



UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES



FALL
2 0 2 2
COURSES

Religious Studies Faculty Teaching Fall 2022



Dexter Callender



Eziaku Nwokocha



Justin Ritzinger



Lacy Crocker Papadakis



Catherine Newell



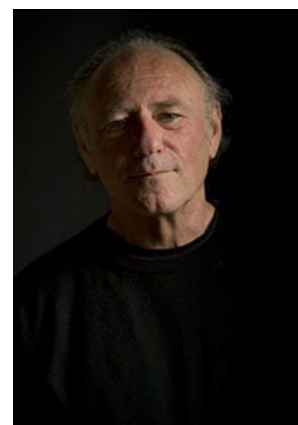
Daniel L. Pals



Robyn Walsh



Nebil Husayn



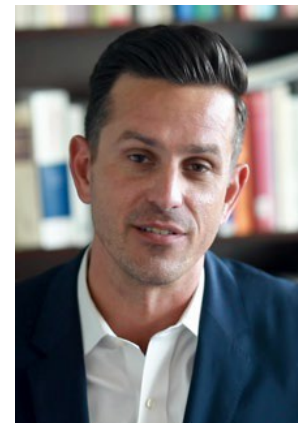
Henry A. Green



Paul Shockley



William Scott Green



Henry Maklakiewicz

REL 101: Introduction to Religion
Shockley | T, TR 3:30pm – 4:45pm

An overview of religious perspectives concerning ultimate reality, humankind, and the world, with special attention to major Asian and Abrahamic religions.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Introduction to Religion
- Asian Religions: South and East Asia
- Religion, Identity, and Pop Culture

REL 102: Problem of God: A skeptic's guide to religion and atheism
Husayn | M, W 5:05pm – 6:20pm

This course considers faith-based claims that invite skepticism and atheist critiques of the phenomenon of religion. This course approaches "the problem of God" from the angle of human experience, focusing on the various historical, social, and existential determinants of belief. Topics include: miracles, morality, violence, childhood indoctrination, globalized religion, humanism, the impact of secularization on religion, and an exploration of the historical, social, and theological images of creation and the divine.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Ethics in the Humanities: Religion, Philosophy, Politics
- Introduction to Religion
- Religion, Myth, and Interpretation

REL 111: Introduction to the Old Testament/Hebrew Scriptures

Callender | M, W, F 11:15am – 12:05pm

The Hebrew Scriptures – the Tanakh for Judaism and the Old Testament for Christianity – are among the most influential writings in the world today. This course examines these earliest biblical writings within the social and historical context of the world of ancient Israel and early Judaism. Special emphasis on questions of ethics, authority, and interpretation.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- A Survey of Jewish Literature
- Religion in the Ancient World
- Judaism, Christianity, Islam
- Introduction to Religion
- Religion, Myth, and Interpretation
- The Evolution of the Jewish People in their Homeland and the Diaspora

REL 121: Introduction to the New Testament

Walsh | T, TR 2:00pm – 3:15pm

What do we know about the beginnings of Christianity and how do we know it? This course is designed to introduce you to the historical circumstances that gave rise to the religious movement we now call Christianity. Through the close and careful reading of both New Testament literature and a variety of relevant ancient sources from outside of the Christian canon, we will work together to understand the world of the 1st-3rd centuries CE. Beyond literary evidence, we will also use tools from other disciplines such as archaeology, art history, anthropology, the social sciences, and the cognitive sciences to help us understand how the Jesus movement took root and flourished in the Roman world.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion in the Ancient World
- Introduction to Religion
- Judaism, Christianity, Islam

REL 131/AMS 324: Religion in America

Shockley | T, TR 5:05pm – 6:20pm

The history of religion in the U.S. from the pre-colonial period to the present. Includes study of the religion of Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, women, Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and cults.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion in the Americas
- Introduction to Religion
- Judaism, Christianity, Islam

REL 151: Religion and Moral Choices

Papadakis | T 6:35pm – 9:20pm (on-line)

