

RELIGION (RELG)

RELG 100 Religions of the World (3 credits)

The major religious traditions, with emphasis on basic beliefs and on the nature and diversity of religious awareness. Meets Gen Ed - Philosophical and Religious Perspectives.

RELG 101 Understanding Religion (3 credits)

An inquiry into our deepest religious questions and expressions, their implications, and their critical appreciation and assessment. Meets Gen Ed - Philosophical and Religious Perspectives.

RELG 102 Religious Ethics (3 credits)

The nature of ethical judgments, the meaning of moral concepts, the conditions of moral responsibility and the methodological presuppositions of ethical theories in philosophy and religion. Meets Gen Ed - Philosophical and Religious Perspectives.

RELG 185 The Arab World and Religion (3 credits)

This course examines the various manifestations of religion in modern Arab culture. Through works written by both Arab and Western authors, students will explore the major religions of the Arab world, and how they have shaped modern Arab culture. Course conducted in English. Students wishing to complete written work in Arabic should register under the ARAB number; students completing written work in English should register under the ARIN or RELG number. Meets Gen Ed - Global Cultural Perspectives. Mutually Exclusive with ARAB 185 and ARIN 185.

RELG 200 Old Testament/Hebrew Scriptures (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. The evolution of the ancient Hebrew worldview as developed in the collection of books that are commonly called the Old Testament. The course examines the literary, historical, social, and religious understandings of these sacred texts. It also compares Hebrew culture and scriptures with those of other Middle Eastern religions in the ancient world.

RELG 204 New Testament/Christian Scriptures (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. Literary and historical analysis of selected books from the Christian scriptures, from the gospels to the letters of Paul. The course explores the relationship between these sacred texts and those of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible. It looks at questions about the historical Jesus, the relationships among the gospel traditions, and the development of the early Christian tradition as visible in the letters of Paul and others.

RELG 207 American Religious Texts (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. This course examines original texts of American religious movements and traditions, such as Native American narrative and folklore, Evangelicalism, Mormonism, Westward missionary expansion, African-American narratives, hymns, sermons, and exhortations. Emphasis will be on the ways religion has served as an acceptable means of expression for women and minorities. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits.

RELG 208 The Qur'an (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. This course is designed to introduce students to Islam's holy book, the Qur'an. Students will be acquainted with the structure and meanings of the Qur'an in addition to studying different schools of interpretation of this text, past and present. The course focuses on investigating the role of the Qur'an in shaping Islamic beliefs and religious practices. It also provides a comparison between some Qur'anic themes and those in other religious writings, especially the Bible.

RELG 209 Introduction to Greek and Roman Religion (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100. A survey of religious thought and practices as they applied to individual, family and society among the Greeks and Romans, and how these items contributed to the religious life of the modern Western world. Mutually Exclusive with HUMN 209.

RELG 213 Buddhism (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106 or RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102. The exploration of Buddhist teachings, practices, history, and religious art in various Asian countries, notably India, Southeast Asia, Japan, and Tibet (may vary). No prerequisites, but RELG 100, Religions of the World, is suggested. Meets World Cultures Requirement.

RELG 214 Asian Texts (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. This course emphasizes critical analysis and interpretation of primary textual sources. Students will read and examine primary documents from each of the Asian religions, their traditional interpretations and recent understandings and applications of these texts.

RELG 215 Hinduism (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106 or RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102. An introduction to Hindu religious traditions, including philosophy, yoga practice, ritual workshop, and sacred art.

RELG 217 Taoism (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106 or RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102. An introduction to Taoist religious texts and traditions, including Tao Te Ching and Chuang Tzu; Taoist connections with traditional Chinese medicine and martial arts; Taoist ritual traditions; and sacred art. No prerequisites, but RELG 100 Religions of the World is recommended.

RELG 218 Death, Dying and Afterlife (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106 or RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102. This course is designed to give students the opportunity to study cross-cultural religious practices and attitudes toward death, dying and the afterlife. The course will cover the grieving process, rituals of death, and various cultural attitudes toward death, including symbolic "deaths" (initiations), and belief in limbo states, soul-survival, ghosts, heaven, hell, and karma and reincarnation.

RELG 220 Religion and Ethical Issues (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106 or RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102. An examination of religious perspectives on classic and contemporary ethical issues. Topics addressed include violence and war, biomedical issues, environmental issues, education, censorship, and marriage/family issues.

RELG 221 Religion and Culture (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. The interrelation of religion and culture in the formulation of human values and views, life-styles and institutions. Meets Gen Ed - Philosophical and Religious Perspectives.

