

**RELIGION DEPARTMENT
2020 – 2021 FALL
COURSE OFFERINGS**

Undergraduate Program

REL 228 / EAS 228: Religion in Japanese Culture
(HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 40
Professor(s): Bryan Lowe
10:00am – 10:50am MW Lecture/Precept

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Religions of Asia

What does religion mean for a culture in which the majority of people identify as nonbelievers but still regularly engage in seemingly religious acts? By looking at practices and teachings that do not easily map onto monotheistic traditions, we will question commonly held assumptions about religion. This course introduces major themes and issues in Japanese religions from ancient to modern times, focusing on the role of religion in culture and history. We will examine aspects of Buddhist, Shinto, Christian and other traditions, as well as topics such as myths, ghosts, the environment, politics, secularism, and violence.

NES 240 / REL 240: Muslims and the Qur'an
Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 80
Professor(s): Muhammad Zaman
10:00 am - 10:50 am M W

Area of Study Stream 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 244 / NES 244 / MED 246: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam: Their Emergence in Antiquity
(HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment no limit
Professor(s): Moulie Vidas
11:00am – 11:50am TTH Lecture/Precept

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean

The period studied in this course saw wide-ranging transformations that inform religion and culture to this day, such as the emergence of the traditions now called Judaism, Christianity and Islam, a spread in allegiance to a single God, and a decline in public animal sacrifice. The course will introduce students to a critical examination of these changes. We will learn to identify patterns across different traditions, uncover the ways these traditions shaped one another, trace the development of beliefs from their earliest forms, and analyze the social and political context of these changes.

CANCELLED!! REL 246 / JDS 246: Ancient Judaism from Alexander to the Rise of Islam
(HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment no limit
Professor(s): Martha Himmelfarb
4:30pm – 5:50pm TTH Lecture

Area of Study Stream 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 264 / CHV 264 / PHI 264: Religion and Reason
(EC) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment no limit
Professor(s): Denys Turner
12:30pm – 1:20pm MW Lecture/Precept

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Critical Thought

An examination of the most influential theoretical, pragmatic, and moral arguments regarding the existence and nature of God (or gods). Along the way, we consider debates about whether and how we can talk or think about such a being, and about whether mystical experience, miracles, and the afterlife are intelligible notions. Finally, we consider whether religious commitment might be rationally acceptable without any proof or evidence, and whether the real-world fact of religious diversity has philosophical implications. Course readings will be taken from both historical and contemporary sources.

CANCELLED!! REL 304 / CHV 304: Religion and Modern Moral Philosophy

(EM) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 15

Professor(s): Ryan Darr

1:30pm – 4:20pm T Seminar

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Does NOT satisfy sub-field requirement; DOES count as departmental.

The story of the development of modern moral philosophy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is inseparable from religion. This course explores the role of religion in that story. We will consider, among other things, the relationship between morality and divine intellect and will, the possibility of moral community between God and creatures, the moral significance of evil, and the moral significance of divine providence. In addition, we will consider how the logical space of moral philosophy changes when religious convictions are rejected and what difference that makes for the legacy of modern moral philosophy.

CANCELLED!! REL 308 / MED 316 / HUM 313 / AAS 340: Christians and Incarceration

(HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 12

Professor(s): Matthew Larsen

1:30pm – 4:20pm TH Seminar

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Does NOT satisfy sub-field requirement; does count as departmental.

Christianity and incarceration have a long and storied history. One way of telling the history of Christianity is through its changing relationship to the carceral practices and geographies. The course explores the changing relationship between Christians and carceral practices and geographies throughout its history, beginning at the origins of what became Christianity in 1st century Palestine and ending with the 2017 Alabama State Legislature's passing of a bill allowing churches to police their communities.

REL 324: Mind and Meditation

(EC) Graded na, npdf Total Course Enrollment 15

Professor(s): Jonathan Gold

1:30pm – 3:20pm M Seminar

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Religions of Asian

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 354: Advanced Biblical Hebrew: Violence and the State in the Hebrew Bible

(HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 30

Professor(s): Madadh Richey

11:00am – 12:20pm M

9:00am – 10:20am F Class

Area of Study Stream 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 9 required courses for the major).