Using a narrative approach, this course introduces students to religious responses to dilemmas raised by issues such as capital punishment, biotechnology, abortion, euthanasia, and war. In this course, we will focus on formative narratives and biographies in Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Because this course is part of the Religion and Health Care program, it will highlight issues related to health care. Key topics include reproductive planning/care, eugenics, abortion, gender vs. sex, vaccinations, mental health, end of life care, euthanasia, and organ donation. The course will be divided into two parts: 1. Formative religious narratives and 2. Health care topics in relation to religious ethics.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Politics and Religion
- Introduction to Religion
- Religion and Medicine
- Ethics in the Humanities: Religion, Philosophy, Politics

REL 161: Religion and Medicine: Health Care as Spiritual Practice

Newell | T, TR 2:00pm – 3:15pm

An exploration of the history of medical care and the history of medicine as calling, as well as the changing professionalism of health care; the role of virtue ethics in the practice of medicine; the tensions between religion and medicine; the place of personal religious beliefs in health care; and the changing landscape of health, holism, healing, faith and the science of medicine.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion and Medicine
- Spirituality

REL/JUS 231: Jewish Civilization and Intro to Judaism, Jews, and Jewishness from Abraham to Wonder Woman

H. Green | T, TR 9:30am – 10:45am

A survey of the development of Judaism from antiquity to modern times.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Judaism, Christianity, Islam
- The Evolution of the Jewish People in their Homeland and the Diaspora

REL 244/ ARC 583, 683: Special Topics Sacred Spaces

W. Green | T 6:00pm – 8:30pm (on-line)

An inter-disciplinary seminar, SACRED SPACE explores the multiple, layered intersections of religion and architecture, through case-studies of contemporary and historic religious buildings across culture, time and place. Students from across the University and the faculty investigate if, how, and to what extent architecture and the sacred are connected and if they require one another. Topics are explored through case studies, readings and discussion in a dinner-meeting, situated in a discussion setting in Mahoney Residential College, designed to support lively and engaging dialogue. Over the course of the semester, students prepare a case study for group discussion. This course is offered in the Harkness Table format which emphasizes discussion-based learning.

REL 281: Introduction to Buddhism

Ritzinger | T, TR 11:00am – 12:15pm

The Buddhist tradition from a variety of angles and in several cultural contexts. We will attend to the ideas for which Buddhism is famous, while situating Buddhist practitioners in their social contexts at key historical moments. Throughout we will give attention to the issue of our own perspective and what it means to think across the porous borders of culture in an interrelated world.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Introduction to Religion
- Asian Religions: South and East Asia

REL 330: Caribbean Religion

Nwokocha | M, W 6:35pm – 7:50pm

Caribbean Religion with an emphasis on African Diaspora, Atlantic, and Creole religions and spirituality. Some of the religious traditions we will cover include Lucumí or La Regla de Ocha (Santería), Haitian Vodou, Spiritism, Regla de Palo Mayombe, Abakua, and Obeah. We will explore race; gender; material and visual culture; healing; as well as issues of stigma, marginalization, and activism.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion in the Americas
- The Caribbean through Literature, History, & the Arts
- Latin America Art and Culture
- Exploring the Caribbean through the Social Sciences
- Africa and the African Diaspora
- Spirituality

REL 351: Death & Dying

Walsh | T, TR 11:00am – 12:15pm

Mortality and death are ever-present and preoccupying forces for human beings. For as long as we have documented history on the subject, we have debated issues of what it means to be mortal, what it means to live well, how to die well,

and whether death is truly the end of life. Graves, iconographic programs, inscriptions, landscapes, medical practices, burial practices, as well as attempted communication with— and narrative imagination about— the dead index complex frameworks and theologies that, through observation and analysis, help us understand what people value, respect or fear about death and dying. Likewise religious traditions and texts serve as guideposts for perspectives on these issues and allow us to trace notable developments in practice and theology on life, death, and afterlife.

This course will survey discourses about death and death rituals from the ancient Mediterranean (ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome) to the present day. While most of our material will cover Western traditions, we will bring in guest speakers and other experts to help us discuss non-Western practices and viewpoints. Among our foci are burial practices, religious texts, and related data on mortality and death and we will ask what they reveal about shifts in religious life, ethical ideals, philosophical anthropology, personhood, familial relationships, and social standing across a variety of time periods and traditions.

