

# RELIGION (REL)

## REL 1013 God and Money

Enrollment limit: 16. 1 Credit.

Money is frequently assumed to be antithetical to religion even as the two are utterly inseparable. This is what makes it a particularly useful category for exploring what counts as religion—concerns that are integral to the discipline of religious studies and central to humanistic inquiry more broadly. Considers money as a measure of time, as a way human communities construct relationships, as well as how it interacts with moral categories such as value, guilt, and obligation, and theological understandings of sin, debt, poverty, charity, and prosperity. Course readings and visual media consist of predominantly Christian sources with some comparison to other traditions and focus on the significance of money in modern life.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule, (FYWS) First-Year Writing Seminar

Prerequisite(s): Latest Class Standing in the selection list First Year, First Semester, First Year, Second Semester

Terms offered: 2024 Fall Semester

## REL 1014 Heretics: Dissent and Debate in the History of Religion

Enrollment limit: 16. 1 Credit.

Writing-intensive, focuses on readings in heretical texts, orthodox creeds, and scholarly treatments of the religious-ideological construction of heresy and orthodoxy. Fundamentally, heresy is dangerous precisely because of its proximity to orthodoxy. Examples focus on Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions; attention given to categories such as dogma vs. freedom, pure vs. impure, society vs. individual. Facets of present-day debates on fundamentalism included.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule, (FYWS) First-Year Writing Seminar

Prerequisite(s): Latest Class Standing in the selection list First Year, First Semester, First Year, Second Semester

Terms offered: 2021 Fall Semester; 2023 Fall Semester

## REL 1101 Introduction to the Study of Religion

Enrollment limit: 50. 1 Credit.

Basic concepts, methods, and issues in the study of religion, with special reference to examples comparing and contrasting Asian and Western religions. Lectures, films, discussions, and readings in a variety of texts such as scriptures, novels, and autobiographies, along with modern interpretations of religion in ancient and contemporary Asian and Western contexts..

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2021 Fall Semester; 2022 Spring Semester; 2022 Fall Semester; 2023 Fall Semester; 2024 Spring Semester; 2024 Fall Semester; 2025 Spring Semester; 2025 Fall Semester

## REL 1142 Philosophy of Religion

Enrollment limit: 50. 1 Credit.

Does God exist? Can the existence of God be proven? Can it be disproven? Is it rational to believe in God? What does it mean to say that God exists (or does not exist)? What distinguishes religious beliefs from non-religious beliefs? What is the relation between religion and science? Approaches these and related questions through a variety of historical and contemporary sources, including philosophers, scientists, and theologians. This course originates in Philosophy and is crosslisted with: Religion. (Same as: PHIL 1442)

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2022 Spring Semester

## REL 1150 Introduction to the Religions of the Middle East

Enrollment limit: 50. 1 Credit.

Begins by showing how Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in the modern Middle East are intertwined closely with politics and with their local contexts. Case studies include modern Iran, Israel, and Lebanon. Investigates how the foundational texts of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam were politically and socially constructed. Considers throughout the influence of other Middle Eastern religions. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Middle Eastern & North African. (Same as: MENA 1150)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2023 Spring Semester; 2025 Spring Semester

## REL 1188 Epics Across Oceans

Enrollment limit: 50. 1 Credit.

Introduces students to the classic Indian epics that form a core literary and cultural tradition within South and Southeast Asia: the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Examines how the epics were adapted across different kingships and polities in South and Southeast Asia, becoming part of the traditional culture of almost every part of this vast region. Since the royal patrons and the heroes of these epics were often linked, the manner in which the epics were told reveals the priorities of the different regions. Drawing on film, graphic novels, and multiple performance genres, explores the continuous reworking of these epics for both conservative and radical ends, from ancient India to the present day. This course originates in Asian Studies and is crosslisted with: Religion. (Same as: ASNS 1770)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

**REL 2201 Black Women, Politics, Music, and the Divine**

Enrollment limit: 16. 1 Credit.

Seminar. Examines the convergence of politics and spirituality in the musical work of contemporary black women singer-songwriters in the United States. Analyzes material that interrogates and articulates the intersections of gender, race, class, and sexuality generated across a range of religious and spiritual terrains with African diasporic/black Atlantic spiritual moorings, including Christianity, Islam, and Yoruba. Focuses on material that reveals a womanist (black feminist) perspective by considering the ways resistant identities shape and are shaped by artistic production. Employs an interdisciplinary approach by incorporating ethnomusicology, anthropology, literature, history, and performance and social theory. Explores the work of Shirley Caesar, the Clark Sisters, Meshell Ndegeocello, Abby Lincoln, Sweet Honey in the Rock, and Dianne Reeves, among others. This course originates in Africana Studies and is crosslisted with: Gender Sexuality and Women St; Music; Religion. (Same as: AFRS 2201, GSWs 2207, MUS 2291)

