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
Jeremy Zwelling Assistant Professor of Jewish Studies; 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

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Adjunct Associate Professor of Religion; Director, Jewish Israel Studies

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DEPARTMENT ADVISING EXPERT

Elizabeth McAllister
- 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
This course will examine the many ways in which religion is understood and practiced by a variety of communities as well as the ways it is critically engaged and understood by scholars in the field of religious studies. The three divisions of the curriculum of the Department of Religion (religious traditions, thematic approaches, and method and theory) will be represented in the course’s examples and approaches. Topics covered in this course include religious violence and conflict, the significance of myth and narrative in providing schemes of meaning, the production of community solidarity and difference through
rituals, the construction and transmission of traditions through texts and objects, and religious conflict.

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

RELI201 Introduction to the Hebrew Bible
The Hebrew Bible, also known as the Old Testament, is a diverse collection of writings spanning a millennium in time and reflecting the societies, beliefs, ideas, and institutions of the people of ancient Israel. This course introduces the Hebrew Bible in its complex historical, religious, and literary dimensions and seeks to introduce students to the variety of approaches modern readers bring to a reading of the Bible. We will combine close readings of the biblical texts in translation with contemporary approaches to the Hebrew Bible and its context in the ancient Near East.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI, HA-RELI, HA-RELI, HA-RELI
Identical With: MDST203, CJST244, MDST203, CJST244, MDST203, MDST203, MJST203, MJST203, CJST244, MDST203, CJST244, MDST203, MDST203, MJST203, MDST203, MNST203, MDST203
Prereq: None

RELI203 Jews & Judaism: Race, Religion, Culture
What is a Jew? Are Jews white? Must a Jew believe in God? What is at stake when defining someone as a Jew? Using sources ranging from the Hebrew Bible to the television show Transparent, this course examines various facets of Jewish life, paying special attention to contesting definitions of Jewishness as race, religion, and culture. Building on a chronological discussion of Jewish history, we will ask theoretical questions such as the relation between gender and biblical interpretation, the relevance of religious law in contemporary society, and the challenges of diasporic thinking to national sovereignty.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: CJST203
Prereq: None

RELI204 Judaisms
This course will examine varieties of Jewishness in its contemporary and historical forms. We will focus on texts that provide a focal point from which to discuss significant religious, historical, and cultural components of Jewish traditions. The course texts draw on several types of literature, including philosophical and theological writings about God, Yiddish short stories, American graphic novels, ethnographic studies of Jewish communities, personal narratives, and critical histories. This wide array of texts is intended to introduce students to Jewish history, thought, practice, stories, and identities from different gendered, geographical, and cultural perspectives.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
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, 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: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL259, CEAS256, PHIL259, CEAS256, PHIL259, CEAS256, PHIL259, EAST256, PHIL259, CEAS256, PHIL259, CEAS256, PHIL259, EAST256
Prereq: None

RELI207 Buddhist Psychology in Modern Perspective
The Buddhist tradition preserves a sophisticated model of mind and behavior in the early literature of the Pali Canon, along with a profound set of practices for transforming human experience from unhealthy to healthy states. Much of this lore is of great interest to modern psychologists, scientific researchers, and philosophers of mind, and is having an impact on a wide range of contemporary fields. This course begins with a survey of the core ideas of Buddhist psychology as they are presented in classical texts, then goes on to explore how these ideas are influencing the work of mental health professionals, cognitive scientists, the study of social sciences, and others.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
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
**RELI209 Unthinkable Suffering: The Problem of "the Problem of Evil"**

This course will explore the difficulties of reconciling the existence of evil and suffering in the world with the existence of an omnipotent and benevolent God. How have Christian philosophers and theologians sought to justify God by redefining, relativizing, or even explaining away evil? We will explore traditional efforts to set forth "theodicies," or justifications of God's goodness, as well as the inadequacy of these schemes in the face of the horrors of the 20th century. How is it possible to account for evil that surpasses all understanding or suffering that is too great to explain away? How, in other words, can thinking think the unthinkable?

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

**RELI210 Thinking with Demons**

As the perennial bad boy of Judeo-Christian tradition, the devil has exerted an enduring fascination on Western culture for two millennia and counting. He and his kind remain so compelling in part because they tap into both our most profound anxieties and our deepest desires. This course will explore the myriad of ways humans across the centuries have found demons useful to "think with," employing them to everything from explaining the existence of evil to justifying violence against others. It will also introduce you to the conventions of college-level writing, and to the perspectives of different academic disciplines, which the many aspects of the demonic provide an ideal opportunity to explore. The first half of the course will focus on the devil and demons in ancient and medieval culture, emphasizing their critical impact on the formation of medieval Christianity. The second half will address the role of the demonic in European culture after 1500, including the great witch trials and the fears of the diabolic that emerged as part of colonial encounter, before considering the way ideas of the devil continue to function in contemporary society.

Offering: Crosslisting  
Grading: A-F  
Credits: 1.00  
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST  
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 profoundly 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, 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.

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

**RELI213 Refugees & Exiles: Religion in the Diaspora**

Recent years have seen the on-going tragic refugee crisis, with millions of people being displaced because of war and ecological disasters. That this crisis also has religious overtones is evident by the so-called "Muslim Ban" in the United States or the rhetoric used by right wing leaders across Europe. This course deals with the meaning of refuge, exile, and diaspora through three perspectives: philosophical, historical, and literary. A variety of case studies—including the contemporary refugee crises in the Middle East, the black transatlantic, and the destruction of the temple in the Hebrew Bible—will raise for us various questions: What does it mean to be violently forced to leave one's home? How is it possible to make sense of such a tragedy? What ethical responsibility do we have toward refugees? What creative power can diaspora muster to the rescue of culture? Assignments in this course will be based on an analysis of a refugee crisis selected by the students.