RELG 223 Religion in the United States (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106 or RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102. The growth and development of various religious movements—Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and sectarian minorities—from colonial times to the present.

RELG 225 Religion and Social Activism (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106 or RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102. The impact of economic, social and political movements on religious belief and the ways in which religion has served as a catalyst for social change.

RELG 232 Body and Soul (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100, An exploration of current theories of the mind-body connection and their impact on medical treatments, from prevention to intervention to palliative care. The course will introduce students to the belief systems that have given rise to alternative forms of medicine in contemporary life. It will also look at scientific studies of the efficacy of alternative treatments and spiritually-based practices, like prayer and meditation, on health and wellness. Meets Gen Ed - Interdisciplinary Studies.

RELG 240 Asian Religions (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. The cultural and theological bases for the faith and practice of major Eastern religions—Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Taoism. Meets Gen Ed - Global Cultural Perspectives. Meets World Cultures Requirement.

RELG 246 Islamic Religious Traditions (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. The course will start by examining the rise of Islam through the eyes of two fundamental Islamic texts, the Qur'an and the biography of Prophet Muhammad. It will then explore the history of Islam's formative and classical periods (632-1258 CE) in terms of theology, philosophy, jurisprudence, and mysticism, while emphasizing diversity of perspectives. The heart of Islam will be approached through the teachings of the Qur'an, hadith and the Islamic intellectual tradition. The encounter between Islam and other religious traditions will also be traced briefly. Major trends in contemporary Islam (traditionalism, liberalism, revivalism, etc.) will be identified and discussed through the writings of their major proponents. Meets Gen Ed - Global Cultural Perspectives.

RELG 250 African Religions (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. An introduction to the indigenous cosmological concepts, ritual practices, and value systems of the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa. Variations on African religious beliefs and practices in the West Indies, such as Voodoo in Haiti, Santeria in Cuba, and Candomble in Brazil will also be examined. Meets Gen Ed - Global Cultural Perspectives. Meets World Cultures Requirement.

RELG 252 Africana Religions in the Americas (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. This course explores the influence of traditional African beliefs, cultures, and religious practices on faith traditions in the United States, Caribbean, and South America, which developed into new forms of religious experience and expression: the Black Gospel and Spiritualist traditions, Candomble, Kumina, Palo Mayombe, Santeria, Vodou, and faith-based liberationist movements. Meets Gen Ed - Global Cultural Perspectives. Meets World Cultures Requirement.

RELG 254 Native American Religion (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. An introduction to the religious traditions and spirituality of the Native American peoples. The course recognizes the value of oral tradition and ritual practices in Native American religions and cultures as well as the variety that exists within this set of traditions. Meets Gen Ed - Global Cultural Perspectives. Meets World Cultures Requirement.

RELG 256 Religion in Latin America (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. A survey of the ways religion, both indigenous and Western, has interacted with culture and society in Latin America. Particular emphasis is given to the diversity of religious expressions, including indigenous religions (Mayan, Aztec, and Quechua), syncretistic religions (i.e., Voodoo and Santeria), alternative and evangelical forms of Christianity, contemporary popular religious expression, and liberation theology. Meets Gen Ed - Global Cultural Perspectives.

RELG 267 Women and Religion (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106 or RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102. This course focuses on women's role and influence within their religious traditions, particularly in regard to beliefs and customs related to women in a range of religions. The course deals with questions such as the nature of women; gender and spirituality; and patriarchy, religion, and power Meets the Graduation Writing Requirement for majors in Religious Studies. Meets World Cultures Requirement.

RELG 273 The Holocaust: Religious Perspectives (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106 or RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102. A study of Nazi extermination of 6,000,000 Jews during World War II and the moral and religious issues raised by this event.

RELG 275 Inter-religious Encounters (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106 or RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102. This course explores problems, teachings, and outcomes connected with encounters between different religious communities and their practitioners. Through examination of particular religious groups in history and the present, and specific teachings or practices, students will investigate the causes of interreligious distrust or violence, as well as efforts to promote interreligious dialogue. Meets the Graduation Writing Requirement for majors in Religious Studies.

RELG 280 Study in World Religions (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100, PHIL 102, PHIL 106, RELG 100, RELG 101 or RELG 102 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. Topics announced each semester. May be repeated two times for a maximum of 9 credits.

RELG 282 Study in Religious Texts (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106 or RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. Topics announced each semester. May be repeated two times for a maximum of 9 credits.

RELG 284 Religion and Society (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106, RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. Topics announced each semester. May be repeated two times for a maximum of 9 credits.

RELG 286 Special Topics in Religious Issues (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 102 or PHIL 106, RELG 100 or RELG 101 or RELG 102 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. Topics announced each semester. May be repeated two times for a maximum of 9 credits.

