

REL - Religious Studies

REL 147G Cults and Conspiracies (3 Credit Hours)

This course will explore why people believe conspiracy theories and why people become dedicated to religious cults or new religious movements, and will provide training in tools and strategies for examining truth claims of various groups.

REL 150P Life, Death, and Meaning (3 Credit Hours)

What is the meaning of life, and what role might the end of life play in living meaningfully? This course provides an introduction to philosophy and religious studies through an investigation of different views on death and the meaning of life from diverse cultures and identities. (Cross-listed with PHIL 150P)

REL 155E Human Nature (3 Credit Hours)

What ways of thinking, feeling, and acting are essentially human? This course focuses on some of the most influential and fascinating philosophical and religious accounts of human nature from diverse cultural perspectives. Topics may include the nature of human beings in relation to God, society, ethics, politics, knowledge, the environment, freedom, evolution, the mind, language, race, gender, and technology. (Cross-listed with PHIL 155E)

REL 226G Honors: Muslims & Media (3 Credit Hours)

Open only to students in the Honors College. A special honors section of REL 260G.

REL 235E Love, Sex, and Desire (3 Credit Hours)

Is love universal or culturally bound? Is sexual desire biologically driven or learned? This course provides an introduction to Philosophy and Religious Studies through an investigation of love, sex, and desire vis-a-vis ethical values and societal norms. (Cross-listed with PHIL 235E)

REL 260G Muslims & Media (3 Credit Hours)

Television, film, and journalism play an influential role in introducing Muslim life to broad audiences. This course provides an introduction to the representation of Islam in news and popular culture over the past century. In examining the relationship between Muslims and media we will develop information literacy skills and learn how to critically evaluate and interpret these sources.

REL 311 Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (3 Credit Hours)

An investigation of the Hebrew Bible on the basis of Biblical criticism and research. Attention is given to the cultural and historical background of these writings.

Prerequisites: junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy, or permission of the instructor

REL 312 New Testament (3 Credit Hours)

An investigation of New Testament literature and thought on the basis of Biblical criticism and research. Attention is given to the religious and cultural background of early Christianity, particularly in late Judaism.

Prerequisites: junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy, or permission of the instructor

REL 315 Qur'an (3 Credit Hours)

The course will examine the Qur'an, the scripture of Islam, as well as other sacred texts such as the Hadith literature (sayings of Muhammad) and the Sira literature (accounts of Muhammad's life). This course will explore the role of these literatures in the faith, culture, and history of Islam. Our survey will include explorations of the history and reception of various texts, their literary and stylistic features, and various themes such as mystical, legal, modern, and feminist interpretations.

Prerequisites: ENGL 110C

REL 333 Historical Jesus (3 Credit Hours)

This course examines the several quests to uncover the historical reality behind Jesus of Nazareth in modern biblical-historical scholarship, including the work of scholars like Albert Schweitzer, Rudolph Bultmann, and the many contemporary inquirers. Students are expected to have some familiarity with the New Testament and/or early Christianity.

Prerequisites: Junior standing and three semester hours in REL or PHIL

REL 350 Judaism (3 Credit Hours)

This course is a basic introduction to Judaism. We will explore the fundamental tenets of Jewish belief, examine primary expressions of Jewish ritual and practice, discuss the historical development of Judaism, and explore sacred texts, secular Yiddish texts, and contemporary issues confronting Jews and Judaism.

Prerequisites: ENGL 110C

REL 351 Christianity (3 Credit Hours)

A study of the Christian tradition, including its primary texts, historical development, intellectual tenets, and contributions to human culture. Specific attention will be given to Christianity as a way of life.

Prerequisites: three semester hours in philosophy or permission of the instructor

REL 352 Islam (3 Credit Hours)

A study of the Islamic tradition, including its primary texts, historical development, intellectual tenets, and contributions to human culture. Specific attention will be given to Islam as a way of life.

Prerequisites: three semester hours in philosophy or permission of the instructor

REL 353 Asian Religions (3 Credit Hours)

This course introduces students to several key religious traditions originating in Asia, such as: Hindu traditions in India; Confucianism, Daoism, and popular religion in China, Buddhism and Shinto in Japan; and Buddhist traditions of China, Tibet, and Mongolia. Students will read and analyze primary sources in English translation. By examining artifacts from literature, art, and poetry, students will also learn about cultural history. Throughout the course, we will be employing hermeneutical methods in the field of religions studies, such as methods of comparisons.

Prerequisites: ENGL 110C and 3 credits of PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

REL 354 African and African American Religious Traditions (3 Credit Hours)

This course surveys key historic and contemporary religions and socio-religious ideas that help shape African and African American life, culture and practices. It also reflects on culture and practice to discover ways in which lived experience shapes religious thought and practice.

Prerequisites: ENGL 110C and 3 credits of PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

REL 380 Hinduism (3 Credit Hours)

An intensive study of the basic teachings of Hinduism as manifested in its sacred writings.

Prerequisites: ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

REL 381 Buddhist Traditions (3 Credit Hours)

A study of the origin, historical development, and contemporary status of Buddhism, in terms of its religious and philosophical elements and its influence in Asian cultures.