Offering: Host  
Grading: A-F  
Credits: 1.00  
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI  
Identical With: CJST214  
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, SBS-RELI  
Identical With: FGSS215, FGSS215, FGSS215, FGSS215  
Prereq: None

**RELI215 Politics and Piety in Early Christianities**

This course is an introduction to the political, social, and religious world of Christianities during the first three centuries of the Common Era. Through discussion sessions, it will explore the controversy between emerging orthodoxy and heresy and its propagandistic impact upon the development of church organizations, interpretations of sexuality and the roles of women, the rise of gnosticism, and the formation of the Christian Bible.

Offering: Host  
Grading: A-F
RELI216 Secularism: An Introduction

This course traces the idea and ideal of secularism from classic enlightenment texts to its contemporary incarnations: both liberal democratic principles of the separation of church and state as well as state-sponsored atheism in the Soviet Union and China. This is not an examination of secularization as a historical process, but rather secularism as an ideological project, encompassing both secularism as a realpolitik approach to governing multireligious societies, the utopian ideals of secular humanism, and the relationship between secularism and the idea of religious freedom as a universal human right.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
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 From Exile into Paradise: Dante’s “Divine” Comedy

Where will I go after I die? Is there an afterlife, and if so, will I be saved, damned, or something in between? Just as importantly, who has the power to tell me about the Hereafter, and so to shape my actions in this world? The Church? The government? God himself? Or the makers of art and literature? These are the questions that the Comedy poses and they remain highly relevant today. Dante’s remarkable poem can be read in many ways: as religious praise, as historical commentary, as a journey to self-knowledge, and as philosophical discourse. Our aim is to gain understanding of how these different modes of writing come together both in Dante’s time as well as in the critical reception of the poem.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN, HA-RLAN, HA-RLAN, HA-RLAN
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 liberation, feminist, process, and neo-orthodox theologies. How do the ways people think about God reflect, support, or even interrupt the ways they think about the human subject? And what are the politics of thinking in different ways about the relationship between God and humanity?

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

RELI221 Islam and Muslim Cultures

This course provides an introduction to Islam and Muslim societies. It familiarizes students with the basic teachings and practices of Islam and examines commonalities and diversity in how Islam has been and continues to be practiced by Muslims, paying particular attention to peoples and places in South Asia and the Middle East. We further examine colonial and postcolonial relations through which the West and Islamic world have come to be understood as mutually distinct and antithetical to one another and as historical and contemporary forms of global and transnational interrelatedness that belie simplistic binaries and oppositions.

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

RELI223 Chinese Buddhist Philosophy

This seminar will focus on three of the key themes in Chinese Buddhist philosophy: interdependence, universal Buddha nature, and emptiness. On each theme, we will read classic scriptural materials, philosophical discussions by Chinese Buddhist thinkers from the 7th-12th centuries, contemporary secondary scholarship, and— in some cases— critical reactions by contemporary Buddhists. Our goals will be both to understand the Buddhist doctrines and to critically evaluate them as philosophy.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL322, CEAS322, PHIL322, CEAS322, PHIL322, EAST322, PHIL322, CEAS322, PHIL322, CEAS322, PHIL322, EAST322
Prereq: None

RELI224 Hasidism: European Origins and American Identities

This course approaches Hasidism as a significant Jewish movement that began in the 18th century and continues today. The course is structured as two case studies. The first half of the course addresses how Hasidism emerged and the dynamics of Hasidic teachings, and the second half of the course focuses on questions of Jewish authenticity, identity, racialization, gender roles, and civil rights in the United States.

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

RELI227 The Jews of the Islamic World from Muhammad to Modernity

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 were for centuries a vital presence throughout the Islamic world and contributed in rich and dynamic ways to Islamic civilization right up to contemporary times. This course explores the complex historical relationship of the Jews of the Islamic world from the rise of Islam in the seventh century to the mass exodus of Middle Eastern and North African Jewry from their ancestral communities in modern times.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI

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, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL

Identical With: PHIL205, CEAS261, PHIL205, CEAS261, PHIL205, CEAS261, PHIL205, CEAS261, PHIL205, CEAS261, PHIL205, CEAS261, PHIL205, CEAS261, PHIL205, CEAS261, PHIL205, CEAS261, PHIL205, CEAS261, PHIL205, CEAS261

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 has 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, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI

Identical With: CEAS343, CEAS343, CEAS343, EAST343, CEAS343, CEAS343, EAST343, CEAS343, CEAS343, CEAS343, CEAS343, CEAS343, EAST343, CEAS343, EAST343

Prereq: None

RELI230 Muslim/Western Engagements in Film and Performance
Examining contemporary films and performances by Americans, Britons, Egyptians, Indians, Pakistanis, and Afghans offers the opportunity to challenge the simplistic binaries of West versus Islam upon which popular representations often rely. Themes that will be explored include Muslim emigration, European imperialism and colonialism, religion and secularism in the formation of national identity, terrorism and state violence, representation of gender differences, and the problem of multiple identities. Performances will include a one-woman play, Hip Hop, sufí "qawwali" music. Films will include "The Kingdom of God," "Battle for Algiers," "Of Gods and Men," "Baby Doll Night," "The Beauty Shop of Kabul," "Restrepo," "Khuda ke Liye," "My Name Is Khan," "Babel," "AmericanEast," and "Brick Lane," plus episodes of "Battlestar Galactica.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST

Identical With: HIST156, REES156, HIST156, REES156

Prereq: None

RELI232 Religions of China: The Ways and their Power
In this course, we examine the religious worlds of China from antiquity to the present. Not only will we read key works of Chinese philosophy from the Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist traditions, we will also investigate how these traditions find expression in art and architecture, poetry and prose, and in the lived realities of Chinese history.

