Religious Studies

Department Website: https://divinity.uchicago.edu/academics/undergraduate-program-religious-studies

PROGRAM OF STUDY

The program in Religious Studies introduces students to the academic study of religion. Students in Religious Studies learn how to think, talk, and write about religion in a way that is well-informed, rigorously critical, and responsibly engaged. The study of religion investigates the way human societies construct practices, seek meanings, and pose questions about their world. These investigations may be constructive, cultural, and/or historical. Since it touches all facets of human experience, the study of religion is a crucial conversation partner with other fields of study and draws on the entire range of humanistic and social scientific disciplines. Students in the program can explore numerous religious traditions, including Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism, and are exposed to the sources, problems, methods, and methodologies of our diverse areas of study, including Biblical and Historical Studies; Ethics, Theology, and the Philosophy of Religions; as well as History of Religions, Anthropology, Sociology, and Religion and Literature. The interests of our students may be descriptive, explanatory, and/or normative.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Religious Studies majors have the option of pursuing one of two tracks: the Regular Track or the Research Track. Students in the Regular Track must take eleven courses for the major, including RLST 10100 Introduction to Religious Studies and at least one introductory-level (“Gateway”) course. There is no order in which these courses need to be taken. Students in the Research Track will also complete these requirements; in addition, they will complete a BA thesis during two BA seminars: RLST 29800 BA Paper Seminar I and RLST 29900 BA Paper Seminar II. Students who wish to pursue the Research Track must officially declare their intention to do so with the Director of Undergraduate Studies by the end of Spring Quarter during their third year. Only students in the Research Track are eligible for departmental honors. Students double majoring may submit one research paper for both majors by submitting the proper form to the Director of Undergraduates Studies.

Students with permission to enroll in graduate Divinity courses may count these toward the major. Students who wish to receive credit in the major for non-departmental courses must submit a petition to the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Such requests are decided on a case-by-case basis. NOTE: The Office of the Dean of Students in the College must also approve the transfer of all courses taken at institutions other than those in the University of Chicago. For more information, visit Transfer Credit (http://collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/thecollege/transfercredit/).

Introductory Course Requirement

Students in Religious Studies are required to take an introductory-level (“Gateway”) course. It need not precede other course work in the major, but students are advised to have completed it by the end of their second year. Gateway courses include (but are not limited to) RLST 11004 Introduction to the Hebrew Bible, RLST 12000 Introduction to the New Testament: Texts and Contexts of Interpretation, and RLST 11030 Introduction to the Qur’an. An updated list of the Gateway courses offered each year may be found on the program’s website.

Course Distribution

Religion is expressed in many forms throughout the world’s cultures, and the academic study of religion therefore requires multiple perspectives on its subject. Students of religion should have some knowledge of the historical development of specific religious traditions, understand and critically engage the ethical and intellectual teachings of various religions, and begin to make some comparative appraisals of the roles that religions play in different cultures and historical periods. To introduce students to these multiple perspectives on religion and to provide a sense of the field as a whole, students are required to take at least one course in two of the following areas. To identify the areas, refer to the RLST number range (see below).

A. Historical Studies in Religious Traditions: courses that explore the development of particular religious traditions, including their social practices, rituals, scriptures, and beliefs in historical context (RLST 11000 through 15000, 20000 through 22900).

B. Constructive Studies in Religion: courses that investigate constructive or normative questions about the nature and conduct of human life that are raised by religious traditions, including work in philosophy of religion, ethics, and theology (RLST 23000 through 29500).

C. Cultural Studies in Religion: courses that introduce issues in the social and cultural contingencies of religious thought and practice by emphasizing sociological, anthropological, and literary-critical perspectives on religion, and by raising comparative questions about differing religious and cultural traditions (RLST 26000 through 29900).

Senior Seminar and BA Paper

The two-quarter senior sequence (RLST 29800 BA Paper Seminar I and RLST 29900 BA Paper Seminar II) will assist students in the Research Track with the preparation of the required BA paper. During May of their
third year, students will work with the Director of Undergraduate Studies to choose a faculty adviser and a topic for research, and to plan a course of study for the following year. These must be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Students will take part in the BA Paper Seminar convened by a preceptor during Autumn and Winter Quarters. This seminar will allow students to prepare their bibliographies, hone their writing, and present their research. Students will register for RLST 29800 BA Paper Seminar I in the Autumn Quarter and for RLST 29900 BA Paper Seminar II in the Winter Quarter. The BA paper will be due the second week of Spring Quarter. The length is typically between thirty and forty pages, with the upward limit being firm.

This program may accept a BA paper or project used to satisfy the same requirement in another major if certain conditions are met and with the consent of the other program. The student will only have to take the BA Paper Seminars for one of the two majors. Approval from both departments is required. Students should consult with the departments by the earliest BA proposal deadline (or by the end of their third year, if neither program publishes a deadline). A consent form, to be signed by both departments, is available from the College adviser. It must be completed and returned to the College adviser by the end of Autumn Quarter of the student’s year of graduation.

**GRADING**

Religious Studies majors must receive quality grades in all courses in the major. With consent of instructor, nonmajors may take Religious Studies courses for P/F grading. Faculty will determine the criteria that constitute a Pass.

**HONORS**

Honors are awarded by the Divinity School’s Committee on Undergraduate Studies. Students who write senior papers deemed exceptional by their faculty advisers will be eligible for consideration for graduation with honors. Only students in the Research Track are eligible for honors. To be considered for honors, students in the Research Track must also have a 3.5 GPA or higher in the major and a 3.25 GPA or higher overall. Please see the program’s website for a full list of honors and awards.

**SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS**

**Regular Track**

RLST 10100  Introduction to Religious Studies  100
One Introductory-level (“Gateway”) course  100
At least two courses in three major areas (Historical, Constructive, Cultural Studies)  200
Seven additional courses in Religious Studies  700
Total Units  1100

**Research Track**

RLST 10100  Introduction to Religious Studies  100
One Introductory-level (“Gateway”) course  100
At least two courses in three major areas (Historical, Constructive, Cultural Studies)  200
Seven additional courses in Religious Studies  700
RLST 29800  BA Paper Seminar I  100
RLST 29900  BA Paper Seminar II  100
Total Units  1300

**MINOR PROGRAM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

The minor in Religious Studies requires a total of six courses. RLST 10100 Introduction to Religious Studies is required of all minors.

The remaining five courses should be chosen to reflect a broad understanding of the academic study of religion. Of these six, students must take at least one course in two of our three areas of study [Historical Studies (A), Constructive Studies (B), and Cultural Studies (C)]. Courses in the minor may not be double-counted with the student’s major(s) or with other minors, and may not be counted toward general education requirements. Courses in the minor must be taken for quality grades, and more than half of the requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses bearing University of Chicago course numbers.

The student must complete a substantial (at least 10–15 pages) paper or project. This work should engage critically with primary source materials and exemplify methodological sophistication in the study of religion, and should earn a grade no lower than B-. It is expected that this paper will normally be written as part of the student’s course work for the minor. The Director of Undergraduate Studies will approve the paper for fulfillment of this requirement.

Students who elect the minor program in Religious Studies must meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies to declare their intention to complete the minor. Consent to Complete a Minor Program forms are
Sample Program

The following group of courses would satisfy a minor in Religious Studies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RLST 10100</td>
<td>Introduction to Religious Studies</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 11004</td>
<td>Introduction to the Hebrew Bible</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 22701</td>
<td>Religion and Society in Medieval Spain</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 26311</td>
<td>Islam and Biomedicine</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 27602</td>
<td>Religion, Gender and the State</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 28705</td>
<td>Christian Iconography</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Units</td>
<td>600</td>
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RELIIGIOUS STUDIES COURSES

**RLST 10100. Introduction to Religious Studies. 100 Units.**

What is religion? Is it truth or an illusion? Is it an opiate or an effervescent? Is it the origin of civilization or the end of it? Is it some of these things, or none, or all? The task of defining religion has bedeviled scholars for centuries and remains a perennial concern in the academic field of Religious Studies. In this course we will explore some of the definitions of religion offered by scholars like Marx, Freud, Durkheim, James, Hurston, Long, de Beauvoir, DuBois, and Mahmood, as well as the methods, motivations, and historical contexts that made those definitions possible. Along the way we will survey some fundamental themes and issues in the field of Religious Studies. We will then apply what we learn to data outside the field, analyzing how religion is defined and deployed in films, novels, music, TikToks, Instagram reels, and our own brains. Ultimately the tools we acquire in the course will enable us to think through how we as humans organize and make sense of our world and our place in it.

Instructor(s): Richard Rosengarten
Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): This is the required intro course for RLST majors/minors.
Equivalent Course(s): SOCI 20541

**RLST 11004. Introduction to the Hebrew Bible. 100 Units.**

The course surveys the contents of the Hebrew Bible, through the concepts of book culture, literature, history, and religion. It introduces critical questions regarding the HB's figures and ideas, its literary qualities and anomalies, the history of its composition and transmission, its relation to other artifacts from the period, its place in the history and society of ancient Israel and Judea, and its relation to the larger culture of the ancient Near East in the Iron Age and Persian period (12th-4th cents. BCE).

Instructor(s): Simeon Chavel
Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. This course counts as a Gateway course for RLST majors/minors.
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 20504, NEHC 30504, JWSC 20120, HIJD 31004, BIBL 31000

**RLST 11030. Introduction to the Qur’an. 100 Units.**

The Quran’s historical setting, thematic and literary features, major biblical figures, and foundational narratives of the Quran. Explorations of medieval exegetical literature on the Quran and its reception in the early (8th-10th century CE) and medieval periods (11th - 15th century CE) will feature heavily in this course. Readings consist primarily of English translations of the Quran alongside a running commentary, as well as secondary articles.

Instructor(s): Yousef Casewit
Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. This course counts as a Gateway course for RLST majors/minors.
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30030, MDVL 10030, ISLM 30030

**RLST 12000. Introduction to the New Testament: Texts and Contexts of Interpretation. 100 Units.**

An immersion in the texts of the New Testament with the following goals: 1. through careful reading to come to know well some representative pieces of this literature; 2. to gain useful knowledge of the historical, geographical, social, religious, cultural and political contexts of these texts and the events they relate; 3. to learn the major literary genres represented in the canon (“gospels,” “acts,” “letters,” and “apocalypses”) and strategies for reading them; 4. to comprehend the various theological visions and cultural worldviews to which these texts give expression; 5. to situate oneself and one’s prevailing questions about this material in the history of research, and to reflect on the goals, contexts and methods of interpretation; 6. to become intelligent and critical “consumers” of biblical scholarship as it appears in academic and popular media; 7. to raise questions for further study.

Instructor(s): Margaret Mitchell
Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Interest in this literature, and willingness to enter into conversation with like-minded and non-like-minded others on the texts and the issues involved in their interpretation.