In this class, we will explore how the Hebrew Bible imagines the interactions of the state with military and other extreme violence. We will focus on three biblical books—Joshua, Kings, and Nahum—and look at how Israelite violence becomes a shifting signifier, enfolding aspects of ritualization, ethnic and gendered consolidation, and theological fantasizing about enemies' deserved downfalls. The highly marked nature of textualized violence will facilitate study of intermediate Biblical Hebrew linguistic topics, including nominal and verbal syntax in prose and poetry, pragmatics, and lexical and other semantics.

REL 364/HUM 364/GSS 412: Love and Justice

(EM) Graded na, npdf Total Course enrollment 15

Professor(s) Eric Gregory

1:30pm – 4:20pm M Seminar

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Critical Thought

Satisfies Critical Approaches (CA) requirement for majors

Analysis of philosophical, literary, and theological accounts of love and justice, with emphasis on how they interrelate in personal and public life. Is love indiscriminate and therefore antithetical to justice, or can love take the shape of justice? What are the implications for law, politics, and social criticism? Particular attention will be given to discussions of virtue, tragedy, forgiveness, friendship, and happiness.

REL 383: American Scriptures

(EC) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment no limit

Professor(s): Seth Perry

10:00am – 10:50am TTH Lecture/Precept

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Religion in America

Satisfies Critical Approaches (CA) requirement for majors

What is a scripture? How does a text become one? In this class, we'll study several American scriptures, relatively recent texts that allow important perspective on these questions. We'll read parts of The Book of Mormon, Science and Health, The Circle Seven Koran, and Dianetics, along with several other new-world scriptures and American iterations of some old-world ones. Emphasis will be on thinking through how these texts know what they know, and how they make that claim of knowledge to readers. We'll investigate their discursive influences, internal logic, and rhetorical effects to think about how scriptures function in the world.

REL 399: Junior Colloquium
Graded No Pass/D/Fail Total Course Enrollment 25
Professor(s): Seth Perry
11:00am – 12:20pm WF

Required Colloquium for Junior Majors

First semester junior majors participate in a colloquium with a member or members of the faculty. In addition to assignments throughout the term that prepare majors to research and write a junior paper (JP), students are expected to produce a five to seven-page JP proposal.

Graduate Program

REL 502: Philosophy and the Study of Religion
Graded **/aud* Total Enrollment 20
Professor(s): Leora Batnitzky
10:00am – 12:50pm F Seminar

The impact of twentieth-century philosophical ideas on the academic study of religion: naturalism, phenomenology, hermeneutics, structuralism, Nietzschean genealogy, and American pragmatism, among other philosophical movements.

REL 504: Studies in Greco-Roman Religions: Group Formation, Ritual, and Politics: Who's In? Who's Out?
Graded **/aud* Total Enrollment 10
Professor(s): Elaine Pagels
1:30pm – 4:20pm TH Seminar

Together we explore basic primary sources (especially Greek, some Latin or Coptic, reading mostly, for our purposes, in translation) of Ancient Mediterranean Religion c.100-400 CE, investigating how the early Jesus movement originated from and interacted with Jewish sources, writers and teachers, as well as classical ones, while spreading throughout the Roman empire, and how, in the fourth century, this unlikely movement morphed into "catholic church" endorsed by Roman imperial authority.

REL 505: Studies in the Religions of the Americas: African American Religious History
Graded no *aud* Total Enrollment 10
Professor(s): Judith Weisenfeld
1:30pm – 4:20pm T Seminar

This course provides a broad introduction to major themes in and literature exploring African American religious history. We consider the stakes of defining African American religions, both historically and in scholarship; the role of African American religions in politics, economics, education, and culture; transnational engagements in African American religious history; religious diversity; and gender and sexuality in African American religions.

REL 509 / NES 510 / GSS 509: Studies in the History of Islam: Legal Categories and Social Realities
Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 10
Professor(s): Shaun Marmon
10:00am – 12:50pm T Seminar

This course explores the relationship or dissonance between various legal categories or discourses and social practice in Medieval Muslim societies. Topics covered include: crime and punishment, gender, childhood, slavery, disease, and death. Readings include primary texts, documents and inscriptions, in Arabic and in translation. We also make use of the resources of Rare Books and Special Collections.