Some of the issues we will discuss include (but are not limited to): the history of certain perspectives on illness, death and burial; the relationship between organized religious systems and death and dying; personhood; theodicy; euthanasia; suicide; and the afterlife.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Ethics in the Humanities: Religion, Philosophy, Politics
- Religion, Identity, and Pop Culture
- Religion and Medicine

REL 352: Religion and Science

Maklakiewicz | Th 5:05pm – 7:50pm (on-line)

The religious and ethical issues created by modern science and technology.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion and Medicine

REL 363/ECS 375: Religion & Science Fiction
Newell | W 3:35pm – 6:05pm

Issues surrounding “dystopia” and religion. We will study sustainability movements, authentic vs. synthetic nature, bioethics, technology, and their effects on modern spirituality and the future of religion. In order to discuss these topics, we will examine the intersections between the cultural significance of various dystopic science fiction novels, short stories, video games, television shows, and films with religion.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion, Myth, and Interpretation
- Spirituality

REL 371/GSS 350: Women, Gender, and Islam
Husayn | M, W 3:35pm – 4:50pm

An examination of issues related to women and gender with an emphasis upon themes pertaining to the Muslim world. We will study the contributions of progressive/feminist Muslim writers in addition to secular academic research on the subject. Topics include Qur'anic revelations concerning women; gendered ideals that developed after the founder's death; understanding how Islamic texts, rituals, and doctrines have both reinforced and challenged certain gender categories; and the experience of Muslims living in the U.S. and the Middle East, addressing racial as well as gendered hierarchies.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- A Cross-Cultural and Historic Examination of Sexuality
- Islam and the Arab World
- Religion, Identity and Pop Culture
- Judaism, Christianity, Islam

REL 375: Democracy and Religion in Israel and Palestine
H. Green | T, TR 11:00am – 12:15pm

Israel's evolution as a nation and a society by focusing on the impact of religion on ethnicity, culture, and democracy.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Politics and Religion
- Judaism, Christianity, Islam
- Studies of Modern Day Israel
- Religion, Identity and Pop Culture
- Ethics in the Humanities, Religion, Philosophy, Politics
- The Evolution of the Jewish People in their Homeland and the Diaspora

REL 388: Living Stories

Ritzinger | T, TH 12:30pm – 1:45pm

In popular culture, Asian religions are referred to as "Eastern Philosophy." Yet, philosophical doctrine is only one part of Asian religious traditions and for many not the most prominent. Oftentimes narrative, key stories or modes of storytelling, occupies a more central role. But what is that role? How do narratives transmit religious ideas and values and inform ritual life? How do they evolve over time? And how do religious individuals and communities drawn upon them to work in the world? This course will address these questions through a focus on a few narratives selected Asian religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. We will attend to these stories as living phenomena that evolve over time and play a vital role in their communities and also as something that those communities live with as they make their way through the world.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Asian Religions: South and East Asia
- Religion, Myth, and Interpretation

REL 405: Special Topics in Religious or Historical Traditions African and African American Religions

Nwokocha | M, W 3:35pm – 4:50pm

This course is designed to provide students with a broad introduction to major themes within African and African American Religions. We will draw on various historical method, i.e., historical, ethnographical, and autobiographical. Additionally, we will examine visual media to understand the presence and value of African and African American Religions.

Thematically, we will work through concepts of the religion in West and Central Africa and the U.S.; memory, myth and authenticity; ritual and material practices; borders, migration, gender and sexuality, religious commodities and exchange. As we traverse through these various religious traditions, it is through the readings, lectures, invited speakers, films and class discussions that we will develop a complex understanding of integrative religious worldviews that impacts every aspect of life: family structure, gender relations, education, healing, economics, politics, arts, and so on.

REL 406/MAL 626: Special Topics of Religion and Revolution

[Pals](#) | [Asynchronous](#)

Explores the pivotal role of religion in the revolutions that have shaped the modern Western world: the Puritan Revolt in 17th-century England, the American/French Revolutions of 1776 and 1789, and the Russian (Communist) Revolution of 1917.

REL 499: Maj/Minor Seminar

[Callender](#) | [M, W, F 9:05am – 9:55am](#)

What is “religion” and how should it be understood? How does religion relate to politics, psychology, economics or other fields of knowledge? This course is a discussion seminar that prepares you to (a) think rigorously about religion as a subject and category of human experience and (b) discuss it in a disciplined fashion through an examination of the issues, texts, and debates that have defined religion as an area of academic study.

Contact Dr. Callender to apply this course to your religion cognate