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; Coordinator, Muslim Studies

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

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

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

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

**VISITING FACULTY**

Andrew Olendzki  
BA, University of Colorado Boulder; MA, Lancaster University; PHD, Lancaster University  
Visiting Assistant Professor of Religion

**EMERITI**

Jerome H. Long  
BD, University of Chicago; MA, University of Chicago; PHD, University of Chicago  
Associate Professor of Religion, Emeritus

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

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

**DEPARTMENT ADVISING EXPERT**

Elizabeth McAlister  
- Undergraduate Religion Major (catalog.wesleyan.edu/departments/reli/ugrd-reli)  
- Undergraduate Religion Minor (catalog.wesleyan.edu/departments/reli/ugrd-reli-mn)

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

**RELI151 Introduction to the Study of Religion**  
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the academic study of religion. What is this thing called religion and how do you approach it from an academic perspective? This class is not a survey of global religious diversity, but a survey of how to study religion. We will use a series of empirical case studies, such as the Jonestown mass suicide, Jerry Falwell's tele-evangelism, Buryat-Mongolian shamans, eco-spirituality and religious freedom court cases to explore theoretical issues in the study of religion. Among other topics, we will examine: the construction of religion as a conceptual category, anthropological approaches to religious difference, theories of religious experience, the interpretation of religious texts, and the place of religion in politics, society, and culture. Together, these discussions will offer a set of descriptive, analytical, and explanatory tools for understanding the role of religion in the contemporary world.
RELI201 Introduction to The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament)
The Hebrew Bible is one of the most influential texts in the world. From antiquity to the present, it has served as a source of philosophical, literary, and artistic reflection. It is a fascinating document, combining narrative, poetry, law, prophetic proclamations, and puzzling parables. What kind of book is the Hebrew Bible? Who wrote it and why? How do we approach such a text across the distance of time? Through a systematic reading from the very beginning, we will place the Bible in its historical context while giving special attention to the philosophical and literary questions it raises: Is obedience to authority always justified? Why do good people suffer unjustly? What gender is God? In answering these and other questions, you will gain an understanding of the ways contesting interpretations make authoritative claims.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
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 contemporary films, 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: CJST244, MDST203
Prereq: None

RELI204 Judaism(s): Religion, Power, and Identity in Jewish History
This course will offer students an intensive survey of the major currents in Jewish social, political, intellectual, and religious history, while focusing in particular on what it means to be a Jew in the 21st-century. The course explores how Jews are a culture, ethnicity, nation, nationality, race, religion, and more and how Jewishness gets constructed differently across different times and contexts. The course looks both locally and globally at the plurality of Jewish identities. Students will read primary historical texts from prominent Jewish thinkers and writers, as well as texts written about Jews by non-Jews.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: CJST203
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, social scientists, 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

RELI211 Religion, Peace, and Violence: Muslim, Hindu, Christian, and Secular Politics
“Why did Martin Luther King Jr. believe that Christianity could cure American racism, while Malcolm X thought the religion promoted it? If Islam is a religion of peace as advocated by many Muslims, how do we understand the so-called Islamic State’s reign of terror? How has Hindu nationalism led to violence against Muslims and Christians if Mahatma Gandhi demonstrated the essential tolerance of Hindu traditions? Secularists often claim that removing religion from politics
creates a more peaceful society, yet the most violent states in the past century have been professedly secular ones.

This seminar looks to explore the complexities of present-day religions and politics by investigating specific case studies in Egypt, India, France, and the U.S. While developing a better understanding of Muslim, Christian, Hindu, and secular traditions (no background in these necessary), we will develop analytic tools to critically comprehend the political dynamics of modern religions and the religious dynamics of contemporary politics."

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

REL212 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 Christianity. Interpreting early Christian texts constitutes the most important task in the study of the New Testament. We will, therefore, focus on a close reading of the New Testament in light of historical situations and social contexts in the Greco-Roman world, having as one of the chief aims of the course the acquisition of critical skills in reading and understanding the New Testament. In the process, we will necessarily engage secondary scholarship and wider theoretical interests, thereby providing students with a general introduction to the academic study of religion.

