

**RELIGION DEPARTMENT  
2020 - 2021 SPRING  
COURSE OFFERINGS**

**Undergraduate Program**

JDS 202/REL 202: Great Books of the Jewish Tradition  
(HA) Graded no audit Total Course Enrollment 20  
Professor(s) Martha Himmelfarb  
11:00am – 12:20pm MW Class

**Area of Study Stream 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 the Hebrew Bible, Midrash, Talmud, the Passover Haggadah, medieval Bible commentaries (Rashi, Nahmanides), Maimonides's Mishnah Torah (code of Jewish Law), and the Zohar, the central work of Kabbalah (medieval Jewish mysticism). We will pay particular attention to the role of interpretation in forming Jewish tradition.

REL 205: An introduction to Indian Philosophy and Religion  
(ECEM) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment no limit  
Professor(s): Katie Javanaud

10:00am – 10:50am TTH Lecture/Precept **Area  
of Study Stream Requirement: Religions of Asia**

This course introduces some of India's most important traditions, covering topics in metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics from a non-Western philosophical perspective. We will examine some of India's most significant contributions to debates on personal identity, free will, spiritual liberation, and the nature of truth itself. We will also explore the implications of religious doctrines for contemporary moral philosophy. For example, how might belief in inter-dependence shape attitudes towards the environment? And what explains the misogyny of some Indian philosophers given their commitment to non-violence and inclusivity?

REL 214/CHV 215: Religion, Ethics and Animals  
(EM) Graded na Course Enrollment no limit  
Professor(s): Andrew Chignell and Shaun Marmon  
11:00am – 11:50am MW Lecture/Precept

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

How have religious traditions addressed the relationship between human and non-human animals, and between non-human animals and the divine? What is the connection between representations of dominion over animals in religious texts, and the subjugation of women, the "racial" other, and marginalized peoples? Our focus will be on the ways in which non-human animals, real or imagined, have figured in the religious and moral traditions, as well as the cultural practices, of the Middle East and the west, from ancient times to the present. Course includes guest speakers and engagement with animal welfare groups that focus on religion/animal welfare.

REL 226/EAS 226: The Religions of China  
(EM) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment no limit  
Professor(s): Stephen Teiser  
10:00am – 10:50am MW Lecture/Precept

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Asia**

A thematic introduction to Chinese religion, ranging from ancient to contemporary. The first half focuses on classics of Chinese thought (Book of Changes, Analects of Confucius, Daoist classics, etc.). The second half utilizes journalism, ethnography, and history to consider topics such as contemporary China, state control of religion, cosmology, gods and saints, divination, gender, and ritual.

REL 230/JDS 230: Who wrote the Bible  
(HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 20  
Professor(s): Madadh Richey  
1:30pm – 2:50pm TTH Class

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean**

The Hebrew Bible (Christian "Old Testament") is a collection of diverse books that is central to worldwide social, political, and religious experience. Despite this centrality, there are many mysteries and misconceptions about how the Bible came into being and what it really says. In this class, we will explore the Bible's historical context and ancient meaning, with a focus on matters of composition and early reception. Moving beyond the project of identifying texts with authors, we will use biblical and ancient non-biblical sources to situate biblical authors with respect to institutions, class, gender, and more.

REL 251 /HLS 251/MED 251: Christianity in the Roman Empire: Secret Rituals, Mystery Cults, and Apocalyptic Prophets  
(HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment no limit

Professor(s): Matthew Larsen

11:00 am - 11:50 am 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.

HUM 290/REL 282: Jesus and Buddha

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

Professor(s): Jonathan Gold and Elaine Pagels

12:30pm - 12:20pm MW Lecture/Precept

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

This course invites us to compare the stories, teachings, lives, deaths, and communities associated with Jesus and Buddha. While respecting each tradition's unique and distinctive sources, cultures, ideas and legacies, it invites us to deepen our understanding of each tradition by looking through the lens of the other. Course readings include accounts of the lives of Jesus and Buddha, what each taught about how to live and create society, and how they articulate the meaning of life and death, suffering and salvation.

