

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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Department Website: <https://divinity.uchicago.edu/academics/undergraduate-program-religious-studies> (<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 Research Seminar I and RLST 29900 BA Research 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 which students are enrolled as part of a study abroad program that is sponsored by 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 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 29500).

## Senior Seminar and BA Paper

The two-quarter senior sequence (RLST 29800 BA Research Seminar I and RLST 29900 BA Research 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 Research Seminar I in the Autumn Quarter and for RLST 29900 BA Research 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 Research Seminar I	100
RLST 29900	BA Research 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

available from the student's College adviser or online ([https://humanities-web.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/college-prod/s3fs-public/documents/Consent\\_Minor\\_Program.pdf](https://humanities-web.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/college-prod/s3fs-public/documents/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 22701	Religion and Society in Medieval Spain	100
RLST 26311	Islam and Biomedicine	100
RLST 27602	Religion, Gender and the State	100
RLST 28705	Christian Iconography	100
Total Units		600

RELIGIOUS STUDIES COURSES

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

Introduction to the Jewish/Hebrew Bible as literature with a material history. Surveys the genres in it, reviews scholarly theories about it and its sources, situates it in the history and culture of ancient Southwest Asia (Near East + eastern Mediterranean). Section features creative, mixed-modes student engagement and interaction. 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 30504, FNDL 11004, HIJD 31004, BIBL 31000, NEHC 20504, JWSC 20120

**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 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): FNDL 28202, MDVL 12500, BIBL 32500

**RLST 13900. Introductory Biblical Hebrew I. 100 Units.**

This course is the first of a two-quarter sequence designed to introduce students to the language of biblical Hebrew, with special emphasis on the fundamentals of its morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. The course follows a standard textbook supplemented by lectures, exercises, and oral drills aimed at refining the student's grasp of grammatically sound interpretation and translation. At the conclusion of the two-quarter sequence students will be prepared to take a biblical Hebrew reading course in the spring quarter.  
 Instructor(s): Tyler J. Harris Terms Offered: Autumn  
 Equivalent Course(s): BIBL 33900

**RLST 14000. Introductory Biblical Hebrew II. 100 Units.**

This course is the second of a two-quarter sequence designed to introduce students to the language of biblical Hebrew, with special emphasis on the fundamentals of its morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. The course follows a standard textbook supplemented by lectures, exercises, and oral drills aimed at refining the student's grasp of grammatically sound interpretation and translation. At the conclusion of the two-quarter sequence students will be prepared to take a biblical Hebrew reading course in the spring quarter.  
 Instructor(s): Tyler J. Harris Terms Offered: Winter  
 Prerequisite(s): BIBL 33900 in Autumn Quarter.  
 Equivalent Course(s): BIBL 34000

**RLST 14100. Introductory Koine Greek-1. 100 Units.**

In this two-course sequence, students will learn the basic mechanics of Koine Greek and begin reading texts from the Greek New Testament and Septuagint. The autumn course and the first three-fourths or so of the winter course will introduce the vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and style of the Greek New Testament, and to a limited degree those of the Septuagint, after which point we will focus on reading and interpreting a New Testament document in Greek at length. Upon the conclusion of the sequence, students will be able to read and comprehend entire passages of Koine Greek text with the aid of a dictionary. This sequence aims to prepare students to successfully participate in a Greek exegesis course.  
 Instructor(s): Richard Zaleski Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): BIBL 35100

**RLST 14200. Introductory Koine Greek II. 100 Units.**

In this two-course sequence, students will learn the basic mechanics of Koine Greek and begin reading texts from the Greek New Testament and Septuagint. The autumn course and the first three-fourths or so of the winter course will introduce the vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and style of the Greek New Testament, and to a limited degree those of the Septuagint, after which point we will focus on reading and interpreting a New Testament document in Greek at length. Upon the conclusion of the sequence, students will be able to read and comprehend entire passages of Koine Greek text with the aid of a dictionary. This sequence aims to prepare students to successfully participate in a Greek exegesis course in Spring quarter or thereafter.

Instructor(s): Doug Hoffer Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Must have taken BIBL 35100 in Autumn quarter.