(c) Humanities, (DPI) Difference, Power, and Inequity, (VPA) Visual and Performing Arts

Prerequisite(s): Latest Class Standing in the selection list First Year, Second Semester, Junior, First Semester, Junior, Second Semester, Senior, First Semester, Senior, Second Semester, Sophomore, First Semester, Sophomore, Second Semester

Terms offered: 2021 Fall Semester; 2022 Fall Semester; 2024 Fall Semester

**REL 2204 Science, Magic, and Religion**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Traces the origins of the scientific revolution through the interplay between late-antique and medieval religion, magic, and natural philosophy. Particular attention is paid to the conflict between paganism and Christianity, the meaning and function of religious miracles, the rise and persecution of witchcraft, and Renaissance hermeticism. Note: This course fulfills the pre-modern requirement for history majors. Note: This course is part of the following field(s) of study: Europe. It also meets the pre-modern requirement for history majors and minors.. (Same as: HIST 2040)

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

**REL 2207 Modern Jewish Identities**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Investigates the origins, development, and current state of modern Jewish identities. We will examine both perceptions and the historical realities of Jews' positions in hierarchies through the emergence of modern movements such as Zionism, Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, and Hasidic Judaism. Course emphasizes how members of these movements perceive themselves as integrated into or apart from the rest of society. Topics include Jews and whiteness, Judaism as ethnicity, and Judaism as a global community.

(c) Humanities, (DPI) Difference, Power, and Inequity, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2024 Spring Semester

**REL 2208 Islam**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

With an emphasis on primary sources, pursues major themes in Islamic civilization from the revelation of the Qur'an to Muhammad until the present. From philosophy to political Islam, and from mysticism to Muslims in America, explores the diversity of a rapidly growing religious tradition. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Middle Eastern & North African. (Same as: MENA 2208)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2021 Fall Semester; 2023 Fall Semester; 2025 Fall Semester

**REL 2212 Religion and Science: Couples Therapy**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

As modern categories, religion and science cannot exist without each other, but the boundary has shifted over time. Traces the prehistory of these categories from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment and analyzes the conversations and arguments between religion and science in modernity. Focuses on the West with frequent comparisons to the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia. Pays attention to religious discussions of astrology, alchemy, and other occult disciplines. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: History. (Same as: HIST 2239)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2023 Spring Semester

**REL 2213 Fictions, Fakes, and Forgeries: How Narratives Shaped the Religions of the Ancient**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

What makes a text trustworthy? What do authority and authenticity have to do with revelation? Explores the question of what makes a story authentic and accepted within a particular religious tradition versus rejected and marginalized. Investigates stories that have traditionally been excluded from the Jewish and Christian Bible as well as other religious movements of the ancient Mediterranean such as Egyptian Hermeticism, the cult of Dionysus, and other Greco-Roman mystery cults. Includes discussions of ancient authorship, magic, canonization, heresy, and cultural history. Simultaneously discusses the ways in which these fictions, fakes, and forgeries have had (and continue to have) a great influence on the very religious traditions from which they were excluded.

(c) Humanities, (DPI) Difference, Power, and Inequity, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2023 Spring Semester

**REL 2214 A History of Anti-Semitism**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Introduces students to a history of anti-Semitism (and its antecedent, anti-Judaism) as discursive operations in the world. Its title reflects the approach to this topic—rather than trace a linear narrative of the history of anti-Semitism, students will investigate particular moments, cases, loci, and flashpoints of anti-Semitism via film, drama, short stories, treatises, dialogues, and scripture. Focusing on a range of forms and contexts, the course analyzes the continuities and discontinuities within the polemical discourses representing Jews and Judaism. The course will consider, for example, Biblical supersessionism; Blood Libel; The Merchant of Venice, Protocols of the Elders of Zion; Christian Zionist anti-Semitism; the Jewish Museum of London's recent exhibit Jews, Money, Myth; contemporary politics and BDS (boycott, divestment, and sanctions); and the rise of white nationalism. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: English. (Same as: ENGL 2903)

(c) Humanities, (DPI) Difference, Power, and Inequity, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2022 Spring Semester; 2024 Fall Semester

**REL 2215 The Hebrew Bible in Its World**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Close readings of chosen texts in the Hebrew Bible (i.e., the Old Testament), with emphasis on its Near Eastern religious, cultural, and historical context. Attention is given to the Hebrew Bible's literary forerunners (from c. 4000 B.C.E. onwards) to its successor, The Dead Sea Scrolls (c. 200 B.C.E. to 200 A.C.E.). Emphasis on creation and cosmologies, gods and humans, hierarchies, politics, and rituals.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2022 Fall Semester; 2025 Spring Semester

