



UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES



Spring
2023
COURSES

REL 101: Introduction to Religion
Callender | T, TR 9:25am – 10:40am

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

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REL 104/PHI 101: Atheism: Doubts and Debates
Husayn | M, W 3:35am – 4:50pm

This course examines faith-based claims that invite skepticism and atheist critiques of the phenomenon of religion. This course defines atheism as a lack of belief in a deity or God and explores atheist literature and history to understand this worldview. Topics include faith, unbelief, scripture, the supernatural, naturalism, morality, secular humanism, violence, extremism, and discussions about epistemology, or how we can know anything.

Counts toward the following cognates:

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

REL 109: Anthropology of Religion

Nwokocha | M, W 8:05pm – 9:20pm

What does it mean to study religion anthropologically? What are the methods that are used to examine lived religion? This course introduces students to anthropological approaches of studying religion. We will explore multiple religious beliefs, meanings, experiences, expressions, and practices across diverse sociocultural environments. Through an engagement with anthropological works on ritual, myth, sacrifice, death, symbol, gender, healing, religious activism, and identities, to name a few, we will learn how religion is understood, experienced, and expressed across different sociocultural environments, both in the past, and within the contemporary moment. Throughout the course students will pursue individual research projects that will allow them to deepen their understanding of a specific question pertaining to religion and gain training in research, writing and presentation skills. The course also exposes introductory-level students to diverse world religious traditions: African and African Diasporic Religions, Religions in Latin America, U.S religious traditions and more.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion, Identity and Pop Culture

REL 111: Introduction to the Old Testament/Hebrew Scriptures

Callender | T, TR 8:00am – 9:15am

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 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 232: A Global History of Christianity

Kling | T, TR 2:00pm – 3:15pm

A survey of the historical development of Christianity from the first century to the present, focusing on the major theological and institutional issues considered in their social and cultural contexts.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Introduction to Religion
- Judaism, Christianity, Islam

REL 324: The Bible and Modern Film

Walsh | W 3:35pm – 6:05pm

The diverse ways in which contemporary cinematic arts interpret and depict narratives from the Bible and the ancient Mediterranean world.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Judaism, Christianity, Islam

REL 325: Jesus in Myth and History

Walsh | T, TR 11:00am – 12:15pm

Changing concepts of Jesus in Western culture, as they emerge in literature, art, and films.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Judaism, Christianity, Islam
- Religion, Myth, and Interpretation

REL 334/AMS 301/JUS 360: The American Jewish Experience: Hollywood and Popular Culture

H. Green | T 5:05pm – 7:50pm

Analysis and interpretation of the image of the Jew and the Jewish experience in American cinema, with emphasis on how the experience and attitudes of Americans in general and the American Jewish community in particular have been reflected on the screen from the pre-World War II period until the present and on the tension between maintaining an ethnic identity and assimilating. The religious and ethical issues created by modern science and technology.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- The Evolution of the Jewish People in their Homeland and the Diaspora
- American Studies: Politics and Religion
- Judaism
- Religion, Myth, and Interpretation

REL 345: Religion & Gender

Nwokocha | M, W 6:35pm – 7:50pm

This class explores the lives of gendered peoples in multiple religious traditions: Indigenous, African, African Diasporic, Hindu, Christian, and Muslim. We will explore the following concepts and issues: religion's shaping influence on patriarchy, intersectionality and feminism, social location (how one's sex, race, culture, religion, economic class, sexual orientation, age, etc., shape our attitudes and assumptions); the differences between sex, gender, and sexual orientation; social privilege of various kinds: authority, religious and otherwise; body image; religious freedom; and social justice. By the end of this course, students will gain

theoretical knowledge and analytical tools that will enable them to critically examine the gendered dimensions of religion within a historical and global context.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- A Cross-Cultural and Historic Examination of Sexuality
- Ethics in the humanities: Religion, Philosophy, Politics
- Religion, Myth, and Interpretation
- Religion, Identity and Pop Culture

REL 354/PHI 351: Religion and the Problem of Evil
[Shockley | T, TR 5:05pm – 6:20pm \(on-line\)](#)

Major religious perspectives on the origin and nature of evil and human suffering

Counts toward the following cognates:

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

REL 360/ECS 372: Religion and Bioethics
[Newell | T, TR 3:30pm – 4:45pm](#)

The implications of religious thought for contemporary problems of biomedical ethics.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion and Medicine
- Ethics in the Humanities, Religion, Philosophy, Politics

REL 372/AMS 324/AAS 390: Islam and the United States: The politics of Race, Media, and Terrorism
[Husayn | M, W 5:05pm – 6:20pm](#)

A critical review of the cultural and political history of U.S. relations with various Muslim communities both domestic and foreign. Major themes include the experience of Muslims in North America, xenophobia, racism, national security, law enforcement and violence.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Islam and the Arab World
- Judaism, Christianity, Islam
- Religion in the Americas

REL 403: Supervised Readings in Religious Issues or Problems

W. Green | TBA

Independent study to enable students to read extensively in an area of personal interest in religious issues or problems.

REL 406/COM 406/POL 499: Special Topics in Religious Issues or Problems: Persuasion, Propaganda, and Genocide

W. Green, R. Jebreal (international recognized journalist) | T 6:00pm – 8:30pm (on-line)

The course examines how governments and other groups use propaganda to persuade citizens to murder or harm other citizens. It covers theories of propaganda and persuasion and examines case studies such as the Holocaust, Rwanda, China, and aspects of American media and society. It is a discussion-based course.

REL 406/ARC 586/ARC 686/CIM 489/CIM 689: Special Topics in Religious Issues or Problems: Religion, Artificial Intelligence, and Virtual Reality

W. Green, Hector (Architecture), Grinfeder (Communication) | TR 6:00pm – 8:30pm (on-line)

The course explores how artificial intelligence and virtual reality will affect the future of religion in both practice and spatial experience. It involves student-designed collaborative projects.

REL 409/HIS 396/JUS 401: Racism, Human Rights, and Freedom of Religion: The Forgotten Exodus

H. Green | M 3:35pm – 6:05pm

Over the last 70 years, millions of people have been displaced from North Africa and the Middle East: Copts (Egypt), Jews (from the Atlantic Ocean to the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers), Kurds and Yazidis in Iraq, and Syrians (Christian and Moslem). The course examines the reasons why these minorities and populations have been displaced. Highlighting the International Declaration of Human Rights in the wake of the Holocaust (1951), the course engages students in collecting and documenting the testimonies of these refugees. The narratives include life in their countries of origin, their story of leaving and their experience of resettling in a new country. Core themes such as racism, religion, human rights, transnational identity, exile, diaspora, and

migration are central to the course. Witnesses who have been exiled will be invited to the class to tell their stories of displacement.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Community Engagement and Social Change
- Study of Aspects of the Holocaust
- Judaism