REL 311: Religious Existentialism

(EC) Graded na Course Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Leora Batnitzky

1:30 pm - 04:20 pm W Seminar

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Critical Thought**  
**Satisfies Critical Approaches (CA) requirement for majors**

An in-depth study of the existentialist philosophies of, among others, Søren Kierkegaard, Simone Weil, Martin Heidegger, Hans Jonas, and Emmanuel Levinas. Most broadly, we will consider arguments about the relations between philosophy and existence, reason and revelation, divine law and love, religion, ethics and politics, and Judaism and Christianity. More particularly, we will focus on arguments about the meanings of different affective and cognitive states such as anxiety, boredom, and enjoyment as well as about historical and individual suffering and trauma.

REL 320: Poetry and Transcendence in some Western Christian Mystical Theologies

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

Professor(s): Denys Turner

1:30 pm - 04:20 pm T Seminar

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Critical Thought**

The "mystical" as understood in the Western Christian traditions refers to experience of the divine pressing on the limits of language, and poetry is often its natural expression. This course examines some poetic expressions of the mystical from the Hebrew Song of Songs through Dante, John of the Cross, George Herbert, to Hopkins, and TS Eliot.

REL 323: Japanese Mythology

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

Professor(s): Bryan Lowe

1:30 pm - 02:50 pm MW Class

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Religions of Asia**

Myths are powerful. The stories we will read were first recorded around 1,300 years ago and continue to be told in the present day. We will ask why people -- both in Japan and humans more generally -- tell these types of tales. To answer this question, we will explore comparative approaches that search for universal patterns, myths as "ideology in narrative form" used as tools of legitimization, and appropriation of myths for new purposes in original contexts including feminist critiques.

REL 333/NES 333: Interpreting the Qur'an: Text, Context, and Materiality

(EC) Graded na Course Enrollment 20

Professor(s): Tehseen Thaver

1:30 pm - 02:50 pm TTH Class

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Islam**

**Satisfies Critical Approaches (CA) requirement for majors**

This course will involve a close reading of the Qur'anic text and its interpretive traditions. The course will also go beyond approaching scripture as a bounded, collected, literary text, by examining the ritual, experiential and material encounters between the Qur'an and Muslim communities. How does the Qur'an operate within societies? What are its multiple functions? How are the controversial verses often associated with the Qur'an interpreted? Through a critical engagement with categories like "scripture," and "interpretation" students will be introduced to larger debates on hermeneutics and material culture within the study of religion.

REL 342/JDS 343: Apocalypse: The End of the World and the Secrets of Heaven in Ancient Judaism and Christianity  
(HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 20  
Professor(s): Martha Himmelfarb  
3:00 pm - 04:20 pm MW Class

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean**

This course studies the rich corpus of revelations composed by ancient Jews and Christians about the end of the world, the fate of souls after death, the secrets of the cosmos, and God's heavenly abode, placing them in their historical contexts and considering them in relation to the development of Judaism and Christianity from the Hebrew Bible through late antiquity. Among the works to be considered are Enoch (an anthology of ancient Jewish apocalypses about the antediluvian patriarch), Daniel (Hebrew Bible), Revelation (New Testament), and Ezra (Apocrypha).

REL 350/CLA 352/ENG 442/HIS 353: God, Satan, Goddesses, and Monsters: How Their Stories Play in Art, Culture, and Politics  
(CDEC) Graded na Course Enrollment 15  
Professor(s): Elaine Pagels  
1:30pm – 4:20pm TH Seminar

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean**

Each week we'll take up a major theme--creation, the problem of evil; what's human/inhuman/ divine; apocalypse--and explore how their stories, embedded in western culture, have been interpreted for thousands of years--so far! Starting with creation stories from Babylon, Israel, Egypt and Greece, we'll consider how some such stories still shape an amazing range of cultural attitudes toward controversial issues that include sexuality, "the nature of nature," politics, and questions of meaning.

REL 377/AAS 376/AMS 378: Race and Religion in America  
(CDSA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 15  
Professor(s) Judith Weisenfeld  
1:30pm – 4:20pm T Seminar

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Religions in the Americas**

In this seminar we examine the tangled and shifting relationship between religion and race in American history. In doing so, we explore a broad landscape of racial construction, identity, and experience and consider such topics as American interpretations of race in the Bible, religion and racial slavery, race and missions, religion, race, and science, popular culture representations of racialized religion, and religiously-grounded resistance to racial hierarchy.