In this exploration of Chinese religions, we will pay special attention to the question of what "counts" as religion, to the role of the state in defining and establishing Chinese religions, and to the power of new religious movements to intervene dramatically (and sometimes violently) in Chinese history.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI, HA-RELI

Identical With: CEAS344, CEAS344, CEAS344, CEAS344

Prereq: None

RELI233 The People of the Book: Jewish Cultures and Jewish Canons
Jewish cultures and Jewish canonical literatures have long existed in a mutually reinforcing and creative tension. This course is designed as an introduction to Jewish cultural and religious canonical literature, from biblical antiquity to modern times, through the lens of the religious, political, and social contexts of Jewish history. We will trace the evolution of Jewish literature from its origins in ancient Israel to its reinvention in modern America, paying careful attention to the process of evolution and expansion by which new ideas and changing sensibilities were either integrated with, or broke from, the voices of the past as they responded to the challenges of the present.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI

RELI234 Sophomore Seminar: East European Jewish Experience
Our concept of the life of East European Jews has been dominated by the Hollywood and Broadway blockbuster FIDDLER ON THE ROOF. The shtetl has been the paradigm of East European Jewish experience. But the powerful imagery of the shtetl is largely a creation of 19th-century writers. This course will take us beyond the shtetl and will look at the history of the Jews in Eastern Europe from the initial settlement of the Jews there until the eve of modernity. We will examine how historians and writers have shaped our understanding of Jewish history in that region and the context in which the persisting imagery of Eastern European Jews was created. Why were certain stories told? What can different historical sources show us about Jewish life in Eastern Europe? We will discuss how Jewish history in Eastern Europe was studied by historians and couple the narratives created by scholars with historical sources: privilege charters, crime records, rabbinic response, anti-Jewish literature, and others. We will try to probe the relation between history, historical sources, and historical writings.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST

Identical With: HIST156, REES156, HIST156, REES156

Prereq: None
RELI236 Duty, Power, Pleasure, Release: Key Themes in Classical Indian Thought

According to thinkers in classical India, the goals of life were fourfold: encompassing the pursuit of social-moral duty (dharma), economic and political power (artha), bodily pleasure (kama), and, finally, release from the endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth (moksha). The four goals provide a useful key for understanding Indian intellectual history in its classical moment—roughly, the half millennium between the 2nd and 7th centuries. This pivotal era witnessed the definition of new forms of social and political thought, the creation of new types of expressive literature in Sanskrit, and the crystallization of the Hindu religion. In this course, we explore classical Indian thought through a variety of theoretical and literary texts articulating the ideas and values of the age. Most of these works were originally written in Sanskrit, the ancient Indian language of culture and power that served as a lingua franca uniting vast portions of Southern Asia. The emphasis is on close reading and discussion of the translated texts themselves and critical engagement with the ideas and values they present.

Offering: Crosslisting

Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART, HA-ART, HA-ART

RELI238 Jewish Mysticism: Literature and Legacy of the Kabbalah

Mysticism challenges our conventional modes of experiencing reality and describing the mystery of being. It transcends commonplace distinctions between the sacred and the profane and upends traditional definitions of the human and the divine. Mystical contemplation and meditative practice have long occupied a central role in the Jewish religious tradition and have succeeded in transforming and remaking that tradition in every generation. This course will examine the central teachings and ongoing legacy of Jewish mysticism from its classical origins to modern times, with special emphasis on the Kabbalah, Hasidism, and modern movements of Jewish renewal. We will consider the questions and controversies that defined Kabbalah and Hasidism in their formative contexts and the reasons for their revival among Jews and non-Jews alike in our day. In our study of Jewish mysticism, we will take the core texts of the mystical tradition as our starting point, while paying close attention to alternative forms of creative expression, from poetry and storytelling to music and dance.

Offering: Host

Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI

RELI239 Modern Shamanism: Ecstasy and Ancestors in the New Age

The wise and mysterious native shaman has long held a particular fascination for Western scholars of religion, but does this figure even exist? What does it mean to be a practicing shaman today? Beginning with Eliaé’s definition of “archaic ecstasy,” we examine the idea of the shaman, its role in the New Age movement, and the challenges faced by contemporary indigenous shamans, from negotiating international Intellectual Property Rights law to Ayahuasca tourism. Course materials are supplemented by A/V materials from the instructor’s fieldwork in Siberia.

Offering: Host

Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI

RELI240 Religion in the Roman Empire

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, SBS-RELI

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 examine Buddhism as the product of two ongoing and historically situated discourses: the one belonging to scholars of Buddhism, and the other to the tradition itself. The course begins with the mainstream tradition of early India, continues through the Mahayana transformation in South and East Asia, and concludes with a comparative look at the Buddhist traditions of Tibet and Japan and the relevance of these movements for contemporary "Western" Buddhism.

Offering: Host

Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI, HA-RELI, HA-RELI, HA-RELI

RELI249 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, SBS-RELI

RELI250 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 empires” 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

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 empires" 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
HIST247, MDST247, HIST247, MDST247
Identical With:
Gen Ed Area:
Credits:
Offering:
Jews: Christians and Muslims. The survey course on the history of Jews will cover the long period from biblical Israelites to Jews living among Christians and Muslims. We will discuss the mutual influences of Jews and non-Jews on their cultures and experiences. The readings will consist mostly of primary historical sources on Jewish culture, politics, 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. This course examines Afro-Creole religions and cultural expressions in selected communities throughout the Atlantic world. How were religious communities created under colonial domination? Under what conditions were religions shaped, and what shapes did they take? How are African-based religions produced through aesthetics and the ritual arts of spiritual talk and sermons, song, dance, drumming, and medicine-making? How do these religions continue to survive, thrive, and, in some cases, grow in the current historical period? This course will pay special attention to the yearly ritual cycle and its attendant traditions and spiritism in Puerto Rico. We will study Orisha religions like La Regla de Ocha, or Lukumi, in Cuba as well as the emergent spiritual and aesthetic traditions such as Capoeira and Rara. We will study Orisha religions like La Regla de Ocha, or Lukumi, in Cuba as well as the emergent spiritual and aesthetic traditions such as Capoeira and Rara.

