

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (RELG)

RELG 10800: WESTERN CHRISTIANITY: 4 Hour(s)

WESTERN CHRISTIANITY ~ This course will look at the life and practice of western Christianity as viewed through the works of Christian mystics in conjunction with an analysis of the history of the institutional church. This analysis not only describes the ideal Christian life but gives us insight into the actual practice of Christian life through the ages.

RELG 11000: INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE:IM: 4 Hour(s)

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE:IM ~ What does the word bible mean? And what exactly is The Bible? From where did it come? In what languages was it written? Have not the original texts been lost or changed in the course of the long history of their transmission? What is the relationship of English translations to the original texts? What is a "testament?" What does it mean that there is an "old" and a "new" one? Why are there at least three (Jewish, Protestant, Catholic) Bibles? And what about those early "secret" Jewish and Christian writings which did not find their way into anyone's Bible? These and other such questions, the outlines of Biblical history, sketches of key figures, and the basic religious ideas of its text are the focus of this course on this ancient and important body of literature. A revised version of this course is offered for three credit hours as RELG 10900. A student may receive credit for only one of these courses.

Core: Interpretive Methods

RELG 20600: RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD: 4 Hour(s)

RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD ~ This course offers an historical and thematic overview of selected non-Judeo-Christian religious traditions, such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Native American Religions, and African Religions. The multidimensional nature of each tradition studied is emphasized through an exploration of sacred narratives, teachings, practices, experiences, and communities.

RELG 20730: RELIGION IN AMERICA:UD: 4 Hour(s)

RELIGION IN AMERICA:UD ~ Whether a person wants to walk in this direction or not, one cannot really understand America without understanding the dominant roles that Religion has played (and continues to play). Because of this, we will come to understand the Protestants who shaped the formation of the nation, along with the struggle of whether to keep religions separate from government or not. We will come to understand the unique entity often labeled as "civil religion" which functions quietly as a kind of generic American national religion. In this class we will learn a great deal of the important history which will enable to us better understand who and what we are as a people today, and how we continue to struggle with the many aspects of religion as children of both the Puritans, and of Jefferson and Madison. Please know that this course cannot be exhaustive, covering every detail of any random religion that has come along in US history. But you will understand America in a completely new way because of the course.

Core: Understanding Diversity Home

RELG 21800: WIZARD, SORCERER, & SHAMAN:IM: 3 Hour(s)

WIZARDS, SORCERERS, AND SHAMANS:IM ~ An investigation of the problem of rationality, carefully considering the perspectives of both "insiders" and "outsiders." From the inside, we will engage with firsthand encounters of wizards, sorcerers, and shamans in non-Western religious traditions, such as Songhay, Mayan, and Hindu. From the outside, we will explore various theoretical positions on rationality, examining classical and contemporary works in religious, anthropological, and philosophical studies, such as Evans-Pritchard's pioneering text on magic among the Azande, Merleau-Ponty's meditations on perception, and Paul Stoller's recent scholarship in "embodied phenomenology." Questions to be pursued in this course include: Is there one form of rationality that is "universal"? Is rationality "relative" to one's own socio-religious context? Is there an alternative approach to both universalism and relativism that allows the student of religion to make sense of apparent "multiple realities"?

Core: Interpretive Methods

RELG 24300: 1st CENTURY RELIGIOUS WORLD: 4 Hour(s)

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD OF THE FIRST CENTURY ~ In the Greco-Roman world of the first century, religion was very much alive and well. Judaism spread through the cities of the Roman empire, and Christianity was on the move, but the traditional deities still received their due, people continued to consult Apollo's oracles at Delphi and Didyma, the Great Mother flourished under various forms, emperors living and dead had become gods worthy of prayer and sacrifice, the mystery religions with their unusual rites were welcoming initiates, and the planets, omens and fate remained a daily source of anxiety and expectation. Designed for the general student, and using the extensive slide library of its instructor, the present course therefore introduces students to this fascinating world of first century religion. A revised version of this course is offered for three credit hours as RELG 24200. A student may receive credit for only one of these courses.

RELG 24400: OLD TESTAMENT LIT/INTERPRET:IM: 3 Hour(s)

OLD TESTAMENT LITERATURE AND INTERPRETATION:IM ~ Whether we call it the Old Testament, the Hebrew Scriptures, or the Tanak, this document provides us with an exciting witness to ancient Israel's walk with its god. Beginning with Abraham and Sarah it carries us from Mesopotamia to Egypt, through the Red Sea, and into the land of promise. It introduces us to kings both good and bad, recounts God's demands for a just society, describes the horrors of Jerusalem destroyed, and continuously recalls God's parental love for Israel. In a very special religious language it tells of how the world was formed and of the ultimate goal of that creation, provides both consolation for the downtrodden as well as songs of love for the bride and her groom, and even tells a great fish story! Thus, in this course designed for the general student we use the results of modern Biblical research in order to gain an appreciation for a most remarkable body of literature. A revised version of this course is offered for four credit hours as RELG 24500. A student may receive credit for only one of these courses.