**REL 2216 The New Testament in Its World**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Situates the Christian New Testament in its Hellenistic cultural context. While the New Testament forms the core of the course, attention is paid to parallels and differences in relation to other Hellenistic religious texts: Jewish, (other) Christian, and pagan. Religious leadership, rituals, secrecy, philosophy of history, and salvation are some of the main themes.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2021 Fall Semester; 2024 Spring Semester

**REL 2219 Religion and Fiction in Modern South Asia**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Explains the nexus between religion and society in modern South Asia via the prism of South Asian literature in English. Confined to prose fiction, considering its tendency to attempt approximations of reality. Interrogates how ideas of religion and ideas about religion manifest themselves in literature and affect understanding of south Asian religions among its readership. Does not direct students to seek authentic insights into orthodox or doctrinal religion in the literary texts but to explore the tensions between textual religion and everyday lived reality in South Asia. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Asian Studies. (Same as: ASNS 2550)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

**REL 2220 Hindu Literatures**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

In this exploration of Hindu texts, we delve into some of the most ancient and beloved literature from the Indian subcontinent. Students read major scriptural sources, including the Vedas and Upanishads. In our study of the epics (the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, including the Bhagavad Gita), we discuss translations from Sanskrit and popular retellings of these stories into other languages and media. We discuss the Puranas, reading the story of the warrior Goddess in the Devi Mahatmyam and investigate visual representations of gods and goddesses. We also sample Sanskrit classical poetry and devotional literature to the Goddess translated from Bengali. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Asian Studies. (Same as: ASNS 2552)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2021 Fall Semester; 2023 Fall Semester; 2025 Fall Semester

**REL 2221 Religious Cultures of India**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

A view of the religious cultures of India “from the ground up,” focused on studies of lived religion beyond texts and institutional orthodoxies. With more than 1.3 billion people, India is home to an incredible diversity of religious cultures, including Hindu, Jain, Muslim, Christian, and Buddhist traditions. Readings examine traditions of pilgrimage, temple worship, yoga, goddess possession, healing practices, and rites of passage, including the ordination of monks and nuns. Themes include women's lived authority in contrast to patriarchal structures and contemporary intersections between religion, class, and modernity. Religious cultures of India also exist beyond the modern nation's borders, as diaspora populations have grown around the world and traditions of yoga, gurus, and mantra meditation are popular globally. The course explores these religious cultures in relation to new media and transnational networks, including debates about the practice of Indian religions in Asia and beyond. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Asian Studies. (Same as: ASNS 2553)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2022 Spring Semester; 2024 Fall Semester

**REL 2222 Early Buddhism**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Introduces students to the major trajectories of Buddhist religious thought and practice. Readings include primary sources such as sermons, monastic codes, miracle tales, sutras, and poetry, as well as secondary scholarship on diverse lived Buddhist practices. Examines Buddhism's transformations in specific historical and cultural settings, from its origins in South Asia to its spread throughout Central, East, and Southeast Asia. Highlights important historical developments, including early Buddhist monastic communities, philosophical traditions, the development of Buddhist art and architecture, Tibetan Buddhist traditions, devotion to the Lotus Sutra, Pure Land practice, and Chan/Zen traditions. Focuses on varied Buddhist practices and goals; dynamics of lay and monastic relations; debates about gender and ethnicity in Buddhist communities; and the interplay of everyday and transcendent concerns. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Asian Studies. (Same as: ASNS 2554)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2023 Spring Semester; 2024 Spring Semester; 2025 Fall Semester

**REL 2223 Mahayana Buddhism**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Studies the emergence of Mahayana Buddhist worldviews as reflected in primary sources of Indian, Chinese, and Japanese origins. Buddhist texts include the Buddhacarita (Life of Buddha), the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, the Prajnaparamitra-hrdya Sutra (Heart Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom), the Saddharmapundarika Sutra (the Lotus Sutra), the Sukhavati Vyuha (Discourse on the Pure Land), and the Vajraccedika Sutra (the Diamond-Cutter), among others. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Asian Studies. (Same as: ASNS 2551)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

**REL 2230 Human Sacrifice**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Uses the practice of human sacrifice to investigate the relationship between religion and violence. As an act of choreographed devotion, sacrifice implicates notions of debt, transformation, exchange, purification, sacredness, death, and rebirth. It is a ritual designed to destroy for an effect, for an explicit if often intangible gain. On the one hand, human sacrifice involves all of these same issues and yet, on the other, it magnifies them by thrusting issues of agency, autonomy, and choice into the mixture. Must a sacrificial victim go peaceably? Otherwise, would the act simply be murder? Investigates the logic of human sacrifice. How have religions across history conceptualized and rationalized the role and status of the human victim? Considers a diverse range of examples from the Hebrew Bible, Greek tragedies, the New Testament, science fiction, epics, missionary journals and travelogues, horror films, and war diaries.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2024 Spring Semester; 2025 Fall Semester