REL 513: Studies in Ancient Judaism: Otherworldly Journeys in Ancient Jewish and Christian Literature
Graded **/aud* Total Enrollment 10
Professor(s): Martha Himmelfarb
1:30pm – 4:20pm W Seminar

This course treats ancient Jewish and Christian texts involving ascent to heaven, tours of hell, and journeys to hidden places on earth, from the Book of the Watchers in the Hellenistic era to the hekhalot texts in the early Islamic era. We consider the contexts in which the texts were composed, their possible relations to each other, and their significance for beliefs about the relationship between humanity and the divine sphere, reward and punishment after death, and cosmology. Among the texts to be studied are Aramaic Levi, the Testament of Levi, Revelation, 2 Enoch, 3 Baruch, the Apocalypse of Peter, and the Apocalypse of Paul.

REL 517: Religion and Public Life

Graded P/D/F only

Professor(s): Jonathan Gold

12:00pm – 1:20pm T

Presentation and critical discussion of research in progress by participants. Focuses on the use of social scientific methods in the study of religion and on applications of recently published work about religion and society. Includes an emphasis on religion and public policy in the U. S. and in comparative perspective.

REL 518: Religion and Critical Thought Workshop

Graded */*aud* Total Enrollment 15

Professor(s): Leora Batnitzky

10:00am – 11:30pm TH

A weekly, year-long workshop focused on current student and faculty research in religion and critical thought, designed primarily for graduate students working on dissertations and general examination essays on the philosophy of religion, religious ethics, and the role of religion in politics. Note: REL 518 (fall) and REL 519 (spring) constitute this year-long workshop. In order to receive credit and/or a grade, students must take the course both semesters.

REL 521: Religion and Culture Workshop

Graded */*aud* Total Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Jenny Wiley Legath

12:00pm – 1:20pm M

A weekly, year-long workshop devoted to the critical discussion of research in progress in the ethnographic, historical, and normative study of religion and culture. Designed for dissertation writers receiving fellowships from the Center for the Study of Religion and post-doctoral fellows. Note: REL 521 (fall) and REL 522 (spring) constitute this year-long workshop. In order to receive credit and/or a grade, students must take the course both semesters.

REL 523: Religion in the Americas Workshop

Graded */*aud* Total Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Seth Perry

3:00pm – 4:20pm TH

A weekly, year-long workshop focused on the current research of visiting presenters, current students, and faculty in American religious history. The workshop is designed primarily for Ph.D. students in the field, but is open as well to undergraduate concentrators with a strong background in the study of American religion and culture. Note: REL 523 (fall) and REL 524 (spring) constitute this year-long workshop. In order to receive credit and/or a grade, students must take the course both semesters.

REL 525: Religions of Late Antiquity Workshop

Graded */*aud* Total Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Moulie Vidas

12:00 pm - 01:30 pm T

A weekly, year-long workshop providing students in the Religions of Late Antiquity with the opportunity to present their current research for discussion. Note: REL 525 (fall) and REL 526 (spring) constitute this year-long workshop. In order to receive credit and/or a grade, students must take the course both semesters.

REL 527: Asian Religions Workshop

Graded */*aud* Total Enrollment 15

Professor(s): Stephen Teiser

7:30pm – 9:00pm M

A weekly workshop focused on disciplinary questions, professional development, and presentation and discussion of work in progress. Required for all students, pre-generals and post-generals, in Asian Religions. Open to other students with permission of the instructor. REL 527 (fall) and REL 528 (spring) constitute this year-long workshop. Students must complete both semesters to receive credit.

REL 529: Workshop in Islamic Studies

Graded */*aud* Total Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Shaun Marmon

TH 4:30pm – 6:00pm

A weekly year-long Religion workshop focusing on the research and writing of graduate students, faculty, and visitors in Islamic Studies. This workshop provides a forum for presentation of works in progress: drafts of dissertation chapters, dissertation proposals, seminar papers, conference papers, articles and book chapters. All Islamic Studies graduate students are encouraged to participate as presenters and as commentators. The workshop fosters collegiality and professional development. Note: REL 529 (fall) and REL 530 (spring) constitute this year-long workshop. Students must take the course both semesters to receive credit/grade.

CANCELLED!! REL 533 / EAS 535: Readings in Japanese Religions: Popular Buddhism in Premodern Japan

Graded */*aud* Total Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Bryan Lowe

1:30 pm - 04:20 pm Th

This seminar explores the issue of popular or folk Buddhism (minshu Bukkyo) in premodern Japan. We read primary sources and secondary scholarship on topics such as mountain practice, pilgrimage, sacred space, and social organizations to better understand the role of Buddhism in the lives of everyday people in premodern Japan. Significant time is spent on translation, as well as research methods and tools necessary for the study of premodern Japanese Buddhism. Readings require basic familiarity with at least one of the following languages: classical Chinese, kanbun, or classical Japanese.

