

**RELIGION DEPARTMENT
2021 – 2022 FALL
COURSE OFFERINGS**

Undergraduate Program

REL 100: Religion and the Public Conversation
(CDSA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 30
Professor(s): Jenny Wiley Legath
1:30pm – 2:50pm TTH Class

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

This course introduces students to the interdisciplinary study of religion and its engagement with society and culture. We will identify where and how religion operates in the public conversation, especially in, but not limited to, the United States. Classes will be focused around topics that intersect with religion in the public conversation such as place, media, race, body, art, and ethics. Students will develop recognition of the different ways people use religion to construct meaning, boundaries, and identity and will demonstrate the ability to engage in informed dialogue around issues of religion.

REL 236/NES 236: Introduction to Islam
(SA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment No Limit
Professor(s): Rebecca Faulkner
11:00am – 11:50am TTH Lecture/Precept

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Islam

This course is an introduction to Islam survey for undergraduates. The course is framed in terms of Muslims' self-understanding and includes pre-modern, modern, and contemporary sources. It begins in pre-Islamic Arabia and ends with contemporary material. We will use a variety of media, including art, music, and film to emphasize the varieties of Muslim experience and explore the contestations and adaptations of what it means to be Muslim.

REL 246/JDS246: 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
10:00am – 10:50am THF Lecture/Precept

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 251/HLS 251/MED 251: The New Testament and Christian Origins
(HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment No Limit
Professor(s): Jonathan Henry
10:00am – 10:50am MW Lecture/Precept

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean

How did Jesus' earliest followers interpret his life and death? What were secret initiation rites and love feast gatherings about? How did women participate in leadership? How did the Roman government react to this movement and why did Jesus' followers suffer martyrdom? How did early Christians think about the end of the world, and what did they do when it did not happen? This course is an introduction to the Jesus movement in the context of the Roman Empire and early Judaism. We examine texts in the New Testament (the Christian Bible) and other relevant sources, such as lost gospels, Dead Sea scrolls, and aspects of material culture.

REL 254: Modern Evangelicalism in the United States
(HA) No Audit Total Course Enrollment No Limit
Professor(s): Wallace Best
11:00am – 11:50am MW Lecture Precept

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Religion in America

This course will trace the history of American Evangelicalism from its roots in the early nineteenth century to rise of the Religious Right in the 1980s and birth of "right wing politics" of the twenty-first century. We will note key figures, events, and institutional expressions of evangelicalism, as well as its large impact on American politics and popular culture.

REL 263: Religion and its Modern Critics
(EC) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment No Limit
Professor(s): Gabriel Citron
3:30pm – 4:20pm MW Lecture/Precept

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Critical Thought
Satisfies Critical Approaches (CA) Requirement for Majors

The most penetrating critiques of Christianity have the power to unsettle our sense of self and disrupt our most natural ways of being - for Christians and non-Christians alike. For these critiques don't focus on attacking religious beliefs alone; rather, they target many of the deepest values, attitudes, and tendencies at the core of Christianity and Christian-molded cultures, and perhaps even at the core of our humanity. This course explores some of the key 19th and 20th century critiques of Christianity. It will involve opening ourselves up to the self-reckoning demanded by the likes of Kierkegaard, Emerson, Nietzsche, Baldwin, and Butler.

REL 352: Who Was or Is Jesus?
(HA) No Audit Total Course Enrollment No Limit
Professor(s): Elaine Pagels
1:30pm – 4:20pm M Seminar

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean

Who Was - or is - Jesus In History, Art, Film, Music, Politics? What do we actually know about Jesus of Nazareth? We start by looking at the earliest known sources-accounts in the New Testament; what Jewish, Roman, Greek contemporaries said of him, and also ancient gospels not in the NT (like the Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Mary Magdalene). Next, we'll explore an amazing range of interpretations of Jesus in art, poetry, music, theology, and politics, throughout 2000 years to the present, including newly emerging views.

REL 357/HIS 310: Religion in Colonial America and the New Nation
(HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment No Limit
Professor(s): Seth Perry
11:00am – 11:50am TTH Lecture/Precept

Area of Study Stream Requirement: Religion in America

This class covers the history of religion in America from European contact through the 1840s or so. Emphasis will be on primary readings, organized chronologically around a few recurrent themes: contact and exchange; authority and dissent; the relationship between theological reasoning and everyday life. We'll pay particular attention to changing conceptions of religion's role in social organization and competing religious views of human nature over time.

REL 373/AAS 320: Studies in Religion: Spirit Possession in Caribbean Religions
(SA) Graded na, npdf Total Course Enrollment 15
Professor(s): Eziaku Nwokocho
1:30pm – 4:20pm W Seminar

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

This course is designed to explore the possession experiences in Caribbean Religions. Through historical, ethnographic, autobiographical, literary and visual texts this course examines complex, gendered practices within the possession process, the vibrant spiritual energy that sustains communal connections during religious ceremonies, and the transnational imaginations that animate Caribbean religious practices in the Americas. Special attention will be given to Santeria, Candomble, Vodou, Myal, Palo Monte, and Revival Zion in the Americas.