Equivalent Course(s): BIBL 35300

**RLST 15100-15200-15300. Introductory Qur'anic Arabic I-II-III.**

Introductory Qur'anic Arabic I-II-III

**RLST 15100. 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, #adith 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, #adith 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, Kebra Nagast, 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

Prerequisite(s): Elementary Ge'ez 1-3 or equivalent

Equivalent Course(s): BIBL 30700, GEEZ 20700, GEEZ 30700, LING 22700, LING 32700

**RLST 20111. History of Death. 100 Units.**

From the treatment of mortal remains to the built environment of cemeteries, tombs, and memorials, the dead have always played a role in the lives of the living. This course examines how beliefs and practices surrounding death have been a source of meaning making for individuals, institutions, religious communities, and modern nations. It will ask students to consider how examining death makes it possible to better understand the values and concerns of societies across time and space. This course will consider case studies from Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, North America, Europe, and Asia, from the Middle Ages to the Vietnam War. It introduces students to the methods and debates that animate the historical study of death-coming from histories of the body,

social history, and the study of slavery-and ends by asking the question: "Is it possible to have a global history of death?"

Instructor(s): K. Hickerson

Note(s): Assignments: short papers, in-class presentation, alternative projects.

Equivalent Course(s): HLTH 20111, HIST 20111, GNSE 21111, CRES 20111

**RLST 20124. The Bible Throughout History: From the Dead Sea Scrolls to King James. 100 Units.**

While the collection of ancient texts found in modern Bibles appears fixed and is read by many people as a source of edification or theological insight, it has not always been this way. Though absent from most Bibles, there is an entire body of literature commonly known as "rewritten bible": early translations, retellings, or entirely new stories with familiar names and faces that update, retcon, or subvert their "biblical" sources. How might we understand these ancient forms of fan fiction? The class will introduce this corpus (including some of the Dead Sea Scrolls) and its sources, production, and historical contexts. We will confront significant problems in understanding religious texts: how is it that some texts become authoritative while other very similar texts do not? Who gets to retell foundational religious narratives, and within what social or political constraints? What does it mean to relate to sacred texts as artistic prompts or imperfect points of departure? Can a biblical text be rewritten for an entirely different religious tradition? We will consider similar questions for contemporary religious practice, asking: how did rewriting the Bible get started, and has it stopped?

Instructor(s): Doren Snoek Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 29908, MDVL 20124, CMLT 20124, FNDL 20124, JWSC 20924

**RLST 20130. Textual Amulets in the Ancient Mediterranean. 100 Units.**

Amulets with inscribed texts were used broadly by individuals and households and across ancient Mediterranean cultures for protection against evils, for curing disease, and for obtaining advantage over adversaries in all walks of life. In this course, we will survey a broad range of such amulets coming from the Levant, Mesopotamia, the Phoenician-Punic world, Greece and southern Italy, and inscribed on such varied materials as sheets of gold and silver, papyrus, ostraca and gems, while scrutinizing their material aspects, their cultural context, and their shared and distinctive features.

Instructor(s): Carolina Lopez-Ruiz, Sofia Torallas-Tovar, Christopher Faraone Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Classical or Near Eastern languages recommended but not required.

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

Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 27923, CLAS 37923, HREL 40130, NEHC 20130, NEHC 40130

**RLST 20201-20202-20203. Islamicate Civilization I-II-III.**

Islamicate Civilization I-II-III

**RLST 20201. Islamicate Civilization I: 600-950. 100 Units.**

This course is an introduction to the history and the study of early Islamicate societies, from the rise of Islam in late antiquity to the early Abbasid period (ca. 600-950 CE), considering various religious and social groups. We will look at the same historical arc from multiple perspectives: political events, such as the Muslim conquests and the rise of ruling dynasties, but also other factors that impacted people's lives in the early centuries of Islamic rule-the environment they inhabited and transformed, documents they created, social institutions, and economic activities. What broad developments characterized the early Islamic period? Who brought those changes about? And how are they studied today?

Instructor(s): CECILIA PALOMBO 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, NEHC 20201, HIST 15611, ISLM 30201, MDVL 20201, HIST 35621

**RLST 20202. Islamicate 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): Mustafa Kaya 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, NEHC 20202, MDVL 20202, NEHC 30202, HIST 35622, ISLM 30202

**RLST 20203. Islamicate 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): Carl Shook 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): ISLM 30203, HIST 15613, HIST 35623, NEHC 20203, NEHC 30203

### **RLST 20223. Magic, Miracles, and Medicine: Healthcare in the Bible and the Ancient World. 100 Units.**

This course examines the complex issues surrounding the body, disability, and medical care in antiquity. It will be guided by a variety of questions, such as what was the root cause of bodily infirmity and disease in antiquity? How did cultural views of sex, gender, and race influence perceptions of the body and what it meant to be able bodied? Such questions are significant when considering what kind of access to healthcare marginalized groups had. In order to explore these questions, we will examine ancient Mediterranean views of medical care through material remains (e.g., magical amulets and healing shrines) and textual evidence (e.g., Galen and Hippocrates). After considering this wider cultural context, we will examine treatments in the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and early Christianity. We will also explore how Christian concepts of medical care evolved in light of accounts of Jesus as a divine healer. In addition to this ancient evidence, we will engage with modern disability studies and sociological analyses to better orient our readings. At the end of the course, students will be better acquainted with the complex relationship between religion and medicine and how that affects modern healthcare decisions.