RELG 301 Spirituality and Mysticism (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 221 or RELG 240 or RELG 246 or RELG 250 or RELG 252 or RELG 254 or RELG 256 or RELG 267 or RELG 280 or RELG 282 or RELG 284 or RELG 286 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. This course explores the spiritual ideals and mystical practices of individuals and communities who seek to transcend everyday experience. It examines how practices like chanting, prayer, meditation, contemplative or ecstatic movement, self-denial, or service to others serve as paths to self-realization and/or spiritual enlightenment. The focus will vary each time the course is offered. May be repeated one time for a maximum of 6 credits.

RELG 304 Feminist Views of Religion (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 221 or RELG 240 or RELG 246 or RELG 250 or RELG 252 or RELG 254 or RELG 256 or RELG 267. This course examines religious texts and traditions in light of recent feminist interpretations of these texts. It considers feminist criticisms of religious thought as it relates to women. It also explores recent developments in feminist religious thought, such as female-centered religious ritual and practice and eco-feminist/creation spirituality.

RELG 322 Religion and Peacemaking (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 221 or RELG 240 or RELG 246 or RELG 250 or RELG 252 or RELG 254 or RELG 256 or RELG 267. This course introduces students to the pacifist tradition in philosophy and religion, from its origins as a set of religious and philosophical ideals, to its current multifaceted, secular, and political forms. Students will examine and evaluate both pacifist thought and peace activism. Mutually Exclusive with PHIL 322.

RELG 324 Religious Experience (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 200, RELG 204, RELG 207, RELG 209, RELG 213, RELG 214, RELG 215, RELG 217, RELG 218, RELG 220, RELG 221, RELG 223, RELG 225, RELG 240, RELG 246, RELG 250, RELG 252, RELG 254, RELG 256, RELG 258, RELG 267 or RELG 273. This course explores the nature, causes, and significance of a variety of experiences deemed "religious" across a range of religious traditions, in addition to such experiences that occur among self-described "non-religious" persons. We'll begin by asking, "What makes an experience 'religious' or not?" Next, we'll consider some of the serious obstacles facing those seeking to study religious experience. From there, we'll analyze several categories of widely reported religious experiences (e.g. visions, spirit possessions, mystical union, near-death experiences). We'll also spend considerable time reflecting on classic ways religious traditions seek to invoke religious experiences, including: ecstatic dance, drumming, fasting, sleep deprivation, meditation, drugs, glossolalia, and sacred architecture.

RELG 325 Atheism (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 221 or RELG 223 or RELG 225 or RELG 267 or PHIL 212 or PHIL 233 or PHIL 239 or PHIL 262 or PHIL 270. How atheism fits into various philosophical traditions; the difference between agnosticism and atheism; what has motivated atheists to deny the existence of God at different cultural moments; why atheism is gaining ground today; how some types of atheism function much as religions do; what the role of science is in accelerating atheism in technologically-advanced societies; how atheists position themselves vis-à-vis theists; and additional related topics. This class is open to theists, atheists, and the undecided.

RELG 328 Jihad, Just War and the Prospect of Peace (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 220, RELG 221, RELG 225, RELG 246, RELG 267 or RELG 273. This course focuses on the study of jihad in the Islamic tradition. The course will first present to students the historical development of the idea of jihad since its inception in Islam's holy book, the Qur'an and collections of teachings attributed to the Prophet of Islam Muhammad (570-632 CE). Based on this study, students will learn the definition and types of jihad as primarily a religious struggle at the personal and social levels to achieve inner peace, communal and inter-communal harmony. The class will proceed to highlight the role of what is traditionally called "the lesser jihad," namely a necessary struggle to combat acts of aggression against the Muslim community. Here, students will learn the religious views on peacemaking and rules that govern the justification and conduct of war in the Islamic tradition as expressed in pre-modern and modern works on the subject. The course also aims to introduce students to Western scholarship on the topic of jihad.

RELG 332 Myth, Meaning and Self (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 221 or RELG 240 or RELG 246 or RELG 250 or RELG 252 or RELG 254 or RELG 256 or RELG 267. Selected psychological investigations and/or theories of religious phenomena; the implications for constructive theology and positive religious response.

RELG 342 Religion and Economics (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): Any 200-level RELG course; and ECON 101 and ECON 102 or prior approval by instructor. This course will explore the dynamics of belief, faith, experience and scarcity. We shall consider how religious institutions and doctrines relate to the expression of spiritual and economic development both as a cause and outcome of socio-economic factors. Issues such as religious extremism and market ideology will be approached from the perspective of various resource disparities, as well as their generation of novelty, meaning and well-being. We will trace varying religious views on money, inquire into the global economic presence of religious institutions, and use economic models to analyze religious behavior. Students can expect to develop insights and analytical tools necessary to better comprehend and respond to the challenges of producing religious and spiritual fulfillment in an increasingly virtual, and scarcity driven, world.