Core: Interpretive Methods

RELG 24500: OT LITRATURE/ INTRPRETATION:IM: 4 Hour(s)

OLD TESTAMENT LITERATURE AND INTERPRETATION:IM ~ Whether we call it the Old Testament, the Hebrew Scriptures, or the Tanak, this document provides us with an exciting witness to ancient Israel's walk with its god. Beginning with Abraham and Sarah it carries us from Mesopotamia to Egypt, through the Red Sea, and into the land of promise. It introduces us to kings both good and bad, recounts God's demands for a just society, describes the horrors of Jerusalem destroyed, and continuously recalls God's parental love for Israel. In a very special religious language it tells of how the world was formed and of the ultimate goal of that creation, provides both consolation for the downtrodden as well as songs of love for the bride and her groom, and even tells a great fish story! Thus, in this course designed for the general student we use the results of modern Biblical research in order to gain an appreciation for a most remarkable body of literature. A revised version of this course is offered for three credit hours as RELG 24400. A student may receive credit for only one of these courses.

Core: Interpretive Methods

RELG 24600: NT LITRATURE/ INTRPRETATION:IM: 3 Hour(s)

NEW TESTAMENT LITERATURE AND INTERPRETATION:IM ~ The New Testament is a collection of twenty-seven fascinating writings from the first hundred years of Christianity, and it was created to be the Church's norm for right belief. In this course designed for the general student, we examine who wrote them, who first read them, when they were written, and, most interestingly, why they were written. For example, the Apocalypse (Revelation) was prepared by an Asian Christian at a particularly desperate time within the early years of the Church and reads most interestingly when understood from that perspective. A revised version of this course is offered for four credit hours as RELG 24700. A student may receive credit for only one of these courses.

Core: Interpretive Methods

RELG 24700: NEW TESTAMENT LIT/INTERPRET:IM: 4 Hour(s)

NEW TESTAMENT LITERATURE AND INTERPRETATION:IM ~ The New Testament is a collection of twenty-seven fascinating writings from the first hundred years of Christianity, and it was created to be the Church's norm for right belief. In this course designed for the general student, we examine many of these writings from the perspective of their original purpose. In other words, we examine who wrote them, who first read them, when they were written, and, most interestingly, why they were written. For example, the Apocalypse (Revelation) was prepared by an Asian Christian at a particularly desperate time within the early years of the Church and reads most interestingly when understood from that perspective. A revised version of this course is offered for three credit hours as RELG 24600. A student may receive credit for only one of these courses.

Core: Interpretive Methods

RELG 24800: JUDAISM:IM: 3 Hour(s)

JUDAISM:IM ~ Designed for the general student, this course has a twin focus: concentration on the origins of Judaism in its formative period, 587 or 58700 BCE to 200 or 20000 CE, and a more general introduction to Jewish history and thought including primary readings in modern Orthodox, Conservative, Reformed, and Reconstructionist Judaism. A revised version of this course is offered for four credit hours as RELG 24900. A student may receive credit for only one of these courses.

Core: Interpretive Methods

RELG 25000: INTRO TO ISLAM:CA,UD: 4 Hour(s)

INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM:VEILED BEAUTY, VOICES OF FAITH:CA,UD ~ This course will take us from historic through modern expressions of Islamic faith. We will learn about Islam through religious, philosophical, and historical texts, as well as through literature, poetry, music, food, Arabic and Persian art (painting, calligraphy and architecture) as well as through political manifestations of belief past and present. We will attend Friday prayers at the Grand Mosque in Parma and/or the African-American Mosque on the East Side to talk with members about their experiences as American Muslims, and, afterward, to enjoy Middle Eastern cuisine. If possible, we will embark on an additional fieldtrip to view Persian art or to attend a cultural performance such (as of the sema ritual, also known as the "whirling dervishes"). The goal of this course is to explore the basic premises of Islam while acquiring an appreciation of its diverse manifestations depending on various cultural contexts, especially how Islam manifests in our own society of the United States. Core: Social/Cultural Analysis Meth; Understanding Diversity Home

RELG 25300: BUDDHISM:IM: 4 Hour(s)

BUDDHISM ~ This course offers an introduction to Buddhist religious traditions. Students will be introduced to key historical periods of Buddhism in India, beginning with the life and teachings of the historical Buddha; moving to the development of the "Teaching of the Elders" and early Indian Buddhism; continuing with the rise and development of the "Great Vehicle;" and ending with the "Diamond Vehicle." The course also emphasizes the expression of Buddhism outside India in varying cultural forms; we will focus on its manifestation in different geographical areas, such as Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia, Japan, and the Tibetan cultural area.

Core: Interpretive Methods

RELG 25800: RELIG IMGTN/REALITY/JURNEYS:IM: 3 Hour(s)

RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION REALITIES OTHERWORLDLYJOURNEYS:IM ~ A cross-cultural and interdisciplinary study of other realities and otherworldly topologies as imagined and discovered in both our own and other cultures and times. Focusing on the religious imagination in particular, this course introduces students to theories and methods of the phenomenology of religion, and theories of the imagination. The course also emphasizes the approaches taken and the alternative answers given by historians of religion with respect to traditional theories and open questions on consciousness and reality in Western and non-Western philosophy. Questions to be pursued in this course include: How seriously should we take visions of other realities? What is the role of "consciousness" in such vision? What is its relationship to "reality"? What is the relationship between imagination and discovery? How seriously should we take the imagination? What is the relationship between religious imagination and artistic and scientific creativity?