**REL 2232 Approaches to the Qur'an**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Explores a variety of approaches to and interpretations of the Qur'an, the foundational text of Islam. Special attention will be paid to the Qur'an's doctrines, its role in Islamic law, its relationship to the Bible, and its historical context. While the Qur'an will be read entirely in English translation, explores the role of the Arabic Qur'an in the lives of Muslims worldwide. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Middle Eastern & North African. (Same as: MENA 2352)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2022 Fall Semester; 2024 Fall Semester

**REL 2235 Gender and Sexuality in Early Christianity**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Investigates the ways in which gender and sexuality can serve as interpretive lenses for the study of early Christian history, ideas, and practices. Can the history of early Christianity—from the apostle Paul to Augustine of Hippo—be rewritten as a history of gender and sexuality? In answer to that question, addresses a range of topics, including prophecy, sainthood, militarism, mysticism, asceticism, and martyrdom. In addition, by oscillating between close readings and contemporary scholarship about gender, feminism, masculinity, sexuality, and the body, looks beyond the world of antiquity. Aims to show how theories of and about sexuality and gender can fundamentally reorient understandings of Christian history. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Gender Sexuality and Women St. (Same as: GSWS 2231)

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2023 Spring Semester; 2025 Spring Semester

**REL 2236 Religion, Nature, and the Environment**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Environmental degradation and climate change have become matters of deep concern to the leaders, institutions, and practitioners of many religious traditions. Practitioners and leaders' words and actions have a history in how nature has been understood as a space in which humans might learn about themselves, about the divine, and about their ethical responsibilities. Sometimes nature has been understood as divine, sometimes independent of divine control, and sometimes just as God's creation. With case studies taken from Christian, Hindu, Islamic, and Buddhist traditions, this course surveys changes in religions' views of nature and humanity's responsibilities to nature and, more recently, the environment. This course pays special attention to groups on the racial, socioeconomic, and political margins. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Environmental Studies. (Same as: ENVS 2236)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2022 Spring Semester; 2024 Spring Semester

**REL 2237 Judaism Under Islam**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Since the rise of Islam in the early seventh century C.E., Jews have lived in the Islamic world. The historical experience of these Jews has shaped their religious traditions in ways that have touched Jews worldwide. Places developments in Jewish liturgy, thought, and identity within the context of Islamic civilization. Answers the question of how Jews perceive themselves and Judaism with regard to Muslims and Islam. Analyzes the significance of the Jewish experience under Islam for current debates in Judaism and in Middle East politics.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2021 Fall Semester

**REL 2239 Judaism in the Age of Empires**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

How did the Hellenistic, Roman, and Christian empires shape Jewish history? Investigates how ancient Judaism and Jewish society materialized under the successive rule of ancient empires. Analyzes both how the Jews existed as a part of and yet apart from the culture, religion, and laws of their imperial rulers. Readings include a cross-section of literature from antiquity—including the books of the Maccabees, the writings of Flavius Josephus and Philo of Alexandria, the New Testament, the Dead Sea Scrolls, apocalyptic literature, the “Mishnah,” and early Christian anti-Jewish polemic—to understand the process by which the Jews created Judaism as a religion in opposition to Christianity and Greco-Roman traditions.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

**REL 2250 Modern Christian Thought**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Acquaints students with the major figures and trajectories of Christian religious thought since the Enlightenment. Gives attention to the “inwardization” of religion, the issue of authority, the claims of Christian supremacy, the association of religion and feeling, and the relationships between religion, ethics, and politics. Of particular interest are the critiques of religious knowledge claims, subjectivity, and patriarchy.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

**REL 2251 Christianity**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

An introduction to the diversity and contentiousness of Christian thought and practice. Explores this diversity through analyses of the conceptions, rituals, and aesthetic media that serve to interpret and embody understandings of Jesus, authority, body, family, and church. Historical and contemporary materials highlight not only conflicting interpretations of Christianity, but also the larger social conflicts that these interpretations reflect, reinforce, or seek to resolve.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2023 Fall Semester; 2025 Fall Semester

**REL 2252 Marxism and Religion**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Despite Karl Marx's famous denunciation of religion as the opiate of the masses, Marxism and religion have become companionable in the last several decades. Examines this development through the works of thinkers and activists from diverse religious frameworks, including Catholicism and Judaism, which combine Marxist convictions and analyses with religious commitments in order to further their programs for social emancipation. Included are works by liberation theologians Hugo Assmann, Leonardo Boff, and José Miguez Bonino, and philosophers Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, and Cornel West.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

