

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

**Undergraduate Program**

REL 226: The Religions of China  
(EM) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment no limit  
Professor(s): Stephen Teiser  
1:30pm – 2:20pm MW Lecture/Precept

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Religions of 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 252/CLA 252/HLS 252: Jesus: How Christianity Began  
(EC) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment no limit  
Professor(s): Elaine Pagels  
12:30pm – 1:20pm MW Lecture Precept

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Ancient Judaism, Christianity, and Greek and Roman Religions**

Who was Jesus of Nazareth, and how do we know about him? Why did some interpretations of truth -- and his message -- win out over others? How have these particular ways of thinking influenced western culture, shaping our views of politics, race and ethnicity, sexuality and gender, civil and human rights even now? To answer questions like these, we'll investigate the earliest gospels, letters, Jewish and Roman sources, prison diaries and martyr accounts -- as well as how artists, filmmakers, musicians and theologians interpret them. Regardless of religious background, or none, you will learn a lot, and be able to contribute.

REL 260: Eliminating Suffering: Netflix, Drugs, and Spiritual Practice  
(EM) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 15  
Professor(s): Gabriel Citron  
1:30pm – 4:20pm W Seminar

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Philosophical and Ethical Approaches to Religion**

We suffer. Sometimes more, sometimes less - but we all suffer, and often profoundly. What is it about the human condition that seems to make suffering inevitable? What can we do to deal with it? One approach is to try to change the external conditions causing the trouble. A very different approach sees the most important change as being within ourselves. Can we eliminate - or at least assuage - our suffering by changing the way we direct our attention (Netflix...), by changing the way we experience (drugs...), or by changing our manner of desiring (spiritual practices...)? We will approach these questions practically and theoretically.

REL 271: Cult' Controversies in America  
(HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 70  
Professor(s): Judith Weisenfeld  
11:00am – 11:50am MW Lecture/Precept

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Religion in America**

In this course we examine a variety of new religious movements that tested the boundaries of acceptable religion at various moments in American history. We pay particular attention to government and media constructions of the religious mainstream and margin, to the politics of labels such as "cult" and "sect," to race, gender, and sexuality within new religions, and to the role of American law in constructing categories and shaping religious expressions. We also consider what draws people to new religions and examine the distinctive beliefs, practices, and social organizations of groups labeled by outsiders as "cults."

REL 281: Buddhist Philosophy  
(EM) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment no limit  
Professor(s): Jonathan Gold  
11:00am -11:50am TTH Lecture/Precept

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

An introduction to the Indian Buddhist philosophical tradition from the time of the Buddha until its decline (c. 400 B.C.E - 1200 C.E.). Topics include Buddhism's view of the world, the person, and the path to nirvana; equanimity, compassion and meditation as core elements in Buddhist ethics; early Buddhist metaphysics; the doctrine of "emptiness" and its various interpretations in the Great Vehicle schools; Buddhist epistemology and philosophy of language; and modern attempts to apply Buddhist philosophy to contemporary philosophical issues.

REL 303/CHV 305: God and Humanity in Catholic Thought  
(EM) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 30  
Professor(s): Daniel Rubio  
11:00am – 12:20pm MW Class

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Philosophical and Ethical Approaches to Religion**

This course will examine thought about the relationship between God and humanity in Roman Catholic thought from the Spanish world. We will focus on four figures, two from the sixteenth century and two from the 20th: St. Theresa of Avila, an important mystic whose influence on modern thought has only recently been recognized by contemporary historians of philosophy; Francisco Suarez, one of the foremost late scholastic philosophers; Jon Sobrino, one of the foremost South American liberation theologians; and Gustavo Gutiérrez, another liberation theologian. All of these thinkers fall within the same intellectual tradition, but offer interesting and diverse ways of thinking about what God is, what humanity is, and what to say about one of the most salient issues in the relationship between God and humanity: the seeming divine indifference to the suffering of the innocent.

REL 307: Kierkegaard: Religion, Philosophy, and Existence  
(HA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 15  
Professor(s): Elizabeth Li  
1:30pm – 4:20pm TH Seminar

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Philosophical and Ethical Approaches to Religion**

This course is an in-depth examination of the authorship of Søren Kierkegaard and his call for an existential revision of religious, theological, and philosophical inquiry. With focus on the dynamic, but complex relation between religion and philosophy in his writings, we will consider topics such as the relationship of ethics and religion; paradox and the limits of philosophy; the task of selfhood; faith and reason; subjective vs. objective thought; the concept of existence; the religious individual in society and culture; neighbour love; freedom, sin, and despair, and critique of state religion.

REL 347: Religion and Law  
(EM) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 30  
Professor(s): Leora Batnitzky  
3:00pm – 4:20pm MW Seminar

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Philosophical and Ethical Approaches to Religion**

**Satisfies Critical Approaches (CA) Requirement for Majors**

A critical examination of the relation between concepts of "religion" and "law," as they figure in modern Christian and Jewish thought, modern legal theory and contemporary debates about religious freedom. If religion gives law its spirit, and law gives religion its structure, then what is their practical relation in both religious and secular life? This course explores the relation between Jewish and Christian conceptions of law, both in their ancient and modern contexts, and the relation between traditional religious and modern secular views of law in debates about the modern nation state.

