The Religion Department offers a cross-cultural, interdisciplinary, and critical program that explores the variety of religious experiences and expressions. In addition to courses that demonstrate the power and limits of various critical approaches to the study of religion, the department provides opportunities to analyze practices of interpretation, systems of belief, and patterns of religious behavior; the history of religious traditions; the effects of religion in society; the ways religions can form collective identity through race, nationalism, gender and sexuality, class, caste, language, and migration; and various forms of religious phenomena such as myth, ritual, texts, and theological and philosophical reflection.

A range of courses is available to students interested in taking one or two courses. Clusters of courses can be devised in consultation with members of the staff for those who wish to develop a modest program in religion in support of another major. A student who chooses a double major must fulfill all requirements for the religion major.

**FACULTY**

**Ron Cameron**
BA, Western Kentucky Uni; MAA, Wesleyan University; PHD, Harvard University
Professor of Religion; Chair, Religion

**Yaniv Feller**
BA, Hebrew University; MA, Hebrew University; PHD, University of Toronto
Assistant Professor of Religion

**Peter S. Gottschalk**
BA, College of the Holy Cross; MA, Univ of Wisconsin Fond Du Lac; PHD, University of Chicago
Professor of Religion; Director, Office of Faculty Career Development; Professor, Science in Society

**Dalit Katz**
BA, Hebrew University; MA, Hebrew University
Adjunct Associate Professor of Religion; Director, Jewish Israel Studies

**Elizabeth McAlister**
BA, Vassar College; MA, Yale University; MA, Yale University; MPHIL, Yale University; PHD, Yale University
Professor of Religion; Chair, African American Studies; Director, Center for African American Studies; Professor, African American Studies; Professor, American Studies; Professor, Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Professor, Latin American Studies

**Justine Quijada**
BA, University of Chicago; MA, Columbia University; PHD, University of Chicago
Assistant Professor of Religion; Assistant Professor, Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies

**Mary-Jane Victoria Rubenstein**
BA, Williams College; MA, Columbia University; MPHIL, Cambridge University; MPHIL, Columbia University; PHD, Columbia University
Professor of Religion; Professor, Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Professor, Science in Society

**EMERITI**

**Jerome H. Long**
BA, Columbia University; MA, Columbia University; PHD, Columbia University
Professor of Religion, Emeritus

**Janice D. Willis**
BA, Cornell University; MA, Columbia University; PHD, Columbia University
Professor of Religion, Emerita

**Jeremy Zwelling**
BA, Columbia University; MA, Brandeis University; PHD, Brandeis University
Associate Professor of Religion, Emeritus

**Department Advising Expert 2017–2018:** Elizabeth McAlister
- Undergraduate Religion Major (catalog.wesleyan.edu/departments/reli/ugrd-reli)
- Undergraduate Religion Minor (catalog.wesleyan.edu/departments/reli/ugrd-reli-mn)

**RELI127 Catholicism and Ideology in the Hispanic World**
Catholicism has played a number of roles in the cultural politics of the Hispanic world, appearing as a place of national being, resistance, and conservatism. In this course, we will read a number of texts from different periods and national contexts with a view to understanding how writers and intellectuals from Spain, Latin America, and the U.S. engage with Catholicism and the historical conditions under which they do so.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-LAST
Identical With: FIST127, LAST127
Prereq: None

**RELI151 Introduction to the Study of Religion**
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the academic study of religion. We will focus on religious communities in and outside the United States but will offer neither an overview of American religious history nor a survey of global religious diversity. Rather, we will use a series of empirical case studies to explore theoretical issues in the study of religion. Among other topics, we will examine: the construction of religion as a conceptual category, anthropological approaches to religious difference, theories of religious experience, the interpretation of religious texts, and the place of religion in politics, society, and culture. Together, these discussions will offer a set of descriptive, analytical, and explanatory tools for understanding the role of religion in the contemporary world.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

**RELI201 Introduction to The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament): From Canaan to Canon**
This course will offer students an introduction to the Hebrew Bible, or Tanakh, one of the three core scriptures of Judaism. The Hebrew Bible not only provides the mythic prehistory of both humanity and the Jewish people, it is also one of our best and most complete texts for understanding the world of ancient southwest Asia and the people who inhabited it. Approaching the Bible from a historical, critical hermeneutic allows students to analyze the information on the page as a separate data set from the religious or theological meaning of the page to various groups. In addition to reading selections from all three sections of the...
Tanakh, students will also read noncanonical or apocryphal texts and discuss the reasons why these texts were not included in the Tanakh, although some of them are included in versions of the Old Testament. Students will also read various secondary texts to help them better understand issues of biblical authorship, the archaeology that helps us better understand the world of the Bible, and the social and political pressures that shaped the text into what we know today.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL
Identical With: MDST203, CJST244
Prereq: None

RELI204 Judaism(s): Religion, Power, and Identity in Jewish History
This course will offer students an intensive survey of the major currents in Jewish social, political, intellectual, and religious history, while focusing in particular on what it means to be a Jew in the twenty-first century. It explores how Jews are a culture, ethnicity, nation, nationality, race, religion, and more and how Jewishness gets constructed differently across different times and contexts. It looks both locally and globally at the plurality of Jewish identities. Students will read primary historical texts from prominent Jewish thinkers and writers, as well as texts written about Jews by non-Jews.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: CJST241
Prereq: None

RELI205 Hindu Lives
Through fiction, autobiography, biography, art, a comic book, a city, and a village, this course explores some of the myriad understandings of what it is to be Hindu. In an effort to introduce students to Hindu culture and religion, a number of approaches shall engage the questions, What is Hindu dharma? and What is it to be Hindu? The class will also investigate the issue of "Hinduism," a term created in the 19th century to identify a Hindu "religion" rejected by many 21st-century Hindus. This issue expresses just one of many arising from the Indian experience of contact with the West. Overall, the course immerses students in the lives of Hindu individuals and communities so that we, as a class, can draw our conclusions about Hindu practices and meanings in different political, mythic, social, and cultural contexts.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI206 Neo-Confucian Chinese Philosophy
This course will present critical discussion of issues central to Neo-Confucian (11th-19th centuries CE) philosophers that in many cases are still central in Chinese thought today. Topics will include the relation between knowledge and action, Neo-Confucian conceptions of idealism and materialism, and the connection between Neo-Confucian philosophy and spirituality.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL259, CEAS256
Prereq: None