RELI257 Protestantism: From the Reformation to the Religious Right
This course studies the impact Protestant theology and piety have had on society, culture, politics, and the economy of Western nations. After an introduction to the major strands of the Reformation in Europe (Lutheran, Calvinist, Anabaptist, and Anglican), the course will focus on the English-speaking world, the United States in particular. Topics will include religion in Wesleyan’s history, African American Protestantism, liberal Protestantism in the early 20th century, and the rise of fundamentalism, evangelicism, and Pentecostalism in the late 20th century. The last part of the course will focus on the United States as a nation both highly secularized and highly religious. Particular emphasis will be given to issues of church-state relations, the culture wars, and the political influence of the Religious Right.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST261, AMST261, HIST261, AMST261, HIST261, AMST261, HIST261, AMST261, HIST261, AMST261
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, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI261 Jewish History: From Biblical Israel to Diaspora Jews
The survey course on the history of Jews will cover the long period from biblical times to 16th century, a period during which Judaism, Christianity, and Islam formed, shaping the foundation of mutual attitudes among these groups for centuries to come. The course will examine transformations of identity from biblical Israelites to Jews living among Christians and Muslims. We will discuss stereotypes and presuppositions of Jewish life and history, including what the historian Salo W. Baron dubbed the “lachrymose concept of Jewish history”--Jewish history as history of suffering. The course will illuminate the experience of Jews whose lives, and deaths, demonstrate that they were active actors rather than just passive victims of historical events. We will discuss the mutual influences of Jews and non-Jews on their cultures and experiences. The readings will consist mostly of primary historical sources on Jewish culture, politics, economic activities, social and legal status, and the Jews’ relations with non-Jews: Christians and Muslims.

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

RELI262 Jewish History: From Spanish Expulsion to Jon Stewart
This course explores Jewish history from the 16th century through in the modern era, reaching toward modern American and Israeli history and culture. The modern Jewish experience has often been characterized as an era of increasing participation of Jews in the civil society and was juxtaposed to the premodern era of the ghettos. This course will challenge these dichotomous stereotypes and introduce students to the complexity of the Jews’ experience, their active involvement in the political and cultural processes that were taking place in the non-Jewish environment during both premodern and modern periods. As in HIST247, we will see Jews as a part of the social and cultural fabric rather than an “alienated minority” whose history is separate from that of their surroundings. We’ll explore the transformations from what some called a traditional society defined by religious identities into a modern society of complex religious, ethnic, cultural, and political identities. We’ll look at the acceptance of and resistance to the new ideas brought by the Enlightenment and explore the consequences of secularization of the society, including the rise of modern anti-Semitism; Jewish and non-Jewish nationalism; Zionism; questions of women, gender, and sexuality; migrations; and Jewish-Arab relations before and after the establishment of the State of Israel, and modern Jewish culture in America.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST
Prereq: None

RELI268 Anthropology of Black Religions in the Americas
This course examines Afro-Creole religions and cultural expressions in selected communities throughout the Atlantic world. How were religious communities created under colonial domination? Under what conditions were religions shaped, and what shapes did they take? How are African-based religions produced through aesthetics and the ritual arts of spiritual talk and sermons, song, dance, drumming, and medicine-making? How do these religions continue to survive, thrive, and, in some cases, grow in the current historical period? This course will pay special attention to the yearly ritual cycle and its attendant festivals: Christmas, Carnivals, Lent, Easter, saints’ days, feasts, and pilgrimages, as well as the emergent spiritual and aesthetic traditions such as Capeverda and Rara. We will study Orisha religions like La Regla de Ocha, or Lukumi, in Cuba and the Latino United States; 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, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, AFAM387, LAST268, AFAM387, LAST268, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387, LAST268
Prereq: None

RELI270 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
and practice of Haitian Vodou? How is Vodou represented in American media?

American representations of Voodoo. We will ask: What constitutes the thought computer games, with “Voodoo” themes. This course explores the anthropology industry has produced numerous films and television episodes, and now captured the imagination of Hollywood and television, and the entertainment its diaspora and draws constantly on new symbols and ideas. Vodou has also cultural system continues as a spiritual method and family obligation in Haiti and after plantation slavery. Called “serving the spirits,” or “Vodou,” this religion and

RELI273 Vodou in Haiti--Vodou in Hollywood
Prereq: 
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00

RELI274 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 three 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: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: AFAM273, AMST275, AFAM273, AMST276, AFAM273, AMST276, AFAM273, AMST276

RELI275 Religions Resist 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 the Taliban each have used religion in an attempt to resist some aspect of modernity, either outside the Western world or within it.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: RELI381, RELI381

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 within believing communities, 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, Peter, Thomas, and “Q.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
RELI277 Arts of Zen in East Asia

Zen (or Chan in Chinese, Sun in Korean), 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 spontaneous enlightenment in Zen Buddhism can be best characterized in the arts associated with this religious school, which include ink painting, calligraphy, ceramics, and garden design. In this course, we will look at how the ideas of Zen were elucidated in the visual arts by examining major works produced in East Asia from the 13th through the 20th centuries. We will also examine the ways in which art was incorporated in the practice of Zen rituals, especially those related to meditation, gardening, and the tea ceremony, and how they were juxtaposed with literary k’an (gong’an in Chinese and kong’an in Korean) to form visual and textual mind puzzles based on allusions and wordplay. Through a comparative approach, we will analyze the development and changes in the form, style, and iconography of Zen art in East Asia, while tracing the history of Zen Buddhism and the transformation of its underpinning philosophical concepts related to enlightenment, nothingness, 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, HA-ART
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 which 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 be reading 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, SBS-HIST
Identical With: CJST278, AMST292, CJST278, AMST292, CJST278, AMST292, 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 Western Christianity often choose a preferential option for evangelical Protestantism? We will examine how liberation theology offers those concerned with human rights a moral compass for future action. For liberation theology, "the poverty of the poor is not a call to generous relief action, but a demand that we go and build a different social order" (Guiterrez, 1983). Indeed, liberation theology has been a powerful influence in many human rights movements in the Americas, from the Sandinista revolution to social movements in grassroots Brazil and Haiti. In contrast, 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, 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 prosperity gospel, the growth of Christian NGOs, gender and machismo, and spiritual warfare. Case studies will include readings on Colorado Springs in the United States, Colombia, Brazil, Haiti, and Zimbabwe.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, 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 the United States? 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, SBS-RELI
Identical With: AFAM282, AMST242, AFAM282, AMST242, AFAM282, AMST242, AFAM282, AMST242
Prereq: None

RELI284 What Makes the Sacred Sacred?