REL394/CHV 394: Environmental Ethics and Modern Religious Thought
(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: Critical Thought

The current ecological crisis is often attributed to the effects of religion, especially Christianity. Focusing primarily on Christian theology and ethics (with some significant attention to Jewish thought as well), this course surveys and critically analyzes the emergence of religious discourses around environmental and animal ethics. The first half of the course considers recent works in "ecothology." The second half of the course turns to particular ethical topics: climate change, environmental racism, biodiversity conservation, animal welfare, and food.

REL 399: Junior Colloquium
Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 25
Professor(s): Seth Perry
11:00am – 12:20pm WF Class

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 501: Religion and the Tradition of Social Theory

Graded **/aud* Total Enrollment 20

Professor(s): Stephen Teiser

10:00am – 12:50pm F Seminar

A critical introduction to developments in social theory that have influenced the academic study of religion, including the classic contributions of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber as well as more recent debates in anthropology and cultural theory. Required of, and designed for, first- and second-year graduate students in religion; others must receive the instructor's permission to enroll.

REL 505: Studies in Religion in America: Religion in Modern American History and Culture

Graded **/aud* Total Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Judith Weisenfeld

1:30pm – 4:20pm W Seminar

This course provides a broad introduction to major themes in and recent literature exploring the history of religion in modern American culture. Topics may include religion, politics, and law; empire, migration, and immigration; religious diversity; race and ethnicity; gender and sexuality; theological conflicts and transformations.

REL 507: Studies in Religion and Philosophy: Modern Jewish Philosophy and Theology

Graded **/aud* Total Enrollment 15

Professor(s): Leora Batnitzky

1:30pm – 4:20pm M Seminar

This course focuses on four major modern Jewish philosophers: Hermann Cohen, Franz Rosenzweig, Leo Strauss, and Emmanuel Levinas, with particular attention to their relations to Kant and Heidegger. Among the topics considered are: What is the relation between Jewish philosophy, theology, and thought? Can or ought we speak of a canon of modern Jewish philosophy? What constitutes the borders or limits of a tradition of thinking? What is the relation between historical and conceptual analysis in thinking about Jewish philosophy within the history of philosophy?

REL 513: Studies in Ancient Judaism: Introduction to Judaism in the Greco-Roman World

Graded **/aud* Total Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Martha Himmelfarb

1:30pm – 4:20pm TH Seminar

The goal of this course is to introduce a significant part of the literature of the Jews of Palestine and Egypt in the period from Alexander to the destruction of the Second Temple.

REL 517: Religion and Public Life

Graded **/aud* Total Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Jonathan Gold

12:00pm – 1:20pm T Seminar

Presentation and critical discussion of research in progress by participants, dealing with the social scientific study of religion, religion and public policy, and religion and contemporary social issues. Note: REL 517 (fall) and REL 517 (spring) constitute this year-long workshop. In order to receive credit and/or a grade, students must take the course both semesters.

REL 518: Religion and Critical Thought Workshop

Graded **/aud* Total Enrollment 15

Professor(s): Leora Batnitzky

9:00am – 10:30am TH Seminar

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 Seminar

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 America Workshop

Graded */aud Total Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Judith Weisenfeld

3:00pm – 4:20pm TH Seminar

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): Elaine Pagels

12:00pm – 1:20pm T Seminar

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 531: Readings in Chinese Religions: Dunhuang Manuscripts & Chinese Buddhism

Graded */aud Total Enrollment 12

Professor(s): Stephen Teiser

1:30pm – 4:20pm W Seminar

Close reading of Chinese Buddhist texts surviving among the Dunhuang manuscripts. Introduction to the Dunhuang corpus, paleography, codicology, & research tools. Survey of different genres: canonical sutras & commentaries, indigenous sutras, miracle tales, sectarian literature, ritual handbooks, documents of lay congregations, & performance literature (sutra lectures, transformation texts, etc.).

REL 536: Studies in Indian Religions: Up to 1300

Graded */aud Total Enrollment 15

Professor(s): Jonathan Gold

1:30pm – 4:20pm TH Seminar

This course is a survey of major text traditions in Indian religions, with an emphasis on the historical/cultural framework against which to read the development of Buddhist traditions. Major topics addressed are: "Orientalism" & "Hinduism"; Vedas & Upanisads; Early Buddhism; Dharmasastras & Mahabharata; Mahayana Buddhism; and Tantra & Vajrayana.

Cross-Listed Courses:

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

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

Professor(s): Sadaf Jaffer

3:00pm – 4:20pm TTH 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.

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.

HIS 423/AFS 424/REL 423: The History of Christianity in Africa: From St. Mark to Desmond Tutu

(HA) Graded No Pass/D/Fail Total Course Enrollment 12

Professor(s): Jacob Dlamini and Jack Tannous

1:30pm – 4:20pm T Seminar

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.

This course will trace the history of Christianity in Africa from the first to twentieth centuries. We will focus on issues as diverse as the importance of Christians from Africa in the development of central Christian doctrines and institutions, the medieval Christian-Muslim encounter, the modern missionary movement, colonization and decolonization, the role of the church in freedom struggles, and more. We will ask the questions: how does studying the history of Christianity in Africa de-center Europe and the European experience in the history of Christianity? And: What would a global history of Christianity, pre-modern and modern, look like?

For more detailed information on each course, please visit:
<http://registrar.princeton.edu/course-offerings/>