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

REL213 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 travel 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

REL214 Buddhism and the Body: Desire, Disgust, and Transcendence
This is a course about the body and the various ways that Buddhists have constructed, disciplined, despised, and venerated the human body. We will explore the Buddhist body in its various incarnations: the disciplined monastic body of monks and nuns, the hyper-masculine body of the Buddha, the sacred corpses of saints, the body given away in sacrifice, the body as marker of virtue and vice, the sexual body, the body transformed in ritual, and the body as understood in Buddhist medicine. Careful attention to ancient and modern Buddhist writing should enrich our understanding of what it means to inhabit a human body.

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

REL215 Politics and Piety in Early Christianities
The first four centuries of the Christian era will illustrate the lively twists and turns of social experimentation that set the stage for the emergence of the Christian religion. This course will be concerned with fundamental arenas of intellectual and social conflict, including constructions of Christian myths of apostolic origins and authority; the appropriation of the Jewish epic; the challenge of gnosticism; the domestication of Greek philosophy; interpretations of sexuality and gender; experiences of martyrdom and prosecution; theological reflections on human nature and society; and the ways Christians were seen by Romans. The objective will be to grasp the beginnings of the Christian religion as a human achievement of cultural consequence.

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

REL216 Jesus Through Jewish Eyes
In this course, we explore the visual and textual representations of the vexed relation between Jews and Christians throughout history. Looking at the various ways in which Christianity and Judaism define themselves vis-à-vis the other allows us to understand what mechanisms of cultural appropriation, subversion, and hidden polemics are at work. Special attention will be given to the figure of Jesus as a point of artistic and theological contention. How do artistic representations change our understanding of religious themes? What is at stake for each religion in the encounter with the other? What are the political implications of theological debates? Is this dialogue needed, or even possible, in our post-secular age?

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

REL217 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

REL218 The Cosmos of Dante's Comedy
This course provides an in-depth introduction to Dante Alighieri's 14th-century masterpiece as a point of entry to the history of Western literature, philosophy, and science. The core of the course consists of an intensive study of Dante's encyclopedic poem in relation to the culture and history of Medieval Europe. Major topics include: representations of the afterlife; the soul's relation to
Offering:

explore Jewish-Muslim relations through religious texts, historical documents, political ramifications of this vital historical relationship in the present. We will consider not only the complex relationships of Jews and Muslims from the rise and formative periods of Islam throughout the Islamic world and have contributed in rich and dynamic ways toward the development of the Abrahamic faiths, but the human, cultural, and political ramifications of this vital historical relationship in the present. The course will consider not only the complex dynamics of communal relations in the past, but the human, cultural, and political ramifications of this vital historical relationship in the present. We will explore Jewish-Muslim relations through religious texts, historical documents, memoir literature, music, and film.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: MDST226, FIST226, ITAL226, COL234

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, evangelical, process, and eco-theologies. How do the ways people think about God reflect, support, or interrupt the ways they think about the human subject? And what sorts of ethics, communities, and political decisions do these models underwrite?
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Identical With: COL220

RELI221 Islam and Muslim Cultures
This course provides an introduction to Islam traditions and Muslim societies. No background is required. Using a variety of in-depth case studies, the course familiarizes students with many of the beliefs and practices Muslims associate with Islam and examines commonalities and diversity in how Muslims live their religion. While paying particular attention to peoples and places in South Asia, the Middle East, and the U.S., the course will demonstrate how contemporary Muslim communities exist within global networks that shape local and transnational religion, cultures, and politics.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: CEAS343

RELI222 Classical Chinese Philosophy
This seminar will explore the philosophies and practices of Chinese philosophy as well as the ways Chinese philosophy has been mythologized by Westerners and non-Chinese alike. We will begin with a review of Chinese philosophy, placing particular emphasis on Confucian thought and practices. We will then focus on the subsequent development and core practices of Chinese philosophy’s key schools, drawing on careful analyses of histories, myths, biographies, and religious discourses. Finally, we will explore the ways in which Chinese philosophy has been mythologized in the minds of Westerners and others. We will pay especial attention to the intersection of these imaginations with contemporary Chinese nationalist movements to apply our insights to the analysis of present-day realities. Readings will draw from primary Buddhist texts, histories, autobiographies, and scholarly journals and will be complemented by in-class film screenings.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: CEAS343