Sacred, sacredness, sacrifice, sacrament, sacracrity, sanctity, sacram, sanction, saint, consecrate, sacrosanct, sacrilege, desecrate. The notion of sacredness has pervaded the English language in myriad ways over nearly a millennium. What, then, makes the sacred sacred? Is sacredness universal? If so, what defines it? If not, why do Anglophones use the term sacred as if it is? Are there parallels among different religious cultures and their literatures? Are these parallels close enough that the English term sacred can be translated into other languages? This course will explore these questions using multidisciplinary methods and diverse readings reflecting various cultures’ views of social and cosmic order. We will interrelate readings of primary and secondary sources by using four themes (sacred places, invoking the sacred, sacred bodies, and sacred nation) to examine five traditions (Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, and Lakota).

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
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 conceptions 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 the culture’s surprising resistance to the secularist tendencies
of most other Western powers and the continuing centrality of religion(s) in the
national culture.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST
Identical With: AMST236, HIST236, AMST236, HIST236, AMST236, HIST236,
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 twenty-four hundred 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, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI288 Buddhism in America: The Dharma Comes to Main Street
This seminar will investigate the history and diverse forms of Buddhist thought
and practice in America. We will begin with an introduction to fundamental
Buddhist teachings, practices, and Asian traditions. Then, we will follow
Buddhism’s transmission to America in the 19th century, and unpack its
subsequent history and role in the lives of both diaspora and convert Buddhist
communities. We will explore African-American understandings of Zen, and
a community of first generation Thai immigrants practicing Theravada in
Philadelphia; American converts practicing Buddhist meditation in prison;
and a multidenominational Buddhist temple in Virginia adapting to life in a
conservative evangelical Christian community. Readings will include primary
Buddhist texts, autobiographies and anthropological case studies, and will be
complemented by in-class film screenings. Students will also conduct one-on-
one interviews, paying careful attention to the ways in which class, gender, and
ethnicity shape the American Buddhist experience.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: CEAS286, CEAS286, EAST286, CEAS286, CEAS286, EAST286
AMST286, CEAS286, EAST286, CEAS286, CEAS286, EAST286
Prereq: None

RELI289 Religion and Indigenous Identity Politics
From stereotypes about wise old Indians to contemporary U.S. repatriation
legislation, religious practice figures prominently in indigenous identity politics
around the world. Religion can be profoundly sustaining to native communities
and, at the same time, fraught with stereotypes and contradictory demands. This
class examines these stereotypes, contradictions, and convictions with empathy
and a critical eye.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: REES289, REES289, REES289
Prereq: None

RELI290 Jews Under Christianity and Islam: Borders, Boundaries, and
Coexistence
This course will focus on the relationship between legal, religious, and real-
life interaction among different religious groups. We will explore how mutual
attitudes of Jews, Christians, and Muslims have been shaped throughout
centuries, from the rise of these religious groups through the premodern period.
We will examine how each religious tradition constructed the "other" and sought
to create boundaries to prevent intermixing and religious corruption while at
the same time dealing with real-life issues of daily contact. We will try to find
answers to the following questions: What was the Jews’ attitude toward non-
Jews? How did Jews fare in Christian and Muslim traditions? We will also discuss
the relationship between religious ideals present in sacred texts and prescriptive
literature of each tradition and historical reality of everyday life: Were all the
laws applied to daily intercourse? Students will be exposed to a wide range of
primary sources. Secondary sources will be used to illustrate current scholarly
debates on the topics relevant to the course. We will read considerable sections
of the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, the Qur’an, the Talmud, the Church
fathers, and later works, including rabbinic responsa, polemical works, and legal
documents.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST301, MDST301, HIST301, MDST301, FGSS290, FGSS290,
FGSS290, FGSS290
Prereq: None

RELI291 What Makes the Sacred Sacred? The Consequences of the Ultimate
Comparison
What are the political, social, and religious consequences when the term
"sacred" is used to describe an object, place, time, or person? Using examples
such as Jewish, Christian, and Muslim views of Jerusalem, Lakota Sioux
recognition of wicasa wakan (medicine men), and Hindu engagements with
divine images, this seminar will explore this question as well as the translatability
of the word for non-Christian and non-Western views of social and cosmic order.
Sacred, sacrifice, sacrament, saint, consecrate, sacrilege, desecrate. The many
words associated with it demonstrate how the idea of sacredness pervades the
English language. "Sacred" serves as a common qualifier that implicitly suggests
a similarity in the structure of religious practices, experiences, and worldviews,
while describing a difference between the mundane and the spiritual or religious.
European imperialism projected such a universal use of the notion, whitewashing
important divergences with non-Christian religions. So what makes the sacred
sacred? And how do communities used notions like (and unlike) sacrality to know
and engage natural, human, and superhuman environments?
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-CHUM, SBS-RELI, SBS-CHUM, SBS-RELI
Identical With: ARHA239, ARHA239, CHUM336, ARHA239, CHUM336, ARHA239, CHUM336, ARHA239, CHUM336, ARHA239, CHUM336, ARHA239, CHUM336, ARHA239, CHUM336
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, the discipline of philosophy can be said to be the effort to evaluate the claims of revelation and reason in terms of one another and to reveal a deep 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, ethists, 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 relationship between monotheism and gender.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI, HA-RELI, HA-RELI
Identical With: PHIL282, PHIL282, PHIL282, PHIL282, PHIL282, PHIL282, PHIL282, PHIL282
Prereq: None