Cross-Listed Courses:

AAS 358 / REL 379 / GSS 359: Sexuality and Religion in America

Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 20

Professor(s): Wallace Best

01:30 pm - 04:20 pm W

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Religion in the Americas

Sexuality has long been a contested and contentious issue within American religions, yet only recently have scholars begun to address it forthrightly. This course will explore the emerging literature on sexuality and religion as a way to understand how approaches to sex and sexuality within "sacred spaces" have shaped private behavior and public opinion. We will give particular attention to African American religious traditions and American evangelicalism and Catholicism more broadly for the way they have been especially influential in framing (and inhibiting) sexual discourse and practices in the United States.

NES 240 / REL 240: Muslims and the Qur'an

Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 80

Professor(s): Muhammad Zaman

10:00am - 10:50am MW

Area of Study Stream 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.

NES 379 / JDS 378 / GSS 380 / REL 376: Marriage and Monotheism: Men, Women, and God in Near Eastern Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 20

Professor(s): Eve Krakowski

11:00 am - 12:20 pm T Th

Area of Study Stream 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). The decline of marriage in recent decades is often tied to the decline of religion. But why should marriage, a contractual relationship centered on sex and property, be seen as a religious practice? This seminar considers the varied and surprising ways in which the great monotheistic traditions of the Near East came to connect certain forms of human marriage - or their rejection- to divine devotion, and considers how marriage worked in societies shaped by these traditions. Spanning biblical Israel to the medieval Islamic world, this course will introduce you to the historical study of Near Eastern religions and to the field of family history.

SAS 309 / REL 300: Hinduism: Visions and Ideas

Graded na, npdf Total Enrollment 20

Professor(s): Nataliya Yanchevskaya

01:30 pm - 02:50 pm T Th

Area of Study Stream 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). Through texts, visual art, observation of ritual practices we will take a close look at Hinduism. We will explore its major ideas, myths, rituals, narratives, its predecessors and opponents at different historical stages. At every stage we will observe how the insiders understood their relationship with the world, their moral and religious duties, and the right organization of society. We will discuss social, philosophical, and ideological tensions within Hinduism and its dialog with outsiders. We will explore the Indus Valley civilization, the Vedas, early and classical Hinduism, and different systems of Hindu philosophy.

SAS 345 / REL 345: Islam in South Asia through Literature and Film

Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 30

Professor(s): Sadaf Jaffer

1:30 pm - 02:50 pm M W

Area of Study Stream 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 course is a survey of Islam in the Indian subcontinent. We begin with the earliest Muslim descriptions of India and the rise of Persian poetry to understand how Muslims negotiated life at the frontiers of the Islamic world. Next, we trace patterns of patronage and production at the Mughal court and the development of Urdu as a vehicle of literary composition including a discussion of the Progressive Writer's Movement and the "Muslim Social"

genre of Hindi cinema. The course concludes with an examination of contemporary novels from Bangladesh and Pakistan. Students will gain an informed perspective on Islam beyond the headlines.

PHI 513 / REL 550: Topics in Recent and Contemporary Philosophy: Almost Everything Concerning the Concrete Part of Reality

Graded **/aud* Total Enrollment 25

Professor(s): Mark Johnston

01:30 pm - 04:20 pm Th

This course is part of a 2-semester sequence co-taught with Gideon Rosen which aims to provide a graduate-level overview of contemporary analytic ontology. Rosen leads the spring semester course "Almost Everything Concerning the Abstract Part of Reality." After taking both courses, a graduate student may expect to have a level understanding of analytic ontology which would provide the basis for original further research in the area.

- HUM 315/ART309/REL307
- ART 520/NES554/REL 544
- AAS 505/REL 505

PHI 535/CHV 535/REL 537: Philosophy of Mind: Conversable Minds

Graded **/aud* Total Enrollment 25

Professor(s): Sam Berstler and Philip Pettit

3:30pm – 6:20pm T

The idea to be explored is that there are many distinctively human capacities that the ability to speak does not presuppose but that the practice of conversing does, mostly, catalyze. These capacities may include the capacity to make up our minds, to reason and follow rules, to make conscious perceptual judgments, to make mutual commitments, and to hold and be held responsible.

For more detailed information on each course, please visit:

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