RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Department of Religious Studies
College of Arts and Letters

101 Exploring Religion
Fall. 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 and deuterocanon, that combines historical and
literary analysis with attention to the ancient religi-
ous 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 Introduction to Religion and Nonprofits
Fall. 3(3-0) R: Not open to seniors.
History, themes and issues in the intersection of reli-
gion, 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 perspec-
tive 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, prac-
tices, 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.

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

275 Magic and Mysticism: An Introduction to
Esoteric Religion
Fall. 3(3-0)
Surveys esoteric traditions in Europe, England and
North America including alchemy, magic, Jewish and
Christian mysticisms, and secret or semisecret
groups like Freemasonry. Transdisciplinary investi-
gation 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 enrol-
ments for this course. R: Approval of depart-
ment.
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 offer-
ings, 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. Roman Catholicism. Changing structures of admin-
istration, instruments of repression, and responses to
and impact on social, cultural and political transfor-
mations. Missionary movements, orders and coun-
cils.

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, cere-
monial life, and art as ways of obtaining and sharing
religious knowledge. Pervasive spiritual and cosmo-
logical themes.

307 Shamanism
Fall. 3(3-0)
Shamanic practice in different cultural and religious
contexts. Entheogens. Peyote, psilocybin. Healing,
sacred knowledge, spiritual journeys, sacred space,
presence in world religions, patterns of pilgrimage,
thoretical debates regarding shamanism and enthe-
ogens.

310 Judaism
Fall. 3(3-0) R: Not open to freshmen.
Jewish life, thought, and institutions. Jewish calen-
dar. Second Temple and Rabbinic periods. Talmud
and Midrash. Jewish life in Europe and America. Ha-
sidic, Reform, Orthodox, and Conservative move-
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, Catho-
lic, 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, Ti-
et, Korea, and Japan, as well as Mahayana and Va-
ajrayana.

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, Shites,
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, Ko-
rea, 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 Ve-
danta. Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shaktism, and mod-
ern 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, Chris-
tianity, and Chinese religions. Diversity of indigenous animistic religions. Past and present relations be-
tween 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 Af-
rican religions examined through their mythology, rit-
uals, 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.
REL—Religious Studies

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.

385 Religion, Health, and Healthcare
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.

411 Modern Jewish Thought (W)
Spring of even years. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Not open to freshmen or sophomores.
Representative Jewish thought from the Enlightenment to the present. Authors such as Moses Mendelssohn, Abraham Geiger, Leo Pinsker, Hermann Cohen, Franz Rosenzweig, Ahad Ha-Am, Martin Buber, Mordecai Kaplan, A. I. Heschel, and Emil Fackenheim.

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.

414 Jewish Identity (W)
Fall. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Not open to freshmen.
Major themes and aspects of Jewish identity in modernity. Topics including philosophy, food, education, material culture.

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.

425 Apocalypse Then and Now (W)
Spring of odd years. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Not open to freshmen and not open to sophomores.
Apocalyptic thought and writings in ancient Christianity and the persistence of apocalyptic ideas in modern fiction and film.

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 Devotional 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 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. 3(3-0) P: Completion of Tier I Writing Requirement R: Open to undergraduate students.

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) P: 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 R: Open to undergraduate students.
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. 3(3-0) 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.

498 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.