

The Department of Religious Studies offers Honours, Majors and Minors with a critical approach to studying religious traditions in their multiple contexts--historical, cultural, political, artistic or literary, for example, both local and global. Given the range and depth of these contexts, this critical study requires approaches that are at the same time interdisciplinary and focused on the diversity of religions. The Department offers courses at the introductory (1000), intermediate and advanced (2000-3000) as well as seminar (4000) levels which are either tradition-specific or multi-religious in scope.

Students who select a Minor in Religious Studies must complete 18 credit hours of courses, including:

RELG 1006 Introduction to Religious Studies

and one of the following from the Tools Courses:

RELG 2243 Texts and Contexts

RELG 2313 Introduction to the Hebrew Bible

RELG 2333 Introduction to the New Testament

RELG 2353 Introduction to the Qur'an

RELG 2413 Ritual Studies

Students who select a Major in Religious Studies must complete 36 credit hours of courses, including:

RELG 1006 Introduction to Religious Studies

and one of the following from the Tools Courses:

RELG 2243 Texts and Contexts

RELG 2313 Introduction to the Hebrew Bible

RELG 2333 Introduction to the New Testament

RELG 2353 Introduction to the Qur'an

as well as:

RELG 2413 Ritual Studies

Students contemplating a Major in Religious Studies will select their courses in consultation with a member of the Department. Students must declare their Major to the Registrar's Office and the Department Chair by the beginning of their third year.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of Religious Studies, students selecting the Major program are encouraged to consider the intellectual and practical value of obtaining a second major in another discipline.

An Honours degree in Religious Studies requires a minimum of 54 credit hours in Religious Studies courses, at least 12 credit hours of which must be at the 4000-level, including:

RELG 1006 Introduction to Religious Studies
and one of the following from the Tools Courses:

RELG 2243

Scientology, the Branch Davidians, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Euro-Indians, and the Vineyard Renewal.

RELG-2233. Women and Religion

The course aims to study how i) women in history and in modern times respond to socio-cultural restrictions and their attempts to create spiritual and social alternatives, ii) how notions of asceticism and sexuality are utilized as liberating and prescriptive modes. It will examine feminist critiques to classical, medieval, and current texts and thinkers. We will closely look at the assumptions that guide both classical texts and modern critiques.

RELG-2263. Human Growth - Christian Spiritual Development

All world religions offer a spirituality to their followers. This course will use categories developed by modern psychology (Erickson, Kohlberg, Fowler, Jung, Keen, and Keegan) to understand the stages in the spiritual life tradition in Christianity. It will then attempt to develop an appreciation of the various schools as well as modern holistic spirituality.

RELG-2273. Death and Dying

This course explores a wide range of topics in the area of death and dying. As a fundamental issue for human beings, these phenomena require investigation from a variety of perspectives. The course considers aspects of death and dying that are religious, philosophical, psychological, and sociological in nature. Further, the course is concerned with both practical and theoretical issues that arise from the relationship between aging, and death and dying.

RELG-2283. Religion and Art

Focusing primarily on the Western religious traditions, this course will examine the art and architecture of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in historical context. Themes to be studied may include: the image of the Divine, iconoclasm, shrines and pilgrimages, patronage, the appropriation of sacred space, sacred music, performance art, and food.

RELG-2293. Religion and Sexuality

An examination of the understanding of the nature of human sexuality with specific reference to religious and theological frameworks. Issues studied may include sexuality as foundational in personal dignity and integrity, marriage, relationality, communication, the commodification of sexuality, systematic abuses and neglect of sexuality.

RELG-2683. Special Topics

The content of this course will reflect the strengths of the faculty and the particular needs of students. It will identify and explore a general interest topic that is multi-religious or tradition-specific in scope.

RELG-3513. Bioethics

This course explores the basic approaches and issues related to the field of bioethics. A specific emphasis on 8HTJo -1.u5copMDaI, copeoetho bs4ea TD(RELal(v)1o(t.41 TDxntal eld oaW)27(e

regulations.

RELG-3573. Religion and Social Ethics

The study of the relationships which shape the nature of human interaction informed by or oriented towards values and specific goals. The role of religious beliefs and communities in analyzing and responding to economic, social, and political problems will be examined.

RELG-3583. Media and Ethics

A critical and foundational examination of the role and function of media in Western society, focussing on its formative influence on religion and culture. Issues may include the business of news, entertainment, the nature of advertising, and religion and media. This course requires students to have a background in ethics and/or critical theory.

RELG-3953. Portrayals of Jihad and Crusade: History, Memory and Film (HIST)

This course considers the diverse ways in which modern global audiences have come to understand histories of religious violence. Our focus will be on academic and popular interpretations of so-called jihad or crusade conflicts from the Middle Ages to the present. Print, electronic and film sources will be examined, reflecting a wide range of often conflicting viewpoints as they have evolved over time.

RELG-3593. Moral Development

An examination of the processes and elements through which persons develop a critical perspective and appreciation of the role of value in their lives and in the social order. This course requires students to have completed previous work in ethics.