**REL 2253 Gender, Body, and Religion**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

A significant portion of religious texts and practices is devoted to the disciplining and gendering of bodies. Examines these disciplines including ascetic practices, dietary restrictions, sexual and purity regulations, and boundary maintenance between human and divine, public and private, and clergy and lay. Topics include desire and hunger, abortion, women-led religious movements, the power of submission, and the related intersections of race and class. Materials are drawn from Christianity, Judaism, Neopaganism, Voudou, and Buddhism. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Gender Sexuality and Women St. (Same as: GSWS 2256)

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

**REL 2257 Christian Sexual Ethics**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

An examination of the historical development, denominational variety (e.g. Catholic, Evangelical, Mormon), and contemporary relevance of Christian teachings and practices regarding sex and sexuality. The course is designed to acquaint students with the centrality of sex to Christian notions of sin and virtue as well as with the broader cultural impact of Christian sexual ethics on the understanding and regulation of gender, the rise of secularization and “family values,” and public policy regarding marriage, contraception, reproductive technologies, sex work, and welfare. In addition, students will have opportunities to construct and test moral frameworks that address sexual intimacy and assault, the stigmatization of bodies (with regard to race, class, size, sexuality and disability), and the commoditization of sex and persons. Materials are drawn from the Bible, Church dogmatics, legal cases, contemporary ethicists and documentary film. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Gender Sexuality and Women St. (Same as: GSWS 2252)

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2024 Fall Semester



**REL 2271 Spirit Come Down: Religion, Race, and Gender in America**  
Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Examines the ways religion, race, and gender shape people's lives from the nineteenth century into contemporary times in America, with particular focus on black communities. Explores issues of self-representation, memory, material culture, embodiment, and civic and political engagement through autobiographical, historical, literary, anthropological, cinematic, and musical texts. This course originates in Africana Studies and is crosslisted with: Gender Sexuality and Women St; Religion. (Same as: AFRS 2271, GSWS 2270)

(c) Humanities

Prerequisite(s): Student has completed any of the following course(s): Any AFRS 1000-2969 or AFRS 3000-3999, Any REL 1000-2969 or REL 3000-3999 with grade greater than or equal to C- (1 Standard Grading).

**REL 2276 Religion and the Unconscious**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Focuses on three central figures in psychology and religion: Sigmund Freud and his pupils C.G. Jung and Wilhelm Reich, none particularly 'popular' at present. Studies selected writings by the three, then moves to William James on individual religious experience and to Islamic mysticism and an anthropological critique of the modern appropriation of the term 'shamanism.'

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives

**REL 2280 Goddesses, Gurus, and Rulers: Gender and Power in Indian Religions**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Provides a historical perspective on how gender and power have intertwined in the diverse religious traditions of India. Explores ideas about femininities, masculinities, and genderqueer identities in religious texts and premodern religious communities, analyzing the influence of monastic ideals, economic patronage, and gendered notions of divine authority. Readings examine mythology, rituals, and ideas about gender and social power in Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, and Muslim traditions; including gender roles in family and culture; transgender identity and religion; and, in the latter part of the course, the impacts of colonialism, nationalist politics, and migration on gender and religion. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Asian Studies; Gender Sexuality and Women St. (Same as: ASNS 2740, GSWS 2292)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2023 Fall Semester

**REL 2286 Karma and Liberation: Violence in South Asian Religions**  
Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

The course provides a historical perspective on forms of violence in several south Asian religious traditions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism. It explores the role of violence by reading primary sources and reflects upon the significance of religious violence in their sociohistorical contexts. The course content will examine Vedic sacrifice in comparison with sacrifice in other early civilizations, ascetic violence among Buddhist renunciators, the philosophical justification and legitimization of violence in Mahayana and Tantra, and finally the religious violence in anticolonial and nationalist movements in India and Sri Lanka. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Asian Studies. (Same as: ASNS 2588)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (DPI) Difference, Power, and Inequity, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2024 Spring Semester

**REL 2288 Religion and Politics in South Asia**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

An introduction to religion and politics in a region that is home to about one-fourth of the world's population, with a focus on India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Topics include religious nationalism, religion and violence, and the role of religion in legislative debates about sexuality and gender. Over the past few decades, the region has seen the growth of religious nationalisms in India and Pakistan, a civil war in Sri Lanka that divided citizens along religious and ethnic lines, and the militarization of Kashmir. But South Asia is also home to shared religious shrines and communities whose identities are "neither Hindu nor Muslim," resisting easy categorizations. Pride parades are held in Indian cities, but debates ensue on the role of religion in legislating sexuality. Questions include: How is religion related to national identity? Should religion have a place in democratic legal systems? Can Buddhist monks justify the use of violence in times of war? This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Asian Studies. (Same as: ASNS 2555)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2022 Fall Semester; 2025 Spring Semester