RELI223 Chinese Religions
In this exploration of Chinese religions, we will pay special attention to the intersection of these imaginations with contemporary Chinese nationalist movements to apply our insights to the analysis of present-day realities. Readings will draw from primary Buddhist texts, histories, autobiographies, and scholarly journals and will be complemented by in-class film screenings.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: CEAS343

RELI227 Jews and Muslims: Perceptions and Polemics
The current state of Jewish-Islamic relations is tragically fraught with mutual suspicion and competing historical narratives that are manifest as much in the religious as in the political arena. In the midst of this fractious debate, it is sometimes forgotten that Jews have for centuries been a vital presence throughout the Islamic world and have contributed in rich and dynamic ways to Islamic civilization right up to contemporary times. This course explores the intricate relationship of Jews and Muslims from the rise and formative periods of Islam in the Middle Ages to the mass exodus of Middle Eastern and North African Jewish communities in the 20th century to the religiously and politically explosive tensions in contemporary times. The course will consider not only the complex dynamics of communal relations in the past, but the human, cultural, and political ramifications of this vital historical relationship in the present. We will explore Jewish-Muslim relations through religious texts, historical documents, memoir literature, music, and film.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI

RELI228 Classical Chinese Philosophy
Topics in this critical examination of issues debated by the early Confucian, Daoist, and Mohist philosophers will include the nature of normative authority and value, the importance of ritual, and the relation between personal and social goods.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL205, CEAS261
Prereq: None

RELI229 Tibetan Buddhism: From Ancient India to Shangri-la
This seminar will explore 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 Tibetan Buddhism have been mythologized by Westerners and others. We will pay especial attention to the intersection of these imaginations with contemporary Tibetan nationalist movements to apply our insights to the analysis of present-day realities. Readings will draw from primary Buddhist texts, histories, autobiographies, and scholarly journals and will be complemented by in-class film screenings.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: CEAS343

RELI230 Cinematic Encounters: Muslims and/in/of the West
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI

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
Identical With: CEAS244
Prereq: None

REL233 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
Prereq: None

REL236 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 second and seventh 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
Identical With: HIST277, ARHA291
Prereq: None

REL238 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 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.
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
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
Identical With: REES216
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 Candomblé and Rara. We will study Orisha religions such as La Regla de Ocha, or Lukumi, in Cuba and the Latino U.S.; Candomblé in Brazil; Vodou in Haiti; and Garifuna traditions and spiritism in Puerto Rico.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: LAST268, ANTH267, AFAM387
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 disenchanted. Now, with the turn of the 21st century, people all over the world experience capitalism as a realm of enchantment. In Malaysia, ghosts possess factory workers; in South Africa, capitalism produces zombies; and in Bolivia, mines eat their miners. Instead of Weber’s “iron cage,” we live in a world of “voodoo economics” where Korean shamans conduct ceremonies to bless new businesses, Russian psychics curse business competitors, and prosperity theology preaches that God will make you rich. This class explores the enchantment of the financial sphere, combining theory on the disenchantment of modernity (Max Weber) and commodity fetishism (Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, William Pietz) with ethnographic accounts of how capitalism and the economy become mystified and enchanted.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None

RELI271 Secularism: An Introduction
This course traces the idea and ideal of secularism as an ideological project from classic Enlightenment texts to its contemporary incarnations. We begin with philosophical arguments for the separation of church and state as well as the utopian ideals of secular humanism. We then trace how these underpinnings were embodied in state-sponsored atheism in the Soviet Union, in contrast to liberal democratic principles in the U.S. and Europe. Finally, we examine critiques of the secular project, focusing on secularism as a realpolitik approach to governing multi-religious societies and the idea of religious freedom as a universal human right.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: SBS-RELI
Prereq: None
will conclude with an epilogue pursuing these themes in Ostrogothic Italy and Merovingian Gaul.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CLAS
Identical With: HIST250, CCIV275, MDST275
Prereq: None

REL275F Religions Resisting Modernity (FYS)
Why did the Taliban forbid television? Why do creationists reject evolution? Why did Gandhi insist that Indian nationalists spin their own thread? Throughout the last century, resistance has risen to modernity, and religion has played an increasingly important role in challenging the globalization of modern Western values. This seminar will explore how Europe transformed itself into a modern society with worldwide influence. Then it will investigate how the Lakota Sioux, Christian creationists, Mohandas Gandhi, the Branch Davidians, and Egyptian Islamists each have used religion in an attempt to resist some aspect of modernity, either outside the Western world or within it. Ultimately, the course will challenge our very understandings and expectations of modernity.