RELI208 The Buddha: His Life and Teachings
Few human beings have had as much impact upon the world as Siddhartha Gautama Shakyamuni, known to us as the Buddha. This course looks closely at the world he inhabited, the ways he transformed it, and the body of work left behind after a lifetime of teaching. Beginning with challenges of interpretation and literary sources, the course consists of equal parts historical and doctrinal investigation of the classical texts of the Pali Canon. We seek to get a sense of both the man behind the myth and the meaning of his message, while appreciating in the process the extent to which all such investigation is shaped by one’s own cultural and historical viewpoints.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI211 Religion, Peace, and Violence: Muslim, Hindu, Christian, and Secular Politics
Why did Martin Luther King, Jr believe that Christianity could cure American racism, while Malcolm X thought the religion promoted it? If Islam is a religion of peace as advocated by many Muslims, how do we understand the so-called Islamic State’s reign of terror? How has Hindu nationalism led to violence against Muslims and Christians if Mahatma Gandhi demonstrated the essential tolerance of Hindu traditions? Secularists often claim that removing religion from politics creates a more peaceful society, yet the most violent states in the past century have been professedly secular ones. This seminar looks to explore the complexities of present-day religions and politics by investigating specific case studies in Egypt, India, France, and the U.S. While developing a better understanding of Muslim, Christian, Hindu, and secular traditions (no background in these necessary), we will develop analytic tools to critically comprehend the political dynamics of modern religions and the religious dynamics of contemporary politics.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI212 Introduction to the New Testament
The purpose of this course is to provide an introduction to those writings of the earliest Christians that came to be included in the New Testament. These writings will be examined critically with respect to their social-historical origin, religious content, and place within the development of early Christianities. Interpreting early Christian texts constitutes the most important task in the study of the New Testament. We will, therefore, focus on a close reading of the New Testament in light of historical situations and social contexts in the Greco-Roman world, having as one of the chief aims of the course the acquisition of critical skills in reading and understanding the New Testament. In the process, we will necessarily engage secondary scholarship and wider theoretical interests, thereby providing students with a general introduction to the academic study of religion.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL
Identical With: MDST214
Prereq: None

RELI214 Buddhism and the Body: Desire, Disgust, and Transcendence
This is a course about the body and the various ways that Buddhists have constructed, disciplined, despised, and venerated the human
body. We will explore the Buddhist body in its various incarnations: the disciplined monastic body of monks and nuns, the hyper-masculine body of the Buddha, the sacred corpses of saints, the body given away in sacrifice, the body as marker of virtue and vice, the sexual body, the body transformed in ritual, and the body as understood in Buddhist medicine. Careful attention to ancient and modern Buddhist writing should enrich our understanding of what it means to inhabit a human body.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: FGSS215
Prereq: None

**RELI215 Politics and Piety in Early Christianities**

The first four centuries of the Christian era will illustrate the lively twists and turns of social experimentation that set the stage for the emergence of the Christian religion. The course will be concerned with fundamental arenas of intellectual and social conflict, including constructions of Christian myths of apostolic origins and authority; the appropriation of the Jewish epic; the challenge of gnosticism; the domestication of Greek philosophy; interpretations of sexuality and gender; experiences of martyrdom and prosecution; theological reflections on human nature and society; and the ways Christians were seen by Romans. The objective will be to grasp the beginnings of the Christian religion as a human achievement of cultural consequence.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: MDST215, CCIV212
Prereq: None

**RELI216 Jesus Through Jewish Eyes**

In this course, we explore the visual and textual representations of the vexed relation between Jews and Christians throughout history. Looking at the various ways in which Christianity and Judaism define themselves vis-à-vis the other allows us to understand what mechanisms of cultural appropriation, subversion, and hidden polemics are at work. Special attention will be given to the figure of Jesus as a point of artistic and theological contention. How do artistic representations change our understanding of religious themes? What is at stake for each religion in the encounter with the other? What are the political implications of theological debates? Is this dialogue needed, or even possible, in our post-secular age?

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: CJST216
Prereq: None

**RELI217 Jewish Graphic Novels**

This course will explore issues in Judaism and the Jewish experience through the medium of the graphic novel. Students will not only gain proficiency in critically reading graphic novels and sequential art, they will also gain a grasp on some of the major issues in Jewish history including (but not limited to) immigration, life in America, the Holocaust, and Israel/Palestine.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Identical With: CJST243
Prereq: None

**RELI218 The Cosmos of Dante's Comedy**

This course provides an in-depth introduction to Dante Alighieri's 14th century masterpiece as a point of entry to the history of Western literature, philosophy, and science. The core of the course consists in an intensive study of Dante's encyclopedic poem in relation to the culture and history of Medieval Europe. Major topics include: representations of the afterlife; the soul's relation to the divine; concepts of modernity and antiquity in the Middle Ages; notions of authorship and authority during the 13th and 14th centuries; vernacular poetics and the medieval genre system; the culture and materiality of manuscripts in the Middle Ages; gender and genre in Dante and the 12th-14th century lyric; intertextuality and imitation; classical and medieval language theory; the role of the classics in the Middle Ages; Dante's concepts of governance; myth and theology in Dante's Christian poetics; the reception history of Dante's work, 14th century to present. The course combines a close analysis of Dante's literary strategies with exercises in critical writing and in multimedia translation and adaptation, aimed at prompting critical reflection on the ways in which present cultural practices are built upon the practices of the past. Fear not! Course conducted in English. No previous knowledge of Italian required.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: FIST226, ITAL226, COL234, MDST226
Prereq: None

**RELI220 Modern Christian Thought**

This course will provide an introduction to the field of Christian thought by exploring the relationship between conceptions of God and conceptions of selfhood, from St. Augustine through mystical liberation, black, feminist, womanist, evangelical, process, and eco-theologies. How do the ways people think about God reflect, support, or interrupt the ways they think about the human subject? And what sorts of ethics, communities, and political decisions do these models underwrite?

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Identical With: COL220
Prereq: None

**RELI221 Islam and Muslim Cultures**

This course provides an introduction to Islam and Muslim societies. No background is required. Using a variety of in-depth case studies, it familiarizes students with many of the beliefs and practices many Muslims associate with Islam and examines commonalities and diversity in how Muslims live their religion. While paying particular attention to peoples and places in South Asia, the Middle East, and the U.S., the course will demonstrate how contemporary Muslim communities exist within global networks that shape local and transnational religion, cultures, and politics.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

**RELI227 Jews and Muslims: Perceptions and Polemics**

The current state of Jewish-Islamic relations is tragically fraught with mutual suspicion and competing historical narratives that are manifest as much in the religious as in the political arena. In the midst
of this fractious debate, it is sometimes forgotten that Jews have for centuries been a vital presence throughout the Islamic world and have contributed in rich and dynamic ways to Islamic civilization right up to contemporary times. This course explores the intricate relationship of Jews and Muslims from the rise and formative periods of Islam in the Middle Ages to the mass exodus of Middle Eastern and North African Jewish communities in the 20th century to the religiously and politically explosive tensions in contemporary times. The course will consider not only the complex dynamics of communal relations in the past, but the human, cultural, and political ramifications of this vital historical relationship in the present. We will explore Jewish-Muslim relations through religious texts, historical documents, memoir literature, music, and film.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI228 Classical Chinese Philosophy
Topics in this critical examination of issues debated by the early Confucian, Daoist, and Mohist philosophers will include the nature of normative authority and value, the importance of ritual, and the relation between personal and social goods.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL205, CEAS261
Prereq: None