Instructor(s): Richard Zaleski Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): HLTH 20223, CCTS 21021, HIPS 20223, KNOW 20223, HIST 25305, JWSC 20923

### **RLST 20271. Islamic Education in West Africa. 100 Units.**

This course will critically explore the history of Islamic scholarship and the transmission of religious knowledge and scholarly authority in West African Muslim societies from the late medieval period to the present day.

We will examine a variety of knowledge traditions, textual and pedagogical approaches, epistemologies, and embodied practices of Muslim scholars and students of the region in order to understand what it means to seek, transmit, and create knowledge in the context of West African Muslim societies. In addition to relevant secondary literature, we will read passages from some of the texts taught in these places. Intermediate Arabic is recommended, but not required for this course.

Instructor(s): Abubakar Abdulkadir Terms Offered: Spring

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

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 33271, NEHC 20271, KNOW 33271, ISLM 33271

### **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): Flowers, Adam Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): SOSC 22000, NEHC 20601, MDVL 20601, HIST 25610

#### **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): Adam Flower - Firas Alkhateeb 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 20602, HIST 25615, MDVL 20602, SOSC 22100

#### **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 maintain 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): Holly Shissler - Tobias Scheunchen Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 25616, NEHC 20603, SOSC 22200

**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

Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 20505, CLCV 26216

**RLST 20523. The Ecumenical Church Councils and the Making of Christian Doctrine. 100 Units.**

The Church Councils of late antiquity (fourth-seventh centuries) were huge conferences of bishops, priests, monks, secular officials, and emperors, who met to decide on the rules that would govern the Church and the doctrines that all Christians had to believe. They combined philosophical debate, criminal trials, committee meetings, and Senate procedure. Some were rowdy and acrimonious, while others were meticulously organized in advance, usually by the court. Some remain obscure, while others are the most thoroughly documented events in all ancient history and reveal in detail how the later Roman government operated. In this course we will read, in Greek, a number of fascinating narratives and official acts stemming from the most important Councils, including Nicaea I (325), Ephesus I (431), and Chalcedon (451). We will also discuss the Councils from a historical perspective to understand the complex negotiations that gave rise to Christian doctrine and canon law.

Instructor(s): Anthony Kaldellis Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): GREK 34523, GREK 24523, HCHR 34523

**RLST 20808. Biography of the Prophet Muhammad. 100 Units.**

This introductory course offers an overview of Prophet Muhammad's life as portrayed in the early and medieval Arabic narrative tradition and through the lens of modern scholarship. We will discuss a diverse range of topics, such as life in pre-Islamic Arabia, the Prophet's early life before prophethood, the first revelations, the Meccan period, his migration to Medina, his religio-political leadership and the military expeditions during the Medinan period, his reported miracles, etc. At the same time, students will gain an overview of the *sira*/maghaz' literature, i.e., the texts devoted to the life of the Prophet Muhammad in the Muslim tradition. Modern methodological questions which concern the reliability of the narrative traditions in reconstructing the biography of the "historical Muhammad" and a wide range of approaches developed in Western academia to overcome problems related to the source material will also be addressed.

Instructor(s): Mehmetcan Akpinar Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): No background in Islamic studies or Arabic language required.

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

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30808, MDVL 20808, NEHC 20808, ISLM 30808

**RLST 21315. Narratives of American Religious History. 100 Units.**

How do we tell the story of religion in America? Is it a story of Protestant dominance? Of religious diversity? Of transnational connections? Of secularization? This course examines how historians have grappled with such questions. We will read the work of scholars who have offered narratives explaining American religious history, including figures like Sydney Ahlstrom, Albert Raboteau, Mark Noll, Ann Braude, Catherine Albanese, and Thomas Tweed. This course will introduce students to key historiographical questions in the study of American religion, as well as to classic texts which have shaped the field's development.