RELI294 Rabbis, Rebels, and Reformers: Jewish Philosophy Through the Ages
How has the philosophical quest contributed to Jewish thought, and how has Judaism contributed to the philosophical tradition? This course offers an introduction to the classics of Jewish philosophy and theology through the ages. We begin with the Bible, which bears witness to the earliest encounter of Torah and philosophy. We will explore the growth of philosophical thought in Hellenistic Jewish culture and its flowering in the medieval Islamic world. We will then focus on the engagement of Jewish thinkers with the philosophical problems of modernity, from Benedict Spinoza to Abraham Joshua Heschel. Among the questions we will consider in class are the role of reason in religion, the relationship between Jewish and non-Jewish wisdom, and the effort to update Jewish modes of thought and its ancestral tradition to the burning questions of each generation.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: COL337, COL337, COL337, COL337, COL337
Prereq: None

RELI295 Cosmopolitan Islams
The widespread transnational migration of Muslims to North America, Australia, and Europe and the proliferation of interregional and globalizing Islamic movements raise a number of thematic issues this course will explore. How do Muslims understand differences between themselves and non-Muslims? How do Muslims apprehend and manage differences among themselves? What transnational and interregional forms of identification and sociopolitical forms of organizing do they develop? We will examine these questions not only in relation to contemporary Muslim movements, but historical precursors as well.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: ANTH294, ANTH294
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, SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI297 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 that of "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. The concept of religion continues to play a significant role in both nation formation and international affairs. Using theory criticizing 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, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: RELI310, HIST276, HIST276, HIST276, RELI310, HIST276, HIST276, HIST276
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, SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST323, HIST323, HIST323, HIST323
Prereq: None

RELI299 National Religions and Political Rituals
This class examines national religions, political rituals, and the role of religion in constructing both secular and not-so-secular nations. Classic texts on religion are interspersed with case studies from Western and Eastern Europe, Russia, Japan, and Bali to help us understand the intersections between nations, states, religious identities, and ritual practices. No previous knowledge of the study of religion is required.

Offering: Host
REL303 The Variety of Religious Expressions: Movements, Mediation, and Embodiment in an Anthro. Perspective
This course takes as its point of departure today's global proliferation of religious movements and media and explores the following questions: What are the similarities and differences among India's Hindutva movement, Christian Evangelical groups in the United States, Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood in the Middle East, and protests led by Buddhist monks in Myanmar? What role do various forms of mediation—including the body and embodied practice—and religious texts, cassette sermons, television serials, documentaries, the Internet, and blog sites play in promoting, shaping, spreading, and containing religious practices and belief? A seminar designed for mid- to upper-level undergraduate students who want to learn about the myriad forms of religious expression in today's world, this course consists of three thematic sections. In the first section, we will explore various theorists' attempts to carve out a universal category of religion and the ways in which this categorization has been problematized. In the second thematic section, our class will examine how "religion" comes to be separated analytically from other categories of experience such as politics, economics, and the secular, and we examine how interrelations between these categories are reestablished. In the third and final thematic section, students will bring their sharpened analytic faculties to bear on contemporary religious expressions and examine a variety of contemporary religious media and movements.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: FGSS305, FGSS305, FGSS305, FGSS305, FGSS305, FGSS305
Prereq: None

REL306 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 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, HA-RELI, HA-RELI
Identical With: ANTH313, ANTH313, ANTH313, ANTH313, ANTH313, ANTH313
Prereq: None

REL307 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 and ethnographic 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, SBS-RELI
Identical With: ANTH303, ANTH303
Prereq: None

REL308 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.
Offering: Crosslisting
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 that of "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. 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, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: HIST276, RELI297, HIST276, RELI297, HIST276, HIST276, RELI297, 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, SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST311, HIST311, HIST311, HIST311, HIST311, HIST311, HIST311, HIST311
Prereq: HIST234 OR HIST228

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, HA-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM312, CHUM312, AMST312, CHUM312, 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
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM, HA-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM319, CJST319, CHUM319, CJST319, CHUM319, CJST319, CHUM319, CJST319
Prereq: None

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, Mormons, 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 19th-century precursors to more recent utopian theory and experimentation.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST
were both inextricably bound together and set apart by centuries of conflict and to get a sense of the conversations that took place between two groups that the effect of the expulsion on subsequent Christian writing. We will read texts Christian neighbors in England before the Jews' expulsion in 1290 and also contemporary times, we shall attempt to understand the values and concerns materials that reveal aspects of the lives of Buddhist women in ancient and in relationship to Buddhist doctrine and practice. Using Buddhist texts that This seminar will seek to investigate the complex and changing status of women from Aleister Crowley to Sting. investigate the history of Western encounters with and appropriations of tantra, scriptures, ritual manuals, and art. We will read scholarship on tantra to probe 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 outcasts? 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. In this course, we 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. This seminar will consider relations between the Jewish minority and their Christian neighbors in England before the Jews' expulsion in 1290 and also the effect of the expulsion on subsequent Christian writing. We will read texts originally written in Hebrew, French, and Latin (in translation) as well as English to get 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 Christian study of Hebrew biblical commentary; the popularity of the Jewish-Christian debate as a literary form; the Crusades; competing Jewish and Christian apocalyptic programs; and the curious afterlife of Insular Jews in Middle English literature. 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. This course will investigate the ways Christianity shaped, and was shaped by, contact with different world cultures and the ways the globalization of Christianity interacted with other global phenomena like imperialism, nationalism, and modernization. The focus will be on Catholicism and Protestantism in Asia and Africa, but students interested in other branches of Christianity, or other areas of the world, will be encouraged to write papers on the area of their interest. The development of modern science--and of modernity itself--not only coincided with the Americas, Middle East, and, particularly, India from the age of Columbus to the crucible of imperial encounter and how non-Westerners have crystallized in the crucible of a globalized world with examples of European engagement 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 encountered these epistememes.
RELI375 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. The course begins with the examination of the basic teachings of Buddhism as presented in canonical texts and 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, HA-ART, HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA381, CEAS381, ARCP380, ARHA381, CEAS381, ARCP380, ARHA381, EAST381, ARCP380, ARHA381, CEAS381, ARCP380, ARHA381, CEAS381, ARCP380, ARHA381, EAST381, ARCP380, ARHA381, CEAS381, ARCP380, ARHA381, EAST381, ARCP380
Prereq: None