RELI229 Tibetan Buddhism: From Ancient India to Shangri-la
This seminar will explore both the philosophies and practices of Tibetan Buddhism as well as the ways Tibetan Buddhism has been mythologized by Tibetans and non-Tibetans alike. We will begin with a review of Indian Buddhism, placing particular emphasis on Tantric thought and practices. We will then focus on the subsequent development and core practices of Tibetan Buddhism's key schools, drawing on careful analyses of histories, myths, biographies, and religious discourses. Finally, we will explore the ways in which Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism have been mythologized in the minds of Westerners and others. We will pay especial attention to the intersection of these imaginings with contemporary Tibetan nationalist movements to apply our insights to the analysis of present-day realities. Readings will draw from primary Buddhist texts, histories, autobiographies, and scholarly journals and will be complemented by in-class film screenings.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: CEAS343
Prereq: None

RELI230 Cinematic Encounters: Muslims and/in/of the West

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None
ongoing conflicts and peace movements around the world, including the
Finally, we will address the role of Buddhism in a number of modern and
spread in the West, paying particular attention to the role of colonialism.
and East Asia. We will then examine how Buddhism was studied and
variations. Using both selected secondary sources and primary texts
This course is an introduction to Buddhism in its major historical
RELI242 Buddhism: An Introduction
Prereq: None

RELI240 Religion in the Roman Empire
This course is an introduction to the religious practices of ancient Rome,
from the Republic to the Empire and its conversion to Christianity.
Attention will be given to the gods and their veneration, divination and
sacrifice, religion and the family, religion and the state, and official
attitudes toward foreign cults.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: REES282
Prereq: None

RELI241 Religion in the Roman Empire
This course is an introduction to the religious practices of ancient Rome,
from the Republic to the Empire and its conversion to Christianity.
Attention will be given to the gods and their veneration, divination and
sacrifice, religion and the family, religion and the state, and official
attitudes toward foreign cults.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: REES282
Prereq: None

RELI242 Buddhism: An Introduction
This course is an introduction to Buddhism in its major historical
variations. Using both selected secondary sources and primary texts
in translation, we will study Buddhist traditions from the life of the
Buddha through Buddhism’s spread from India to Southeast, Central,
and East Asia. We will then examine how Buddhism was studied and
spread in the West, paying particular attention to the role of colonialism.
Finally, we will address the role of Buddhism in a number of modern and
ongoing conflicts and peace movements around the world, including the
Parliament of World Religions, Japanese nationalism, the Sri Lankan civil
war, and Tibetan sovereignty.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Identical With: CEAS242
Prereq: None

RELI250 Islamic Movements and Modernities
The so-called Islamic State grabs headlines daily with criminal acts
primarily committed against other Muslims, but also against non-
Muslims. Its violence has overshadowed even al-Qaeda and the Taliban
in media coverage. This seminar will track the development of these
groups as well as the many more Islamic movements that reject violence
and seek peaceful social change. Indeed, many Muslims object to
the name “Islamic State” because they recognize the group as neither
Islamic nor a legitimate state. The seminar examines how specific
Muslim communities in the Middle East, South Asia, and the U.S. have
engaged the modern conditions of Western imperialism, nationalism,
and globalization and shaped their own forms of modernity. It also
investigates the increasingly digital, transnational, and intercultural
realms of Muslim experiences.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI253 Islamic Civilization: The Classical Age
This course surveys the historical development of Islamic civilization
from the time of the Prophet Muhammad to the rise of the "gunpowder
ingeries" of the 16th century. Special emphasis will be placed on the
unique cultural forms this civilization developed and the emergence of
Islam as a world religion. This course primarily deals with the political,
intellectual, and social history of the Muslim peoples of the Middle East
and only secondarily with Islam as a system of religious belief.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST231, MDST251
Prereq: None

RELI259 Islam and/in the West
Is there a clash of civilizations between Islam and the West? What
distinguishes the two and why the conflict? This course, which assumes
no familiarity with Islam, explores these questions and the assumptions
underlying them. Through a historical and thematic exploration, we will
delve into the notions of difference and the interests these have served,
as well as the cultural, religious, and political dimensions of interaction
at specific historical moments. These will include Arab imperialism, the
Crusades, the Spanish Reconquista, European imperialism, Zionism,
Islamist revivalism, Western Muslims, and the War Against Terror.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI261 Jewish History: From Biblical Israel to Diaspora Jews
Can we trace an “authentic” Jewish identity through history, as distinct
from many “cultures” of Jews in the multitude of times and places in
which they have lived? This course provides an overview of major trends
Religious and Secular in the U.S. and Europe. Finally, we examine critiques of the
incarnations. We begin with philosophical arguments for the separation
become mystified and enchanted.

Pietz) with ethnographic accounts of how capitalism and the economy
Weber) and commodity fetishism (Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, William
despite what we call "cage," we live in a world of "voodoo economics" where Korean shamans
ghosts possess factory workers; in South Africa, capitalism produces
disenchanted. Now, with the turn of the 21st century, people all over the
world experience capitalism as a realm of enchantment. In Malaysia,
emergent spiritual and aesthetic traditions such as Capoeira and Rara.
We will study Orisha religions like La Regla de Ocha, or Lukumi, in Cuba
and the Latino U.S.; Candomble in Brazil; Vodou in Haiti; and Garifuna
traditions and spiritism in Puerto Rico.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267
Prereq: None

REL270 Magical Money and Enchanted Capitalisms
In the early days of the 20th century, Max Weber foresaw that with the
rise of capitalism and modernity, the world would become increasingly
disenchanted. Now, with the turn of the 21st century, people all over the
world experience capitalism as a realm of enchantment. In Malaysia,
ghosts possess factory workers; in South Africa, capitalism produces
zombies; and in Bolivia, mines eat their miners. Instead of Weber's "iron
cage," we live in a world of "voodoo economics" where Korean shamans
conduct ceremonies to bless new businesses, Russian psychics curse
business competitors, and prosperity theology preaches that God will
make you rich. This class explores the enchantment of the financial
sphere, combining theory on the disenchantment of modernity (Max
Weber) and commodity fetishism (Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, William
Pietz) with ethnographic accounts of how capitalism and the economy
become mystified and enchanted.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: AFAM273, AMST283
Prereq: None

REL274 Romans and Christians: The World of Late Antiquity
The emperor Diocletian’s administrative and financial reforms, closely
followed by the conversion of Constantine to Christianity, mark a
watershed in the history of the late Roman Empire. From AD 284
(accession of Diocletian) until the establishment of the Germanic
successor kingdoms (roughly in the 6th century)—the period known as
late antiquity—the Roman West presents a fascinating picture of cultural
change. In this course we will study the period (4th to 6th century) from
different perspectives: the conversion of Romans to Christians and
of Christians to “Romans”; the material world of late antiquity—especially
the changes to the city of Rome—and the art, architecture, and literature
of the period; and the rise of the cult of the saints and of monasticism
and the lives of the holy men and women. The course will conclude with
an epilogue pursuing these themes in Ostrogothic Italy and Merovingian
Gaul.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CLAS
Identical With: CCIV275, HIST250, MDST275
Prereq: None

