

**RELIGION DEPARTMENT
2014-2015 SPRING
COURSE OFFERINGS**

Undergraduate Program

REL 222 / HUM 222 / VIS 244 (EC)

Religion in Modern Thought and Film

Jeffrey L. Stout

MW 12:30-1:20

M 7:30-10:20PM Film

Department Area Requirement: Required Course, Departmental

This course examines the most influential modern conceptions of religion, as articulated by major thinkers (e.g. Durkheim, Emerson, Freud, Marx, Nietzsche, Pascal, Weber) and filmmakers (e.g. Antonioni, Capra, Friedrich, Hitchcock, Kurosawa). Topics include secularization, the rationality of religious belief, the psychological pathologies, social functions, and political effects of religion, the social construction of identities, and international cinema as vehicle for the expression of "religious" and "secular" visions of transformation.

REL 227 (EM)

Tibetan Buddhism

Jonathan C. Gold

TTh 11:00-11:50

Department Area Requirement: Religions of Asia

This course is a survey of the Buddhist traditions of Tibet, focusing on the doctrines and practices associated with the main schools of tantric ritual and meditation. Topics covered will include: the origins of the distinct forms of Buddhism in Tibet; Buddhist responses to historical challenges; the special relationship between politics and religion in Tibet; the role of Tibetan Buddhist scholars and scholasticism; Tibet through the lenses of the Chinese, and the West; and Tibetan Buddhist art.

REL 232 (HA)

Religion and Conservatism in the United States Since WWII

Gillian Frank

MW 10:00-10:50

Department Area Requirement: Religions in America

This course examines the development of the Religious Right since 1945 by studying how conservatives from different religions engaged with postwar liberalism, reshaped their own denominations, and responded to the civil rights movement, second wave feminism, and gay liberation. Topics include: conservative theology, institution and culture building, and electoral politics. Readings include primary texts and documents and recent scholarly works.

REL 246 / JDS 246 (HA)

Ancient Judaism from Alexander to the Rise of Islam

Martha Himmelfarb

MW 10:00-10:50

Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean

This course offers an introduction to the development of ancient Judaism during the eventful millennium from the establishment of the Torah as the constitution of the Jewish people in the fifth century BCE--an event that some have seen as marking the transition from biblical religion to Judaism--to the completion of the other great canonical Jewish document, the Babylonian Talmud, in perhaps the sixth century CE.

REL 251 (HA)

The New Testament and Christian Origins

John G. Gager

MW 2:30-3:20

Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean

To trace the origins of Christianity from its beginnings as a movement within ancient Judaism to its gradual transformation and emergence as an independent religious movement in the Roman Empire and beyond. To read the New Testament with a critical eye, i.e., as a collection of documents illustrating differing emphases and stages in the growth of early Christianity.

REL 301/NES 301 /GSS 314/ANT 387 : Women, Gender, and Islam (SA) *na, npdf*

Women, Gender, and Islam

Nadia Guessous

W 1:30-4:20

Department Area Requirement: Islam

This seminar introduces students to the varieties of ways in which Muslim women of different generations, social classes, educational background, political orientation and regions inhabit and embody their Muslim identities. Our focus will be on Muslim women in the modern Middle East. Readings are drawn from the fields of history, religious studies, and anthropology. Readings also include novels and memoirs in translation. Films are an integral part of the course.

REL 306 / ART 326/SAS 306/HUM 306 (EM) *No Audit*

Creating the Universe: Buddhist Science, Ritual, and Art

Eric R. Huntington

W 1:30-4:20

Department Area Requirement: Religions of Asia

Much of Buddhist art can usefully be thought of as ritual technology-physical pieces that, when arranged systematically, make a given ritual effective. This class is about the Buddhist scientific perspectives underlying the production of such visual art in Tibet, Nepal, and India. The course is organized around cosmological and biological topics such as physical models of the universe, the types of beings that dwell in the world, and the cycles of life and death. Within these topics, we will investigate the relationships between sacred texts, ritual practices, and visual arts as the material culture of religion.

REL 313 (EC) *No Audit*

Pragmatism and Religion: James and Dewey

Eddie S. Glaude

T 1:30-4:20

Department Area Requirement: Critical Thought

This seminar will examine the works of two important classical pragmatists, William James and John Dewey, and their views about religion. Several questions will guide our efforts: how do James and Dewey understand and respond to evil and death? Is a conception of God important to their thoughts about religion? Attention will be given throughout the course to the concepts of nature, experience, and piety.

