

# Religious Studies

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Department Website: <https://divinity.uchicago.edu/undergraduate-program-religious-studies-0>  
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 are able to 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

A major in Religious Studies consists of twelve courses, including one introductory course and a two-quarter senior seminar. It is preferable that students consult the Director of Undergraduate Studies and declare their major in Religious Studies before the end of their second year. Students and the Director of Undergraduate Studies will work together to create a program of study. The goal is to develop depth in one area so that a satisfactory BA paper will be written in the fourth year. Students are encouraged to explore more than one religious tradition in their courses.

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 which students are enrolled as part of a study abroad program that is sponsored by the University of Chicago. For more information, visit Examination Credit and Transfer Credit.

## Introductory Course

Students in Religious Studies are required to take RLST 10100 Introduction to Religious Studies. 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. It will typically be offered every year during Autumn Quarter. This course will introduce students to some of the central themes in Religious Studies; its particular focus will vary according to the interests of the individual instructor.

## 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 each 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 25900).

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 28900).

## Senior Seminar and BA Paper

The two-quarter senior sequence (RLST 29800 BA Paper Seminar and RLST 29900 BA Paper) will assist students with the preparation of the required BA paper. During May of their third year, students will work with the preceptor 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 in the Autumn Quarter and for RLST 29900 BA Paper 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. 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. To be considered for honors, students must also have a 3.5 GPA or higher in the major and a 3.25 GPA or higher overall.

### Summary of Requirements

RLST 10100	Introduction to Religious Studies	100
One course in historical studies in religious traditions		100
One course in constructive studies in religion		100
One course in cultural studies in religion		100
Six additional courses in Religious Studies		600
RLST 29800	BA Paper Seminar	100
RLST 29900	BA Paper	100
Total Units		1200

### Minor Program in Religious Studies

The minor in Religious Studies requires a total of seven courses. RLST 10100 Introduction to Religious Studies is required of all minors. The remaining six 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 each 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 before the end of Spring Quarter of their third year to declare their intention to complete the minor. Consent to complete a minor forms are available from the student's College adviser or online at [https://college.uchicago.edu/sites/college.uchicago.edu/files/attachments/consent\\_minor\\_program.pdf](https://college.uchicago.edu/sites/college.uchicago.edu/files/attachments/consent_minor_program.pdf).

### Sample Program

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

RLST 10100	Introduction to Religious Studies	100
RLST 11004	Introduction to the Hebrew Bible	100
RLST 21801	Religion and Society in the Middle Ages	100
RLST 23603	Cosmos and Conscience: Looking for Ourselves Elsewhere	100
RLST 23900	Buddhist Thought in India and Tibet	100
RLST 22505	Histories of Japanese Religion	100
RLST 26800	The Mahabharata in English Translation	100
Total Units		700

### Religious Studies Courses

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

What are we talking about when we talk about religion? There are a multitude of answers to that question, and this course provides students with an entry way into a longstanding conversation—involving insiders, outsiders, and those in between—around the meanings of a word that indexes ideas of god and the gods, of origins and ends, and of the proper places of humans (and everything else, including animals) above, in, and below the globe. Talk about religion today is, in fact, cheap: this course will aim to promote a grammatical currency (morphology, vocabulary, syntax) to enhance the value of such talk. Instructor(s): Sarah Hammerschlag Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Required of students who are majoring in Religious Studies.

**RLST 12602. Introduction to the New Testament. 100 Units.**

This is an introductory course to the history and literature of the New Testament. Our primary focus will be to read select texts of the New Testament, with an emphasis on their literary nature, their historical problems and sources, their theological visions, and their historical, geographic, social, religious, political, and cultural contexts in early Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds. One will have the opportunity to situate one's questions about and approaches to these texts in light of the history of scholarly research and through critical reflection about the methods and goals of interpretation. Discussions groups will meet on Fridays.