RELI275 Religions Resisting Modernity
Why did the Taliban forbid television? Why do creationists reject
evolution? Why did Gandhi insist that Indian nationalists spin their own
thread? Throughout the last century, resistance has risen to modernity,
and religion has played an increasingly important role in challenging the
globalization of modern Western values. This seminar will explore how
Europe transformed itself into a modern society with worldwide influence.
Then it will investigate how the Lakota Sioux, Christian creationists,
Mohandas Gandhi, the Branch Davidians, and Egyptian Islamicists each
have used religion in an attempt to resist some aspect of modernity,
either outside the Western world or within it. Ultimately, the course will
challenge our very understandings and expectations of modernity.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI276 The Gospels and Jesus
In this examination of the history and literature of the earliest writings
about Jesus, attention will be given to the literary forms used in the
composition of gospel literature, the social and religious functions of the
traditions, the role of imagination in the production of gospel texts, and
the diversity of interpretations of Jesus in the early church. Readings will
focus on the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Thomas, and "Q.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI277 Arts of Zen in East Asia
Zen, a school of Buddhism that originated in China and later spread to
Japan and Korea, is considered a gateway to East Asian thought and a
force that challenges modern materialism. The nature of abstraction,
spirituality, and enlightenment can best be approached through the
arts associated with this religious school, which include ink painting,
calligraphy, ceramics, architecture and garden design. In this course,
we will discuss how the ideas of Zen were elucidated in the visual arts
by looking at major works from the 13th through the 20th centuries.
We will also examine the ways in which artworks were incorporated in
the practice of Zen rituals, especially those related to meditation and
the tea ceremony. In addition, we will explore the meanings of pictorial
and literary ko’an and how they form visual and textual riddles based on
allusion and wordplay. Through a comparative approach, we will analyze
the development in the form, style, and iconography of Zen art in East
Asia, while tracing the history of Zen Buddhism and its underpinning
philosophical concepts related to enlightenment, emptiness, and beauty.
The goal of this course is to form an in-depth appreciation for the arts of
Zen in their historical, philosophical, and cultural context.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA277, CEAS288
Prereq: None

RELI278 American Jewish Humor
This course is a look at American Jewish history through one particular
lens—that of the peculiar phenomenon of Jewish humor. There is
a long history of Jews and humor that has nothing to do with the
immigrant experience in America, but the immigrant experience in
America nonetheless has a great deal to do with the humor that has
been produced by Jews in this country, particularly in the 20th century.
We will read some historical background on American Jews and some
humor theory as our foundation for our understanding of film viewings,
short stories, stand-up comedy performances, and musical recordings. By
looking at the way Jewish humor changed throughout the 20th century,
we should, in the end, be able to chart the way the lives of American Jews
were changing and have a deeper understanding of the American Jewish
experience.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: CJST278, AMST292
Prereq: None

RELI279 Liberation Theology and Pentecostalism in the Americas and
Africa
This course tackles the question: If liberation theology advocates a
preferential option for the poor, why do the poor in Africa and the
Americas often choose evangelical Protestantism? For evangelical
Christianity, the common good is a by-product of the righteous lives
of believers as they enact the outward signs of personal salvation.
This course examines both religious thought and analysis of various
Christianities of the Americas and Africa, with particular attention to
the ways religious thinkers and communities grapple with and resolve
questions of human rights, evangelizing race, and structural inequalities
that arise in the recent era of globalization and neoliberal capitalism.
Other topics will include the prosperity gospel, the growth of Christian
NGOs, gender and machismo, and spiritual warfare. Case studies will
include readings on the U.S., Colombia, Brazil, Haiti, and Zimbabwe.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI280 Mixed in America: Race, Religion, and Memoir
This course examines the history of mixed-race and interfaith identities
in America. Using the genre of the memoir as a focusing lens, we will
look at the various ways that Americans of mixed heritage have found
a place, crafted an identity, and made meaning out of being considered
"mixed." How has being multiracial or bi-religious changed in the course
of history in this country? What has occasioned these changes, and
what patterns can we observe? We will explore questions of racial
construction; religious boundary-making; rites of passage; gender,
sexuality, and marriage; and some literary and media representations of
mixed-heritage people.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: AFAM282, AMST242
Prereq: None
RELI285 Religion and National Culture in the United States
This lecture/discussion course offers sustained analysis of the role of religion in the intellectual life of the nation. We will examine both the work of American theologians and the ways that other American intellectuals have thought about religion and its function as a language of authority in both state and society. We will consider the ramifications of the United States as a Protestant and millennial nation and the challenges to that conception posed by the growing diversity of religions in the country. The variety of spiritual practices and the clashes between religion and science generated debates that continue to haunt both the study of religion and political life. From participation in a transatlantic evangelical culture to the rise of the social gospel and theological modernism through the fundamentalist response to liberal religion and Darwinism, the course charts the influence of Protestant Christianity in American culture and evaluates claims about the development of a distinctively American religious style. The replacement of overt anti-Catholicism and anti-Semitism with the notion of a Judeo-Christian heritage that celebrated the incorporation of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish traditions into American civil religion figures as the central dynamic of the 20th century. The course concludes with a consideration of contemporary religious developments, including New Age formations and the growing presence of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam, and the continuing centrality of religion(s) in the national culture.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: AMST236, HIST236
Prereq: None

RELI286 The Examined Life: Religion and Philosophy on the Art of Living
What kind of life is worthy of a human being? How do you examine what W. B. Yeats called "the dark corners of your own soul" with the same scrutiny you give the world around you? To live a noble life is the most critical challenge we face as individuals, the courage to confront ourselves and our most cherished assumptions, and to face the world, in turn, as a conscious steward. To live an examined life, as Socrates implored over 2,400 years ago, is to be actively engaged in the world and to take ownership of our choices. It is to live in the sacred space between thought and action, truth and justice, philosophy and life. Both philosophy and religion, for all their differences, ask the same perennial questions of humanity: How do you create a flourishing human life? Philosophy is not the possession of wisdom, but the love of wisdom, an orientation to truth and justice constantly in the-making, demanding renewed devotion to conscious living. Diverse religious traditions, in turn, define the religious life as the striving for sanctity and human wisdom, in short, a way of life in harmony with the deepest truths of existence. In this seminar, we will explore classics of religious thought and Western philosophy as complementary responses to the deepest questions of humanity and the quest for a noble life. We begin at the beginning, with Socrates' challenge that the unexamined life is not fit for a human being, and explore how this challenge was put into practice in medieval and modern times. We will conclude with contemporary philosophers, both religious and secular, who challenge us anew to live up to the ancient Socratic ideal.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: AMST236, HIST236
Prereq: None

RELI288 Buddhism in America: The Dharma Comes to Main Street
The American understanding of Buddhist ideas and acceptance of Buddhist practices, which has been growing slowly for some time, has quickened significantly in the last few decades. In this course we examine this process, from its early phases in the 19th century, through the impact of population displacement and increasing spiritual diversity in the 20th century, to the virtual explosion in the current century of creative engagement between Buddhism and a wide range of fields. We cover such topics as: environmentalism; physical and mental health; issues of conflict resolution, social justice, race and gender; practices relating to optimal performance, end-of-life care, and prison ministry; and the emerging fields of cognitive science, contemplative studies, and the philosophy of mind.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: CEAS286
Prereq: None