**REL 2305 Voicing the Divine: Religious Modes of Listening and Sonic Embodiment**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

This course explores the complex relationship between language, sound, and hearing in a myriad of religious traditions. Positioning sound and music as our primary lens of inquiry, we examine primary sources and ethnographic studies in our attempt to grapple with the variegated ways religious or mystical experiences are experienced and interpreted. A central component to this course is a focus on practices of listening and its place in conversation relevant discourse from the fields of voice studies, ethnomusicology, religious studies, and sound studies. Students will engage in methods of vocal analyses and religious studies methodologies on performativity and embodiment. Weekly topics and their affiliated readings will include, but are not confined to Islam and El-Ghayb; spiritualism; African-American sermon traditions; Hindu mysticism; American evangelicalism; Jewish aniconism. This course originates in Music and is crosslisted with: Religion. (Same as: MUS 2306)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives

Terms offered: 2023 Spring Semester

**REL 2350 Myth in Arabic Literature: From the Qur'an to Modern Poetry and Prose**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Examines various myths in Arabic literature in translation. Discusses how myths of different origins (Ancient Near East, Greco-Roman Mediterranean, Ancient Arabia, Iran, India, Judeo-Christian traditions) have been reinterpreted and used in Arabic-speaking cultures from the sixth until the twenty-first century, to deal with questions such as the struggle of people against gods, their defiance against fate, their quest for salvation, their pursuit of a just society, and their search for identity. Explores various genres of Arabic literature from the Qur'an, the hadith (i.e., prophetic sayings), ancient and modern poetry, medieval prose and travel literature, '1001 Nights', Egyptian shadow theater, and modern short stories and novels. In this way, presents Arabic literature as global, rooted in different ancient traditions and dealing with the perennial questions of humanity. This course originates in Arabic and is crosslisted with: Classics; Religion. (Same as: ARBC 2350, CLAS 2350)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

**REL 2354 On the Road: Travel Writing and the Cosmopolitan World of Medieval Islam**

Enrollment limit: 25. 1 Credit.

Islamic medieval writings of travelers, explorers, and exiles present a cosmopolitan world of encounters of peoples and cultures. This 2000-level course uses these accounts as an entryway to the history of medieval Islam. We will consider how and why Islam emerged in seventh-century Arabia and follow its path through the Mongol expansion in the fourteenth century. We will examine the impact of the Islamic empire on the medieval Middle East, as it spread across most of the known world from Spain to India, and the cultural practices that it developed to manage cultural difference. The readings, lectures, and class discussions will focus on primary sources: the accounts of Muslims, Jews, and Christians who traveled the length and breadth of the Islamic empire. Emphasis on the interconnectedness of the medieval world and on narratives of inclusion and exclusion. Taught in English. For advanced Arabic students, Arabic 3354 with an Arabic reading and writing component will be offered concurrently with this course. Note: This course fulfills the premodern and non euro/us requirement for history majors and minors. This course originates in Arabic and is crosslisted with: History; Religion. (Same as: ARBC 2354, HIST 2440)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives

**REL 2355 On the Road: Travel Writing and the Cosmopolitan World of Medieval Islam**

Enrollment limit: 15. 1 Credit.

Students enrolled in this course will attend all regular class meetings of ARBC 2354, but will additionally meet once a week as a separate group to read and discuss primary sources in the original Arabic. Some short written assignments will be submitted in Arabic. Please refer to ARBC 2354 for a complete course description. This course originates in Arabic and is crosslisted with: Religion. (Same as: ARBC 3354)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives

Prerequisite(s): Student has completed all of the following course(s): ARBC 1101 - Elementary Arabic I, ARBC 1102 - Elementary Arabic II, ARBC 2203 - Intermediate Arabic I, ARBC 2204 - Intermediate Arabic II, ARBC 2305 - Advanced Arabic with grade greater than or equal to C- (1 Standard Grading).