REL 380: The American Sermon  
(HA) Graded na Course Enrollment 15  
Professor(s): Wallace Best  
1:30pm – 4:20pm M Seminar

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Religions in the Americas**

The sermon is one of the most unique contributions to the American literary and oral tradition. This course examines sermonic texts and recordings from the late 18th century to the present. We will explore written and recorded homilies, placing both sermons and sermonizers in historical context. In this way we want to discover not only the theological perspectives contained in the sermons but also the cultural, social, economic, and political situations in the U.S. that helped shape them. Rather than a concern for the "practice" of preaching, our course focuses on sermons as literature and historical narratives.

**Cross-Listed Courses:**

AAS 365/REL 362: Migration and the Literary Imagination  
(LA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 20  
Professor(s): Wallace Best  
7:30pm – 10:20pm W Seminar

**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).**

This course will explore the various meanings of The Great Migration and mobility found in 20th century African American literature. Through careful historical and literary analysis, we will examine the significant impact migration has had on African American writers and the ways it has framed their literary representations of modern Black life.

AMS 351/GSS 427/AAS 345/REL 393: Islam in/and America: Race, Religion, and Gender in the United States  
(CDSA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 12  
Professor(s): Staff  
11:00am – 12:20pm TTH Class

**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).**

What is American Islam and who are U.S. Muslims? This seminar employs lectures, discussions, and a diverse array of texts, including novels, scholarly works, films, arts, music, and much more, to respond to this question, revealing how a focus on Islam and Muslims in the U.S. produces critical counter-narratives of race, religion, and gender in the United States from the colonial era to the present.

ART 310/HLS 354/MED 307/REL 305: The Icon  
(LA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 12  
Professor(s): Justin Willson  
11:00am – 12:20pm TTH Class

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 examine the history, function, theory and meaning of the icon. We will also examine the icon's influence upon the discourses of Modernism. A more practical aspect of this class is that participants in the course will work with the Princeton University Art Museum's icon collection and with its collection of icon painter's preparatory drawings. The class will provide participants with a broad grounding in questions pertaining to the icon

CHV 410/REL 403/PHI 410: Perfect Being Theology: Problems and Prospects  
(EM) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 20  
Professor(s): Daniel Rubio  
1:30pm – 4:20pm T Seminar

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).

This course will be a critical examination of a method known as Perfect Being Theology. Most associated with Anselm of Canterbury, Perfect Being Theology attempts to determine the attributes of a divine being from the supposition of its absolute perfection. Common in all of the Abrahamic faiths, it is increasingly popular among philosophers of religion. The course asks questions: what kinds of inference do practitioners of perfect being theology make? What presuppositions underlie the method, and do they face challenges from the facts of religious diversity? Are there alternative theological methods that have been overlooked or ignored?

EGR 219/ENT 219/REL 219: Business Ethics: Succeeding without Selling Your Soul  
(EM) Graded no Audit Total Course Enrollment 30  
Professor(s): David Miller  
1:30pm – 2:50pm W Lecture/Precept

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).

The course objective is to equip future leaders to successfully identify and navigate ethical dilemmas in their careers. The course integrates theory and practice. Students will learn basic ethical theories and develop practical tools for personal and applied ethics in business, entrepreneurial, and broader marketplace contexts. The course focuses on and explores the role of religion and spirituality as a resource for ethical formation, frameworks, and decision-making. The class will explore weekly contemporary case studies, wider trends on faith and work, and include guest CEO visitors from different industry sectors and traditions.

NES 339/REL 339: Introduction to Islamic Theology  
(HA) Graded PDF only Total Course Enrollment 12  
Professor(s) Hossein Modarressi  
1:30pm – 4:20pm M Seminar

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).

This course is a general survey of the main principles of Islamic doctrine. It focuses on the Muslim theological discourse on the concepts of God and His attributes, man and nature, the world to come, revelation and prophethood, diversity of religions, and the possibility and actuality of miracles.

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

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