Note(s): This course meets the HS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. This course counts as a Gateway course for RLST majors/minors.
Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 12500, FNDL 28202, BIBL 32500
RLST 15100-15200-15300. Introductory Qur’anic Arabic I-II-III.

Introductory Qur’anic Arabic I. 100 Units.
This course is the first in a 3-quarter sequence “Introduction to Qur’anic Arabic” (IQA), which aims to provide students with foundational philological and reading skills by covering the essentials of Qur’anic/Classical Arabic grammar. The 3 quarters of IQA are sequential, and students are strongly encouraged to join in the first quarter. Exceptions can be made on a case by case basis.
Instructor(s): graduate student instructor TBD Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Graduate and undergraduate students from any department are welcome to register. The absolute minimum prerequisite for IQA I is knowledge of the Arabic script. Training equivalent to at least a quarter of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is highly desirable. The IQA sequence is also open to students who may have had more exposure to Arabic (modern or classical) but wish to acquire a solid foundation in Arabic grammar, and/or students who feel they are not yet ready for third-year Arabic courses.
Equivalent Course(s): NELC 30100, ISLM 30100

RLST 15200. Introductory Qur’anic Arabic II. 100 Units.
This course is the second in a 3-quarter sequence “Introduction to Qur’anic Arabic” (IQA), which aims to provide students with foundational philological and reading skills by covering the essentials of Qur’anic/Classical Arabic grammar. This course also features readings of select passages from the Qur’an, ʿadith and Tafsir. The 3 quarters of IQA are sequential, and students are strongly encouraged to join in the first quarter. Exceptions can be made on a case by case basis.
Instructor(s): graduate student instructor TBD Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Successful completion of Introductory Qur’anic Arabic I.
Equivalent Course(s): ISLM 30200, NELC 30200

RLST 15300. Introductory Qur’anic Arabic III. 100 Units.
This course is the third in a 3-quarter sequence “Introduction to Qur’anic Arabic” (IQA), which aims to provide students with foundational philological and reading skills by covering the essentials of Qur’anic/Classical Arabic grammar. This course also features readings of select passages from the Qur’an, ʿadith and Tafsir. The 3 quarters of IQA are sequential, and students are strongly encouraged to join in the first quarter. Exceptions can be made on a case by case basis.
Instructor(s): graduate student instructor TBD Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Graduate and undergraduate students from any department are welcome to register. The minimum prerequisite for IQA III is the successful completion of IQA II or equivalent training. The IQA sequence is also open to students who may have had more exposure to Arabic (modern or classical) but wish to acquire a solid foundation in Arabic grammar, and/or students who feel they are not yet ready for third-year Arabic courses.
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30300, ISLM 30300

RLST 17700. Advanced Readings in Classical Ethiopic (Ge’ez) 100 Units.
In this course we will read excerpts from literature written in Classical Ethiopic (Ge’ez), such as Enoch, Jubilees, ከልብና ከጆድ ቆንጫሽ, Beauty of Creation, and others, and review some basic grammatical structures of the language. Students will need a good grasp of the basic grammar of Ge’ez in order to take the class.
Instructor(s): Rebecca Hasselbach-Andee Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): LING 32700, GEEZ 20700, GEEZ 30700, BIBL 30700, LING 22700

RLST 20113. Heaven, Hell, and Life After Death. 100 Units.
What happens after people die? Nothing at all? Does the same thing happen to everyone after death, or is there some form of postmortem reward and punishment? If heaven exists, what is heaven like? How do beliefs about life after death influence behavior in this life? This course engages with these questions as we explore the development and diversity of afterlife beliefs in Judaism and Christianity, from antiquity to the present day. We will pay special attention to the various functions of afterlife beliefs at different points in history, including in our contemporary society. Is Marx correct that belief in heaven and eternal life legitimizes the social order and contributes to oppression on earth? Conversely, does the idea of postmortem rewards and punishments actually contribute to a more just society by motivating individuals to strive to live virtuously? By the end of the course, students will not only be familiar with Jewish and Christian conceptions of the afterlife, but also conversant in perspectives on postmortem existence found in classical philosophy that continue to inform how we think about death in the contemporary world. There are no prerequisites.
Instructor(s): Christine R. Trotter Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 20122, JWSC 20113

RLST 20201-20202-20203. Islamicate Civilization I-II-III.
Islamicate Civilization I. 100 Units.
This course covers the rise and spread of Islam, the Islamic empire under the Umayyad and early Abbasid caliphs, and the emergence of regional Islamic states from Afghanistan and eastern Iran to North Africa and Spain. The main focus will be on political, economic and social history.
Instructor(s): Ahmed El Shamsy Terms Offered: Autumn. This course will not be offered for the 2021-2022 academic year.
Note(s): The Islamicate Civilization sequence does not fulfill the General Ed requirements
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30201, ISLM 30201, HIST 15611, MDVL 20201, NEHC 20201, HIST 35621

RLST 20202. Islamic Civilization II: 950-1750. 100 Units.
This course, a continuation of Islamicate Civilization I, surveys intellectual, cultural, religious and political developments in the Islamic world from Andalusia to the South Asian sub-continent during the periods from ca. 950 to 1750. We trace the arrival and incorporation of the Steppe Peoples (Turks and Mongols) into the central Islamic lands; the splintering of the Abbasid Caliphate and the impact on political theory; the flowering of literature of Arabic, Turkic and Persian expression; the evolution of religious and legal scholarship and devotional life; transformations in the intellectual and philosophical traditions; the emergence of Shi’i states (Buyids and Fatimids); the Crusades and Mongol conquests; the Mamluks and Timurids, and the ‘gunpowder empires’ of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Moghuls; the dynamics of gender and class relations; etc. This class partially fulfills the requirement for MA students in CMES, as well as for NELC majors and PhD students.
Instructor(s): K. Hickerson Terms Offered: Winter. This course will not be offered for the 2021-2022 academic year.
Prerequisite(s): Islamicate Civilization I (NEHC 20201) or Islamic Thought & Literature-1 (NEHC 20601), or the equivalent
Note(s): The Islamicate Civilization sequence does not fulfill the General Ed requirements
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 15612, MDVL 20202, ISLM 30202, NEHC 20202, HIST 35622, NEHC 30202

RLST 20203. Islamic Civilization III: 1750-Present. 100 Units.
This course covers the period from ca. 1750 to the present, focusing on Western military, economic, and ideological encroachment; the impact of such ideas as nationalism and liberalism; efforts at reform in the Islamic states; the emergence of the “modern” Middle East after World War I; the struggle for liberation from Western colonial and imperial control; the Middle Eastern states in the cold war era; and local and regional conflicts.
Instructor(s): Orit Bashkin Terms Offered: Spring. This course will not be offered for the 2021-2022 academic year.
Prerequisite(s): Islamicate Civilization II (NEHC 20202) or Islamic Thought & Literature-2 (NEHC 20602), or the equivalent
Note(s): The Islamicate Civilization sequence does not fulfill the General Ed requirements
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 15613, ISLM 30203, HIST 35623, NEHC 20203, NEHC 30203

RLST 20210. Greek and Near Eastern Creation Stories. 100 Units.
This course will offer a comparative view of Greek traditions about the origin of the world (cosmogony) and the origin of the gods (theogony), and the multiple layers on which they were entangled with Near Eastern narratives. On the Greek side, we will focus on Hesiod, Homer, and the Orphic poems. Near Eastern sources will include Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Hittite, Phoenician, and Hebrew texts. The reading of primary sources will be done in translation (though students are always encouraged to check the texts in the original language for closer reading and discussion, if training allows). We will engage with secondary bibliography, especially works that take a comparative approach or discuss the comparative method. We will discuss the methodological challenges and advantages of comparative mythology and the phenomenon of cultural exchange, as revealed in these mythical and literary connection.
Instructor(s): Carolina López-Ruiz Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 20210, CLCV 20222

RLST 20270. Islam in African History. 100 Units.
From the early years of the spread of Islam to contemporary forms of religious expressive cultures, Islam has shaped and continues to shape the lives of people across Africa, where today roughly a third of the global Muslim populations resides. This course examines Islamic history in Africa as a religious orientation that informs architectural traditions, political elections, creative prose, and artistic expression. It investigates the diversity of Islamic cultures in Africa through historical writings, art, literature, and film, as well as examining the experiences of diasporic African Muslims in North America and Europe and the writings of Black American Muslims on the continent. Students will examine debates that animate this field of scholarship from the politics of the study of Islam, to debates about race and slavery within Islamic societies, to gender and society, to the diverse encounters with colonial states and struggles for decolonization. In addition to scholarship based on textual analysis, students will use visual and material sources, including mosque architecture, paintings, photography, films, and music to examine the past, present, and imagined futures of African Islamic expressive cultures in a global context.
Instructor(s): K. Hickerson Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Assignments: short papers, in-class presentation, alternative projects
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 25770, GNSE 25700, CRES 25700, HIST 25700

RLST 20401-20402-20403. Islamic Thought and Literature I-II-III.
This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. Taking these courses in sequence is recommended but not required.
RLST 20401. Islamic Thought and Literature I. 100 Units.
This sequence explores the thought and literature of the Islamic world from the coming of Islam in the seventh century C.E. through the development and spread of its civilization in the medieval period and into the modern world. Including historical framework to establish chronology and geography, the course focuses on key aspects of Islamic intellectual history: scripture, law, theology, philosophy, literature, mysticism, political thought, historical writing, and archaeology. In addition to lectures and secondary background readings, students read and discuss samples of key primary texts, with a view to exploring Islamic civilization in the direct voices of the people who participated in creating it. All readings are in English translation. No prior background in the subject is required. This course sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.
Instructor(s): Tahera Qutbuddin Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 25610, NEHC 20601, MDVL 20601, SOSC 22000

RLST 20402. Islamic Thought and Literature II. 100 Units.
This course covers the period from ca. 950 to 1700, surveying works of literature, theology, philosophy, sufism, politics, history, etc., written in Arabic, Persian and Turkish, as well as the art, architecture and music of the Islamicate traditions. Through primary texts, secondary sources and lectures, we will trace the cultural, social, religious, political and institutional evolution through the period of the Fatimids, the Crusades, the Mongol invasions, and the “gunpowder empires” (Ottomans, Safavids, Mughals).
Instructor(s): Ahmed El Shamsy Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Taking these courses in sequence is recommended but not required. This course meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.
Equivalent Course(s): SOSC 22100, MDVL 20602, NEHC 20602, HIST 25615

RLST 20403. Islamic Thought and Literature III. 100 Units.
This course covers the period from ca. 1700 to the present. It explores Muslim intellectuals’ engagement with tradition and modernity in the realms of religion, politics, literature, and law. We discuss debates concerning the role of religion in a modern society, perceptions of Europe and European influence, the challenges of maintaining religious and cultural authenticity, and Muslim views of nation-states and nationalism in the Middle East. We also give consideration to the modern developments of transnational jihadism and the Arab Spring. This course sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.
Instructor(s): A. Holly Shissler Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): SOSC 22200, NEHC 20603, HIST 25616