Core: Interpretive Methods

RELG 26000: CREAT/MINDFULNESS BUDDHISM: 4 Hour(s)

CREATIVITY AND MINDFULNESS IN BUDDHISM ~ This course is especially designed for both Religious Studies and Entrepreneurial Studies students, but will be relevant and compelling to anyone interested in Buddhist understandings and practices of creativity and mindfulness in relation to self-development in work, vocation, and other relevant life-situations. We focus on new forms of Buddhism arising in the United States that apply traditional teachings and practices of what Buddhists call "mindfulness"—and related aspects of the natural self, including creativity, spontaneity, and playfulness—to a 21st-century context. Students ground themselves in the historical and thematic foundations of four essential manifestations of Buddhism—Theravada, Mahayana, Zen, and Tibetan—before studying the appropriation of ideas and practices of creativity, mindfulness, contemplation, and vision, from these traditions, and applied to new life-situations. We analyze, interpret, evaluate, and apply a variety of these teachings and practices, drawing on case studies and works from a wide variety of contemporary Buddhist teachers and practitioners. This course will contain several experiential components, based on Buddhist methods, as students learn and apply various techniques such as creative journaling, contemplation/meditation, and creative visualization.

RELG 28000: SEM:: 1-4 Hour(s)

SEMINAR ~ This course is for the general student to introduce them to a current topic in religious studies.

RELG 28100: INDEPENDENT STUDY: 1-4 Hour(s)

INDEPENDENT STUDY ~ This offering provides an opportunity for students to pursue a topic of their interest under the guidance of a faculty member.

RELG 28300: BIBLE STUDY:: 3 Hour(s)

TOPICS IN BIBLE STUDY ~ The purpose of this course is to provide students with the opportunity for in-depth study of the prophet Isaiah, or Jeremiah, Psalms or Proverbs, the Deuteronomic history, or a fascinating text from the Catholic Bible such as First or Second Maccabees, or from the New Testament, perhaps the Gospel of Matthew or John, the Acts of the Apostles, or the Apocalypse. Because necessary introduction will be part of the class lectures, there is no prerequisite. This course is repeatable. An version of RELG 28310 for four (4) semester hours is also available.

RELG 28310: BIBLE STUDY:: 4 Hour(s)

TOPICS IN BIBLE STUDY ~ The purpose of this course is to provide students with the opportunity for in-depth study of the prophet Isaiah, or Jeremiah, Psalms or Proverbs, the Deuteronomic history, or a fascinating text from the Catholic Bible such as First or Second Maccabees, or from the New Testament, perhaps the Gospel of Matthew or John, the Acts of the Apostles, or the Apocalypse. Because necessary introduction will be part of the class lectures, there is no prerequisite. This course is repeatable. The course syllabus or the instructor will provide the course description for a specific course offering. An version of RELG 28300 for three (3) semester hours is also available.

RELG 28400: "LOST BOOKS": 3 Hour(s)

TOPICS IN THE LOST BOOKS OF THE BIBLE ~ The purpose of this course is to provide students with the opportunity for in-depth study of important early Jewish and Christian documents which did not find their way into either the Jewish or Christian canon of Scripture. There exist, for example, a variety of Christian gospels and fragments thereof, an Acts of Paul, various Jewish and Christian "revelations" the texts from Qumran, the Testaments of the Twelve patriarchs and many others. Because necessary introduction will be part of the class lectures, there is no prerequisite. This course is repeatable.

RELG 31100: SEM IN BIBLICAL LITERATURE:ES: 4 Hour(s)

SEMINAR IN BIBLICAL LITERATURE:ES ~ This seminar focuses on issues of special interest within the world of the Bible. It includes an offering on the historical Jesus and the gospels, as well as a comprehensive analysis of prophecy in ancient Israel.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

RELG 31200: ASIAN SEM:: 4 Hour(s)

SEMINAR IN ASIAN RELIGIONS ~ This seminar focuses on a selected topic in Asian Religions. Possible topics include a key figure (such as Shankara, Nagarjuna, or Chuang-tzu), a key text (such as the Bhagavad Gita, the Tibetan Book of the Dead, or the Tao-te-ching) or a particular set of related traditions (such as the Tantric traditions, Zen Buddhism, or Taoism). Additionally, we may study a selected theme comparatively in the context of Asian Religions. Possible comparative themes include models of ultimate reality, meditative disciplines and rituals of transformation, concepts and understandings of the self, or religious experiences and visions.

RELG 38000: SEM:: 1-4 Hour(s)

SEMINAR ~

RELG 38100: SPC TPC:: 1-4 Hour(s)

SPECIAL TOPICS ~

RELG 48100: INDEPENDENT RESEARCH: 1-4 Hour(s)

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH ~ This offering provides an opportunity for students to pursue a topic of their interest under the guidance of a faculty member. Prerequisite: at least two courses in religious studies and permission of the department.