



DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

FALL
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COURSES

REL 101: Introduction to Religion

Crocker - Papadakis | MWF 10:10AM – 11:00AM

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:

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

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Callender | Online Course

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REL 102: Problem of God

Crocker - Papadakis | R 5:05PM – 7:50PM

Contemporary religious issues related to the concept of God. Foundational to this course is an examination of the religious dimension of human experience and consciousness in relation to a number of historical and contemporary problems and challenges. 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: globalized religion, the challenge of atheism and 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 105: One Goal: Transforming the Self in Asian Religions

Ritzinger | TR 11:00AM – 12:15PM

A selective survey of some of the continent's major religious traditions that attempts to provide a sense of their diversity, including a hint of their internal diversity. We will encounter major figures, doctrines, and ethical precepts, but special attention will be paid to one key element shared that distinguishes them from their Abrahamic counterparts (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam): the one goal of self-transformation and the techniques for achieving it. Here we will find the differences among traditions thrown into stark relief even as we encounter surprising parallels and continuities. Along the way students will be exposed to major concepts and approaches to the academic study of religion.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Introduction to Religion
- Spirituality

- China Studies
- Asian Religions: South and East Asia

REL 109/APY 109: Anthropology of Religion

Devarajan | MWF 11:15AM–12:05PM

Through themes such as myth, word and text, symbol, gender, pilgrimage, embodiment, and ritual, students learn about lived religion through anthropological research and field methods. The course also exposes introductory-level students to diverse world religious traditions: Korean folk religion, Indonesian Islam, Hinduism in diaspora, Judaism across cultures, Japanese temple Shinto traditions, and more.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion, Identity, and Pop Culture

REL 151: Religion and Moral Choices

Crocker-Papadakis | T 5:05PM–7:50PM

An introduction to major themes and important figures in religious and philosophical ethics. We will read, discuss, and write about moral issues in the major religions.

Counts toward the following cognates:

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

REL 231: Jewish Civilization and Being Jewish

H. Green | 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 271/AMS 324: Introduction to Islam

Homayounvash | TR 12:30PM – 1:45PM

An introduction to the religion, culture, and history of Islam. This course examines Muslim beliefs about God, the Prophet Muhammad, the Qur'an, the caliphate and the emergence of various sects.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Introduction to Religion
- Judaism, Christianity, Islam
- Islam and the Arab World

REL 304/ CLA 304/ CLA 491: The Roman Empire in the Flavian-Antonine Period

Graf | TR 3:30PM – 4:45PM

The focus of this course is the Flavian and Antonine Dynasties, between AD 70 and 192, the period the historian Gibbon described as a "Golden Age," the zenith of Roman Civilization. But it began with imperial civil war and ended with another one, and in the more than a century of its existence embraced major natural disasters, serious internal revolts, dangerous external threats, and the expansion and then retraction of the imperial borders. In spite of these events, there were major administrative changes, and significant cultural and intellectual developments, including Christianity emerging out of the shadows. Although lacking any reputable contemporary historians for the period, archaeology, inscriptions, and papyri illuminate the events. These are the themes and topics that will be addressed.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion in the Ancient World

REL 311/ JUS 301: Prophecy and Prophetic Literature in the Hebrew Bible

Callender | TR 12:30PM – 1:45PM

Prophecy in ancient Israel and Judah and the prophetic literature of the Hebrew Bible in relation to its ancient near-eastern historical, religious, and social context.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Judaism, Christianity, Islam
- Religion, Myth and Interpretation
- Religion in the Ancient World
- A Survey of Jewish Literature

REL 325/ JUS 301: Jesus in Myth and History

R. Walsh | TR 2:00PM – 3:15PM

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

Counts toward the following cognates:

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

REL 330: Caribbean Religion

M. Tsang | T 5:05PM – 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
- Belonging in a Diverse Society: Intersections of culture, Identity, and social justice
- Spirituality

REL 354: Religion and the Problem of Evil**Crocker – Papadakis | MWF 1:25PM – 2:15PM**

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

Counts toward the following cognates:

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

REL 358: The Color of God: Race and Religion**Callender | Online Course**

This course will examine the role of race and ethnicity within the discipline of religious studies. We will emphasize the manner in which racial and ethnic identity have contributed to religious identity, and the way in which religion has functioned within the struggles of racially and ethnically marginalized peoples. This course will focus on the Americas and draw from diverse racial, ethnic, and religious traditions.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion in the Americas
- Religion, Identity, and Pop Culture
- Africa and the African Diaspora
- Spirituality

REL 370: Islam in the Modern World**M. Homayounvash | TR 11:00AM- 12:15PM**

How is Islam understood and practiced in the modern world? Students will learn about the rituals, traditions and popular beliefs of contemporary Muslims through film and key texts. The course also explores fault lines in the community such as the rise of authoritarian states, secularism, and liberal values on one hand and increased sectarianism and patterns of radicalization on the other.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion, Identity, and Pop Culture
- Judaism, Christianity, Islam
- Islam and the Arab World

REL 375: Democracy and Religion in Israel and Palestine**H. Green | 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:

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

REL 384: Karma**Ritzinger | TR 2:00PM – 3:15PM**

Karma is one of the most central doctrines of Buddhism and by far the most viral. Through lip jars, pop songs, and TV shows, the concept has become familiar to many. But what is karma? How does it work? What does it mean to live in a karmic universe? This course will examine these questions through a consideration of Buddhist doctrine, ritual, ethics, and narrative.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Ethics in the Humanities: Religion, Philosophy, Politics
- Asian Religions: South and East Asia

REL 499: Method and Theory in the Study of Religion**Callender | R 5:05PM – 7:50PM**

An examination of central issues and texts in the academic study of religion, with special focus on the rise of the discipline, its axioms, and its several schools of interpretation.

REL 505/CLA 505/MLS 611: The Age of Augustus**Dr. David Graf | R 6:35PM – 9:20PM**

The Age of Augustus saw revolutionary changes that transformed Rome, Romanized the provinces, and witnessed an unequalled era of peace and prosperity across the Mediterranean world. This course will track these developments between 27 BCE and 68 CE, from Augustus to Nero, by analysis of the major sources, films, and a survey of the archaeological remains of the early empire.