REL 347 / JDS 347 (EM) *na, npdf*

Religion and Law

Leora F. Batnitzky, Yonatan Y. Brafman

W 1:30-4:20

Department Area Requirement: Critical Thought

A critical examination of the relation between concepts of "religion" and "law," as they figure in the modern state. The course will survey theoretical tools for thinking about these issues and their historical development before applying them to case studies in Europe and the Middle East. With the benefit of these comparative studies, and a new historical and philosophical insights, we will then address religion, politics and law in contemporary America.

REL 352 (HA) *na, npdf*

Jesus of Nazareth: Ancient Controversies, New Interpretations

Elaine H. Pagels

ENROLLMENT BY APPLICATION OR INTERVIEW. DEPARTMENTAL PERMISSION REQUIRED.

T 1:30-4:20

Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean

We'll investigate the earliest known sources about Jesus--New Testament gospels and "gnostic gospels", including the Gospel of Thomas, Mary Magdalene, and Philip; then check sources written by Jewish and Roman outsiders to the movement to see what they say about the actual historical context and how various people interpret Jesus (as revolutionary, healer, rabbi, prophet, magician, God). We'll also look at interpretations of Jesus in film, art, theater, fiction, and other contemporary sources, including those suggested by seminar members.

REL 383 / ENG 332 (SA)

American Scriptures

Seth A. Perry

TTh 10:00-10:50

Department Area Requirement: Religions in America

The relative novelty of American scriptures allows us entry into the most essential questions of scriptures' meaning, function and use: What is a scripture? How does a text become one? We will discuss selections from The Book of Mormon, Science and Health, Message to the Blackman in America, and Dianetics, along with several other new-world scriptures and, by way of comparison, the American histories of some old-world scriptures. Emphasis will be on reading and reflecting on these texts as primary sources, investigating their internal logic, discursive influences, and rhetorical effects to think about how communities have formed around them.

REL 452 / HUM 452 (EM) *No Pass/D/Fail*

Religion and Power in Grassroots Democracy

Ernesto Cortés

Jeffrey L. Stout

ENROLLMENT BY APPLICATION OR INTERVIEW. DEPARTMENTAL PERMISSION REQUIRED.

Th 1:30-4:20

Department Area Requirement: Critical Thought

A critical examination of grassroots democratic movements and groups: What ills do they address? How do they acquire and exercise power? What ethical constraints apply to them? What organizational structures do they adopt? What roles does religion play in them? What do they imply for our conception of democracy?

Cross-Listed Courses

AAS 318 / REL 318 (LA)

Black Women and Spiritual Narrative

Wallace D. Best

T 7:30-10:20

Department Area Requirement: Religions in America

This course will analyze the narrative accounts of African American women since the nineteenth century. Working from the hypothesis that religious metaphor and symbolism have figured prominently in black women's writing (and writing about black women) across literary genres, we will explore the various ways black women have used their narratives not only to disclose the intimacies of their religious faith, but also to understand and to critique their social context. We will discuss the themes, institutions, and structures that have traditionally shaped black women's experiences, as well as the theologies black women have developed in response.

JDS 303 / NES 311 / REL 303

The Wise Guys: Readings in Biblical Wisdom Literature

Naphtali S. Meshel

MWF 9:00-9:50

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).

We will read selected passages of Biblical Wisdom Literature (primarily from Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job). Particular attention will be paid to techniques of generating ambiguity in Wisdom Literature. The course is open to students who have completed JDS 302, as well as students with intermediate/advanced Biblical Hebrew.

POL 309 / REL 309 (EM)

Politics and Religion

Jan-Werner Müller

MW 10:00-10:50

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).

Is there an affinity between particular religions and particular forms of politics? Is religion a necessary basis for any stable politics, as many canonical authors in the history of political thought asserted, or is it in fact a threat, as religion provokes strife and poses a danger to modern ideals of autonomy - including democracy? The course addresses such broad questions by engaging classic works as well as recent sociological writings, studies in comparative politics, and legal theories on politics and religion.

SOC 340 / REL 390 (SA)

God of Many Faces: Comparative Perspectives on Migration and Religion

Patricia Fernández-Kelly

TTh 10:00-10:50

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).

Immigrants often experience discrimination in areas of destination. Religion can strengthen their sense of worth, particularly when the circumstances surrounding departure from the country of origin are traumatic, as with exiles and refugees. We take a comparative approach and use examples from the United States, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. The course broaches questions such as: how does religion transform (and how is it transformed by) the immigrant experience? When is religion used to combat stereotypes? Are there differences between the way men and women or dominant groups and racial minorities understand religion?

For more detailed information on each course, please visit:

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