RELI289 Indigenous Religions: Politics, Land, Healing
From wise old shamans to heroic pipeline protestors, the media is full of romantic representations of indigenous religion, but what do you really know beyond the stereotypes? If indigenous religion is just religion practiced by indigenous people, is it a category at all? Since the first days of colonialism the question of whether or not the "natives" have or are capable of having religion has had political consequences. This class introduces students to the historical and political contexts within which indigenous peoples practice their religions, and critically engages with popular stereotypes. Using ethnography, fiction, critical theory and the instructor's own fieldwork materials, we will examine some of the criteria by which indigenous religious practices have been romanticized or judged lacking by outsiders: What does an oral tradition sound like? What does it mean to engage in place-based religion? What is a "noble savage," what are sacred sites, animate landscapes, and what are some of the ways indigenous peoples really do relate to the environment in radically different ways? What are some of the contradictions and complications of multiculturalism and the politics of recognition when it comes to indigenous populations? While this is not a survey course, students will be introduced to case studies of indigenous religious practices from North America, Australia and Siberia.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: REES289
Prereq: None

RELI290 Pantheologies: Animal, Vegetable, Mineral, World
Pantheism teaches that the world itself is divine. The idea seems simple enough, yet it has suffered extraordinary ridicule at the hands of Western philosophers and theologians who have considered "matter" to be lifeless, dark, and feminine, which is to say as different as possible from "God." This course will explore this generalized panic over pantheism--in particular, the anxieties it encodes over gender, race, nationality, and class--before turning to contemporary constructive pantheologies. To what extent are recent theories of cosmology, complexity, and materiality setting forth subtle pantheisms? What are the feminist, antiracist, and ecological stakes of these theories? Properly conceived, what is pantheism, and is it ultimately distinguishable from atheism?
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: FGSS290
Prereq: None
RELI291 From Jerusalem to Ground Zero: Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Sioux, and Hindu Notions of Sacredness
Many Jews, Christians, and Muslims view Jerusalem as a "sacred" place. But what does this mean? How does a place—or an object or person—become sacred, holy, revered? Is Ground Zero sacred? If so, how do we compare the destruction of an office building that makes part of Manhattan sacred and Native American efforts to protect venerated sites from "development" that they describe as "desecration"? When does a stone sculpture become an embodiment of a Hindu deity? Using examples such as Jewish, Christian, and Muslim views of Jerusalem, Lakota Sioux recognition of revered places and wicasa wakan (medicine men), and Hindu engagements with divine images, this seminar will explore these questions through readings and site visits to a temple, mosque, and church. This course is made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this seminar do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: ARHA239
Prereq: None

RELI292 Reason and Revelation: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion
Throughout the medieval period in Europe, philosophy and theology were thought to be compatible, if not completely coextensive. With the dawning of modernity, however, a distinction of mutual suspicion began to emerge between the secular and sacred disciplines. Broadly speaking, "philosophy of religion" is the effort to evaluate the claims of revelation and reason in terms of one another, revealing either consonance or dissonance between the two. We will examine some of the major texts within this field, whose authors include deep skeptics, committed Christians, committed anti-Christians, secular and nonsecular Jews, feminists, ethicists, idealists, empiricists, and Romantics. Themes to be explored include proofs of God's existence—along with refutations of those proofs and rebuttals to those refutations—the problem of evil, religious ethics, religious experience, the possibility of a universal religion, and the relationships between monotheism, race, ecology, and gender.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Identical With: PHIL282
Prereq: None

RELI296 Judaism and the Politics of Identity
The extraordinary diversity of Jews and Jewish expression in the modern period defies simple categorization. Secularism and history are as much a part of the politics of Jewish identity as are religion and race. How has Jewish identity been defined historically and who decides who is a Jew today? How is Jewish identity defined and debated among the Jews of the Middle East, India, China, and Sub-Saharan Africa? How is Jewish identity negotiated in the State of Israel? How have secular ideologies impacted the construction of Jewish identity in recent times? This course will examine the diversity of Jewish cultures and the paradigms and politics of Jewish identity on a global scale.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI298 Religion and History
The course will examine some ways that scholars have understood the role of religion in history. Readings will reflect a wide variety of theoretical, theological, and disciplinary perspectives.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST323
Prereq: None

RELI299 Imagining Communities: National Religions and Political Rituals
From the Catholic-Protestant troubles in Northern Ireland, Christian nationalism in Serbia, Hindu-Buddhist conflict in Sri Lanka, and the Taliban in Afghanistan, religious nationalism often produces virulent and violent conflict. Yet the Virgin of Guadeloupe is a national symbol of Mexico, Catholicism was central to the Polish Solidarity movement, and America defines itself as "one nation under God." How are we to understand the relationship between religion and national identity, and how do political rituals, both religious and secular, help form communities? Popular media and political science analysis define religious nationalism as dangerous, and secular nationalism as good. We will investigate this claim over the course of the semester by asking what the study of religion and ritual can bring to the topic. Are religious and secular political rituals really as different as they seem? We will read and discuss the classic social theories of Samuel Huntington, Benedict Anderson, Emile Durkheim, Victor Turner, Clifford Geertz, and Talal Asad, and these readings will be interspersed with case studies that illustrate how these theories help us understand the world. Case studies include the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the arrest and trial of the punk band Pussy Riot in Russia, and the Yasukuni shrine in Japan, where the souls of kamikaze pilots and World War II war criminals are enshrined. In addition, students will pick a case study of their own for a research project. This project will be conducted through multiple small assignments over the course of the semester that will be combined into a final research paper and class presentation.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: REES299
Prereq: None

RELI301 Jesus and the Gods: Christianity and the Religions of Antiquity
This course will focus on the politics and methods of comparison in order to reveal how thinkers have described the myths and practices of early Christianity as they relate to the religions of ancient Israel, Greece, and Rome. In reading carefully a wide range of ancient texts and modern scholarly discussions, we will be thinking on several levels at once. That is, we will learn about the gods and ritual practices of ancient Greece and Rome and also think critically about the agendas of the many writers—from Plato to Thomas Jefferson and beyond—who described them for their own purposes. How did Jesus of Nazareth come to be understood as a god, who dies and rises, in a world brimming with gods? Why was he remembered as a philosopher and a martyr, like Socrates? How—and with what motives—did writers throughout history compare Jesus with the priests and kings of ancient Israel or with the gods and goddesses of the Hellenistic Mystery Religions? What is the place of Demeter, Isis, and Osiris in the history of religion? How did early Christians understand their rituals of death and resurrection in terms of rebirth, salvation, and martyrdom? Considering themes and theories of piety and sacrifice, purity and prophecy, wisdom and narrative, ethics and philosophy, mythmaking and cultural critique, we will ask how the
politics of comparison and classification have shaped not only our understanding of Jesus and Judaism, ancient Greece and Rome, but also the construction of "Judaism" and "Christianity" as religions and the very category of religion itself.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI302 Kierkegaard: An Advanced Seminar in Absurdity
Throughout Kierkegaard’s "pseudonymous authorship"—a set of books written by different characters he dreamed up to remove the burden of authorship from himself—we encounter the possibility that from the perspective of ethics, philosophy, and even religion, the truth will seem ridiculous. Truth, for these pseudonymous authors, takes the form of paradox, that reason and common sense can only call "absurd." Of course, it is no surprise that a paradox seems absurd; if it is not absurd, it is not a paradox. For the pseudonyms, it is therefore either the case (1) that truth is paradoxical, exceeding the realms of ordinary thinking and existing, or (2) that it is not. If it is not, then the absurd is simply absurd and both philosophy and religion are right to reject it. But if truth *is* paradoxical, then we are faced with the problem of thinking the unthinkable, communicating the incomunicable, and getting serious about absurdity. In this seminar, we will wrangle some of these pseudonyms’ best-known, most exciting, and crankiest books, along with a few of Kierkegaard’s signed, vitriolic attacks on the established church.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI304 God After the Death of God: Postmodern Echoes of Premodern Thought
The proclamation is well known: Nietzsche’s madman cries throughout the marketplace that "God himself is dead, and we have killed him." This message has appeared on magazine covers, T-shirts, and coffee mugs, but what, exactly, does it mean? Which "God" is it that "we" have killed, and how? Even more puzzlingly, how is it that Christian thought is not entirely disabled by this claim? This advanced seminar will explore various post-Nietzschean attempts to come to terms with the eclipse of the very source of traditional Christian thinking and will track the ways in which these strategies resonate with premodern, mystical theologies.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Identical With: MDST305
Prereq: None