Instructor(s): Margaret Mitchell Terms Offered: Winter  
Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 28205,BIBL 32602

**RLST 20230. Jerusalem: The "Holy" City. 100 Units.**

What makes a city "holy?" How is religious space created and contested? How can one city be claimed by three faiths? This course will attempt to answer these questions and many others by tracing the religious history of Jerusalem—a religious center for Jews, Christians, and Muslims—from its founding under King David to the modern Israeli/Palestinian conflict. For roughly three thousand years, Jerusalem has served as a site of creation, interaction, and conflict for these traditions and millions of their adherents. Using primary and secondary materials, along with theoretical works, we will analyze Jerusalem as an object of study in relation to common themes of Religious Studies like sacred space, pilgrimage, and myth.

Instructor(s): Marshall Cunningham Terms Offered: Spring  
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 26007,JWSC 21230,NEHC 20009

**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 course covers the period from ca. 600 to 950, concentrating on the career of the Prophet Muhammad; Qur'an and Hadith; the Caliphate; the development of Islamic legal, theological, philosophical, and mystical discourses; sectarian movements; and Arabic literature.

Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: Autumn  
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30601,SOSC 22000,HIST 25610,HIST 35610,ISLM 30601,NEHC 20601

**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): F. Lewis Terms Offered: Winter  
Note(s): Taking these courses in sequence is recommended but not required. This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.  
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30602,SOSC 22100,ISLM 30602,CMES 30602,NEHC 20602

**RLST 20403. Islamic Thought and Literature III. 100 Units.**

This course covers the period from ca. 1800 to the present, exploring the works of authors, film-makers, poets, intellectuals, political theorists, religious reformists and scholars of Islam who interpreted various aspects of Islam or Islamicate civilizations: the history of the former Dar al-Islam and the histories of modern Muslim-majority nation states; the encounter with colonialism and the West; attitudes toward "modernity"; calls for religious and social reform; ideas of political legitimacy; modern forms of spirituality; issues of gender, class, race, multiculturalism; the development of new genres of literature and art; etc. We focus primarily on Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine and Israel. The course focuses on encountering primary works (non-fiction, fiction, and poetry, films, music, etc.), contextualized through lectures, discussion and secondary readings.

Instructor(s): Franklin Lewis Terms Offered: Spring  
Note(s): This course does not apply to the medieval studies major or minor.  
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30603,SOSC 22200,NEHC 20603

**RLST 20408. The Bible and Archaeology. 100 Units.**

In this course we will look at how interpretation of evidence unearthed by archaeologists contributes to a historical-critical reading of the Bible, and vice versa. We will focus on the cultural background of the biblical narratives, from the stories of Creation and Flood to the destruction of the Jerusalem temple by the Romans in the year 70. No prior coursework in archaeology or biblical studies is required, although it will be helpful for students to have taken JWSC 20120 (Introduction to the Hebrew Bible).

Instructor(s): David Schloen Terms Offered: Winter  
Note(s): This course may be used to fulfill the College's general education requirement in civilization studies.  
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 20121,NEHC 30121,JWSC 20121

**RLST 20501. Islamic History and Society I: The Rise of Islam and the Caliphate. 100 Units.**

This course covers the period from ca. 600 to 1100, including the rise and spread of Islam, the Islamic empire under the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs, and the emergence of regional Islamic states from Afghanistan and eastern Iran to North Africa and Spain.

Instructor(s): F. Donner Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Taking these courses in sequence is recommended but not required. This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30501, HIST 25704, HIST 35704, ISLM 30500, NEHC 20501

**RLST 21304. Religion and the American Civil Rights Movement. 100 Units.**

This course is an introduction to the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, though some attention is focused on the emergence and the consequences of this period. We will begin the course with a discussion of the moral and religious assault on Jim Crow segregation and then move to religious opposition to racial and political inequality in American society. Although emphasis will be placed on religious protest against racial oppression and inequality, we also linger on religious support for segregation and racial injustice. Rather than a straightforward narrative of progress, the course will seek to understand how competing visions for racial justice and opposition to such visions came together in the aftermath of the height of Civil Rights activism.

