

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

REL

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.

185 Nonprofits and Religion

Fall. 3(3-0) R: Not open to seniors.

History, themes and issues in the intersection of religion, philanthropy, and nonprofit organizations in U.S. and global contexts.

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 in relation to religious symbols and life-cycle rituals. Cross-cultural perspective on religious world views and the interpretation of myth as sacred narrative.

210 Religion and the Environment

Fall. 3(3-0)

Global perspectives on religion and the environment, with U.S. emphasis. Focus on places, beliefs, practices, and conflicts. Field trips required.

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.

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 PHL 101

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.

294 History of Catholicism, Late Antiquity to the Present

Spring of odd years. 3(3-0) Interdepartmental with History. Administered by History.

Roman Catholicism. Changing structures of administration, instruments of repression, and responses to and impact on social, cultural and political transformations. Missionary movements, orders and councils.

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

Fall. 3(3-0) R: Not open to freshmen.

Jewish life, thought, and institutions. Jewish calendar. Second Temple and Rabbinic periods. Talmud and Midrash. Jewish life in Europe and America. Hasidic, Reform, Orthodox, and Conservative movements. Anti-Semitism, Zionism, and the Holocaust. Current issues.

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

Spring. 3(3-0) R: Not open to freshmen.

Islam from the time of Muhammad to the present. Pre-modern developments. Life of Muhammad. Qur'an, Hadith, and Islamic law. Sunnis, Shiites, sects, and their rituals. Unity and diversity. Modern movements and trends.

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-Yoga and Vedanta, Vaishnavism, Shaivism, 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

Spring. 3(3-0) R: Not open to freshmen.

Early origins of Buddhism. Life of the Buddha. Formulation of the Samgha. Pali canon. Three turnings of the Wheel of the Law. Monastic developments vs. lay Buddhism. Buddhist meditation practices.

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.

Religious Studies—REL

- 385 Religion, Health, and Healthcare**
Fall. 3(3-0)
Religion, health, and illness, and responses to them in health care professions, faith communities, and the broader society. Topics may include religion and interpretations of embodiment or suffering; challenges of religious diversity to health care professionals; and the "religiosity" of secular science, medicine, and public health, which are partially shaped by their own myths, rituals, and symbols.
- 412 Jewish Mysticism (W)**
Fall. 3(3-0) P: 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 (W)**
Fall. 3(3-0) P: 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.
- 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 North India from the 12th to the 18th century.
- 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 (W)**
Fall of even years. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement
Religion, culture and film in South Asia. Bollywood (Indian) films, with special focus on religion, gender, and globalization.
- 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 (W)**
Spring. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement
Religion, ethical leadership practices, and nonprofit 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 4 credits in all enrollments for this course. R: Not open to freshmen. 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. P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: 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.