RLST 20410. Introduction to Islamic Studies. 100 Units.
This course is designed for graduate students who wish to learn about the tools, primary and secondary sources, references, journals, distinct subfields, and electronic resources available to researchers in Arabic and Islamic Studies. We will acquire first-hand knowledge and practice of basic skills that will help professionalize students in the field, and will discuss methodological and historiographical issues related to the study of Islamicate civilization in various historical, cultural, political, and religious frameworks.
Instructor(s): Yousef Casewit Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Basic ability to work with Classical Arabic.
Note(s): This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): ARAB 40010, ISLM 40010

RLST 20505. Pagans and Christians: Greek Background to Early Christianity. 100 Units.
This course will examine some of the ancient Greek roots of early Christianity. We will focus on affinities between Christianity and the classical tradition as well as ways in which the Christian faith may be considered radically different from it. Some of the more important issues that we will analyze are: “The spell of Homer.” How the Homeric poems exerted immeasurable influence on the religious attitudes and practices of the Greeks. The theme of creation in Greek and Roman authors such as Hesiod and Ovid. The Orphic account of human origins. The early Christian theme of Christ as Creator/Savior. Greek, specifically Homeric conceptions of the afterlife. The response to the Homeric orientation in the form of the great mystery cults of Demeter, Dionysus, and Orpheus. The views of the philosophers (esp. Plato) of the immortality of the soul compared with the New Testament conception of resurrection of the body. Ancient Greek conceptions of sacrifice and the crucifixion of Christ as archetypal sacrifice. The attempted synthesis of Jewish and Greek philosophic thought by Philo of Alexandria and its importance for early Christianity.
Instructor(s): David Martinez Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 20505, CLCV 26216

RLST 20668. Introduction to Agadic Literature of the Rabbinic Period. 100 Units.
We will make acquaintance with midrash, the idiosyncratic rabbinic method of textual interpretation of the Bible, concentrating on midrash aggadah, which deals with non-legal material (biblical narrative and ethical teachings). We will deal with questions of interpretation (how did the rabbis interpret the biblical text?), relevancy (in what ways did they view the ancient text as relevant to their lives?), and literature (an appreciation of the literary aspects and genres of midrash aggadah). Rabbinic readings will be compared with biblical interpretations of the Second Temple period (in Philo, Josephus, Apocrypha, and the Dead Sea Scrolls). Texts will be read in the original Hebrew and Aramaic with English translation.
Instructor(s): Paul Mandel (visiting professor) Terms Offered: Winter
Religious Studies

Prerequisite(s): Basic reading skills in biblical Hebrew desirable.
Note(s): This course meets the HS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): HIJD 30668, JWSC 20668, BIBL 30668

RLST 20751. Global Jewish History since the 1960s. 100 Units.
Jewish history around the globe since the mid-century watershed of the Holocaust and the establishment of a Jewish nation-state and a majority-Jewish Israeli society marked by radically new forms of Jewish culture and profound divisions of identity, ideology, and inequity; the unmaking of Jewish life in the Middle East and North Africa; the unprecedentedly full integration of American Jews into the political, economic, and cultural life of a global power; the total assimilation but stigmatization of Soviet Jews, and the further entanglement of Jewish and Palestinian life after 1967. Examines Jewish political, cultural, religious, and intellectual life with a particular focus on the creation and then ongoing crisis of secular Jewishness in Israel, the complexities of full integration in a dynamic but deeply fissured United States, the evolution of the Israeli-Arab conflict, and the deepening of Israeli domination over Palestinian life, feminism and the transformation of Jewish communal life, resurgent traditionalist religiosity, and rising disagreements over Zionism, identity, politics, and the Jewish future rolling Jewish communities.
Instructor(s): William Schultz Terms Offered: Autumn

RLST 20904. Introduction to Jainism. 100 Units.
Jainism has long been on the margins of Religious Studies, little known beyond its otherworldly emphasis on extreme forms of asceticism, nonviolence, and vegetarianism. This course seeks to expand this popular understanding of Jainism by posing a question: What does it mean to be a Jain in the world when the Jain religion is fundamentally otherworldly in its orientation? By reading ethnographies and historical studies alongside primary sources, this course will introduce students to Jainism as an enduring lived religion whose meaning and practice has changed over time, across regions, between sectarian communities, and in conversation with Buddhism and Hinduism. By the end of the quarter, students can expect to understand Jainism as a minor religion with a major impact.
Instructor(s): K. Moss Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Assignments: short and long papers, in-class presentations
Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 29538, NEHC 29538, HIST 29538

RLST 21304. Religion and the American Civil Rights Movement. 100 Units.
This undergraduate course examines the religious actors and institutions of the Civil Rights movement from the late 1950s to the early 1970s. We look at the evolution of religious and racial change from a number of different angles, trying especially to understand what the various reformers hoped to accomplish. We also will study the opponents of the black freedom struggle, paying attention to the religious and theological defenses of segregation and trying to understand how they persisted in different forms even when legal segregation in the South ended. Some time is devoted to understanding key concepts and moments: desegregation, integration, freedom, and equality, and the different meanings of personal and social transformation. Primary attention is on the black-white divide and most of my examples come from Christian individuals and traditions since they comprised the majority of activists on both sides of Civil Rights activism.
Instructor(s): Curtis J. Evans Terms Offered: Winter

RLST 21440. Fundamentalism. 100 Units.
Is fundamentalism a useful term that allows us to compare anti-modernist movements across a range of religious traditions? Or is it a hopelessly problematic term that lumps together vastly different phenomena? This course will use the troubled career of “fundamentalism” as a window onto the modern history of religion-and the people who study it. We will begin by focusing on the origins of fundamentalism: as a description of the political mobilization of conservative Protestants in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century. From there, we will broaden our perspective, considering how the term “fundamentalist” has been applied to Islamic, Jewish, and Hindu movements, as well as to secular phenomena like Marxism and nationalism. At each step of the way we will consider not only “fundamentalism” itself but also the people who study it and those who mobilize against it. Ultimately, we will ask: is fundamentalism an idea whose time has come again, or one whose time has come and gone?
Instructor(s): William Schultz Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): This course meets the HS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): RAME 41440, AASR 41440, HCHR 41440

RLST 21450. Coptic Bible. 100 Units.
The Coptic versions of the Bible present one of the earliest translations of Christian scripture as the new religion spread. Understanding how the Bible (canonical and non-canonical) was read and used in Egypt at this early stage implies studying the development of Christian communities in those agitated times, as well as paying attention to questions of literacy and linguistic environment, book production, Bible (both Greek and Coptic) on papyrus, and translation and interpretation in Antiquity. The course will draw on materials assembled from my work on the critical edition of the Gospel of Mark, but will also look into other materials like the Coptic Old Testament, and non-canonical scriptures such as Nag Hammadi and the Gnostic scriptures. No previous
knowledge of Coptic is required. A brief introduction to the Coptic language will be part of the class, and parallel sessions of additional language instruction will be planned for those who are interested in learning more.

Instructor(s): S. Torallas
Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 34118, BIBL 31418, NEHC 24118, CLAS 34118, CLCV 24118, MDVL 24118

RLST 21780. Poetry of the Hebrew Bible. 100 Units.
The course will survey poetic genres of the Hebrew Bible, their elements and tropes, scholarship on biblical poetry specifically, and approaches to poetry in general.
Instructor(s): Simeon Chavel
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): PQ: Introductory Biblical Hebrew I-III (BIBL 33900–34000 + Text course) or equivalent.
Note(s): This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 41780, BIBL 41780, NEHC 21780, HIJD 41780

RLST 21865. Zion and Zaphon: Biblical Texts from Seventh Century BCE Judah. 100 Units.
A reading course of biblical Hebrew covering multiple genres. Texts are selected around the theme of responses to the dramatic events of the 8th cent. BCE, when the Assyrian empire dissolved the Israelian kingdom and attacked the Judean. The course explores the concepts of history and historiography, memory, intertextuality, and political allegory as modes of literary composition and methods of historical interpretation.
Instructor(s): Simeon Chavel
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Introductory Biblical Hebrew sequence (BIBL 33900–34000 + Text course) or equivalent.
Note(s): This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): HIJD 44600, BIBL 44600, NEHC 44600, NEHC 21865, KNOW 44600

RLST 22010-22011-22012. Jewish Civilization I-II-III.
Jewish Civilization is a three-quarter sequence that explores the development of Jewish culture and tradition from its ancient beginnings through its rabbinic and medieval transformations to its modern manifestations. Through investigation of primary texts—biblical, Talmudic, philosophical, mystical, historical, documentary, and literary—students will acquire a broad overview of Jews, Judaism, and Jewishness while reflecting in greater depth on major themes, ideas, and events in Jewish history. The Autumn course will deal with antiquity to the medieval period; the Winter course will begin with the early modern period and continue to the present. The Spring course will vary as to special topic; for the Spring course to count towards the general education requirement in civilization studies, the student must also take the Autumn and Winter courses. Note: Jewish Studies revised its civilization studies courses in academic year 2018–19. Students who began the requirement prior to Autumn Quarter 2018 under the previous course options, may complete it with those courses that remain available, or (with prior approval from the JWSC director of undergraduate studies) they may combine them with the new course options, provided that they fulfill the requirement to take one JWSC course in the ancient or medieval period and one in the modern period. Only students who have taken JWSC courses prior to academic year 2018–19 are eligible to complete the program under the prior system.

RLST 22010. Jewish Civilization I: Ancient Beginnings to Medieval Period. 100 Units.
Jewish Civilization is a three-quarter sequence that explores the development of Jewish culture and tradition from its ancient beginnings through its rabbinic and medieval transformations to its modern manifestations. Through investigation of primary texts—biblical, Talmudic, philosophical, mystical, historical, documentary, and literary—students will acquire a broad overview of Jews, Judaism, and Jewishness while reflecting in greater depth on major themes, ideas, and events in Jewish history. The autumn course will deal with antiquity through the Middle Ages. Its readings will include material from the Bible and writings from the second temple, Hellenistic, rabbinic, and medieval periods. All sections of this course will share a common core of readings; individual instructors will supplement with other materials. It is recommended, though not required, that students take the three Jewish Civilization courses in sequence. Students who register for the Autumn Quarter course will automatically be pre-registered for the winter segment. In the Spring Quarter students have the option of taking a third unit of Jewish Civilization, a course whose topics will vary (JWSC 1200X).