**REL 2385 Muslims in American Society**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

This course explores Muslim Americans' experiences in the US and is intended to enhance students' knowledge about Islam and Muslims to overcome common myths and misconceptions associated with this racial /ethnic and religious minority group. Some of the topics covered during the course include the history of Muslims on American soil, disassociating Islam from the Abrahamic triad of Judaism-Christianity-Islam, diversity aspect of the Muslim American population, assimilation of Muslims to larger society, gender issues ("saving" Muslim women), discrimination and prejudice, Islamophobia, Islam and terrorism (meaning of jihad), depiction of Muslims in American media, and sharia (Islamic law) myth. To gain a better understanding of the historical and contemporary social integration of Muslims in the US, students will explore several key theories, such as orientalism, labeling theory, Muslim feminism, the Blauner hypothesis, and the Noel hypothesis. This course originates in Sociology and is crosslisted with: Religion. (Same as: SOC 2385)

(b) Social and Behavioral Sciences, (DPI) Difference, Power, and Inequity

Prerequisite(s): Student has completed all of the following course(s): SOC 1101 - Introduction to Sociology with grade greater than or equal to C- (1 Standard Grading).

Terms offered: 2024 Fall Semester

**REL 2470 Religions of the African Atlantic**

Enrollment limit: 16. 1 Credit.

Introduces the religious beliefs and practices of African peoples and their descendants in the Americas. Topics will include historical spiritual links between Africa and the African diaspora, spirits and divinities from an Afro-Atlantic perspective, and religious contact and mixture in Africa and the Americas. The contributions of Afro-Atlantic peoples to global Christianity, Islam, and other world religions will be explored. After a brief historical and cultural grounding, the course pursues these issues thematically, considering various Afro-Atlantic religious technologies in turn, from divination and spirit possession to computers and mass media. This course originates in Anthropology and is crosslisted with: Africana Studies; Religion. (Same as: ANTH 2470, AFRS 2382)

(b) Social and Behavioral Sciences, (IP) International Perspectives

Prerequisite(s): Student has completed any of the following course(s): Any ANTH 1000-2969 or ANTH 3000-3999, Any REL 1000-2969 or REL 3000-3999 with grade greater than or equal to C- (1 Standard Grading).

**REL 2500 New Religious Movements in the United States**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

The word "cult" conjures all sorts of stereotypes which obscure more than they reveal. This class aims to peel back the misapprehensions, prejudices, and biases relating to New Religious Movements in the U.S., analyze how and why they form, and what they tell us about religion in the modern world. This course will focus on a variety of movements including Mormonism, Heaven's Gate, The People's Temple, and Pastafarianism.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2023 Spring Semester; 2025 Spring Semester

**REL 2520 Popular Religion in the Americas**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

What makes a particular religious practice "popular," and what does "popular" religion indicate about the future of religion in America? This course explores the relationship between institutional religion and popular religion—sometimes labeled "lived" or "vernacular" religion—in the Americas. We will pay particular attention to the ways in which popular religious practices challenge or complement institutional religion in the lives of practitioners. Readings will focus on social, economic, and political aspects of popular religious practices, examining the ways they challenge or reinforce categories like class, race, and gender. Topics may include the Mexican saint of death (Santa Muerte), the emergence of the designation "spiritual but not religious," Sherlock Holmes fan culture, and the veneration of science and scientists.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2022 Spring Semester

**REL 2530 Jesus in the Modern Imagination**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

How has media shaped modern perceptions of the figure of Jesus? How do these representations fit or clash with the Jesus of the Bible and other ancient texts? Explores the narrative behind the Jesus movement and the countless stories about it told through a variety of media—texts, films, artwork, songs, etc. Investigates how these depictions are formed and how they shape cultural understandings of Jesus and Christianity. Includes discussions of historical Jesus, authorial intent, modern "forgeries," comedy and religion, gender and sexuality, and pop theology.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2023 Fall Semester

**REL 2540 The History of American Christianity**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

In this course, we seek to understand the ways in which Christianity intertwines with the histories of colonization, settlement, slavery, progressivism and globalization that continue to shape life in the modern United States. In addition to introducing students to the denominations that both drove and were transformed by these histories (e.g. Catholicism and mainline Protestantism), we will examine the novel forms of Christianity that emerged in and are frequently identified with peculiarly American projects of individualism, work, self-help, and prosperity (Mormonism, Evangelicalism, and Pentecostalism). Rather than simply focus on Christian theologies and doctrines, we will consider how ordinary Christians use their beliefs and practices to navigate these challenging periods in American history.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2021 Fall Semester



**REL 2544 Religion in the United States South**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

For many Americans, conservative, evangelical Christianity and the U.S. South are coextensive. And yet, for most of the colonial period and even into the Early Republic the south was not particularly religious. This course will seek to understand what changed in the early 1800s. We will trace the co-development of evangelicalism, English honor culture, slavery, and free market capitalism in the antebellum period in order to better understand the rise of Jim Crow. In addition, we will consider the distinct religious elements of the Civil Rights movement and the Catholic, immigrant, and secular dimensions of the Nuevo South.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

**REL 2808 Islam in Asia**

Enrollment limit: 35. 1 Credit.

