

**RELIGION DEPARTMENT  
2015-2016 FALL  
COURSE OFFERINGS**

**Undergraduate Program**

**JDS 202 / REL 202 (HA) *No Audit***

**Great Books of the Jewish Tradition**

**Yaacob Dweck/Moulie Vidas**

3:00 pm - 4:20 pm **M W**

**Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean**

This course is intended to introduce students to the classical Jewish tradition through a close reading of portions of some of its great books, including Bible, the rabbinic midrash, the Talmud, Rashi's commentary on the Torah, Mishneh Torah, the Zohar, and the Haggadah. We will pay particular attention to the role of interpretation in forming Jewish tradition.

**REL 219 (EM)**

**Business Ethics and Modern Religious Thought**

**David W. Miller**

10:00 am - 10:50 am **M W**

**Department Area Requirement: Critical Thought**

The course objective is to learn basic ethics theory and develop practical tools for business ethics, with particular attention throughout the course to the role of religion and spirituality in ethical formation, frameworks, and decision making. This will be applied to contemporary business ethics case studies, and will include guest CEO visitors.

**REL 225 (HA)**

**The Buddhist World of Thought and Practice**

**Jacqueline I. Stone**

2:30 pm - 3:20 pm **M W**

**Department Area Requirement: Religions of Asia**

This course surveys the development of Buddhism from its beginnings in India through some of its later forms in East Asia, Tibet, and the West. Attention will be given to continuity and diversity within Buddhism, its modes of self-definition as a religious tradition, the interplay of its practical and trans-worldly concerns, and its transformations in specific historical and cultural settings.

**REL 230 / JDS 230 (HA)**

**Who Wrote the Bible**

**Naphtali S. Meshel**

11:00 am – 12:20 pm **MW**

**Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean**

The course will introduce students to the Hebrew Bible ("Old Testament") in its ancient Near Eastern setting. Key concepts often associated with the Hebrew Bible, such as God, damnation, sin, and history, will be scrutinized through a careful reading of a selection of Biblical texts including the Creation and Garden of Eden narratives in Genesis, the laws of Leviticus, the prophecies of Ezekiel and the poetry of Song of Songs. Particular attention will be paid to the transformations that the texts underwent through a continuous process of transmission and interpretation

**NES 240 / REL 240 (EM)**

**Muslims and the Qur'an**

**Muhammad Q. Zaman**

10:00 am - 10:50 am **M W**

**Department Area Requirement: Islam**

A broad-ranging introduction to pre-modern, modern, and contemporary Islam in light of how Muslims have approached their foundational religious text, the Qur'an. Topics include: Muhammad and the emergence of Islam; theology, law and ethics; war and peace; mysticism; women and gender; and modern debates on Islamic reform. We shall examine the varied contexts in which Muslims have interpreted their sacred text, their agreements and disagreements on what it means and, more broadly, their often competing understandings of Islam and of what it is to be a Muslim.

**REL 252 (HA)**

**Christianity: From Illegal Movement to World Religion**

**Elaine H. Pagels**

1:30 pm - 2:20 pm **M W**

**Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean**

How did the movement that began with a few followers of Jesus of Nazareth become a world religion? We will investigate the earliest primary sources, gospels and historical accounts, Jewish and Roman, showing what was known about Jesus--including secret gospels; letters written to and from Roman emperors about whether to kill Christians in order to stop the movement; trial accounts, prison diaries, and martyrdoms; what Jesus and Paul said about sexual practices and gender; what converts said about why they chose Christianity, despite the dangers; how emperor Constantine--and his allies shaped Christianity as we know it today.

**REL 257 / AMS 397 (HA)**

**Religion and American Film**

**Judith Weisenfeld**

12:30 pm - 1:20 pm **M W**

**Department Area Requirement: Religion in America**

This course explores representations of religious beliefs, practices, and communities in American film, including documentary, independent, and commercial features. We consider how cinematic images have contributed to shared understandings of the nature of religion and its place in American life and what conflicts over representation reveal about the broader American religious landscape. Topics include religion and censorship, representing ethnicity, race, gender, and sexuality, new religious movements, and religion and politics.

**REL 261 / CHV 261 (EM)**

**Christian Ethics and Modern Society**

**Eric S. Gregory**

11:00 am - 11:50 am **T Th**

**Department Area Requirement: Critical Thought**

An introduction to Christian ideals of conduct, character, & community, & to modern disputes over their interpretation & application. Are Christian virtues & principles fundamentally at odds with the ethos of liberal democracy oriented toward rights, equality, & freedom? What do Christian beliefs & moral concepts imply about issues related to feminism, racism, & pluralism? What is the relationship between religious convictions, morality, & law? Special emphasis on selected political & economic problems, sexuality & marriage, bioethics, capital punishment, the environment, war, terrorism & torture, & the role of religion in public life.