Instructor(s): James Robinson, David Barak-Gorodetsky, Bevin Blaber
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 12000, JWSC 12000, NEHC 22010

RLST 22011. Jewish Civilization II: Early Modern Period to 21st Century. 100 Units.
Jewish Civilization is a three-quarter sequence that explores the development of Jewish culture and tradition from its ancient beginnings through its rabbinic and medieval transformations to its modern manifestations. Through investigation of primary texts—biblical, Talmudic, philosophical, mystical, historical, documentary, and literary—students will acquire a broad overview of Jews, Judaism, and Jewishness while reflecting in greater depth on major themes, ideas, and events in Jewish history. The Winter course will begin with the early modern period and continue to the present. It will include discussions of Spinoza and Mendelssohn, the nineteenth-century reform, the Holocaust and its reflection in writers such as Primo Levi and Paul Celan, and literary pieces from postwar American Jewish and Israeli authors. All sections of this course will share a common core of readings; individual instructors will supplement with other materials. It is recommended, though not required, that students take the three Jewish Civilization courses in sequence. Students who register for the Autumn Quarter course will automatically be pre-
registered for the winter segment. In the Spring Quarter students have the option of taking a third unit of
Jewish Civilization, a course whose topics will vary (JWSC 1200X).
Instructor(s): Kenneth Moss Jessica Kirzane Yiftach Ofek Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 22011, JWSC 12001, HIST 11702

RLST 22012. Jewish Civilization III: Language, Creation, and Translation in Jewish Thought and
Literature. 100 Units.

Jewish Civilization is a three-quarter sequence that explores the development of Jewish culture and tradition
from its ancient beginnings through its rabbinic and medieval transformations to its modern manifestations.
Through investigation of primary texts-biblical, Talmudic, philosophical, mystical, historical, documentary,
and literary-students will acquire a broad overview of Jews, Judaism, and Jewishness while reflecting in
greater depth on major themes, ideas, and events in Jewish history. The Spring course in 2022 will focus on
mothers and motherhood in modern Jewish culture. From sentimentalized keepers of Jewish tradition to objects of ridicule
burdened by stereotypes of overbearing, guilt-inducing behavior, Jewish mothers hold a prominent role in
Jewish self-representations. Writing alongside or against these stereotypes, Jewish mothers themselves have
struggled with the obligations and expectations of Jewish motherhood. Engaging with a variety of literary,
thematic, historical, and pop culture texts, this class explores Jewish feminisms in relation to motherhood,
Jewish fictions of motherhood, and the role of motherhood in Jewish religious life and thought. This course
includes material from a variety of different contexts for modern Jewish life, but places particular emphasis on
American Jewish history and culture.
Instructor(s): Na’ama Rokem Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Students who wish to take this course for Civilization Studies credit, must also take Jewish
Civilization I and II. The course may also be taken as an independent elective.
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 16004, JWSC 12001

RLST 22013. Jewish Civilization III - Mothers and Motherhood in Modern Jewish Culture. 100 Units.

Jewish Civilization is a three-quarter sequence that explores the development of Jewish culture and tradition
from its ancient beginnings through its rabbinic and medieval transformations to its modern manifestations.
Through investigation of primary texts-biblical, Talmudic, philosophical, mystical, historical, documentary,
and literary-students will acquire a broad overview of Jews, Judaism, and Jewishness while reflecting in
greater depth on major themes, ideas, and events in Jewish history. The Spring course in 2022 will focus on mothers and
motherhood in modern Jewish culture. From sentimentalized keepers of Jewish tradition to objects of ridicule
burdened by stereotypes of overbearing, guilt-inducing behavior, Jewish mothers hold a prominent role in
Jewish self-representations. Writing alongside or against these stereotypes, Jewish mothers themselves have
struggled with the obligations and expectations of Jewish motherhood. Engaging with a variety of literary,
thematic, historical, and pop culture texts, this class explores Jewish feminisms in relation to motherhood,
Jewish fictions of motherhood, and the role of motherhood in Jewish religious life and thought. This course
includes material from a variety of different contexts for modern Jewish life, but places particular emphasis on
American Jewish history and culture.
Instructor(s): Jessica Kirzane Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Students who wish to take this course for Civilization Studies credit, must also take Jewish Civilization I
and II. The course may also be taken as an independent elective.
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 16004, JWSC 12001

RLST 22014. Jewish Civilization III - Narratives of Assimilation. 100 Units.

This course offers a survey into the manifold strategies of representing the Jewish community in East Central
Europe beginning from the nineteenth century to the Holocaust. Engaging the concept of liminality-of a society
at the threshold of radical transformation-it will analyze Jewry facing uncertainties and challenges of the modern
era and its radical changes. Students will be acquainted with problems of cultural and linguistic isolation, hybrid
identity, assimilation, and cultural transmission through a wide array of genres-novel, short story, epic poem,
memoir, painting, illustration, film. The course draws on both Jewish and Polish-Jewish sources; all texts are read
in English translation.
Instructor(s): Bozena Shallcross Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 16004, JWSC 12001

RLST 22015. Jewish Spaces and Places, Imagined and Real. 100 Units.

What makes a ghetto, a ghetto? What defines a Jewish neighborhood? What determined the architectural form
of synagogues? Making extensive use of Jewish law and customary practice, cookbooks, etiquette guides, prints,
films, novels, maps, memoirs, architectural drawings and photographs, and tourist guides, this course will
analyze how Jews (in all their diversity) and non-Jews defined Jewish spaces and places. The focus will be on
Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, but we will also venture back into the early modern period and across
the Mediterranean to Palestine/Israel and North Africa and the Atlantic to the Caribbean and the Americas. We
will study both actually existing structures-synagogues, ritual baths, schools, kosher (and kosher-style) butcher
shops, bakeries and restaurants, social and political clubs, hospitals, orphanages, old age homes, museums and
memorials-but also texts and visual culture in which Jewish places and spaces are imagined or vilified. Parallel
to our work with primary sources we will read in the recent, very rich, scholarly literature on this topic. This
is not a survey course; we will undertake a series of intensive case-studies through which we will address the
larger issues. This is a limited-enrollment, discussion-based course in which both undergraduates and graduate
students are welcome. No previous knowledge of Jewish history is expected.
Instructor(s): Leora Auslander Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): In order for a Spring course to qualify as a civilization course for the general education requirement, the student must also take Jewish Civilization I and II. A Spring course, however, may also be taken as an independent elective.
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 11703, JWSC 12006

RLST 22110. Enlightenments: England & America. 100 Units.
Study in the historiographies of the Enlightenment in England and in America, with special attention to the "trans-Atlantic" communication of ideas regarding the nature of the person, religion, and the role of the political order.
Instructor(s): Richard Rosengarten Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): RLVC 42100, RAME 42100, HCHR 42200

RLST 22308. Phoenicians in Their Own Words (And Those of Their Neighbors) 100 Units.
The Phoenicians were a Canaanite people who maintained their language, religion, and culture until Roman times. One of the main challenges facing the study of the Phoenicians is that most of their literature is lost. This course gathers together a variety of emic sources in the Phoenicians' own language or stemming from the Phoenician realm but written in Greek or Latin, as well as sources written by others about the Phoenicians, with a special focus on religion and identity. The texts we will read and discuss range from the Amarna letters and Phoenician inscriptions (royal, funerary, votive), to the views about the Phoenicians in the Hebrew Bible, and Greek and Roman writers. This course is partly a text-based, reading course, and partly a thematic, culture course.
Instructor(s): Carolina López-Ruiz Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Intermediate knowledge (2 years) of a Semitic language (e.g., Hebrew, Phoenician, Aramaic, Ugaritic, Arabic) OR of ancient Greek and/or Latin.
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 42308, CLCV 22322, NEHC 22308, HREL 42308, CLAS 32322

RLST 22810. Hinduism of the Living and the Dead. 100 Units.
An introduction to Hinduism through the lens of everyday life, including popular shrines, roadside religion, ghost stories, digital representation, and traditions of the South Asian diaspora.
Instructor(s): Anand Venkatkrishnan Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): SALC 22810

RLST 23001. Confucian Philosophy and Spirituality. 100 Units.
The goal of this course is to introduce you to the central themes and texts of classical Confucian and Neo-Confucian traditions, both as philosophical works to be evaluated and digested for their doctrinal content and as literary artifacts from a perhaps unfamiliar cultural sphere. This will call for the development of two distinct but related sets of skills, namely, the ability to think through and comprehend philosophical arguments and ideas, and the equally crucial ability to reflect on one's own assumptions as they come into play in one's reaction to and evaluation of those ideas. Readings will include, from the classical period, the Four Books (Great Learning, Doctrine of the Mean, Analects of Confucius, Mencius), Xunzi, the Book of Changes, and from Sung-Ming Neo-Confucian writings of Zhou Dunyi, Zhang Zai, the Cheng Brothers, Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming.
Instructor(s): Brook Ziporyn Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): DVPR 33001, RLST 23201, HREL 33001, EALC 33001

RLST 23150. Capitalism and Doing Good? 100 Units.
This class asks the question: is it possible to believe in capitalism (i.e., the private ownership of wealth) and do good for society? Restated, are there values that can accompany capital accumulation for positive social impact on people and the environment?
Instructor(s): Dwight Hopkins Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): GLST 23150

RLST 23201. Confucian Philosophy and Spirituality. 100 Units.
The goal of this course is to introduce you to the central themes and texts of classical Confucian and Neo-Confucian traditions, both as philosophical works to be evaluated and digested for their doctrinal content and as literary artifacts from a perhaps unfamiliar cultural sphere. This will call for the development of two distinct but related sets of skills, namely, the ability to think through and comprehend philosophical arguments and ideas, and the equally crucial ability to reflect on one's own assumptions as they come into play in one's reaction to and evaluation of those ideas. Readings will include, from the classical period, the Four Books (Great Learning, Doctrine of the Mean, Analects of Confucius, Mencius), Xunzi, the Book of Changes, and from Sung-Ming Neo-Confucian writings of Zhou Dunyi, Zhang Zai, the Cheng Brothers, Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming.
Instructor(s): Brook Ziporyn Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): DVPR 33001, HREL 33001, EALC 33001, RLST 23201

RLST 23250. Introduction to Islamic Theology. 100 Units.
Survey of ideas and arguments formulated by renowned Muslim theologians and responses that their doctrines triggered. Major doctrines will be covered, starting with early debates over the nature of belonging to the Muslim community, the nature of God, revelation, prophecy, freewill and predestination. The course roughly follows
the historical development of Islamic theology in conversation with other Islamic sciences (philosophy, sufism, law), with a close examination of the confrontation between a group of rationalist theologians (Muḥtazilites), the traditionalist hadith-scholars, and the emergence of Sunni Ashārite theology between the 9th and 11th centuries. 

Instructor(s): Yousef Casewit Terms Offered: Autumn 

Note(s): No knowledge of Arabic is required. Reading materials will be in English. Open to graduate students. This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 23250, ISLM 36250, NEHC 36250

RLST 23314. Philo of Alexandria. 100 Units.
In this course we will read the Greek text of Philo’s de opificio mundi, with other brief excerpts here and there in the Philonic corpus. Our aim will be to use this treatise to elucidate the thought and character of one of the most prolific theological writers of the first century. We will seek to understand Philo as a Greek author and the nature and origins of his style, Philo as a proponent of middle Platonism, and Philo as a Jew in the context of Alexandrian Judaism. We will also examine his use of the allegorical method as an exegetical tool, and its implications for pagan, Jewish and early Christian approaches to sacred texts.