RELI377 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—those 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

RELI380 The Gospel of Mark and Christian Origins
Borges has written that “the generations of men, throughout recorded time, have always told and retold two stories—of a lost ship that searches the Mediterranean Sea for a dearly beloved island and that of a god who is crucified on Golgotha.” This seminar will examine the fateful construction of an epic hero myth of Christian origins by tracing the social history and patterns of sectarian formation coursing through and under the Gospel of Mark. Through a close reading of Mark’s parables and controversies, aphorisms and anecdotes, miracle stories and passion narratives, analyzed contextually with contemporaneous Jewish, Greek, Roman, and Christian literature, the Gospel will be exposed as an apologetic rationalization of a specific apocalyptic mythology.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI

RELI381 Religions Resist 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 the Taliban each have used religion in an attempt to resist some aspect of modernity, either outside the Western world or within it.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI

RELI385 Performance Studies
Within the frame of performance studies, this seminar focuses on how particular uses of the body, space, and narrative inform the limits and intersections between ritual and performance, including the study of theoretical frames and audience reception. Performance is broadly defined to include cultural events and nontraditional performances. We will look at a number of theoretical texts as well as case studies, performances, and theories to examine theatrical modes of action and presence, as well as the limits between real and fictional.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-THEA, HA-THEA, HA-THEA
Identical With: THEA316, THEA316, THEA316, THEA316, THEA316, THEA316, THEA316, THEA316
Prereq: None
RELI388 Socially Engaged Buddhism—East and West
For the past several decades, a new movement within Buddhist communities
has been emerging that aims at joining the tenets and practices of the tradition
with various forms of activism—involving political, social, economic, and
ecological concerns. Titled "socially engaged Buddhism," this phenomenon and
perspective can be seen throughout Asia—in examples such as the work of Thich
Nhat Hanh in Vietnam, Sulak Sivaraksa in Thailand, the Dalai Lama on behalf of
Tibetans, and Aung San Suu Kyi in Burma—as well as, more recently, in various
forms and locations throughout the West. This course will explore in some depth
the history and contours of this emerging religious and social phenomenon.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Prereq: [RELI242 or CEAS242]

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) means through which
communities form collective identities.

We will read a range of historical analysis and primary source materials from
the United States and the Caribbean. After a theory module, we will examine a
colonial-era captivative narrative, antebellum pro-slavery document, missionary
works, analyses of anti-Semitism, works on Father Divine, the Nation of Islam,
Rastafari, Haitian Vodou, Jonestown, the Christian White Supremacy movement,
as well as the contemporary United States relationship to the Middle East.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: AFAM280, AMST391, AMST297, AFAM280, AMST391, AFAM280, AMST391,
AFAM280, AFAM280, AMST391, AFAM280, AMST391, AFAM280, AMST391, AFAM280,
AFAM280, AMST391, AFAM280, AMST297, AFAM280, AMST391, AFAM280, AMST391,
AFAM280, AMST391, AFAM280, AMST391, AFAM280, AMST297
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 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, SBS-CJST, SBS-CJST
Identical With: HIST395, REES344, CHUM344, HIST395, REES344, CHUM344,
HIST395, REES344, HIST395, REES344, CHUM344, HIST395, REES344, CHUM344,
HIST395, REES344, HIST395, REES344, CHUM344, HIST395, REES344, CHUM344,
HIST395, REES344

RELI395 The Anthropology of Religion
We often think of religion as being about belief, but how do you observe
a belief? What exactly do we study when we study religion? What can be
observed, documented, and concluded from the ethnographic study of religion?
This course introduces students to a cross-cultural, comparative perspective
on religious practice and belief through methodological inquiry. The class is
intended to prepare students to do independent field research. Ethnographic
readings interspersed with methodological exercises in a local religious
community culminate in the preparation of a research proposal.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: ANTH395, ANTH395, ANTH395

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. For each of these areas of
study, the seminar will examine a classical seminal work as well as outstanding
recent ones that are on the frontiers of knowledge. Talks by a number of invited
guest speakers will be a required part of the seminar.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-CJST, SBS-CJST, SBS-RELI
Identical With: HIST313, CJST313, HIST313, CJST313, HIST313, CJST313, HIST313

RELI398 Majors Colloquium in Religious Studies
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, including the Bible; philosophy of religion and theology;
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.
Religion

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

RELI 401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI 402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI 403 Department/Program Project or Essay
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

RELI 404 Department/Program Project or Essay
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

RELI 405 Senior Tutorial
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

RELI 406 Senior Tutorial
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

RELI 407 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI 408 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI 409 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI 410 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI 411 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI 412 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI 413 Student Forum
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

RELI 414 Education in the Field, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

RELI 415 Independent Study, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI 416 Independent Study, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: None
Prereq: None

RELI 469 Education in the Field, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: None
Prereq: None