RELI307 Ritual
Religion can be defined through beliefs or traditions or texts, but it always takes physical form through ritual. Ritual is the one universal in religion, but the question of how to understand ritual is possibly the most contested question in the study of religion. Can a ritual be read like a text? How do symbols produce effects, and how should we understand these effects? What is performative speech and how does it work? How does ritual behavior reflect and shape social relationships? This course introduces students to the major approaches of studying ritual. The readings draw heavily, but not exclusively, on anthropological approaches to ritual, both classic texts and recent innovative approaches focusing on language and embodiment. Students will be required to do practical fieldwork observations of rituals so that they can put these texts in dialogue with their research experience.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: ANTH303
Prereq: None

RELI308 Funny, You Don’t Look Jewish: Race, Gender, Sexuality, and Judaism
This course will give advanced students the opportunity to engage deeply with critical current issues in Judaism, including race, gender, and sexuality. In both the U.S. and Israel, issues of Jewish whiteness (or not), straightness (or not), and maleness (or not) dominate conversations about the direction Judaism will take in the 21st century and how Judaism can remain relevant in an increasingly globalized and secularized world. Students in this course will read contemporary scholarship on those who have been traditionally pushed to the margins of Judaism and will be asked to wade into murky ethical waters as they think about the power of naming and who has the authority to determine "in" and "out.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: FGSS313, CJST308
Prereq: None

RELI310 Constructing Hinduism and Islam
What is Hinduism? What is not? Is Islam a religion or a way of life? What is the difference? The meanings of few words are as greatly contested as is "religion." For Western (primarily Christian) observers, Hinduism and Islam have acted as foils for their self-perceptions of faith, practice, modernity, and culture. More significantly, Western scholars of religion, in the course of their studies, have influenced the self-understanding of those who identify themselves as Hindu and Muslim while, undeterred, many Hindus and Muslims have advocated their own practices, beliefs, and sensibilities. The concept of religion continues to play a significant role in both nation formation and international affairs. Using theory critiquing the category of religion, we will explore the application of this term by Westerners in South Asia and the Middle East and investigate the continuing debate regarding the identities of these religions both by those within and outside these traditions.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: HIST276
Prereq: None

RELI311 Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in the Middle East and the Balkans
The dissolution of empires, Ottoman and Soviet, produced dramatic changes in the economic and social structure of the Middle East and the Balkans, leading to the emergence of new, competing social identities. This course will examine issues of nationalism versus religious identities; class struggle versus anti-Western struggle; and the changing role of the minorities, both religious and ethnic, in the larger society in the 19th- and 20th-century Middle East and Balkans.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST311
RELI312 Indigenous Religion and the New Age: Inspiration or Appropriation?
Is imitation the sincerest form of flattery? This course examines the way in which indigenous religious practices, images, and ideas become appropriated into New Age religion. In GOD IS RED, Native American philosopher Vine Deloria Jr. argued that indigenous religion is superior to western Christianity and the Christian West has much to learn from it, but many indigenous people understandably object when their practices are copied by outsiders, decontextualized, and used to make a profit. Where is the line between respectfully learning from and disrespectfully appropriating? Why are indigenous practices so appealing to the New Age? How do New Age desires intersect with the needs and desires of contemporary indigenous practitioners, as well as national legal structures and neo-liberal economies? What are the contexts within which decontextualized indigenous practices and ideas become re-contextualized as New Age? We will read and deconstruct the classic manifesto of New Age spirituality THE TEACHINGS OF DON JUAN, examine the Ayahuasca patent case, and consider questions of intellectual property, cultural appropriation, and spiritual tourism.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM312, AMST312
Prereq: None

RELI315 Ethics and Action in the Buddhist Cosmos
We often think about nirvana, or “enlightenment,” as the ultimate goal of Buddhist practice. But the reality is much more complex. Buddhist traditions imagine a huge range of positive outcomes for moral behavior: immediate material benefits, rebirth in a better body or in a wealthier family, and enjoyment of gold-paved heavens or eternally blissful Pure Lands. In this seminar we will read Buddhist scriptures, commentaries, biographies, narrative anthologies, and scholarly works that trace the many ways of thinking about ethics, action, and rebirth in the vast Buddhist cosmos. We will tour Buddhist heavens and hells, Pure Lands and political dystopias, as well as the complex worlds of Buddhist modernity. Along the way we will begin to think about key issues in the study of religion: narrative and ethics, magic and material culture, cosmology and sacred presence, modernity and globalization.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: CEAS345
Prereq: None

RELI319 Zionism: A Political Theology
This seminar examines the political theology of Zionism by focusing on the intersections of secular aspirations and theological notions embedded in the ideology and practice of the national Jewish mission. To this end, the seminar is designed to explore the modern concept of political theology. In analyzing a range of selected primary and secondary sources, it will also bring this concept to bear on an understanding of the Zionist secular adaptations of theological concepts, such as heresy, faith, inner-experience, and redemption. Finally, the seminar will focus on how this type of political-theology informed the national Jewish language, symbolism, literature, social institutions, and social and political imagination.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00

RELI330 American Utopias in the 19th Century
This seminar will examine expressions, both religious and secular, of the utopian impulse in 19th-century American culture. Communitarian experiments launched by Shakers, transcendentalists, perfectionists, and feminists will be studied as manifestations of social and religious turmoil and will be compared with their literary analogues. Utopianism as a philosophical, literary, and literal approach to solving social problems and constructing a more perfect nation-state has been a persistent and recurrent feature in American history. This seminar explores precursors in the long 19th century to more recent utopian theory and experimentation.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: AMST330, HIST330
Prereq: None