Instructor(s): David Martínez Terms Offered: Autumn 

Prerequisite(s): At least 2 years of Greek.

Equivalent Course(s): GERE 24600, BIBL 44500, FNDL 22314, GERE 34600

RLST 232808. Suffering, Grief, and Consolation. 100 Units.
Why do people suffer and die? How can we find comfort? Should we hope for a better future, focus our energies on making peace with the present, or attempt to do both? How do we cultivate joy in the midst of adversity?

Can pain be productive? The literature of ancient consolation engages these questions as it bears witness to the myriad ways in which ancient Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians attempted to comfort suffering people. The goal was not simply to defeat grief, but to replace grief with its opposite, joy. This course introduces students to ancient consolation literature, a genre composed of various literary forms (e.g., funeral orations, consolatory letters, apocalypses, prophecies) but united by a common store of vocabulary, expressions of sympathy, arguments against grief, and exhortations to admirable behavior amid hardship. We will read selections from Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch, the Bible, and various texts of early Judaism and Christianity. At the end of the course, we will bridge the horizons between ancient approaches to consolation and current debates about how to treat grief and facilitate human flourishing during hardship. While there are no prerequisites for the course, if there is sufficient student interest, the course may feature Languages Across the Curriculum (LxC) sessions in which students who have knowledge of Latin will be able to read select course texts (e.g., from Cicero and Seneca) in Latin. Participation in the LxC sessions is elective and s

Instructor(s): Christine R. Trotter Terms Offered: Winter 

Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 23823, JWSC 23808

RLST 232809. Pain, Truth, and Justice. 100 Units.
Why should the truth hurt? Does pain guarantee the truth told? Is pain the price of exposure to the truth? Does that make punishment just? In this course, we will take a historical and philosophical approach to examine the relations between pain, truth, and justice. In the premodern period, we will draw from Genesis, Sophocles’ Oedipus, Augustine, Tertullian, martyrdom accounts, and public penance in medieval Christianity. To study the theme in the early modern nation-state spectacles of punishment, colonial contexts, and contemporary scenes of justice, we will turn to the writings of Foucault, Fanon, and others. Over the course of the historical and philosophical examinations, we will trace the themes of body, affect, and performance; truth, law, and ritual; power, religion, and the nation-state. In the end, we will turn a critical eye to contemporary cultural discourses and representations of pain, truth, and justice in the arts, law, literature, philosophy, and politics.

Instructor(s): Maureen Kelly Terms Offered: Spring 

Prerequisite(s): No prerequisites 

Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 23809, CLCV 23809

RLST 232829. Foundational Readings in Christian Anthropology. 100 Units.
What is necessary for humans to flourish? How do the soul, body, and intellect relate? How did early Christians understand the human person, the effects of sin, and the nature of revelation? This course introduces students to the ways Origen, Augustine, Ephrem the Syrian, and Gregory of Nyssa approached these foundational questions and set trajectories for the subsequent development of Christian thought. We will pay particular attention to their interpretation of scripture, especially Genesis 1-3 and the Pauline Epistles. These theologians’ interpretations of scripture shaped Christian thinking about social structures, gender, class, and freedom in ways that continue to have an influence. For those unfamiliar with the intellectual history of early Christianity, this class will offer an opportunity to read consequential texts (in translation) from Latin, Greek, and Syriac authors that represent the diversity inherent within Christian literature. By the end of the course, students will have the skills to discern how these formative voices continue to shape Christian ethics and theology. For those interested in reading these authors in their original languages, I will offer optional weekly translation sessions in Latin, Greek, and Syriac.

Instructor(s): Erin Walsh Terms Offered: Spring 

Note(s): This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.

Equivalent Course(s): HCHR 33829, BIBL 33829, THEO 33829
RLST 23907. Gandhi and His Critics. 100 Units.
The moral and political writings of M.K. Gandhi constitute one of the most influential archives of ethics in the twentieth century. For a man so devoted to periodic vows of silence and withdrawal, he nevertheless left over ninety volumes of public speeches, personal correspondence, and published essays. A modernist arrayed against the brutalities of modernity, Gandhi’s thought encompassed concepts of sovereignty, the state, self and society, religion, civilization, and force. His insistence on cultivating technologies of the self as a response to both colonial and intimate violence was inspired by an eclectic range of source material. Generations of critical thinkers from around the world, including Black, feminist, Communist, and Dalit political activists, engaged with his ideas. This course explores several themes in Gandhi’s ethical thought and the responses they have generated.

Instructor(s): Anand Venkatakrishnan Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): This course meets the HS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. Equivalent Course(s): HREL 33907, FNDL 23907, CRES 23907, RETH 33907

RLST 24103. Bioethics. 100 Units.
This is a lecture and discussion class that will explore how a variety of philosophic and religious thinkers approach the issues and problems of modern dilemmas in medicine and science in a field called bioethics. We will consider a general argument for your consideration: that the arguments and the practices from faith traditions and from philosophy offer significant contributions that underlie policies and practices in bioethics. We will use a case-based method to study how different traditions describe and defend differences in moral choices in contemporary bioethics. This class is based on the understanding that case narratives serve as another core text for the discipline of bioethics and that complex ethical issues are best considered by a careful examination of the competing theories as work themselves out in specific cases. We will examine both classic cases that have shaped our understanding of the field of bioethics and cases that are newly emerging, including the case of research done at our University. Through these cases, we will ask how religious traditions both collide and cohere over such topics as embryo research, health care reform, terminal illness, issues in epidemics and public health, and our central research question, synthetic biology research. This class will also explore how the discipline of bioethics has emerged to reflect upon such dilemmas, with particular attention to the role that theology and philosophy have played in such reflection.

Instructor(s): Laurie Zoloth Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Graduate students will meet in a separate section. This course meets the CS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. Equivalent Course(s): BIOS 29216, HIPS 24103, RETH 30600, HLTH 24103, SIGN 26069

RLST 24114. Justice in the Struggle of History. 100 Units.
This course examines topics at the crossroads of religion and social ethics, namely, (1) the meaning and justification of conceptions of justice, and (2) the possibility of realizing justice within the flux of human history. The course moves in interlocking steps: (1) an inquiry into ancient religious and non-religious ideas of justice (The book of Amos, the Hebrew Prophet, and Plato’s Gorgias), the first Christian theology of History (Augustine’s City of God, selections), and Martin Luther’s Temporal Authority; (2) modern accounts (Immanuel Kant’s Perpetual Peace and John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism); and, (3) contemporary accounts (Martin Luther King, Jr. Letter from Birmingham Jail, Martha Nussbaum, Creating Capabilities, and Paul Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice). By the end of the course, we will have then come full circle to the questions, if not the answers, found in the ancient texts.

Instructor(s): William Schweiker Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Graduate students may petition to enroll.

RLST 24275. Chinese Buddhist Omnicentrism: Tiantai and Huayan. 100 Units.
In this course we will read and analyze the key texts (in English translation) of the two great classical "sinifying" Chinese Buddhist theoretical schools of the Sui, Tang, and Song dynasties: Tiantai and Huayan, with special attention to what is arguably their biggest shared innovation: the development of the classical Mahāyāna Buddhist idea of Emptiness (sūnyata) into the “omnicentric” idea that each entity, precisely through its emptiness, is in some sense present in all times and places, is eternal and omnipresent—and the controversies arising from the different justifications and implications advanced by the two schools for this shared doctrine. Readings will include the works of Zhiyi, Zhanran, and Zhili from the Tiantai school, and Dushun, Zhiyan, Chengguan, and Zongmi. Some basic background in Buddhist thought is recommended. Readings will be in English, but an optional reading group working with the original classical texts will likely also be convened.

Instructor(s): Brook Ziporyn Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. Equivalent Course(s): EALC 44275, MDVL 24275, DVPR 44275, EALC 24275

RLST 24550. Major Trends in Islamic Mysticism. 100 Units.
This course examines Islamic mysticism, commonly known as Sufism, through an exploration of English translations of some of the greatest masterpieces of Sufi literature in Arabic and Persian. The goal is to gain first-hand knowledge of a broad spectrum of literary expressions of Islamic spirituality in their historical context, and to understand exactly what Sufis say, and how they say it. Each of the units will comprise lectures and close readings of excerpts from the text in Arabic/Persian and English translation. The average reading load per unit is 100 pages.

Instructor(s): Yousef Casewit Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): No Arabic required. This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): GLST 24550, ISLM 32419, MDVL 24550, SIGN 26068

RLST 24175. On Dialogue: Introduction to a Genre. 100 Units.
The figure of Socrates is famous for engaging Athenians in dialogue, but what was so important and effective about this mode of exchange? How did Socrates' dialogue work as a philosophical exercise? Why was the dialogue suited to mediate between gods, Socrates, and citizens? In this class, we will take a philosophical and historical approach to the genre of dialogue, analyzing key moments in the genre and related texts to trace the relationships between the mode of dialogue, the role of the divinity, the obligations of the citizen, and the formation of the subject. Starting from the dialogue of Socrates, we will read from classical antiquity into the Christian context, with attention to the creative transformations of the genre and the changing notions of subject, god, and citizen. In the final turn, we will return to two canonical texts of modern philosophy, the Dialogues by David Hume and Dialogues by Jean-Jacques Rousseau to examine how modern philosophical texts deploy the mode of dialogue, invoke the classical and Christian modes, and transform the genre again.
Instructor(s): Maureen Kelly Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 24722

RLST 24801. Heidegger's Being and Time. 100 Units.
This course will provide a close reading of Martin Heidegger's Being and Time (1927) in translation. Our reading will be supplemented by portions of Heidegger's early lectures and seminars, as well as readings drawn figures such as Aristotle, Augustine, Kant, Nietzsche, Husserl. Themes to be discussed include: time, history, finitude, hermeneutics, and phenomenology.
Instructor(s): Ryan Coyne Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): THEO 31801, DVPR 31801, FNBL 24805

RLST 25005. Elective Affinities: Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure on the Return to God. 100 Units.
The return to God (or reditus) is one of the central themes in medieval mysticism and in mysticism more generally. But return signals much more than a state of mystical contemplation. It involves finding a path back to God, not as an escape for human beings who find themselves in turmoil in the world but as a way for them to articulate where they find their true, spiritual home. Return is in many ways more about carving out one's intellectual trajectory than about the ecstasy of achieving actual union with God. Deferral and suspense are as important as consummation. Finally, return is the mirror image of procession, the path that creation follows once it is set in the world. To understand return then, one has to begin at creation. This course will interrogate Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure, contemporary scholastic thinkers with respectively a more Aristotelian and a more Platonic profile, on the theme of return, seeing it both as a theoretical construct or object and as the lens through which they approach theology.
Instructor(s): Willemien Otten Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Knowledge of Latin will be helpful. This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): HCHR 45005, HIST 32109, THEO 45005, HIST 22109