RELG-4163. Independent Study

A course of independent study under the supervision of the Religious Studies Department. Students will normally collaborate on a description of the study project with the staff member or members who will guide the independent study. This description must be approved by the Department Chair and submitted to the registrar for his records.

RELG-4183. Special Topics

The content of this course changes from year to year reflecting the strengths of the faculty and the particular needs of students. It will involve an advanced treatment of some aspect of the religious dimension of human experience that is multi-religious or tradition-specific in scope.

2. ISLAM AND GLOBALIZATION

RELG-2253. Islam in an Age of Globalization

In their responses to modernity, Muslims have variously chosen: a return to traditionalism; a reinterpretation of Islam; secular responses separating religion and state; or some combination of the above. This course examines these responses to modernity in their cultural contexts. Themes will include: issues of gender; notions of democracy in Islam; Muslims living in the West; the rise of fundamentalisms; the globalization of Sufi orders.

RELG-2313. Introduction to the Hebrew Bible

This course will provide an introduction to the study of the Hebrew Bible, commonly referred to by Christians as the Old Testament. A first chapter will provide an overview of the history of Israel from the early centuries of the second millennium B.C. to the end of the first century A.D. A second chapter will look at the various canonical collections of scriptural books accepted by the Samaritans, the Palestinian Jews, the Jews of the Diaspora and Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Christians.

RELG-3223. The Medieval Church (HIST)

This course deals with the history of the Church from the time of Gregory the Great in the sixth century to the end of the fifteenth century. For the most part, we will deal with the Western Church, although there will be some treatment of the relations that existed with the East. The theme that will run throughout the course is that of the interaction between the Church and the society of this period.

RELG-3323. Book of Isaiah

This course will study the book of Isaiah as an example of prophetic literature. It will treat such questions as the authorship, dating, unity, background, and theology of the book. Particular passages will be singled out for more detailed study.

RELG-3343. Gospel of John

This course will study the gospel of John as one of the four canonical gospels. It will treat such questions as authorship, dating, background, sources, and theology of the gospel. Particular passages will be singled out for more detailed study.

RELG-3363. Jesus of Nazareth - Christ of Faith

Biblical commentators of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries focused their attention on what can be historically verified about Jesus in the New Testament, and contrasted this understanding of Jesus with that of the first-century Church's faith in Jesus. This course will give particular attention to distinguishing between the Historical Jesus and the Christ of Faith as expressed in the New Testament. It will also address the development of the New Testament itself.

RELG-3413. God in Western Thought (PHIL)

A survey, through lectures, readings, and discussion, of Western philosophical speculation regarding the divine. Themes: theism and atheism in classical antiquity; demonstrations of God's existence in medieval philosophy; the effect on religious belief of empiricism, idealism, Marxism, and existentialism. Prerequisite: PHIL 1013 and 1023, or permission of the instructor.

RELG-3433. Religious Traditions of China and Japan

We shall investigate what scholars are saying about the religious traditions of China and Japan: Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, and the popular religions.

RELG-3453. Religious Traditions of India I

An inquiry into the religious traditions of India, including Hinduism in its many varieties, early Buddhism, and Jainism.

RELG-3473. Native American Religions

An inquiry into the issues in the study of Native American religions, and the results of that study. The focus will be on some of the diverse religions of First Nations people in what is now Canada and the United States.

RELG-3533. Islam in the West (Art and Architecture in New York City)

This course examines the physical presence of Islam in New York City. Students will tour the mosques of New York, visit collections of Islamic art and manuscripts, observe ritual music and dance, and taste food from around the Muslim world. Themes will include spiritual Islamic art, Islam in the West, and North American Muslims today. The goal of the course is to provide students with material objects that will enrich their understanding of culture.

RELG-3553. Islamic Ethics and Spirituality

This course will look at the various forms of Islamic spirituality, as expressed by individuals and organized orders. It will explore the symbolic path of the mystic and how it coalesced with popular piety and sainthood. It will also look at the ethical systems of rational mystics who combined theology, philosophy, and mysticism.

RELG-3653. Women and Christianity

Women's rights, gender sensitivities, and feminist movements both inside and outside the churches have inspired lively and complex debates within contemporary Christian theologies. By deconstructing, revising and rebuilding basic issues in theology on the basis of women's experiences and gender analysis, a substantial range of feminist theologies has emerged. This course will explore theological themes and interests central to the diversity of feminist theologies.

completion of the first year of university-level study or its equivalent.

RELG-2243. Texts and Contexts

This course will explore the interaction between text and context of several writings deemed to be sacred, whether traditional or not, from a variety of religious traditions. Attention will also be paid to the particular situations and conditions in which these texts are created and received.

such as William James, Sigmund Freud, and Carl Jung, and their contemporary interpreters.

RELG-2543. Sociology of Religion (SOCI)

This course focuses on the relations between the beliefs and institutionalized practices that people hold sacred, and contemporary community life. The students explore the contradictory trends of mass secularism and the rise of religious fundamentalism, and the practices through which people collectively mobilize to sustain, challenge, and change religious