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

REL276 The Gospels and Jesus
In this examination of the history and literature of the earliest writings about Jesus, attention will be given to the literary forms used in the composition of gospel literature, the social and religious functions of the traditions, the role of imagination in the production of gospel texts, and the diversity of interpretations of Jesus in the early church. Readings will focus on the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Thomas, and "Q."

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

REL277 Arts of Zen in East Asia
Zen, a school of Buddhism that originated in China and later spread to Japan and Korea, is considered a gateway to East Asian thought and a force that challenges modern materialism. The nature of abstraction, spirituality, and enlightenment can best be approached through the arts associated with this religious school, which include ink painting, calligraphy, ceramics, architecture, and garden design. In this course, we will discuss how the ideas of Zen were elucidated in the visual arts by looking at major works from the 13th through the 20th centuries. We will also examine the ways in which artworks were incorporated in the practice of Zen rituals, especially those related to meditation and the tea ceremony. In addition, we will explore the meanings of pictorial and literary ko’an and how they form visual and textual riddles based on allusion and wordplay. Through a comparative approach, we will analyze the development in the form, style, and iconography of Zen art in East Asia, while tracing the history of Zen Buddhism and its underpinning philosophical concepts related to enlightenment, emptiness, and beauty. The goal of this course is to form an in-depth appreciation for the arts of Zen in their historical, philosophical, and cultural context.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: CEAS288, ARHA277
Prereq: None

REL278 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 Jewish and humor that has nothing to do with the immigrant experience in America, but the immigrant experience in America nonetheless has a great deal to do with the humor that has been produced by Jews in this country, particularly in the 20th century. We will read some historical background on American Jews and some humor theory as our foundation for our understanding of film viewings, short stories, stand-up comedy performances, and musical recordings. By looking at the way Jewish humor changed throughout the 20th century, we should, in the end, be able to chart the way the lives of American Jews were changing and have a deeper understanding of the American Jewish experience.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: CJST278, AMST292
Prereq: None

REL279 Liberation Theology and Pentecostalism in the Americas and Africa
This course tackles the question: If liberation theology advocates a preferential option for the poor, why do the poor in Africa and the Americas often choose evangelical Protestantism? For evangelical Christianity, the common good is a by-product of the righteous lives of believers as they enact the outward signs of personal salvation. This course examines both religious thought and analysis of various Christianities of the Americas and Africa, with particular attention to the ways religious thinkers and communities grapple with and resolve questions of human rights, evangelizing race, and structural inequalities that arise in the recent era of globalization and neoliberal capitalism. Other topics will include the prosperity gospel, the growth of Christian NGOs, gender and machismo, and spiritual warfare. Case studies will include readings on the U.S., Colombia, Brazil, Haiti, and Zimbabwe.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: LAST306
Prereq: None

REL280 Mixed in America: Race, Religion, and Memoir
This course examines the history of mixed-race and interfaith identities in America. Using the genre of the memoir as a focusing lens, we will look at the various ways that Americans of mixed heritage have found a place, crafted an identity, and made meaning out of being considered "mixed." How has being multiracial or bi-religious changed in the course of history in this country? What has occasioned these changes, and what patterns can we observe? We will explore questions of racial construction; religious boundary-making; rites of passage; gender, sexuality, and marriage; and some literary and media representations of mixed-heritage people.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: AFAM282, AMST242
Prereq: None

REL280F Mixed in America: Race, Religion, and Memoir (FYS)
This first-year seminar course examines the history of mixed-race and interfaith identities in America. Using the genre of the memoir as a focusing lens, we will look at the various ways that Americans of mixed heritage have found a place, crafted an identity, and made meaning out of being considered "mixed." How has being multiracial or bi-religious changed in the course of history in this country? What has occasioned these changes, and what patterns can we observe? We will explore questions of racial construction; religious boundary-
making; rites of passage; gender, sexuality, and marriage; and some literary and media representations of mixed-heritage people.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: 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 contemporary religious developments, including New Age formations and the growing presence of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam, and the continuing centrality of religion(s) in the national culture.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST236, AMST236
Prereq: None