RLST 25102. Reading Augustine's Confessions. 100 Units.
This course will carry out a close reading of Augustine's Confessions. We will study the work not only as a spiritual autobiography-a common approach-but also as a philosophical argument against various alternatives to Christian faith and practice in the late fourth century. With this bifocal approach in place, we'll examine how Confessions interrogates the quality of human love, fear, hatred, and regret; moral responsibilities to ourselves and others; the (anxious) awareness that we are limited in body and time; and how to craft an honest narrative of self-understanding. We will ask, Is religion a source of psychic health, or an obstacle to it? What sorts of problems is religion meant to cure? What problems do religious beliefs create? How does religion bear on the self's loves, its past, its mortality, its doubts? Along the way we'll ask whether it is possible to want to do evil, whether it is possible to love or grieve too much, what it means to be a friend-and how Augustine's answers to these questions presuppose a wider account of the order of the cosmos.
Instructor(s): Richard B. Miller Terms Offered: Spring. FNBL agreed to let RLST be parent of this new course
Equivalent Course(s): FNBL 27002, MDVL 25102

RLST 25130. Introduction to the Philosophy of Religions. 100 Units.
Open to graduate and undergraduate students, this course introduces major works and topics in Philosophy of Religions, with particular emphasis on works from doctoral qualifying exam bibliographies in the area.
Instructor(s): Daniel Arnold Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): DVPR 31400

RLST 25377. #Blessed: The Prosperity Gospel, The Bible, and Economic Ethics. 100 Units.
Is wealth a sign of divine favor? What would Jesus do when it comes to money? How does the Bible inform contemporary views of charity, economic ethics, and material possessions? This class examines the multiple messages about material wealth contained within biblical literature and the diverse ways these passages have been interpreted. After a survey of shifting approaches to economic ethics among Christians over the centuries, students will turn to the phenomenon of the "Prosperity Gospel" within the modern period. The class will query
the ways the Bible has been harnessed to an economic vision tied to capitalism and ostentatious displays of personal wealth. Previous knowledge of the Bible and the historical periods covered is not expected.

Instructor(s): Erin Walsh and William Schultz
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 25322

**RLST 25560. A Latinx Philosophy of Religion? Exploring the Religious Foundations of Latino Identity. 100 Units.**

In this class, we will explore Latinx identity from an unusual perspective: philosophy of religion. We will focus on the conditions of possibility, development, and problems of the Latinx religious experience and its theoretical articulation in Latinx theology and religious thought. To pursue this task, we will examine three key features of the Latinx experience: mestizaje (miscegenation), lo cotidiano (everyday life), and religiosidad popular (popular religiosity). In the first part of the class, we will turn to mestizaje: Is this concept useful to describe the Latinx experience despite its ties to the violence of colonialism? Can this term account for Afro-Latinos and indigenous peoples? In the second part, we will focus on the primary given to lo cotidiano by Latinx theologians. Is this primacy warranted? Is everyday experience self-evident or inherently better than abstract thought? Lastly, we will study religiosidad popular. Is the focus on popular religion a reflection of a Catholic bias? Can the focus on popular religion and its role in identity-formation overshadow questions of political and economic justice? The course concludes sketching alternative paths for Latinx theology/religious thought, stressing the importance of a greater plurality of perspectives and a more robust engagement with non-Christian and non-religious expressions of the Latinx experience. No prerequisites.

Instructor(s): Raul Zegarra
Terms Offered: Winter

**RLST 25704. Environmental Justice in Chicago. 100 Units.**

This course will examine the development of environmental justice theory and practice through social scientific and ethical literature about the subject as well as primary source accounts of environmental injustices. We will focus on environmental justice issues in Chicago including, but not limited to waste disposal, toxic air and water, the Chicago heat wave, and climate change. Particular attention will be paid to environmental racism and the often understudied role of religion in environmental justice theory and practice. Throughout the course we will explore how normative commitments are expressed in different types of literature as well as the basis for normative judgments and the types of authorities authors utilize and claim as they consider environmental justice.

Instructor(s): Sarah Fredericks
Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Graduate students need permission to enroll and will have additional requirements.
Equivalent Course(s): ENST 25704, CHST 25704, CRES 25704, PBPL 25704, KNOW 25704, AMER 25704

**RLST 25706. Climate Justice. 100 Units.**

Climate injustice includes the disproportionate effects of climate change on people who benefit little from the activities that cause it, generally the poor, people of color, and people marginalized in other ways. Given the complex economic, physical, social, and political realities of climate change, what might climate justice entail? This course explores this complex question through an examination of classical and contemporary theories of justice; the gendered, colonial, and racial dimensions of climate change; and climate justice movements.

Instructor(s): Sarah Fredericks
Prerequisite(s): Graduate students need permission to enroll and will have additional requirements.
Note(s): This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): GLST 25766, ENST 25706, CRES 25706, RETH 35706, HMRT 25706

**RLST 25809. Islamic and Jewish Political Philosophy. 100 Units.**

What can we learn about political philosophy from reading Muslim and Jewish thinkers? The flowering of political philosophy in the medieval Islamic world provides a mirror for examining our own assumptions about religion, politics, and philosophy. In this course, students read major works by Muslim and Jewish thinkers who debated whether and how to apply philosophical ideas to the political life of a community governed by divine laws. We will begin by discussing the transmission of Greek philosophy into Arabic-Islamic culture, the debates that ensued over the status of “foreign wisdom,” and the issue of esoteric writing. These preliminary topics provide necessary background for studying the tradition of political philosophy that developed under Islam and Judaism in the Middle Ages. Major themes include approaches to divine law, the figure of the philosopher-prophet, logic and language, scriptural interpretation, the place of the philosopher in society, and the nature of human perfection.

Instructor(s): Yonatan Shemesh
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): No prerequisites
Equivalent Course(s): IWSC 28809, MDVL 25809

**RLST 25910. bell hooks and Cornel West: Education for Resistance. 100 Units.**

Cornel West and bell hooks are two of the most influential philosophers and cultural critics of the past half-century. Their writings—including their co-authored book-address pressing questions about politics, religion, race, education, film, and gender. In different ways, they each find resources for hope, love, and liberation in an unjust social order. In this course, we will read selections from their writings over the last forty years alongside the authors who influenced their thinking (including Du Bois, Freire, Morrison, King, and Baldwin). We will pay special attention to how hooks and West communicate to popular audiences, how they engage religious traditions (their own and others’), and the role of dialogue in their thought and practice. The goal of the course is
not just to think about hooks and West, but to think with them about ethics, writing, American culture, and the aims of education. No prior familiarity with either author is required.

Instructor(s): Russell Johnson
Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 25911

RLST 26062. The Jewish Graphic Novel. 100 Units.

Over the past decade, there has been an explosion of "graphic novels" aimed at adult readers concerning Jewish society, history, and religion. This course explores the history of comics through the lens of its Jewish creators and Jewish themes, and the history of twentieth century Jewish culture through the lens of graphic storytelling. We learn to interpret this complex art form that combines words and hand-drawn images, translating temporal progression into a spatial form. Reading American, European, and Israeli narratives, our discussions will focus on autobiographical and journalistic accounts of uprooting, immigration, conflict, and loss. Authors whose work we will study include: Art Spiegelman, Rutu Modan, Leela Corman, Joann Sfar, Joe Sacco, R. Crumb.

Instructor(s): Na'ama Rokem
Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 20711, NEHC 26062, JWSC 20701, SIGN 26062

RLST 26301. Religion and AIDS. 100 Units.

The AIDS crisis was not an epoch that we survived. It is a battle that we are still fighting…when Americans talk about AIDS they are rarely just talking about a scientific problem or a pharmaceutical solution. They are instead offering a sociology of suffering and a plan for spiritual warfare.” - Kathryn Lofton Is it possible to understand current debates over public health or the role of religion in the public sphere without first examining religious responses to the AIDS crisis? This course focuses on the emergence of the AIDS epidemic during the peak of the American culture wars. As such, students will analyze the fraught intersection of political power structures, medical epistemologies, and religious views on bodies, sex, and public morality. Through a varied catalog of disciplinary frameworks, e.g., history, theology, medical ethics, sociology of religion, and history of medicine, students will weigh the accuracy of Lofton’s claim that for Americans, AIDS is more than just a disease. Thus, we will scrutinize moral rhetoric surrounding contraception and its public availability. We will discuss the extent to which religious philanthropy, especially on the international stage, reshaped approaches to global health. Finally, we will revisit the role of religious communities in providing both care for the sick and theological responses to suffering. Prior knowledge of religious studies and/or medical history is not required for the course.

Instructor(s): Mark M. Lambert
Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): CCTS 21014, HIPS 26301, HLTH 26301, PBPL 25301

RLST 26304. Religion and Abortion in the United States. 100 Units.

In American public discourse, it is common to hear abortion referred to as a "religious issue." But is abortion a religious issue? If so, in what ways, to whom, and since when? In this course we will answer these questions by tracing the relationship between religion and abortion in American history. We will examine the kinds of claims religious groups have made about abortion; how religion has shaped the development of medical, legal, economic, and cultural perspectives on the topic; how debates over abortion have led to the rise of a certain kind of political religions in the United States; and how issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and the body are implicated in this conversation. Although the course will cover a range of time periods, religious traditions, and types of data (abortion records from Puritan New England, enslaved people’s use of root medicine to induce miscarriage, and Jewish considerations of the personhood of the fetus, among others), we will give particular attention to the significance of Christianity in legal and political debates about abortion in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. There are no prerequisites for this course and no background in Religious Studies is required. However, this course may be particularly well-suited to students interested in thinking about how their areas of study (medicine and medical sciences, gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity, political science) converge with religion and Religious Studies.

Instructor(s): Emily D. Crews
Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): PBPL 25304, CCTS 21015, HIPS 26304, HLTH 26304

RLST 26316. Medical Innovation and Religious Reform in Early Modernity. 100 Units.

Through a survey of innovative medical authorities and religious reformers, students will investigate the co-constitution of two bodies of knowledge at a historical moment (the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) when questions of authority and epistemology are in considerable flux. This period has long been implicated in the “conflict thesis”-a hugely influential argument that portrays the centuries-long relationship between religion and science/medicine as an inherently adversarial one. This course shall scrutinize that argument through a discussion of seemingly contradictory examples where reformers that touted the all-encompassing reach of divine providence also promoted intricate public health infrastructures; where the Vatican increasingly relied on university-trained physicians to validate saints and their miracles; where theologians were viewed as authorities on Galen and responsible for medical breakthroughs; and where medicine and metaphysics were considered complementary pursuits. Ultimately, students will unveil a portrait not of conflict, but of a symbiotic relationship between religion and medicine. The goal of our course will then be to query why religious reformers were not only unthreatened by but also actively esteemed the medical arts as a valuable ally.