RELI 474 Secularization and Secularism
This course examines historical processes of secularization, religious adaptation, resistance to secularization, and varieties of modern secularism.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI 475 Religion and Politics: Faith and Power in Comparative-Historical Perspective
This course examines the relationship between religion and politics historically in the contemporary world and across diverse religious traditions. We discuss the relationship of religion to the rise of the modern state, church-state relations, religious social movements, and the sources of religious conflict and violence.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI 476 Introduction to the Sociology of Religion
This course examines classical and contemporary theoretical perspectives on the nature of religion as a social institution and cultural system. Themes will include sociological definitions of religion and the rise of capitalism, modernity, and belief and patterns of religion's reconciliation with modern society.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI 477 Conversion: Patterns of Individual and Cultural Transformation
This course examines conversion as an individual, social, and cultured process involving a change from one system of beliefs and behaviors to another. We will evaluate social-scientific approaches to the phenomenon of conversion and examine and compare examples drawn from history and the contemporary world. Readings will focus on the conditions and outcomes of conversion processes, the missionary/convert relationship, and the contexts of cultural interaction in which conversion succeeds or fails.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI 478 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, HA-RELI, HA-RELI, HA-RELI, HA-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI479 Judaism and Race
Before race became a named category used to differentiate between human bodies, Jewish converts to Catholicism in medieval Spain became suspect subjects due to the “purity” of their “blood” (limpieza de sangre). Beginning with the Spanish debates regarding pure and impure bodies, this course traces the relationship between Jews and racial categories to the 21st century. The course focuses on how evolving definitions of “race” and “Jewishness” have correlated and conflicted in varied and sometimes surprising ways. We will read about theories of race, examine their direct ties to European colonial projects, and discuss the pervasive impact of these theories and projects on contemporary societies. We will consider questions such as: Why does “race” mean in particular times and places? How have Jews been racialized, and how have Jews represented themselves in terms of racial categories? Why does race continue to inform social thought and institutions in such prominent ways, and how do we situate Jews in these contexts? Case studies will address the question of Jewish “whiteness” in various geographical contexts, crypto-Jews in the United States, and mizrahim (“eastern” Jews) in Israel.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI

RELI480 Sacred Mountains in Buddhist Asia
By approaching Buddhism “on the ground” through a close study of key sacred mountains, students in this course will come to an understanding of various Buddhist practices and their philosophical, cosmological, and soteriological frameworks. Monks, hermits, and lay practitioners alike acknowledge the transformative power of sacred mountains; nevertheless, their methods of and motivations for encountering these mountains can be quite divergent.

This course begins with an introduction to geographical approaches to the study of religion that we will then employ throughout the semester to analyze how this relationship between law and religion in the United States. The course will include three main components: (1) a historical overview that examines how this relationship has changed over time, starting with the colonial period; (2) a study of varied theoretical approaches from the fields of religious studies and law and society on subjects such as the boundaries of state power, what counts as religion, and how state actors (judicial and legislative bodies) have justified legal decisions regarding religious practices and identities; and (3) an analysis of significant Supreme Court decisions pertaining to religion and law but also related to intersecting issues of race, gender, and homosexuality. Among other topics, we will discuss the criminalization of religious practices such as peyote consumption and snake handling and civil rights protection for religious groups such as the Supreme Court’s decision to grant race-based rights to Jews.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI

Identical With: FGS225, FGS225, FGS225, FGS225, FGS225, FGS225, FGS225, FGS225, FGS225

RELI482 Jewish Art and Rituals in Context
This course covers the history of Judaica. Although it will look at the early sources of ceremonial arts in antiquity and the Middle Ages, it will focus on Jewish art since the Renaissance and until modern times. The halakhic, or legal requirements, in Jewish law for Judaica are one context for understanding the objects; the second is their relationship to the forms and style of similar pieces of the decorative arts in the period of their creation.

The goal of the course is to give students an understanding of the range of ceremonial art used in the practice of Judaism and how individual works were fashioned out of a creative tension between the minimal demands of Jewish law and models in the art of surrounding cultures. Another aim is to enable students to analyze a work visually and to connect the work to others that are similar in style and form.

The course will result in an exhibition curated at the Congregation Adath Israel.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART, HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA212, HEST228, HIST212, ARHA212, HEST228, HIST212

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 post-colonial 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, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: CEAS245, CEAS245, CEAS245, CEAS245, CEAS245, CEAS245, CEAS245, CEAS245

RELI484 Religion and Law in the United States
This course addresses the complex and continually contested relationship between law and religion in the United States. The course will include three main components: (1) a historical overview that examines how this relationship has changed over time, starting with the colonial period; (2) a study of varied theoretical approaches from the fields of religious studies and law and society on subjects such as the boundaries of state power, what counts as religion, and how state actors (judicial and legislative bodies) have justified legal decisions regarding religious practices and identities; and (3) an analysis of significant Supreme Court decisions pertaining to religion and law but also related to intersecting issues of race, gender, and homosexuality. Among other topics, we will discuss the criminalization of religious practices such as peyote consumption and snake handling and civil rights protection for religious groups such as the Supreme Court’s decision to grant race-based rights to Jews.

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

RELI486 Nonviolence and Violence in Buddhism
This seminar examines one of the most important and debated themes in Buddhism—its teachings and practices of nonviolence and of justified violence. Using both selected secondary sources and primary texts in translation, students will not only learn the basic doctrines and history of Buddhism through this engaging theme, but also reflect on the dynamics of religious nonviolence and violence in general at both philosophical and sociopolitical levels. The course explores a variety of subjects and materials, including Buddhist stories and philosophy, practices such as vegetarianism and Tibetan tantric rituals, Buddhist political leaders from Ashoka to Ambedkar, Dalai Lama, and Aung Sun Suu Kyi.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI, SBS-RELI
Identical With: CEAS486, CEAS486, EAST486, CEAS486, CEAS486, EAST486
Prereq: None

RELI488 De/Constructing Religion
We tend to assume religion is a transhistorical phenomenon, an essential form of human experience shared across various cultures and geographic spaces. Religion is distinct from politics, science, art, and the economy, or so we hold. But how did this notion of religion emerge, and what exactly are its parameters? This course examines the construction of religion as a category and a concept and the way its emergence intersects with particular matrices of sex/gender, as well as with attendant notions of agency, autonomy, civilization, progress, and modernity. Particular attention will be paid to the colonial genealogy of the modern concept of religion and to the colonial and postcolonial transformation of various socioethical traditions into “religions.”
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-FGSS, SBS-FGSS, SBS-FGSS, SBS-FGSS
Identical With: FGSS230, FGSS230, FGSS230, FGSS230, FGSS230, FGSS230,
FGSS230, FGSS230, FGSS230, FGSS230, FGSS230, FGSS230
Prereq: None

RELI491 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI492 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI495 Research Apprentice, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

RELI496 Research Apprentice, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U