RELI286 The Examined Life: Religion and Philosophy on the Art of Living
"What kind of life is worthy of a human being? How do you examine what W. B. Yeats called "the dark corners of your own soul" with the same scrutiny you give the world around you? To live a noble life is the most critical challenge we face as individuals, the courage to confront ourselves and our most cherished assumptions, and to face the world, in turn, as a conscious steward. To live an examined life, as Socrates implored over 2,400 years ago, is to be actively engaged in the world and to take ownership of our choices. It is to live in the sacred space between thought and action, truth and justice, philosophy and life.

Both philosophy and religion, for all their differences, ask the same perennial questions of humanity: How do you create a flourishing human life? Philosophy is not the possession of wisdom, but the love of wisdom, an orientation to truth and justice constantly in the making, demanding renewed devotion to conscious living. Diverse religious traditions, in turn, define the religious life as the striving for sanctity and human wisdom, in short, a way of life in harmony with the deepest truths of existence. In this seminar, we will explore classics of religious thought and Western philosophy as complementary responses to the deepest questions of humanity and the quest for a noble life. We begin at the beginning, with Socrates' challenge that the unexamined life is not fit for a human being, and explore how this challenge was put into practice in medieval and modern times. We will conclude with contemporary philosophers, both religious and secular, who challenge us anew to live up to the ancient Socratic ideal."

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

RELI288 Buddhism in America: The Dharma Comes to Main Street
The American understanding of Buddhist ideas and acceptance of Buddhist practices, which has been growing slowly for some time, has quickened significantly in the last few decades. In this course we examine this process, from its early phases in the 19th century, through the impact of population displacement and increasing spiritual diversity in the 20th century, to the virtual explosion in the current century of creative engagement between Buddhism and a wide range of fields. We cover such topics as environmentalism; physical and mental health; issues of conflict resolution, social justice, race, and gender; practices relating to optimal performance, end-of-life care, and prison ministry; and the emerging fields of cognitive science, contemplative studies, and the philosophy of mind.

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

RELI289 Indigenous Religions: Politics, Land, Healing
From wise old shamans to heroic pipeline protestors, the media is full of romantic representations of indigenous religion, but what do you really know beyond the stereotypes? If indigenous religion is just religion practiced by indigenous people, is it a category at all? Since the first days of colonialism the question of whether or not the "natives" have or are capable of having religion has had political consequences. This class introduces students to the historical and political contexts within which indigenous peoples practice their religions, and critically engages with popular stereotypes. Using ethnography, fiction, critical theory, and the instructor's own fieldwork materials, we will examine some of the criteria by which indigenous religious practices have been romanticized or judged lacking by outsiders: What does an oral tradition sound like? What does it mean to engage in place-based religion? What is a "noble savage," what are sacred sites, animate landscapes, and what are some of the ways indigenous peoples really do relate to the environment in radically different ways? What are some of the contradictions and complications of multiculturalism and the politics of recognition when it comes to indigenous populations? While this is not a survey course, students will be introduced to case studies of indigenous religious practices from North America, Australia, and Siberia.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: REES289
Prereq: None

RELI290 Pantheologies: Animal, Vegetable, Mineral, World
Pantheism teaches that the world itself is divine. The idea seems simple enough, yet it has suffered extraordinary ridicule at the hands of Western philosophers and theologians who have considered "matter" to be lifeless, dark, and feminine, which is to say as different as possible from "God." This course will explore this generalized panic over pantheism—in particular, the anxieties it encodes over gender, race, nationality, and class—before turning to contemporary constructive pantheologies. To what extent are recent theories of cosmology, complexity, and materiality setting forth subtle pantheisms? What are the feminist, antiracist, and ecological stakes of these theories? Properly conceived, what is pantheism, and is it ultimately distinguishable from atheism?