Islamic traditions are generally associated with the Middle East, but the majority of the world's Muslims live in the Asia-Pacific region. Introduces students to Asian Islamic traditions, tracing their development from the medieval period until the current day. Readings examine the development of regional Islamic practices, including teachers and lineages of mystical traditions (Sufism), local pilgrimages, indigenous healing traditions, and religious art and architecture, with a focus on the diversity of lived Islam. Explores contemporary conflicts over Muslim identity in Asia and debates about the place of Islam in modern media, business practices, and governments. By 2050, the largest population of the world's Muslims will live in India but they face social and political marginalization. In Indonesia, by contrast, Muslim teachers broadcast nationally televised self-help programs for an aspiring middle class. Focus on primary historical sources and contemporary studies. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Asian Studies. (Same as: ASNS 2962)

(c) Humanities, (IP) International Perspectives, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

**REL 3209 Religion on the Move: Migration, Globalization, and the Transformation of Tradition**

Enrollment limit: 16. 1 Credit.

Contemporary migration and globalization trends have transformed where and how religious traditions are practiced, radically altering the landscape of local religion around the world. But religion in practice is always changing, and what we consider 'timeless traditions' are also reframed by individuals and communities in every generation. While migration has been integral to the development of many religions, this course considers how contemporary migration and the global spread of practices like yoga and meditation have led to the creation of new religious identities, diversifying where religions are practiced around the world. Readings highlight debates about religious identity in relation to gender, race, ethnicity, and transnational communities, including the rise of mega gurus in India and the US, the global popularity of Buddhism, and the relationship between race, religion, and authority among American Muslims. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Asian Studies. (Same as: ASNS 3831)

(c) Humanities

Terms offered: 2023 Spring Semester; 2025 Spring Semester

**REL 3310 Religious Toleration and Human Rights**

Enrollment limit: 16. 1 Credit.

Is toleration a response to difference we cannot do without or is it simply a strategy for producing religious subjectivities that are compliant with liberal political rule? Is toleration a virtue like forgiveness or a poor substitute for justice? Examines the relationship between early modern European arguments for toleration and the emergence of universal human rights as well as the continuing challenges that beset their mutual implementation. Some of these challenges include confronting the Christian presuppositions of liberal toleration, accommodating the right to religious freedom while safeguarding cultural diversity by prohibiting proselytism, and translating arguments for religious toleration to the case for nondiscrimination of sexual orientations and relationships. In addition to case studies and United Nations documents, course readings include selections from Locke, Marx, Heyd, Walzer, Brown, Pellegrini, and Richards.

(c) Humanities

**REL 3325 Deadly Words: Language and Power in the Religions of Antiquity**

Enrollment limit: 16. 1 Credit.

In the ancient Mediterranean world, speech was fraught with danger and uncertainty. Words had enormous power—not just the power to do things but a tangible power as things. Words attached themselves to people as physical objects. They lived inside them and consumed their attention. They set events in motion: war, conversion, marriage, death, and salvation. This course investigates the precarious and deadly presence of oral language in the religious world of late antiquity (150 CE to 600 CE). Focusing on evidence from Christian, Jewish, and pagan sources—rabbinic literature, piyyutim, curse tablets, amulets, monastic sayings, creeds, etc.—students will come to understand the myriad ways in which words were said to influence and infect religious actors. For late ancient writers, words were not fleeting or ethereal, but rather quite tactile objects that could be felt, held, and experienced. It is the physical encounter with speech that orients this course. This course originates in Religion and is crosslisted with: Classics. (Same as: CLAS 3325)

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

Terms offered: 2022 Spring Semester; 2024 Spring Semester

**REL 3333 Islam and Science**

Enrollment limit: 15. 1 Credit.

Surveys the history of science, particularly medicine and astronomy, within Islamic civilization. Pays special attention to discussions of science in religious texts and to broader debates regarding the role of reason in Islam. Emphasizes the significance of this history for Muslims and the role of Western civilization in the Islamic world. Students with a sufficient knowledge of Arabic may elect to read certain texts in Arabic.

(c) Humanities, (FYCS) First-Year Course Schedule

**REL 3390 Theories about Religion**

Enrollment limit: 16. 1 Credit.

Seminar focusing on how religion has been explained and interpreted from a variety of intellectual and academic perspectives, from the sixteenth century to the present. In addition to a historical overview of religion's interpretation and explanation, also includes consideration of postmodern critiques and the problem of religion and violence in the contemporary world.

(c) Humanities

Terms offered: 2021 Fall Semester; 2022 Fall Semester; 2023 Fall Semester; 2024 Fall Semester; 2025 Fall Semester