Instructor(s): Curtis J. Evans Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): CRES 23104, HIST 28810

**RLST 21400. Latin American Religions, New and Old. 100 Units.**

This course will consider select pre-twentieth-century issues, such as the transformations of Christianity in colonial society and the Catholic Church as a state institution. It will emphasize twentieth-century developments: religious rebellions; conversion to evangelical Protestant churches; Afro-diasporan religions; reformist and revolutionary Catholicism; new and New-Age religions.

Instructor(s): D. Borges Terms Offered: Spring

**RLST 21601. Saints and Barbarians: The Conversion of Europe. 100 Units.**

How did Europe become Christian, and why? Who were these new Christians, and how did they shape what it meant to be Christian? What happened to those who were left out? And did Europe need to become Christian before it could become Europe? This course will examine these questions and more from the earliest stirrings of the new religion, through the fall of Rome and the barbarian invasions, the expansion of the Carolingian world, and the age of the Vikings. We will consider the relationship between the Church and the Roman state, Christian attitudes toward the barbarians, and the missions to northern Europe, as well as manifestations of religion in "popular" Christianity and the emergence of consciously Christian monarchies.

Instructor(s): L. Pick Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 22112

**RLST 22121. Censorship from the Inquisition to the Present. 100 Units.**

Collaborative research seminar on the history of censorship and information control, with a focus on the history of books and information technologies. The class will meet in Special Collections, and students will work with the professor to prepare an exhibit, *The History of Censorship*, to be held in the Special Collections exhibit space in the spring. Students will work with rare books and archival materials, design exhibit cases, write exhibit labels, and contribute to the exhibit catalog. Half the course will focus on censorship in early modern Europe, including the Inquisition, the spread of the printing press, and clandestine literature in the Renaissance and Enlightenment. Special focus on the effects of censorship on classical literature, both newly rediscovered works like Lucretius and lost books of Plato, and authors like Pliny the Elder and Seneca who had been available in the Middle Ages but became newly controversial in the Renaissance. The other half of the course will look at modern and contemporary censorship issues, from wartime censorship, to the censorship of comic books, to digital-rights management, to free speech on our own campus. Students may choose whether to focus their own research and exhibit cases on classical, early modern, modern, or contemporary censorship. This course is part of the College Course Cluster, The Renaissance.

Instructor(s): A. Palmer & S. McManus Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Admission by consent of instructor

Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 25417, CLAS 35417, HIST 35421, HIPS 25421, CHSS 35421, KNOW 21403, KNOW 31403, HREL 34309, SIGN 26010, HIST 25421

**RLST 22123. History of Skepticism. 100 Units.**

Before we ask what is true or false, we must ask how we can know what is true or false. This course examines the vital role doubt and philosophical skepticism have played in the Western intellectual tradition, from pre-Socratic Greece through the Enlightenment, with a focus on how Criteria of Truth—what kinds of arguments are considered legitimate sources of certainty—have changed over time. The course will examine dialog between skeptical and dogmatic thinkers, and how many of the most fertile systems in the history of philosophy have been hybrid systems which divided the world into things which can be known, and things which cannot. The course will touch on the history of atheism, heresy and free thought, on fideism and skeptical religion, and will examine how the Scientific Method is itself a form of philosophical skepticism. Primary source readings will include Plato, Sextus Empiricus, Lucretius, Ockham, Pierre Bayle, Montaigne, Descartes, Francis Bacon, Hobbes, Voltaire, Diderot, and others.

Instructor(s): A. Palmer Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): No prerequisites; first-year students welcome.

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 39516, CLCV 28517, CLAS 38517, HIPS 29516, CHSS 39516, KNOW 21406, KNOW 31406, HREL 39516, SIGN 26011, HIST 29516

**RLST 22650. Protestant Reformations. 100 Units.**

Martin Luther was the father of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century. However, in the course of the sixteenth century different forms of the Reformation came into being. This class focuses on the intellectual or theological history of the various reformation theologies of this era. The readings include Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli (the Swiss Reformation), John Calvin, and the Anabaptists. Subjects of these reformations include sin, the bondage or freedom of the will, the fall of reason, the nature of faith, the knowledge of God and of the self, and the doctrine of justification or salvation by faith alone.