Instructor(s): Mark M. Lambert
Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HLTH 26316, HIST 24924, HIPS 26316, CCTS 21013
RLST 26603. The Holocaust in Jewish History and Global Culture. 100 Units.
Intensive introduction to Nazi Germany’s genocide campaign against the Jewish people, commonly referred to as the Holocaust, and some aspects of its aftermath in Jewish and global thought, culture, and politics. Particular attention to the multiple contexts of the Holocaust’s unfolding not only in Germany but across Europe; the range and legacy of Jewish responses at the time; the complex histories of Holocaust memory in Israel and around the world; the Holocaust in critical social thought (possible readings include Adorno and Horkheimer, Arendt, Du Bois, Bauman), the arts (possible artists include Sutzkever, Kovner, Celan, Pagis, Yehuda Poliker, Rouch and Morin, Tarantillo, Neutral Milk Hotel), and works of witness (possible readings include Ringelblum, Auerbach, Frank, Levi, Landsmann). Ways in which the Holocaust does, can, might, and should inform analysis of other instances of political mass murder and ethnicized/racialized mass violence also considered.
Instructor(s): K. Moss Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Assignments: short and long papers, in-class presentations. HIJD 36603 meets the Historical Studies (HS) Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): HIJD 36603, HIST 33412, HIST 23412, JWSC 23412

RLST 27075. The Latinx Religious Experience: Race and the Politics of Faith in the US. 100 Units.
Latinos? Hispanics? Latinx? How much do we know about one of the largest minorities (18.5%) in the USA? How does their culture shape their religious experience? What is the role of religion in their politics and activism? In this class we will explore these and other questions drawing from biographical narratives, history, sociology, and theology. In the first part of this course, students will be introduced to foundational biographical narratives and historical sources for studying the Latinx religious experience. In the second part of the course, students will examine the diversity of Latinx religion and the multiple functions of faith and devotion in the Latinx community. The course culminates with a close examination of three authors (Roberto Goizueta, Michelle González, and Nancy Pineda-Madrid) whose work allows us to understand the complex and diverse links between theological reflection, religious practice, and political action in the Latinx community. No prerequisites.
Instructor(s): Raul Zegarra Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 23326, CRES 27075, LACS 27075, AMER 27075, SOCI 20539

RLST 27180. Constitutional Law and the Palestinian-Arab Minority in Israel. 100 Units.
This course will provide an introduction to Israeli constitutional law with an emphasis on the case of the Arab and Palestinian citizens in Israel’s ethnic democracy. It explores the scope of the individual and group rights they enjoy, as well as their various limitations. The course will discuss constitutional issues arising inside Israel and issues arising with respect to the Occupied Territories. Students will be offered the opportunity to examine and critically evaluate key features of constitutional jurisprudence in Israel such as the concept “defensive democracy” plays in Israeli constitutional law, judicial decision concerning voting rights, freedom of expression, housing, equality and anti-discrimination, social rights, and cultural rights. The course assumes no previous knowledge of law or Israeli legal system. It is available for both undergraduate and graduate students. Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 23326, CRES 27075, LACS 27075, AMER 27075, SOCI 20539

RLST 27501. Indigenous Religions, Health, and Healing. 100 Units.
This course introduces students to the dynamic, often-contested understandings of health, healing, and religion among the Indigenous peoples of the Americas. Our task will be threefold: first, to examine the dramatic effects of settler colonialism upon the social determinants of health for Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas, including the Caribbean, Mexico, United States, and Hawaii. Second, we shall attempt to understand healing practices as they are steeped in and curated by Indigenous traditions and religious beliefs. Our goal is to counteract centuries-old stereotypical images of Native peoples and challenge our preconceived notions of wellness, selfhood, and the boundaries of medicine. Third, we will reflect upon contemporary Indigenous approaches to health and healing with particular attention to the postcolonial hybridity of these practices. Throughout the course we will attend to a generative diversity of epistemologies, anthropologies, and religious worldviews with the ultimate goal that a renewed understanding of Indigenous healing traditions will augment our own approaches to global/public health and the study of religion.
Instructor(s): Mark M. Lambert Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 27520, HLTH 27501, CCTS 21016

RLST 27518. Praising the Gods: Greek Hymnic Poetry and Its Context. 100 Units.
In this course we will read a broad range of Greek hymnic poetry, starting with Hesiod’s invocation to the Muses in the Theogony, followed by a selection from the Homeric Hymns, the Orphic hymns, and later literary or philosophical hymns by Callimachus and Proclus. Close readings will explore matters of language, genre, and literary tropes, as well as the evolving religious and cultural context of the hymns through the long chronological span in which the genre was productive in Greek antiquity.
Instructor(s): Carolina López-Ruiz Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Two years of Greek.
Equivalent Course(s): CLAS 37522, CLCV 27522, HREL 47518

RLST 27652. Ethnography Before Modernity. 100 Units.
Although the culture concept and the science of anthropology are a product of modernity, ethnographic inquiry and prose genres go back to Greek, Near Eastern, and Huaxia historians. These sophisticated styles of thinking and writing about one’s own people in light of others-styles which crossed a broad range of premodern
disciplines like medicine, geography, and law-shaped the identities of ancient imperial/colonial powers and of minorities within their borders. As ethnography developed and spread throughout Roman, Persian, and Islamic civilizations, it continued to function as a crossroads for traffic between politics and the sciences, where both durable and long-forgotten ideas about the nature of humanity were drafted and sedimented. By tracing a wide arc of ethnographic inquiry and writing from Herodotus to the Renaissance, we will examine patterns in ethnographers' self-representations across periods and genres, considering both the political and the scientific implications of ethnographic literature. We will conclude with a reflection on the afterlife of ancient ethnographic tropes (e.g. "barbarian") and the reception of ancient ethnography in the invention of modern categories (e.g. "Aryan" and "Semite") which continue to circulate at the intersection of race, religion, and culture.

Instructor(s): James Adam Redfield Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Graduate students may enroll themselves after obtaining instructor permission with one or two paragraphs explaining their interest in the course and any prior preparation.
Note(s): This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): HREL 37652, HIJD 37652, JWSC 26603, CMLT 37652

RLST 28016. Religion and Politics in the United States. 100 Units.
This graduate course will focus primarily on the complex evolution of religion and politics from the early 20th century to the present. The class will involve a mix of historical/chronological approaches to grasp broad changes over time, case studies that give attention to close analysis of practice and meaning on the ground, and theoretical works that interrogate the meanings, overlaps, and constraints of the political and the religious. The aim of the course is to raise a number of questions that we will try to answer and explore together: why have certain theological and religious traditions tended to support positions labeled "conservative" or liberal? How have engagements with and understandings of race, gender, and sexuality changed over time and altered the intersections of religion and politics? In what ways do religious commitments, local practices, and theological visions shape views of the common good and national identity?
Instructor(s): Curtis Evans Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course meets the HS or SCSR Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): RAME 38016, HCHR 38016

RLST 2802. Iconoclasm and Animation. 100 Units.
This course will explore the fantasies of the animation of images both ancient and early Christian, both secular and sacred, as the backdrop to examining the phenomenon of iconoclasm as an assault on the image from pre-Christian antiquity via Byzantium to the Protestant Reformation. It will tackle both texts and images, the archaeological context of image-assault and the conceptual (indeed theological) contexts within which such assault was both justified and condemned.
Instructor(s): Jaš Elsner Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): The course will be taught over 5 weeks in the Spring Quarter on an intensive schedule. This course meets the LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): CICV 21316, RLVC 36302, ARTH 36302, ARTH 26302, CLAS 31316

RLST 28030. Introduction to Byzantine Art. 100 Units.
In this course we will explore works of art and architecture as primary sources on the civilization of Byzantium. Through the close investigation of artifacts of different media and techniques, students will gain insight into the artistic production of the Byzantine Empire from its beginnings in the fourth century C.E. to the Ottoman conquest in 1453. We will employ different methodological approaches and scholarly resources that are relevant for the fruitful investigation of artifacts in their respective cultural setting. In order to fully assess the pivotal importance of the visual arts in Byzantine culture, we will address a wide array of topics, including art and ritual, patronage, the interrelation of art and text, the classical heritage, art and theology, Iconoclasm, etc.
Instructor(s): K. Krause Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): For nonmajors, this course meets the arts, music, drama general education requirements.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 14006, MDVL 14006

RLST 28300. Art and Religion from the Roman to the Christian Worlds. 100 Units.
This course will be an introduction to Roman and early Christian art from the early empire to late antiquity. It will explore the significance of the changes in visual production in relation to different attitudes to religion and society; its specific and conflictive historiography; the particular issues involved in the move to Christianity and a Christian visual culture. We shall veer between an empirical inductive approach, looking at lots of stuff and a more general account of theoretical overviews that have been offered for Roman and late art - overviews that have been influential in the broader historiography of art history as a discipline.
Instructor(s): Jaš Elsner Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): The course will be taught over 5 weeks in the Spring Quarter on an intensive schedule. This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): CICV 28322, RLVC 38330, ARTH 38330, ARTH 28330, CLAS 38322

RLST 28404. Zen and Translation. 100 Units.
In terms of their teachings and practices the Ch’an / Son / Zen ( Soda Buddhist traditions in China, Korea, and Japan differed significantly in their respective cultural parameters even as they shared a Sino-centric body of textual materials. The translation of these shared materials into English occurred sporadically from as early as the late 19th century but was first systematically addressed in Kyoto from the 1960s. Ruth Fuller Sasaki
created a Zen practice center and a translation atelier at the Ryosen-an ( advocated by the Daitokuji Zen complex temple and staffed with both leading scholars of Buddhism in Japan and a new generation of Zen practitioners and writers from the West. Many of the original materials from these efforts are now held in the Special Collections of the Regenstein Library here at the University of Chicago. This course will be an examination of how Zen was initially interpreted, translated, and transmitted from the Sino-centric to the Anglophone world in the mid-20th century. The focus will be the actual notes and draft translations of key Zen texts as worked on at the Ryosen-an and its team of Japan-based scholars and practitioners. Supplemental readings will contextualize these efforts more generally with the history of Zen in the West.

**Instructor(s):** James Ketelaar

Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): HREL 38404

**RLST 28448. American Apocalypse: Visions of the End(s) of the World. 100 Units.**

Apocalyptic thought and millenarian movements have had a powerful and enduring influence in the US. This course starts with the Millerite movement of the mid-19th century and moves through a number of case studies in the 20th century. We explore theories of the widespread appeal of apocalyptic thought in the US and interpretations of key sacred texts and recurring ideas that inform and shape the contours of debates about the end of the world. Given the significant role that Christianity has played in discussions about the nature of an imminent apocalypse in the US context, most of the examples will be from the Christian tradition. Theoretical approaches to millenarian movements, practices, and rhetoric, however, are drawn from multiple religious traditions. A number of themes will be examined including the language of violent endings alongside visions of peace and harmony in conceptions of the end, the tensions between human agency and divine action in hastening the apocalypse, and understandings of and interactions with “the world” in view of fervent hopes for and prophecies of its imminent demise, among other things.