REL 393: Muslim America  
(SA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 30  
Professor(s): Rebecca Faulkner  
11:00am – 12:20pm TTH Class

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Islam**

This course is a seminar for undergraduates. The course begins with the intertwined history of Muslims in America and America itself. We will then apply that foundation to topics in contemporary Muslim American life—for example, authority in mosques, fashion and coolness, and representation in movies. Students will encounter primary as well as secondary sources. For example, students will read an 1831 autobiography of an enslaved Muslim named Omar ibn Said and analyze a Chicago-based Ahmadi newspaper from the 1920s. We will use a range of media, including film and material culture, to emphasize the varieties of Muslim experience in America.

## **Graduate Program**

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

Graded *\*/aud* Total Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Seth Perry

1:30pm - 4:20pm T

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: Wittgenstein

Graded *\*/aud* Total Enrollment 15

Professor(s): Gabriel Citron

1:30pm - 4:20pm F

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 511/HLS 546: Studies in Greco-Roman Religions: Fashion, Footwear, and Faith

Graded *\*/aud* Total Enrollment 12

Professor(s): AnneMarie Luijendijk

1:30pm - 4:20pm W Seminar

This course introduces students to the tools of the discipline of papyrology. The two main components are 1. how to write history with ancient papyrus documents and 2. the material history of books (new philology). We work with a broad range of papyri, mainly in Greek, so strong knowledge of Greek is required.

REL 517: Religion and Public Life

Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Jonathan Gold

12:00pm - 1:20pm T

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 519: Religion and Critical Thought Workshop

Graded *\*/aud* Total Enrollment 15

Professor(s): Leora Batnitzky

9:00am - 10:30am W

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 522: Religion and Culture Workshop

Graded *\*/aud* Total Enrollment 10

Professor(s): Jenny 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 524: Religion in the Americas Workshop

Graded *\*/aud* Total Enrollment 15

Professor(s): Wallace Best

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. 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 526: Religions of Late Antiquity Workshop

Graded *\*/aud* Total Enrollment 15

Professor(s): Elaine Pagels

12:00pm - 1:30pm 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.

### **Cross-Listed Courses:**

AAS 318/REL 318/GSS 375: Black Women and Spiritual Narrative

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

Professor(s): Wallace Best

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Religion in America**

1:30pm – 4:20pm F Seminar

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 (& 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.

CLA 260/REL 245: Christianity and Classical Culture

(CEM) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 60

Professor(s): Emmanuel Bourbouhakis

3:00pm – 4:20pm TTH Lecture

Most often seen in opposition, Greco-Roman Classical culture and Christianity have a long history of reciprocal reliance. Neither would look as it does today without the other. Through readings and discussion of both Classical and Christian texts, as well as art and architecture, this course will inquire into the Classical roots of much Christian theology, ethics, cosmology, and values more broadly, while also considering the effect on Classics as a cultural cornerstone of societies beholden to these twin traditions.

COM 381/REL 385: Literature and Religion: Christianity in Korean and Korean-American Novels and Films

(CDLA) Graded A-F, P/D/F, Audit Total Course Enrollment 99

Professor(s): John Park

1:30pm – 2:50pm TTH Lecture

This course explores the role of American Christianity in canonical and popular Korean and Korean-American novels and films. While the references to Christianity in these novels and films serve to indicate the active presence of American Christian missionaries in 20th century Korea, we will pay attention to the ways in which the figures of American Christianity function in these narratives.

EGR 219/ENT 219/REL 219: Business Ethics: Succeeding without Selling Your Soul

(EM) Graded No audit Total Course Enrollment 100

Professor(s): David Miller

11:00am – 11:50am TTH Lecture/Precept

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.

JDS 202/REL 202: Great Books of the Jewish Tradition  
(HA) Graded No Audit Total Course Enrollment 20  
Professor(s): Ra'anan Boustan

**Area of Study Stream Requirement: Ancient Judaism, Christianity, and Greek and Roman Religions**

1:30pm – 2:50pm MW Class

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, the Midrash, the Talmud, the Passover Haggadah, Maimonides' Guide for the Perplexed, the Zohar, and Spinoza's Theological-Political Treatise. We will pay particular attention to the roles of reading and interpretation in forming the Jewish tradition.

JDS 313/REL 306: Pagans, Jews, and Christians in the Ancient World  
(CDHA) Graded No Audit Total Course Enrollment 20

Professor(s): Ra'anan Boustan

1:30pm – 4:20pm T Seminar

This course considers the social and cultural encounters between religious/ethnic groups in the ancient Mediterranean world. It aims to challenge the idea that these groups (for example, Greeks, Jews, Romans, Christians) had stable boundaries or that they spoke with a unified and authoritative voice. The dynamic and even fluid relationships among these groups had a deep impact on the nature of religious life during the formative period of Late Antiquity and beyond. The course will thus explore religious contact and conflict, proximity and separation, dialogue and prejudice—both ancient and modern.

NES 339/REL 339: Introduction to Islamic Theology

(HA) Graded No Audit Total Course Enrollment 12

Professor(s) Hossein Modarressi

1:30pm – 4:20pm M Seminar

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.

NES 532/REL 541: Medieval Judaism

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

Professor(s): Eve Krakowski

1:30pm – 4:20pm T

This seminar surveys recent trends in historiography about medieval Jews and Judaism. We will read and compare major works of scholarship written mainly during the last two decades that focus on medieval Jewish history in both Europe and the Middle East, from the 9th century to the 14th century. Special emphasis will be placed on works of social and cultural history that illuminate Jewish communal life and religious identity in varying historical contexts. All required readings are in English, but supplementary readings will be suggested for students with reading knowledge of Hebrew.

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

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