Instructor(s): Schreiner, Susan Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 23009

**RLST 23030. Introduction to Phenomenology of Religion. 100 Units.**

General introduction to phenomenology to philosophy of religion, starting from Husserl into the 'theological turn of phenomenology', through Heidegger, Ricoeur, Levinas, Henry

Instructor(s): Jean-Luc Marion Terms Offered: Spring

**RLST 23303. Black Theology: An Introduction. 100 Units.**

In the 1960s, a group of black religious leaders began to discuss the relation between African American culture and the Christian religion. This course explores their creation, known as black theology of liberation. We will discuss the domestic, global, economic, cultural, and political contexts for the rise of this indigenous American phenomenon. And we will look at some of the theories, methods, and theologies of the pioneers in this field of inquiry.

Instructor(s): Dwight Hopkins Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): CRES 23303

**RLST 23506. Being Human in the Anthropocene. 100 Units.**

The Anthropocene is a proposed geologic age in which humans shape the earth on a planetary scale (e.g. through climate change). This scientific term raises many questions for religion and ethics about what it means to be human in the Anthropocene. What vision of humanity is implied by or presumed scholars of the Anthropocene? Is the term problematically or appropriately anthropocentric (human centered)? Does it recognize the uneven contributions to and burdens of environmental change between human communities? How do visions of time and/or humans from various religions challenge the very idea of the Anthropocene?

Instructor(s): Sarah Fredericks Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): ENST 23506

**RLST 23902. Self-Cultivation and the Way in Traditional China. 100 Units.**

In this course we will explore three distinct but interrelated modes of self-cultivation and the contemplative life from premodern China: those exemplified by the *Laotzi*, and in particular by those artists and philosophers who drew upon the text; by the Chan tradition in Tang and Song Buddhism; and by the Song Neo-Confucian philosopher and exegete Zhu Xi (1130–1200). We will read classic texts in these modes (and a few modern ones too) closely, attuning ourselves as best we can to their original contexts, and we will brood together on how we might use them in our own contemplative lives. Central to the course will be careful consideration of the different understandings of the Way (Dao) found in our texts and how these different Ways structured conceptions of the ideal human life.

Instructor(s): P. Copp Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): EALC 23902

**RLST 23903. Jainism: An Indian Religion and its Contributions to Philosophy. 100 Units.**

The course will introduce the history and doctrines of the Jaina religion and, in the second half of the quarter, turn to consider a selection of recent writings on Jaina philosophy in particular. Though there is no formal prerequisite, the course will presuppose a basic background in the study of Indian religions and philosophies, as is given, for instance, in Indian Philosophy I & II (RLST 24201, RLST 24202). Please contact the instructor (m-kapstein@uchicago.edu) if you are uncertain as to your prior preparation.

Instructor(s): M. Kapstein Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Open only to Juniors and Seniors

Equivalent Course(s): DVPR 32401, HREL 32401

**RLST 24304. Immanuel Kant's Critique of Practical Reason. 100 Units.**

This course is a careful reading and engagement with Immanuel Kant's fundamental text in moral theory. If time allows, the course will also consider elements of Kant's religious thinking in his philosophical theology.

Instructor(s): W. Schweiker Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): FNLD 21809, RETH 34304

**RLST 25125. Introduction to Philosophy of Religion. 100 Units.**

This course explores the Western philosophical tradition of reasoned reflection on religious belief. Our questions will include: what are the most important arguments for, and against, belief in God? How does religious belief relate to the deliverances of the sciences, in particular to evolutionary theory? How can we reconcile religious belief with the existence of evil? What is the relationship between religion and morality? In attempting to answer these questions we will read work by Plato, Augustine, Anselm, Hume, Nietzsche, and Freud, as well as 20th century discussions in the 20th Century analytic tradition. (B)

Instructor(s): B. Callard Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 25120

**RLST 25205. The Death of God: Atheism from Hegel to the Present. 100 Units.**

Nietzsche proclaimed the death of God more than a century ago, yet the meaning of this death remains contested. In this course we will examine its conceptual origins before turning to an in-depth study of Nietzsche and his interpreters. Does the death of God give rise to atheism or does it clear the way for a new conception of divinity? Does proclaiming this death lead us past religion or does it motivate a return to religious discourse and practice? We will raise these questions while reading figures such as Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Blanchot, Bataille, Derrida, along with more recent figures working in the continental and/or American contexts.