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: FGSS290
REL291 From Jerusalem to Ground Zero: Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Sioux, and Hindu Notions of Sacredness
"Many Jews, Christians, and Muslims view Jerusalem as a "sacred" place. But what does this mean? How does a place--or an object or person--become sacred, holy, revered? Is Ground Zero sacred? If so, how do we compare the destruction of an office building that makes part of Manhattan sacred and Native American efforts to protect venerated sites from "development" that they describe as "desecration"? Does the term "sacred" even translate in other languages? When does a stone sculpture become an embodiment of a Hindu deity?

Using examples such as Jewish, Christian, and Muslim views of Jerusalem, Lakota Sioux recognition of revered places and wicasa wakan (medicine men), and Hindu engagements with divine images, this seminar will explore these questions. This course is made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this seminar do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities."

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: ARHA239
Prereq: None

REL292 Reason and Revelation: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion
Throughout the medieval period in Europe, philosophy and theology were thought to be compatible, if not completely coextensive. With the dawning of modernity, however, a distinction of mutual suspicion began to emerge between the secular and sacred disciplines. Broadly speaking, "philosophy of religion" is the effort to evaluate the claims of revelation and reason in terms of one another, revealing either consonance or dissonance between the two. We will examine some of the major texts within this field, whose authors include deep skeptics, committed Christians, committed anti-Christians, secular and nonsecular Jews, feminists, ethicists, idealists, empiricists, and Romantics. Themes to be explored include proofs of God's existence--along with refutations of those proofs and rebuttals to those refutations--the problem of evil, religious ethics, religious experience, the possibility of a universal religion, and the relationships between monotheism, race, ecology, and gender.

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

REL296 Judaism and the Politics of Identity
The extraordinary diversity of Jews and Jewish expression in the modern period defies simple categorization. Secularism and history are as much a part of the politics of Jewish identity as are religion and race. How has Jewish identity been defined historically, and who decides who is a Jew today? How is Jewish identity defined and debated among the Jews of the Middle East, India, China, and sub-Saharan Africa? How is Jewish identity negotiated in the State of Israel? How have secular ideologies impacted the construction of Jewish identity in recent times? This course will examine the diversity of Jewish cultures and the paradigms and politics of Jewish identity on a global scale.

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

REL298 Religion and History
This course will examine some ways that scholars have understood the role of religion in history. Readings will reflect a wide variety of theoretical, theological, and disciplinary perspectives.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST323
Prereq: None

REL299 Imagining Communities: National Religions and Political Rituals
From the Catholic-Protestant troubles in Northern Ireland, Christian nationalism in Serbia, Hindu-Buddhist conflict in Sri Lanka, and the Taliban in Afghanistan, religious nationalism often produces virulent and violent conflict. Yet the Virgin of Guadalupe is a national symbol of Mexico, Catholicism was central to the Polish Solidarity movement, and America defines itself as "one nation under God." How are we to understand the relationship between religion and national identity, and how do political rituals, both religious and secular, help form communities? Popular media and political science analysis define religious nationalism as dangerous and secular nationalism as good. We will investigate this claim over the course of the semester by asking what the study of religion and ritual can bring to the topic. Are religious and secular political rituals really as different as they seem? We will read and discuss the classic social theories of Samuel Huntington, Benedict Anderson, Emile Durkheim, Victor Turner, Clifford Geertz, and Talal Asad, and these readings will be interspersed with case studies that illustrate how these theories help us understand the world. Case studies include the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the arrest and trial of the punk band Pussy Riot in Russia, and the Yasukuni shrine in Japan, where the souls of kamikaze pilots and World War II war criminals are enshrined. In addition, students will pick a case study of their own for a research project. This project will be conducted through multiple small assignments over the course of the semester that will be combined into a final research paper and class presentation.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: REES299
Prereq: None