RELI348 Magic, Sex, and Scholasticism: Tantric Traditions in Asia and Beyond
The word “tantra” conjures many images: ritual feasts on illicit substances, sexual union in the service of religious transformation, alchemical journeys, and explorations of the erotic, the terrifying, and the sublime. But what precisely did tantra look like in practice? Were the worlds of tantra imagined by marginal outcastes? Monastic elites? Or were they just the wild fantasies of Western imperialists? In this course, we will immerse ourselves in the worlds of tantra, through scriptures, ritual manuals, and art. We will read scholarship on tantra to probe the social and philosophical contexts in which tantra thrived. Finally, we will investigate the history of Western encounters with and appropriations of tantra, from Aleister Crowley to Sting.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Identical With: FGSS348
Prereq: None

RELI350 Women and Buddhism
This seminar will seek to investigate the complex and changing status of women in relationship to Buddhist doctrine and practice. Using Buddhist texts that present traditional views of women as well as a variety of contemporary materials that reveal aspects of the lives of Buddhist women in ancient and contemporary times, we shall attempt to understand the values and concerns that drive, restrain, and/or empower such women.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: FGSS264, CEAS350
Prereq: [RELI242 or CEAS242] OR RELI151

RELI351 Debate and Destruction: Jews and Christians in the Middle Ages
This course will consider relations between the Jewish minority and their Christian neighbors in England before the Jews’ expulsion in 1290. We will also look at how the Jews are depicted in subsequent Christian writing. We will read texts originally written in Hebrew, French, and Latin (all in translation) as well as English, giving us a sense of the conversations that took place between two groups that were both inextricably bound together and set apart by centuries of conflict and...
persecution. Among the issues we will explore are: the popularity of Jewish-Christian debate as a literary form, the Crusades, gender roles and gender fluidity, Jewish and Christian apocalyptic programs, and the curious afterlife of Jews in Middle English literature.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL351, MDST351, CJST351
Prereq: None

REL355 Mystical Traditions in Islam
Muslim scholars today often condemn the mystical traditions of Sufism as being un-Islamic. But for almost a thousand years, mysticism provided an alternative voice to Muslim believers. This course will explore the origins and development of Sufism and its extraordinary impact on the cultural life of Muslims over the past one thousand years.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST337
Prereq: None

REL372 Jewish Politics, Jewish Power
What has Judaism to do with politics? Is there such a thing as a Jewish political tradition before the establishment of the modern State of Israel? This course will take a close look at the history of Jewish political thought and the implementation of Jewish power, both in the past and in the present. We will begin with an overview of the current debate over religion and politics and how it impacts the case of Jewish statehood. We will then look at the roots of Jewish power in antiquity and the development of political thought in classical and medieval Jewish sources before turning to the challenges and controversies associated with modern Jewish politics and statehood and the ambiguous relationship between religion and politics. In addition to numerous sources from the Jewish tradition, we will explore the implications of Jewish power and powerlessness in contemporary Jewish literature and film.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

REL373 Religion, Science, and Empire: Crucible of a Globalized World
The development of modern science—and of modernity itself—not only coincided with the rise of European imperialism, it was abetted by it. Meanwhile, religion was integral to both the roots of European science and Western encounters with others. This class will explore how the intersections of religion, science, and empire have formed a globalized world with examples of European engagement with the Americas, Middle East, and, particularly, India from the age of Columbus through to the space race. We will examine how the disciplines we know today as biology, anthropology, archaeology, folklore, and the history of religions all crystallized in the crucible of imperial encounter and how non-Westerners have embraced, engaged, and resisted these epistememes.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: SISP377
Prereq: None

REL375 Relic and Image: The Archaeology and Social History of Indian Buddhism
This course investigates the social history and material culture of Indian Buddhism from the 5th century BCE through the period of the Kushan empire (1st–3rd century CE). The course begins with the examination of the basic teachings of Buddhism as presented in canonical texts and then turns to consideration of the organization and functioning of the early Buddhist community, or sangha. The focus then shifts to the popular practice of Buddhism in early India and the varied forms of interaction between lay and monastic populations. Although canonical texts will be examined, primary emphasis in this segment of the course is given to the archaeology and material culture of Buddhist sites and their associated historical inscriptions. Specific topics to be covered include the cult of the Buddha’s relics, pilgrimage to the sites of the Eight Great Events in the Buddha’s life, the rise and spread of image worship, and the Buddhist appropriation and reinterpretation of folk religious practices. Key archaeological sites to be studied include the monastic complex at Sanchi, the pilgrimage center at Bodh Gaya (site of the Buddha’s enlightenment), the city of Taxila (capital of the Indo-Greek kings and a major educational center), and the rock-cut cave monasteries along the trade routes of western India.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA381, CEAS381, ARCP380
Prereq: None

REL377 Worlding the World: Creation Myths from Ancient Greece to the Multiverse
This course will focus on two questions that have thwarted and enthralled scientists, philosophers, and theologians for millennia: Where have we come from? and Where are we going? By reading ancient Greek and early Christian sources alongside contemporary astrophysicists, we will witness the reconfigured resurrection of some very old debates about the creation and unmaking of the world. Is the universe eternal, or was it created? Is it finite or infinite? Destructible or indestructible? Linear or cyclical? And is ours the only universe, or are there others? The semester will be divided into four sections. The first will explore the dominant, or “inflationary,” version of the big bang hypothesis in relation to the Christian doctrine of creation. The second will consider the possibility that the whole universe might be a negligible part of a vast “multiverse” in conversation with the early Greek atomists, who posited an extra-cosmic space teeming with other worlds. The third will explore contemporary cyclical cosmologies—that is, theories that posit a rebirth of the cosmos out of its fiery destruction—in relation to early Stoic philosophy and cross-cultural cyclic mythologies. The fourth will explore quantum cosmologies, in which the universe fragments into parallel branches each time a particle “decides” upon a position. We will examine these varied cosmologies of multiplicity, not with a view toward adjudicating among them, but toward pointing out their mythic and ontological genealogies and consequences.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: SISP377
Prereq: None

REL379 Christianity and Sexuality
This course will explore a range of Christian teachings on attitudes toward, and technologies of, sex and sexuality. We will read medieval and modern theologies of sexuality, as well as contemporary historical,
sociological, and cultural studies. Points of focus will include confession, mysticism, marriage, celibacy, queer and transgendered practices and identities, and reproductive rights.

**Offering:** Host  
**Grading:** A-F  
**Credits:** 1.00  
**Gen Ed Area:** HA-RELI  
**Identical With:** FGSS309, AMST379  
**Prereq:** None

**RELI385 Performance Studies**  
Performance Studies introduces students to theories from the fields of aesthetics and cultural studies to help them examine how particular uses of the body, space, and narrative intersect to inform our experience of "performance", broadly defined. A reading and writing intensive seminar, Performance Studies prepares students to develop in-depth research on a topic of their choice. They may experiment with archival and library research, analysis of live performance, and analysis of documents of various kinds, including visual materials. In class, we will look at a wide range of public events, and use the frame of performance studies to engage the interplay between real and fictional in both artistic productions and performative contexts. This seminar is appropriate and recommended for students with a background in either performance (theater, dance, music, performance art) or ritual/cultural studies.

