850’s. Encounter with the west and Christianity. Reform movements. Religious thinkers and their ideas.

460 Advanced Topics in the Philosophy of Religion (W)  
Fall, Spring. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement RB: Introductory course in philosophy of religion or in history of philosophy. R: Not open to freshmen and not open to sophomores.  
In-depth investigation focused on specific themes on figures in the philosophy of religion such as notions of divinity, the rationality of belief, philosophy under religious authority, conceptions of human perfection.

461 South Asian Religions and Bollywood Film  
Fall of even years. 3(3-0)  

471 The Ritual Process (W)  
Spring. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Not open to freshmen or sophomores.  
Definitions of ritual. Aspects of ritual, such as repetitiveness and drama. Generic forms of ritual including passage rites, renewal rites, liminality, sacrifice, taboo, and divination. Experience of ritual and its power to inform and transform the participant.

480 Comparative Studies in Religion (W)  
Fall, Spring. 3(3-0) A student may earn a maximum of 9 credits in all enrollments for this course. P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Not open to freshmen or sophomores.  
Multidisciplinary approaches to topics such as patterns in comparative religion, comparative mysticism, or comparative mythology.

485 Religion and Nonprofit Leadership  
Spring. 3(3-0)  
Religion, ethical leadership practices, and non-profit organizations in both religious and secular contexts.

490 Independent Study (W)  
Fall, Spring. 1 to 4 credits. A student may earn a maximum of 12 credits in all enrollments for this course. P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Approval of department.  
Special projects arranged by an individual student and a faculty member in areas supplementing regular course offerings.

491 Special Topics in Religious Studies (W)  
Fall, Spring. 3(3-0) A student may earn a maximum of 12 credits in all enrollments for this course. P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Not open to freshmen or sophomores.  
Special topics supplementing regular course offerings, proposed by faculty on a group study basis.

493 Religious Studies Internship  
Fall, Spring. 1 to 4 credits. A student may earn a maximum of 12 credits in all enrollments for this course. R: Not open to freshmen or sophomores.  
Approval of department; application required.  
Supervised pre-professional experience related to religious studies.

499 Senior Thesis or Project (W)  
Fall, Spring. 1 to 4 credits. A student may earn a maximum of 4 credits in all enrollments for this course. R: Not open to freshmen or sophomores.  
Approval of department.  
Individual research project supervised by a faculty member that demonstrates the student's ability to do independent research.

890 Independent Study  
Fall, Spring. 1 to 4 credits. A student may earn a maximum of 12 credits in all enrollments for this course. R: Approval of department.  
Special projects, directed reading, and research arranged by an individual graduate student and a faculty member in areas supplementing regular course offerings.

891 Special Topics in Religious Studies  
Fall, Spring, Summer. 3(3-0) A student may earn a maximum of 6 credits in all enrollments for this course. RB: Undergraduate degree. R: Approval of department.  
Special topics supplementing regular course offerings proposed by faculty for graduate students on a group study basis.