Instructor(s): Ryan Coyne Terms Offered: Autumn

**RLST 26150. Introduction to Buddhism. 100 Units.**

This course will be an introduction to the ideas and meditative practices of the Theravada school of South and Southeast Asian Buddhism, from ancient to modern times. It will study both classical texts and modern ethnography.

Instructor(s): S. Collins Terms Offered: TBD

Equivalent Course(s): CHDV 29701, SALC 29700

**RLST 26315. Christian Traditions and Medicine in the Late Modern World. 100 Units.**

What is the meaning of medicine in our contemporary world? How has it changed over time, and what are its normative conditions and challenges? What religious and spiritual resources might Christian traditions bring to bear on such questions?

This course rests on the assumption that contemporary challenges in medicine stem from a moral pluralism reflecting the cultural conditions of late modernity, as well as from a growing inability to maintain clinical excellence in an increasingly complex and bureaucratic health care system. We will first examine this assumption and its sociological, historical, and theological significance. In parallel, we will engage guest speakers throughout the course who will help us comparatively explore several Christian responses to modernity and to diverse domains of medicine. Lastly, we will critically explore James Hunter's constructive proposal of "faithful presence," and what that might mean in the context of medicine. Our goal, ultimately, will be to reflect on the conditions and challenges of modern medicine and to appraise the historical and theological resources that the Christian traditions may offer.

Instructor(s): John Yoon, Daniel Kim Terms Offered: Winter. Not offered every year

Prerequisite(s): Completed SOSC Sequence

Equivalent Course(s): CCTS 21004

**RLST 26622. Memory Bound: Jewish Memory and the Binding of Isaac. 100 Units.**

The story of the Binding of Isaac (Gen. 22:1-19) is perhaps the best known narrative in the Hebrew Bible. It may also be the least appreciated for its ongoing influence on Jewish identity and memory. We will apply social and memory theory to the Binding of Isaac (Genesis 22:1-19), and its interpretations in rabbinic literature, historical chronicles, and literature, in order to better understand the ways in which foundational narratives and cultural identities engage in a process of continuous mutual interpretation. We will also examine how technology and social media are customizing memory, and dramatically reshaping cultures and their collective memories.

Instructor(s): David Gottlieb Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 28750

**RLST 26623. Narratives of Assimilation. 100 Units.**

Engaging the concept of liminality—of a community at the threshold of radical transformation—the course analyzes how East Central European Jewry, facing economic uncertainties and dangers of modern anti-Semitism, seeks another diasporic space in North America. Projected against the historical backdrop of the end of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century, the immigration narratives are viewed through the lens of assimilation, its trials and failures; in particular, we investigate why efforts of social, cultural and economic inclusion cannot be mistaken with imposing on a given minority the values of majority. One of the main points of interests is the creative self's reaction to the challenges of radical otherness, such as the new environment, its cultural codes and language barriers. We discuss the manifold strategies of artistic (self-)representations of the Jewish writers, many of whom came from East Central European shtetls to be confronted again with economic hardship and assimilation to the American metropolitan space and life style. During this course, we inquire how the condition called assimilation and its attendants—integration, secularization, acculturation, cosmopolitanism, etc.—are adapted or resisted according to the generational differences, a given historical moment or inherited strategies of survival and adaptation. The course draws on the writings of Polish-Jewish, Russian-Jewish, and American-Jewish authors in English translation.

Instructor(s): Božena Shallcross Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): This course may be used to fulfill the general education requirement in civilization studies.