**REL 270 (HA)**  
**The Bible in America**  
**Seth A. Perry**

10:00 am - 10:50 am **T Th**

**Department Area Requirement: Religion in America**

In this course we will examine the historical and current place of the Bible in America, from Puritans' use of the Geneva Bible to nineteenth-century Hebrew printing to twenty-first century bible apps. We will pay particular attention to the ways in which different communities have read, referred to, presented, translated, and interpreted the Bible over time. Our readings will encompass both secondary sources addressing these questions and a variety of American bibles, from eighteenth-century pulpit bibles to contemporary comic books.

**JDS 302 / NES 302 / REL 302**  
**Elementary Biblical Hebrew I**

**Naphtali S. Meshel**

10:00 am – 10:50 am **MWF**

**Department Area Requirement: Does NOT satisfy sub-field requirement; does NOT count as departmental.**

**Majors may petition to count this as a cognate course (in addition to the 8 required courses for the major).**

Students will achieve a basic ability to read the Hebrew Bible in the original language. During the semester, students will learn the script and the grammar, develop a working vocabulary, and read a selection of Biblical passages. The course is designed specifically and exclusively for beginners with little or no previous knowledge of the language. Students with prior experience in the language should contact the instructor about course alternatives.

**REL 308 / GSS 338 / ART 387 / HUM 338 (EM) No Audit**  
**The Buddhist Individual**

**Eric R. Huntington**

1:30 pm - 4:20 pm **Th**

**Department Area Requirement: Religions of Asia**

How does a tradition portray an individual, and how does an individual see themselves within a tradition? From epics of kings to private visionary experiences, the relationship of the individual to the tradition is a central theme of Buddhism. This course examines different conceptions of the individual by looking at numerous examples, including devoted patrons, accomplished masters, and struggling practitioners. Major themes include the structure of early Buddhist society, the roles of women, and autobiography. Topics will be drawn from 2,000 years of literature and artwork from India and Tibet.

**REL 320 (EM)**  
**The Problem of Evil**  
**Liane F. Carlson**

1:30 pm - 4:20 pm **Th**

**Department Area Requirement: Critical Thought**

What is evil? Can you really call someone evil if you believe their character and history are shaped by chance? How have the atrocities of the 20th century influenced how artists, philosophers and theologians depict evil? The course will begin by exploring traditional efforts to reconcile the existence of evil with an omnipotent, loving God. Next, students will consider modern reactions against the problem of evil as depicted in literary, philosophical, and religious texts. Finally, the course will end by questioning how we evaluate evil and the possibility of atonement in a nominally secular world.

**REL 324 (EC) na, npdf**

**Mind and Meditation**

**Jonathan C. Gold**

1:30 pm - 4:20 pm **T**

**Department Area Requirement: Religions of Asia**

This course examines the philosophy, history, and methods of Buddhist meditation. Primary readings will be Buddhist works on the nature of the mind and the role of meditation on the path to liberation (nirvana). We will ask how traditional Buddhist views have been reshaped by modern teachers, and we will interrogate the significance of current research on meditation in the fields of neuroscience, psychology and the philosophy of mind. In addition to other coursework, students will be practicing meditation and keeping a log and journal. Some coursework in Philosophy or Religion is expected.

**REL 328 / GSS 328 (SA)**

**Women and Gender in Islamic Societies**

**Shaun E. Marmon**

1:30 pm - 4:20 pm **T**

**Department Area Requirement: Islam**

Topics include: Women and the Law; Women and Sexuality; Gender and Seclusion; Women and Modernity; Gender and Post-Colonial Societies; Women's Voices; Women and Film; Politics of Women's Bodies; Women and Modern Islamic Revivalism. No prior background in Islam or Gender Studies required. Readings from fields of history, religious studies, anthropology, sociology and politics. Weekly primary sources in translation include: religious texts, popular literature, court records, letters, novels, poetry, autobiography, newspapers and films with subtitles.

**REL 351 (HA)**

**Priests and Priesthood from the Hebrew Bible to Ancient Judaism and Christianity**

**Martha Himmelfarb**

11:00 am - 12:20 pm **T Th**

**Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean**

Priests played a central role in the religion of ancient Israel, performing sacrifice and judging matters of purity. When the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE brought an end to sacrifice, priests could no longer perform these tasks. But it was impossible for Jews and Christians to ignore priesthood because priests and their activities were enshrined in the Torah, which now stood at the center of Judaism and held a place in the Christian Old Testament. This course examines ideas about priests and priesthood in order to understand how ancient Jews and Christians saw themselves in relation to God, the cosmos, and each other.