REL301 Jesus and the Gods: Christianity and the Religions of Antiquity
This course will focus on the politics and methods of comparison in order to reveal how thinkers have described the myths and practices of early Christianity as they relate to the religions of ancient Israel, Greece, and Rome. In reading carefully a wide range of ancient texts and modern scholarly discussions, we will be thinking on several levels at once. That is, we will learn about the gods and ritual practices of ancient Greece and Rome and also think critically about the agendas of the many writers--from Plato to Thomas Jefferson and beyond--who described them for their own purposes. How did Jesus of Nazareth come to be understood as a god, who dies and rises, in a world brimming with gods? Why was he remembered as a philosopher and a martyr, like Socrates? How--and with what motives--did writers throughout history compare Jesus with the priests and kings of ancient Israel or with the gods and goddesses of the Hellenistic Mystery Religions? What is the place of Demeter, Isis, and Osiris in the history of religion? How did early Christians understand their rituals of death and resurrection in terms of rebirth, salvation, and martyrdom? Considering themes and theories of piety and sacrifice, purity and prophecy, wisdom and narrative, ethics and philosophy, mythmaking and cultural critique, we will ask how the politics of comparison and classification have shaped not only our understanding of Jesus and Judaism, ancient Greece and Rome, but also the construction of "Judaism" and "Christianity" as religions--and the very category of religion itself.

Offering: Host
RELI307 Ritual

Religious practice 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 to the study of ritual. The readings draw heavily, but not exclusively, on anthropological approaches to ritual, both classic texts and recent innovative approaches focusing on language and embodiment. Students will pick a ritual that they are interested in and will attend that ritual several times over the semester, conducting practical fieldwork exercises and applying the theories we read in class. The assignments culminate in a paper in which students will be required to analyze "their" ritual using the theory we read together in class. For these assignments, students are encouraged to define ritual broadly and creatively. The goal of the class is to gain an understanding of theoretical approaches to ritual by applying these theories to the social world around them.

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

RELI308 Funny, You Don't Look Jewish: Race, Gender, Sexuality, and Judaism

"This course will give advanced students the opportunity to engage deeply with critical current issues in Judaism, including race, gender, and sexuality. In both the U.S. and Israel, issues of Jewish whiteness (or not), straightness (or not), and maleness (or not) dominate conversations about the direction Judaism will take in the 21st century and how Judaism can remain relevant in an increasingly globalized and secularized world.

Students in this course will read contemporary scholarship on those who have been traditionally pushed to the margins of Judaism and will be asked to wade into murky ethical waters as they think about the power of naming and who has the authority to determine "in" and "out."

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

RELI310 Constructing Hinduism and Islam

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

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

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
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.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Identical With: FGSS348
Prereq: None

RELI350 Women and Buddhism
This seminar will seek to investigate the complex and changing status of women in relationship to Buddhist doctrine and practice. Using Buddhist texts that present traditional views of women as well as a variety of contemporary materials that reveal aspects of the lives of Buddhist women in ancient and contemporary times, we will attempt to understand the values and concerns that drive, restrain, and/or empower such women.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: FGSS264, CEAS350
Prereq: [RELI242 or CEAS242] OR RELI151

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

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

RELI355 Mystical Traditions in Islam
Muslim scholars today often condemn the mystical traditions of Sufism as being un-Islamic. But for almost 1,000 years, mysticism provided an alternative voice to Muslim believers. This course will explore the origins and development of Sufism and its extraordinary impact on the cultural life of Muslims over the past millennium.

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

RELI372 Jewish Politics, Jewish Power
What has Judaism to do with politics? Is there such a thing as a Jewish political tradition before the establishment of the modern State of Israel? This
course will take a close look at the history of Jewish political thought and the implementation of Jewish power, both in the past and in the present. We will begin with an overview of the current debate over religion and politics and how it impacts the case of Jewish statehood. We will then look at the roots of Jewish power in antiquity and the development of political thought in classical and medieval Jewish sources before turning to the challenges and controversies associated with modern Jewish politics and statehood and the ambiguous relationship between religion and politics. In addition to numerous sources from the Jewish tradition, we will explore the implications of Jewish power and powerlessness in contemporary Jewish literature and film.