**Instructor(s):** Curtis Evans

Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): This course meets the H5 or SCSR Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.

Equivalent Course(s): AASR 48448, HCHR 48448, RAME 48448

**RLST 28499. How Did The Ancients Interpret Their Myths? 100 Units.**

How did the ancient Greeks interpret their own narratives about the gods? How did their encounter with Near Eastern mythologies shape their own story-telling, and how did their understanding and use of myths evolve with time? In this course, we will explore the ancient interpretation of myth from the archaic Greek to the Roman periods. First, we will focus on the cross-cultural adaptations of Near Eastern traditions in Greek epic (Homer and Hesiod), as a form of interpretation itself. Then we will discuss how ancient poets and thinkers interpreted and reinterpreted divine narratives, paying attention to their philosophical, literary, and cultural strategies, from Orphism and Plato to the Stoics and later philosophical schools, including Euhemerism and its engagement with Phoenician mythology.

**Instructor(s):** Carolina López-Ruiz

Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 28499, CLCV 28422, HREL 38499, CLAS 38422, NEHC 38499

**RLST 28511. Star Wars and Religion. 100 Units.**

This course puts religious texts into conversation with George Lucas’s popular Star Wars film franchise with an eye toward understanding the power of myth in human life. In interviews, Lucas said he took bits and pieces from a variety of religious traditions to create the mythology of Star Wars. Through close readings of the films and primary texts, students will analyze these influences and evaluate how well the films hold these religious elements together. This course is not an in-depth study of any one religious tradition, but draws elements from different traditions to shed light on the portrayal of religion within Star Wars (i.e., the Force) and the metaphysical and moral themes found in the Star Wars films.

**Instructor(s):** Russell Johnson

Terms Offered: Spring

**RLST 28603. Tragedy and the Tragic: Text/Theory/Event. 100 Units.**

The course aims to think about tragedy in history: as orchestrated dramatic practice and as unanticipated historical event. We will compare the conventions of tragic drama in ancient Greece and Renaissance England and will read a range of theorists of tragedy and the tragic (including such usual suspects as Aristotle and Nietzsche, but also Weil, and those who consider events that are beyond the ken of tragedy to characterize).

**Instructor(s):** Richard Rosengarten

Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): This course meets the LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.

Equivalent Course(s): RLVC 38603

**RLST 28612. The Global Revolt Against Liberalism. 100 Units.**

Is liberalism in crisis? Only ten years ago, the ideology that won the Cold War seemed to reign supreme. Values such as individualism, free enterprise, representative government, and religious tolerance, were seen as more than hallmarks of order, but the very goals to which every nation should aspire. Since then, however, in the United States and across the globe, the liberal consensus has been challenged by populists, socialists, religious traditionalists, and others. Some have protested the close relationship between liberalism and capitalism. Some objected to liberalism’s breakup of “organic” ethno-religious communities. And some maintained that liberalism is no more than Western imperialism with a human face. What happened? Were these revolts mere setbacks on the long ‘arc of history’? Or were they, rather, a reflection of a deep philosophic unease with the very premises of modernity? Is this the end of the liberal world order? What will replace it? And what is the role of religion in the contemporary political imagination? This class will combine readings in political theory, the philosophy
of history, and current events, to understand better these criticisms and gain some perspective on our present discontents. No prior knowledge is required.

Instructor(s): Yiftach Ofek
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): GLST 28612

**RLST 28710. Theological Genealogies of Modernity. 100 Units.**

Narratives about the origins of modernity typically attribute a key role to religious and theological considerations, although their significance is understood in various ways. The different roles ascribed to religious factors most often relate to whether the emergence of Western modernity is imagined to be a story of progress or decline. This seminar will explore the general form of genealogical approaches to modernity and how they serve to vindicate or critique aspects of the present. Indicative sources are works by Löwith, Blumenberg, MacIntyre, Merchant, Taylor, Milbank, and Gregory. We will consider such questions as the extent to which secular conceptions of history continue to draw upon covert theological principles; whether secular modernity lacks normative foundations; the nature of secularization and secularism; the historical relations between science and religion and their respective roles in the trajectory of the modern West.

Instructor(s): Peter Harrison (visiting fellow)
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Undergraduates may enroll themselves after obtaining instructor permission.
Note(s): This course meets the SCSR Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): RETH 39700, THEO 39700, AASR 39700

**RLST 28755. Making "I'll Take You There: The Life of Mavis Staples" at Court Theatre. 100 Units.**

Court Theatre has acquired the rights to Greg Kot’s 2014 biography of Chicago-born music legend Mavis Staples, “I’ll Take You There: Mavis Staples, the Staple Singers, and the Music that Shaped the Civil Rights Era.” Kot joins Court as consultant as the theater starts the work of adapting Mavis Staples’s life for the stage. He is the former music critic for the Chicago Tribune, editorial director of the multimedia music platform the Coda Collection, and co-host of Sound Opinions. This course invites students to take a lead role in Court’s creative development process for the Mavis Staples story. Using the methods of history, dramaturgy, biography and musicology, students will work with Kot and Court’s artistic team to map the story’s rich historical landscape, excavate the essential characters and identify the key events-social, political and musical-that a playwright might explore. Students will pursue individual research projects grounded in the epic journey of the Staples family and its powerful mobilizing role in the Civil Rights movement. Mavis Staples continues to blend gospel, blues, folk, rock and protest music in her work; her collaborators have included Bob Dylan, Prince, David Byrne, and Chuck D.

Students will trace the Staples family’s story via multiple archives to build a portfolio of sound recordings, oral history interviews, photographs, newspapers, film and video recordings that will help the bring the production to life. Kot will be a regular guest in class.

Instructor(s): N. Titone
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CHST 20755, MUSI 20755, TAPS 20755, HIST 20300

**RLST 28902. Second City, Sacred City: Exploring Religion in Chicago. 100 Units.**

The city of Chicago is famous for many things—from hot dogs, jazz, and The Great Fire to comedy, Al Capone, and deep-dish pizza. What often goes unrecognized about the so-called “Second City” is its rich and complex religious history. In this course, we will explore that history through in-person and online visits to some of Chicago’s most celebrated, overlooked, and contested religious sites (like Quinn Chapel, Moody Church, and Haymarket Square), as well as cultural institutions like DuSable Museum of African American History and the Art Institute. We will put these spaces into conversation with theories and ideas from the field of Religious Studies in order to map the topography of Chicago’s religious landscape and to discover why, how, and in what ways Chicago might be considered one of the country’s most sacred cities. This course will be taught in cooperation with Chicago Studies and will involve off-campus travel funded by the university. There are no prerequisites for this course and no background in Religious Studies is required.

Instructor(s): Emily D. Crews
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Must be able to travel off campus.

**RLST 28980. There’s an App for That: Religion in the Digital Age. 100 Units.**

Can you sit shiva (a Jewish mourning ritual) via Facetime? Is Christian communion really communion if the wafer is made of pixels? Can religious communities experience a feeling of sacred togetherness if its members only get together online? How does online worship change the kinds of religious people we are or may become? This course explores such questions and others that arise out of the relationship between religion and digital media. We will read theories about religious ritual; religion, space, and place; and religion and embodiment to think through what happens when religion leaves the material sphere and “goes online.” We will partner these theories with scholarly reflections on how one is able to study religion on the internet, attending to some of the many conceptual, logistical, and ethical issues that arise when we do. Once we have a grasp of scholarly reflections on digital religion, we will put them into conversation with data from apps, blogs, websites, digital games, streaming events, and online message boards to test their ideas and to ask and answer our own questions. In keeping with the themes of the course, our final assignment will be the creation of a collaborative digital project. There are no prerequisites for this course and no background in Religious Studies or digital technology is required.

Instructor(s): Emily D. Crews
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): GLST 28980
RLST 29035. Religion, Secularism, and Democracy. 100 Units.
This course will introduce the student to some seminal texts and more recent interventions in the ongoing
debate over how to conceptualize, negotiate, and structure relations between the modern state and the plurality
of religious and other philosophical commitments that obtain in modern liberal democracies. Readings will
be drawn from political theory, anthropology, sociology, comparative religion, and theology; and authors
will include John Rawls, Richard Rorty, Saba Mahmood, Talal Asad, Craig Calhoun, Tomoko Masuzawa, Jose
Casanova, Jurgen Habermas, Joseph Ratzinger, Steven D. Smith, William Cavanaugh, and Isaiah Berlin.
Instructor(s): David Lyons Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 29035

RLST 29100. History of Religions” and Japan. 100 Units.
Edmund Buckley was one of the first recipients of the Ph.D. degree from the University of Chicago. His
dissertation was published in 1895 with the title Phallicism in Japan. As a practitioner of the new “science of
religions,” Buckley carried out his field work in Japan and collected hundreds of objects to supplement his
historical and comparative research with copious examples of contemporary material culture. These talismans,
ritual objects, amulets, maps and guides to Buddhist and Shinto pilgrimage sites, portable statues, shrines for
traveling and the home, as well as numerous folk curios (such as phalli and kteis related to his research), were
kept by the University of Chicago and, over the decades, were moved many times. They now, or much of them
at any rate, reside within the Smart Museum of Art. They are uncatalogued, merely stored there, and are largely
unknown. This course will be an examination of the discipline of religionswissenschaft as it was applied to Japan
and the religious worlds therein. Buckley’s work, as well as the remnants of his collection, will serve as a major
resource. Moreover, close readings of the works of Anesaki Masaharu, Hori Ichiro, Joseph Kitagawa, Helen
Hardacre, and others, will enhance our understanding of the history of this discipline as applied to the religious
world of Japan.
Instructor(s): James Ketelaar Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): HREL 49100

RLST 29700. Reading and Research Course. 100 Units.
This is the Reading and Research independent study that RLST majors/minors can petition to take, in conjunction
with a faculty supervisor and the Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Divinity School.
Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter
Prerequisite(s): Consent of faculty supervisor and Director of Undergraduate Studies.
Note(s): Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form.

RLST 29800. BA Paper Seminar I. 100 Units.
This class meets weekly to provide guidance for planning, researching, and writing the BA paper.
Instructor(s): BA Preceptor TBD Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Consent of faculty supervisor and Director of Undergraduate Studies.
Note(s): RLST 29800 and 29900 form a two-quarter sequence that is required of fourth-year students who are
majoring in Religious Studies. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form.

RLST 29900. BA Paper Seminar II. 100 Units.
This class meets weekly to assist students in the preparation of drafts of their BA paper, which are formally
presented and critiqued.
Instructor(s): BA Preceptor TBD Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): RLST 29800 and 29900 form a two-quarter sequence that is required of fourth-year students who are
majoring in Religious Studies. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form.