**Offering:** Crosslisting  
**Grading:** A-F  
**Credits:** 1.00  
**Gen Ed Area:** HA-THEA  
**Identical With:** THEA316  
**Prereq:** None

**RELI391 Religion and the Social Construction of Race**  
In this course we examine aspects of the intersections between race and religion in a number of historical and social contexts. We place at the center of our discussions the question of how race and religion are co-constructed categories that function as a prism through which people come to understand and experience their own identities and those of others. We will privilege interpretations that emphasize (a) the intersections of race and religion as a process in which power plays a pivotal role; and (b) the means through which communities form collective identities. We will read a range of historical analysis and primary source materials from the U.S. and the Caribbean. After a theory module, we will examine a colonial-era captivity narrative, antebellum pro-slavery document, missionary works, analyses of anti-Semitism, works on Rastafari, Haitian Vodou, Jonestown, the Christian White Supremacy movement, as well as the contemporary U.S. relationship to the Middle East.

**Offering:** Host  
**Grading:** A-F  
**Credits:** 1.00  
**Gen Ed Area:** SBS-RELI  
**Identical With:** AFAM280, AMST391  
**Prereq:** None

**RELI393 If there is no God, then everything is permitted?" Moral Life in a Secular World**  
In Fyodor Dostoevsky’s The Brothers Karamazov, Dmitri Karamazov famously poses the question of what would happen to mankind “without God and immortal life,” asking whether this means that “all things are permitted.” Made famous by Dostoevsky, the question of whether we can be moral without God has always haunted secularism and has consistently been the most vocal criticism of unbelief. From papal condemnations of secularism and “godless Soviets,” to the contemporary consensus that belief in God is evidence of moral goodness and its absence a sign of a broken ethical barometer, the assumption has been that transcendental authority is all that stands between us and moral abyss. When the atrocities committed by “totalitarian” regimes are cited as evidence of this, it is only the most radical articulation of a broader narrative of secular modernity. One of modernity’s master narratives is that people go from being under the care of the church to being under the care of the state, and our focus will be on historical cases where the question of secular values was explicitly engaged by the state. We will examine individual and collective articulations of morality in three prominent models of secularism: American civil religion, French laïcité, and Communist official atheism. What constitutes the moral foundation of a world without God? Can religion’s moral and spiritual function be performed by a different kind of belief system?

**Offering:** Crosslisting  
**Grading:** A-F  
**Credits:** 1.00  
**Gen Ed Area:** SBS-HIST  
**Identical With:** HIST395, REES344  
**Prereq:** None

**RELI395 The Anthropology of Religion**  
What do we study when we study religion? We can observe practices, record speech, examine objects and actions, but what do these things tell us? If religion is about belief, what can we say about belief from documenting actions? Perhaps we must conclude that religion is not about belief, but if so, are in danger of “explaining away” the very phenomena we seek to understand? This course will introduce students to a cross-cultural, comparative perspective on religious practice and belief, in order to critically reflect on the role of methodology and research design in the study of religion, and the social sciences more broadly. How do we know what we know? How do we plan research in order to find out what we want to know? The course has a significant methods component. Students will be expected to do field research exercises in a local religious community, and prepare a methodology research proposal for a fictional or real project as a final assignment. Methodological exercises will be interspersed with ethnographic texts that allow us to reflect on how religion is studied, experienced and explained. Students planning thesis or other research projects with an ethnographic component, in any social science field, may use the class and the final assignment to conceptualize and plan their projects.

**Offering:** Host  
**Grading:** A-F  
**Credits:** 1.00  
**Gen Ed Area:** SBS-RELI  
**Identical With:** ANTH395  
**Prereq:** None

**RELI396 Performing Jewish Studies: History, Methods, and Models**  
Jewish studies is broad in terms of disciplinary approaches and diverse in the ways it conceives its subject matter. This course will focus on the historical roots of the field of Jewish studies, models that advance theories and methods of Jewish studies, and on how such studies are being differently forged and performed in different disciplines, including Jewish history, Jewish literary studies, anthropology, sociology, and religious studies.

**Offering:** Crosslisting  
**Grading:** A-F  
**Credits:** 1.00  
**Gen Ed Area:** SBS-CJST  
**Identical With:** HIST313, CJST313  
**Prereq:** None
This course is designed to teach us how to reflect critically upon the theories, methods, and discourses that constitute the academic study of religion. We will be concerned with current studies in history and the history of religions, the interpretation of texts, anthropology, cultural studies, and feminist theory. Our task is to understand and assess how scholars of religion make critical judgments. And so, since the building blocks of argumentation remain constant—definitions, classifications, data, and explanations—we will seek to identify and evaluate each scholar's principles of selection, means of description, stipulation of evidence, use of comparative categories, and methods and models of argumentation.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI403 Department/Program Project or Essay
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

RELI404 Department/Program Project or Essay
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI407 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

RELI408 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

RELI409 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI410 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI411 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI412 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI420 Student Forum
Student-run group tutorial, sponsored by a faculty member and approved by the chair of a department or program.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

RELI466 Education in the Field, Undergraduate
Students must consult with the department and class dean in advance of undertaking education in the field for approval of the nature of the responsibilities and method of evaluation.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

RELI467 Independent Study, Undergraduate
Credit may be earned for an independent study during a summer or authorized leave of absence provided that (1) plans have been approved in advance, and (2) all specified requirements have been satisfied.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: None
Prereq: None

RELI468 Independent Study, Undergraduate
Credit may be earned for an independent study during a summer or authorized leave of absence provided that (1) plans have been approved in advance, and (2) all specified requirements have been satisfied.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: None
Prereq: None

RELI469 Education in the Field, Undergraduate
Students must consult with the department and class dean in advance of undertaking education in the field for approval of the nature of the responsibilities and method of evaluation.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: None
Prereq: None

RELI478 Buddhist Art of Asia
Study of the philosophical underpinnings, use, and social significance of select genres of Buddhist art in India, China, Tibet, and Indonesia. Special attention will be given to ways of representing Buddhist concepts, values, and practices through visual narrative strategies.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI483 Constructions and Re-Constructions of Buddhism
Is Buddhism a philosophy? A mind science? An ancient mystical path? A modern construct? This seminar will evaluate a variety of answers to these questions by exploring how Buddhism has been understood in colonial and postcolonial periods. Our primary-source materials range from Orientalist poetry to Zen essays to Insight Meditation manuals to 21st-century films to contemporary academic critiques. We will examine the shape Buddhism takes in these works and turn to recent scholarship to discuss how romantic, imperialist, anti-modern, nationalist,
therapeutic, and scientific frames depict one of today's most popular
religions.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: CEAS245
Prereq: None

RELI491 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
The teaching apprentice program offers undergraduate students the
opportunity to assist in teaching a faculty member's course for academic
credit.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI492 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
The teaching apprentice program offers undergraduate students the
opportunity to assist in teaching a faculty member's course for academic
credit.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI495 Research Apprentice, Undergraduate
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

RELI496 Research Apprentice, Undergraduate
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U