**REL 370 / LAS 380 (HA) CANCELLED**

**Religious Experience, Expression, and Authority in Colonial Latin America**

**Jessica Delgado**

1:30 pm - 4:20 pm **T**

**Department Area Requirement: Religion in America**

Religion permeated everything in colonial Latin America. In fact, it is not really accurate to talk about religion as something separate from other aspects of human life for this time and place. This class explores the ways "religion" was lived and understood by people in colonial Latin America through three categories: 1) experience, with an emphasis on internal experience, both physical and emotional; 2) expression, both verbal and non-verbal, with an emphasis on ambivalent forms of expression that simultaneously validated and challenged accepted religious truths; and 3) authority, with an emphasis on its limits.

REL 399

Required Colloquium for Junior Majors

Professor(s): **Leora Batnitzky**

Day/Time: 10:00-11:50 am F

First semester Junior Majors participate in a required workshop on research and writing that culminates in a five to seven-page JP proposal. The colloquium is a non-credit fifth course. The grade for the colloquium is factored into the final grade for the junior independent work.

### *Cross-listed Courses*

**ART 357 / REL 304 (LA) No Audit**

**Dunhuang: Buddhist Art and Culture on the Silk Road**

**Dora C. Y. Ching**

11:00 am - 12:20 pm **M W**

**Department Area Requirement: Does NOT satisfy sub-field requirement; does NOT count as departmental. Majors may petition to count this as a cognate course (in addition to the 8 required courses for the major).**

Located at the crossroads of the ancient Silk Road, Dunhuang is one of the richest Buddhist sites in China with nearly 500 cave temples constructed between the fourth and the fourteenth century. The sculptures, murals, portable paintings, and manuscripts found in the caves represent every aspect of Buddhism, both doctrinally and artistically. This course will explore this visual material in relation to topics such as expeditions, the role of Dunhuang in the study of Buddhist art and Chinese art in general, Buddhist ritual practices, image-text relationships, politics and patronage, and contemporary attitudes toward Dunhuang.

**ART 481 / REL 481 (LA)**

**Egyptian Architecture: The Monumental Landscape**

**Staff**

1:30 pm - 4:20 pm **T**

**Department Area Requirement: Does NOT satisfy sub-field requirement; does NOT count as departmental. Majors may petition to count this as a cognate course (in addition to the 8 required courses for the major).**

In this seminar we will examine a variety of forms of ancient Egyptian architecture, primarily from the pharaonic period, through the lens of landscape. We will examine god's temples, funerary temples, and burial monuments within the larger context of their settings, including the surrounding landscape and their relationships to other monuments. A number of themes will be addressed, including the sacred landscape, architecture as microcosm, architecture and performance, ancestry and memory, the temporality of landscape and monument, and locality and community.

**NES 221 / JDS 223 / REL 216 (HA)**

**Jerusalem Contested: A City's History from Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives**

**Jonathan M. Gribetz**

1:30 pm - 4:20 pm **Th**

**Department Area Requirement: Does NOT satisfy sub-field requirement; does NOT count as departmental. Majors may petition to count this as a cognate course (in addition to the 8 required courses for the major).**

Jerusalem is considered a holy city to three faiths: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In this course, students will learn the history of Jerusalem from its founding in pre-biblical times until the present. Over the course of the semester, we will ask: What makes space sacred and how does a city become holy? What has been at stake - religiously, theologically, politically, nationally - in the many battles over Jerusalem? What is the relationship between Jerusalem as it was and Jerusalem as it was (and is) imagined?

**NES 231 / REL 231 / JDS 233 (HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit**  
**Jews, Christians, and Conversion in the Early Islamic World**  
**Staff**

11:00 am - 12:20 pm **T Th**

**Department Area Requirement: Does NOT satisfy sub-field requirement; does NOT count as departmental.**  
**Majors may petition to count this as a cognate course (in addition to the 8 required courses for the major).**

This seminar examines Jews' and Christians' lives in the medieval Islamic world through the lens of religious conversion. In the seventh century, a mix of Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, and pagans lived in the Middle East. Four hundred years later, most of these people's descendants were Muslims. This shift changed what it meant to belong to a religious community, for Muslims and non-Muslims alike. We will examine this enormous historical change and its effects, focusing first on the long process of conversion to Islam after the Arab conquests, and then on the contexts of individual and mass conversions in medieval Islamic societies.

**For more detailed information on each course, please visit:**

<http://registrar.princeton.edu/course-offerings/>