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

RELI373 Religion, Science, and Empire: Crucible of a Globalized World
The development of modern science—and of modernity itself—not only coincided with the rise of European imperialism, it was abetted by it. Meanwhile, religion was integral to both the roots of European science and Western encounters with others. This class will explore how the intersections of religion, science, and empire have formed a globalized world with examples of European engagement with the Americas, Middle East, and, particularly, India from the age of Columbus through to the space race. We will examine how the disciplines we know today as biology, anthropology, archaeology, folklore, and the history of religions all crystallized in the crucible of imperial encounter and how non-Westerners have embraced, engaged, and resisted these epistemes.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: SISP373
Prereq: None

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

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

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—that is, theories that posit a rebirth of the cosmos out of its fiery destruction—in relation to early Stoic philosophy and cross-cultural cyclic mythologies. The fourth will explore quantum cosmologies, in which the universe fragments into parallel branches each time a particle “decides” upon a position. We will examine these varied cosmologies of multiplicity, not with a view toward adjudicating among them, but toward pointing out their mythic and ontological genealogies and consequences.”

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

RELI379 Christianity and Sexuality
This course will explore a range of Christian teachings on attitudes toward, and technologies of, sex and sexuality. We will read medieval and modern theologies of sexuality, as well as contemporary historical, sociological, and cultural studies. Points of focus will include confession, mysticism, marriage, celibacy, queer and transgendered practices and identities, and reproductive rights.

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

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

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

RELI391 Religion and the Social Construction of Race
In this course we examine aspects of the intersections between race and religion in a number of historical and social contexts. We place at the center of our discussions the question of how race and religion are co-constructed
categories that function as a prism through which people come to understand and experience their own identities and those of others. We will privilege interpretations that emphasize (1) the intersectionality of race and religion as a process in which power plays a pivotal role; and (2) the means through which communities form collective identities. We will read a range of historical analysis and primary source materials from the U.S. and the Caribbean. After a theory module, we will examine a colonial-era captivity narrative, antebellum pro-slavery document, missionary works, analyses of anti-Semitism, works on Rastafari, Haitian Vodou, Jonestown, the Christian White Supremacy movement, as well as the contemporary U.S. relationship to the Middle East.

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

RELI393 "If there is no God, then everything is permitted?" Moral Life in a Secular World

"In Fyodor Dostoevsky’s The Brothers Karamazov, Dmitri Karamazov famously poses the question of what would happen to mankind "without God and immortal life," asking whether this means that "all things are permitted." Made famous by Dostoevsky, the question of whether we can be moral without God has always haunted secularism and has consistently been the most vocal criticism of unbelief. From papal condemnations of secularism and "godless Soviets," to the contemporary consensus that belief in God is evidence of moral goodness and its absence a sign of a broken ethical barometer, the assumption has been that transcendental authority is all that stands between us and moral abyss. When the atrocities committed by "totalitarian" regimes are cited as evidence of this, it is only the most radical articulation of a broader narrative of secular modernity.

One of modernity's master narratives is that people go from being under the care of the church to being under the care of the state, and our focus will be on historical cases where the question of secular values was explicitly engaged by the state. We will examine individual and collective articulations of morality in three prominent models of secularism: American civil religion, French laïcité, and Communist official atheism. What constitutes the moral foundation of a world without God? Can religion's moral and spiritual function be performed by a different kind of belief system?"

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

RELI395 The Anthropology of Religion

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

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

RELI401 Majors Colloquium in Religious Studies

"This seminar provides an opportunity for majors to reflect even more critically upon the theories, methods, and discourses that constitute the academic study of religion. We will be concerned with current studies in history and the history of religions, the interpretation of texts, anthropology, feminist theory, and post-colonial theory.

With particular emphasis on case studies, the seminar will explore how scholars operate within disciplinary communities, choose their topics, engage interlocutors, weigh issues of emic and etic interpretation, and--on good days--publish their analyses.

Each member of the seminar will choose a local religious community to engage throughout the semester as a further opportunity to consider the choices scholarship entails."

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

RELI404 Department/Program Project or Essay

Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI405 Department/Program Project or Essay

Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

RELI406 Dependent Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RELI407 Senior Thesis Tutorial (downgraded thesis)

Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

RELI408 Senior Thesis Tutorial (downgraded thesis)

Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

RELI409 Senior Thesis Tutorial

Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

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

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

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

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

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

RELI467 Independent Study, Undergraduate
Credit may be earned for an independent study during a summer or authorized leave of absence provided that (1) plans have been approved in advance, and (2) all specified requirements have been satisfied.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RELI496 Research Apprentice, Undergraduate
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: None
Prereq: None

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

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

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

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

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

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