Prerequisites: ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

REL 395 Topics in Religious Studies (3 Credit Hours)

The advanced study of selected topics designed to permit qualified students to work on subjects that, because of their specialized nature, may not be taught regularly. These courses will appear in the course schedule booklet and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors.

Prerequisites: 3 hours in PHIL or permission of the instructor

REL 396 Topics in Religious Studies (3 Credit Hours)

The advanced study of selected topics designed to permit qualified students to work on subjects that, because of their specialized nature, may not be taught regularly. These courses will appear in the course schedule and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors.

Prerequisites: three hours in PHIL or REL or permission of the instructor

REL 403/503 Gender and Sexuality in Islam (3 Credit Hours)

This course explores the shifting constructions of gender and sexuality in Muslim communities from the early period until the present, considering feminism, patriarchy, gender identity, masculinity, femininity, homosexuality, heteronormativity, and transgender people.

Prerequisites: ENGL 211C, ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C, and three credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

REL 451/551 Native American Philosophies (3 Credit Hours)

This course will provide students with an introduction to Native American philosophies with a focus on issues of identity, genocide, personhood, gender, sovereignty, and decolonization. Topics will be approached through a consideration of Native American philosophical methodologies and Native views regarding metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. (Cross-listed with PHIL 451)

Prerequisites: ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

REL 483/583 Tibet, Happiness, and this Precious Life (3 Credit Hours)

Throughout this course, students will examine Tibetan texts and artifacts that address the meaning of happiness and the human condition. The course covers the indigenous religion Bön; the four main Tibetan Buddhist traditions (Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyu, and Geluk), Islam in Tibet, and contemporary social issues, such as gender, identity politics, and the use of social media.

Prerequisites: ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

REL 495/595 Topics in Religious Studies (1-3 Credit Hours)

The advanced study of selected topics designed to permit qualified students to work on subjects that, because of their specialized nature, may not be taught regularly. These courses will appear in the course schedule and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors.

Prerequisites: 3 hours in PHIL or REL or permission of the instructor

REL 496/596 Topics in Religious Studies (1-3 Credit Hours)

The advanced study of selected topics designed to permit qualified students to work on subjects that, because of their specialized nature, may not be taught regularly. These courses will appear in the course schedule and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors.

Prerequisites: three hours of PHIL or REL or permission of the instructor

REL 497/597 Tutorial Work in Religious Studies (1-3 Credit Hours)

Independent reading and study of a topic to be selected under the direction of an instructor. Conferences and papers as appropriate.

Prerequisites: permission of the instructor

REL 498/598 Tutorial Work in Religious Studies (1-3 Credit Hours)

Independent reading and study of a topic to be selected under the direction of an instructor. Conferences and papers as appropriate.

Prerequisites: permission of the instructor

REL 503 Gender and Sexuality in Islam (3 Credit Hours)

This course explores the shifting constructions of gender and sexuality in Muslim communities from the early period until the present, considering feminism, patriarchy, gender identity, masculinity, femininity, homosexuality, heteronormativity, and transgender people.

REL 551 Native American Philosophies (3 Credit Hours)

This course will provide students with an introduction to Native American philosophies with a focus on issues of identity, genocide, personhood, gender, sovereignty, and decolonization. Topics will be approached through a consideration of Native American philosophical methodologies and Native views regarding metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. (Cross-listed with PHIL 551)

Prerequisites: ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

REL 583 Tibet, Happiness, and this Precious Life (3 Credit Hours)

Throughout this course, students will examine Tibetan texts and artifacts that address the meaning of happiness and the human condition. The course covers the indigenous religion Bön; the four main Tibetan Buddhist traditions (Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyu, and Geluk), Islam in Tibet, and contemporary social issues, such as gender, identity politics, and the use of social media.

Prerequisites: ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

REL 595 Topics in Religious Studies (3 Credit Hours)

The advanced study of selected topics designed to permit qualified students to work on subjects that, because of their specialized nature, may not be taught regularly. These courses will appear in the course schedule and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors.

Prerequisites: 3 hours in PHIL or permission of the instructor

REL 596 Topics in Religious Studies (3 Credit Hours)

The advanced study of selected topics designed to permit small groups of qualified students to work on subjects of mutual interest which, due to their specialized nature, may not be offered regularly. These courses will appear in the course schedule, and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors.

REL 597 Tutorial Work in Religious Studies (1-3 Credit Hours)

Independent reading and study of a topic to be selected under the direction of an instructor. Conferences and papers as appropriate.

REL 598 Tutorial Work in Religious Studies (1-3 Credit Hours)

Independent reading and study of a topic to be selected under the direction of an instructor. Conferences and papers as appropriate.

REL 697 Tutorial Work in Religious Studies (1-3 Credit Hours)

Independent reading and study of a topic to be selected under the direction of an instructor. Conferences and papers as appropriate.

REL 698 Tutorial Work in Religious Studies (1-3 Credit Hours)

Independent reading and study of a topic to be selected under the direction of an instructor. Conferences and papers as appropriate.