RELG 362 Philosophy of Religion (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): HUMN 285 or PHIL 237 or RELG 221 or RELG 240 or RELG 246 or RELG 250 or RELG 252 or RELG 256 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. A philosophical examination of religion. It includes the nature and shape of religious experience: criteria for meaning within religious thought and language, metaphysical and epistemological implications of such questions as the nature and existence of God, and the possibility of life after death.

RELG 363 Psychology of Religion (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): HUMN 285 or PSYC 203 or RELG 221 or RELG 240 or RELG 246 or RELG 250 or RELG 252 or RELG 254. This course explores the psychological study of religion, religious phenomena, and spirituality through an examination of classical and contemporary psychological theories of, and approaches to, the study of religion as well as the effects of diverse religious experiences and beliefs on individuals and groups.

RELG 364 Religion, Culture and Society (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): SOCI 201 or SOCI 220 or SOCI 230 or RELG 220 or RELG 221 or RELG 223 or departmental approval. The social bases of religious belief and practice; religion vs magic and sorcery; religion in a politico-economic and historical context; social psychology of comparative religions; secularization and its critiques; religion and globalization; religion and social inequality; race and gender in religion; religious movements, sects, and denominations. Mutually Exclusive with SOCI 364.

RELG 380 Study in World Religions (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 221 or RELG 240 or RELG 246 or RELG 250 or RELG 252 or RELG 254 or RELG 256 or RELG 267 or RELG 280 or RELG 282 or RELG 284 or RELG 286 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. Topic announced each semester. May be repeated two times for a maximum of 9 credits.

RELG 382 Special Topics in Religious Texts (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 221 or RELG 240 or RELG 246 or RELG 250 or RELG 252 or RELG 254 or RELG 256 or RELG 267 or RELG 280 or RELG 282 or RELG 284 or RELG 286 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. Topics announced each semester. May be repeated two times for a maximum of 9 credits.

RELG 384 Religion and Society (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 221 or RELG 240 or RELG 246 or RELG 250 or RELG 252 or RELG 254 or RELG 256 or RELG 267 or RELG 275 or RELG 280 or RELG 282 or RELG 284 or RELG 286 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. Topic announced each semester. May be repeated two times for a maximum of 9 credits.

RELG 386 Special Topics in Religious Issues (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 221 or RELG 240 or RELG 246 or RELG 250 or RELG 252 or RELG 254 or RELG 256 or RELG 267 or RELG 275 or RELG 280 or RELG 282 or RELG 284 or RELG 286 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. Topic announced each semester. May be repeated two times for a maximum of 9 credits.

RELG 400 Seminar (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 301, RELG 304, RELG 328, RELG 322, RELG 324, RELG 325, RELG 332, RELG 380, RELG 382, RELG 384 or RELG 386 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. Cooperative research seminar in major movements, problems, theologians. Topic announced each semester. May be repeated two times for a maximum of 9 credits.

RELG 405 Engaged Learning Project (3-6 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 301 or RELG 304 or RELG 322 or RELG 332 or RELG 380 or RELG 382 or RELG 384 or RELG 386. This is a capstone course that provides students with the option to do faculty-guided project-based work related to the role of religion in everyday life. Such work may take two primary forms: [1] field study/ethnographic research in religious communities and institutions, or [2] program and research assistance in (nonsectarian) non-profit, charitable, or community organizations that are engaged in work pertaining to religion. Students' engaged learning in this course will be paired with academic readings and writing assignments related to the impact of religion on individuals and in society, as assigned by the instructor. May be repeated for a maximum of 12 credits.

RELG 490 Independent Study in Religion (1-6 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 301, RELG 304, RELG 328, RELG 322, RELG 324, RELG 325, RELG 332, RELG 380, RELG 382, RELG 384 or RELG 386 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. Directed independent study and research in religious studies. Open to students with a minimum of 3.0 cumulative average in at least 9 semester hours of Religious Studies courses.

RELG 492 Independent Study in Religion (1-6 credits)

Prerequisite(s): RELG 301, RELG 304, RELG 328, RELG 322, RELG 324, RELG 325, RELG 332, RELG 380, RELG 382, RELG 384 or RELG 386 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. Directed independent study and research in religious studies. Open to students with a minimum of 3.0 cumulative average in at least 9 semester hours of Religious Studies courses.