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 20223, NEHC 30223, REES 27003, REES 37003, JWSC 20223

**RLST 26801. Many Ramayanas. 100 Units.**

This course is a close reading of the great Hindu Epic, the story of Rama's recovery of his wife, Sita, from the demon Ravana on the island of Lanka, with special attention to the changes in the telling of the story throughout Indian history. Readings are in Paula Richman, *Many Ramayanas and Questioning Ramayanas*; the *Ramayanas of Valmiki* (in translation by Goldman, Sattar, Shastri, and R. K. Narayan), Kampan, and Tulsi; the *Yogavasishta-Maharamayana*; and contemporary comic books and films.

Instructor(s): W. Doniger Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor

Equivalent Course(s): FNLD 22901, SALC 42501, SCTH 40701, HREL 42501

**RLST 27550. Secrecy and Science. 100 Units.**

This course traces the relationship between openness, secrecy, and the construction of scientific knowledge. Our sources span several millennia of intellectual history, from cuneiform tablets containing glassmaking recipes and the “secrets of the gods,” to Medieval alchemical recipes, and to the first museums of natural history. We will investigate how and why science shifted from a subject intended for the elite few, to a more democratic ideal that embraced public demonstration. The role of patronage in the development of scientific knowledge, and the complex interaction between science and religion will be central to our discussions. Writing assignments will respond to thematic questions based on the readings.

Instructor(s): Eduardo Escobar Terms Offered: Spring  
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 24918, HIPS 27005, KNOW 27005

**RLST 27701. Religious Law, Secular Law, and Sexual Deviation-Ancient India. 100 Units.**

The Laws of Manu, the Arthashastra, and the Kamasutra. This course will compare these three important texts in order, first, to understand the social norms for religion and sexuality in ancient India (in The Laws of Manu); and then to discover how two widely accepted scientific texts (the Kamasutra, on pleasure, and the Arthashastra, on politics) challenged those norms.

Instructor(s): Wendy Doniger Terms Offered: Spring  
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 44009, SALC 44000, HREL 44009

**RLST 28309. The Bible, the Reformation, and Modernity. 100 Units.**

In celebration of the five hundredth anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, this course will examine the interpretation of the Bible both in the work of the Reformation’s founding figure, Martin Luther, and in one of the interpretive trajectories influenced by the Reformation, namely, modern biblical criticism. We will focus especially on the interpretation of the books of Genesis and Deuteronomy in Luther’s commentaries and in modern, critical scholarship. Themes to be addressed include faith, the hiddenness of God, idolatry, and the law.

Instructor(s): Jeffrey Stackert, Susan Schreiner Terms Offered: Winter

**RLST 28310. Byzantium: Art, Religion, Culture I. 100 Units.**

In this introductory seminar we will explore works of art and architecture as primary sources for Byzantine civilization. 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 foundation in the 4th century A.D. to the Ottoman conquest in 1453. We will employ different methodological approaches and 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, classical heritage, art and theology, Iconoclasm, etc.

Instructor(s): K. Krause Terms Offered: Winter  
Equivalent Course(s): RLCV 32302, ARTH 32302, ARTH 23202, HCHR 32302

**RLST 28610. Topics in EALC: Major Works of East Asian Buddhism. 100 Units.**

An exploration of key textual and artistic works of East Asian Buddhism, including Chinese translations of Indic scriptures such as the Lotus and Vimalakirti sutras, Chan/Soen/Zen treatises and dialogues, and important works of Buddhist visual and material culture, including shrine murals, devotional prints, reliquaries, and sculptures.

Instructor(s): P. Copp Terms Offered: Autumn  
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 10500

**RLST 29700. Reading and Research Course. 100 Units.**

No description available.

Terms Offered: Autumn, Winter, Spring

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. 100 Units.**

This class meets weekly to provide guidance for planning, researching, and writing the BA paper.

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 will register via pink slip.

**RLST 29900. BA Paper. 100 Units.**

This class meets weekly to assist students in the preparation of drafts of their BA paper, which are formally presented and critiqued.

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 will register via pink slip.







### Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Times was used instead of Trajan.

Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.