Instructor(s): William Schultz and Curtis Evans Terms Offered: Autumn

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

Equivalent Course(s): AMER 41315, RAME 41315, HIST 27304, RDIN 41315, HCHR 41315, RDIN 21315, KNOW 41315, HIST 47304, AMER 21315, CRES 22315

**RLST 21430. Religion and American Capitalism. 100 Units.**

This course will introduce students to the intersection of religion and capitalism in the United States. Through a variety of primary and secondary readings, we will explore how religious people and institutions have interacted with, affirmed, and challenged American capitalism. We will pay particularly close attention to the alternative moral economics envisioned by religious communities in the United States.

Instructor(s): William Schultz Terms Offered: Autumn

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

Equivalent Course(s): AMER 21430, HIST 27716, RAME 40200, HIST 37716, HCHR 40200, AMER 40200

**RLST 21550. Innerbiblical Exegesis. 100 Units.**

This course will explore the phenomenon of literary revision in the Hebrew Bible and, to a limited extent, its precursors and successor texts. In addition to analyzing various examples of innerbiblical exegesis, we will consider the theoretical issues related to literary revision, including the question of criteria for determining literary dependence and direction of dependence and the intents of texts that reuse source material. All biblical texts will be read in their original languages.

Instructor(s): Jeffrey Stackert Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Strong Biblical Hebrew

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

Equivalent Course(s): BIBL 45100

**RLST 21702. Buddhist Thought in Japan. 100 Units.**

In this seminar we will explore the intellectual history and social contexts of fundamental motifs of Buddhist thought in, especially but not exclusively, premodern Japan. Eschewing narrow sectarian boundaries, we will focus on the four traditions of the Lotus sūtra, the Pure Land, the tantric teachings and Zen construed inclusively as trans-sectarian sources of religious meaning and models of cultivation. Building on an initial exploration of the wider East Asian context of Japanese Buddhism, we will deepen our understanding of these four traditions through a careful examination of primary sources in translation. The course will also incorporate field trips to Japanese Buddhist groups in the Chicago area.

Instructor(s): Stephan Licha Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): EALC 21702

**RLST 21880. The Birth of the Gods: A Close Reading of Hesiod's Theogony. 100 Units.**

In this course we will read in Greek the Theogony by Hesiod, one of the earliest preserved literary pieces in ancient Greek and a text that became a point of reference for cosmogonic literature and thought in later centuries. We will conduct a close reading, commenting on both poetic/literary aspects and mythical tropes, and will read (in English) comparative materials from other Greek and Near Eastern cosmogonies, as well as some interpretive essays. Exams will be based on translation work as well as engagement in discussions.

Instructor(s): Carolina Lopez-Ruiz Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Two years of Greek (intermediate level) required.

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

Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 21880, HREL 31880, GREK 34923, GREK 24923

**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): Larisa Reznik Terms Offered: Autumn Winter

Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 12000, NEHC 22010, MDVL 12000, HIST 11701

**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 mysticism, the works 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 Larisa Reznik Terms Offered: Spring Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 11702, JWSC 12001, NEHC 22011

**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 2021 will start with two stories from Genesis-the creation story and the story of the Tower of Babel in chapter 11-and consider the intertwined dynamics of language, creation, and translation in Jewish thought and literature. In addition to commentaries on both of these key texts, we will read philosophical and literary texts that illuminate the workings of language as a creative force and the dynamics of multilingualism and translation in the creation of Jewish culture. Through this lens, we will consider topics such as gender and sexuality, Jewish national identity, Zionism, the revival of the Hebrew language, Jewish responses to the Holocaust, and contemporary American Jewish 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): NEHC 12003, CMLT 12003, JWSC 12003

**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, theological, 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): JWSC 12004, YDDH 21724, GNSE 16004

**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): NEHC 12005, JWSC 12005, REES 27005

**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? Taught in Special Collections in Regenstein Library and making extensive use of the textual and visual sources there, this course will analyze how Jews (in all their diversity) and non-Jews defined Jewish spaces and places. Sources will include: Jewish law and customary practice, cookbooks, etiquette guides, prints, films, novels, maps, memoirs, architectural drawings and photographs, and tourist guides. We may also take a field trip to the Oak Woods Cemetery. 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 and 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. Assignments include: presentations (individual or collaborative), short papers, Canvas postings, and there will also be the option of making a digital map or an on-line exhibition. This is a limited-enrollment, discussion-based course. 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, NEHC 12006

### **RLST 22035. The Acts of Paul and Thecla and the Pastoral Epistles. 100 Units.**

In the early second century there were bitter battles over the legacy of Paul and his preserved letters in terms of gender, sexuality, family life, asceticism, church administration, and theological vision. We can see these well by reading the narrative text *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* alongside the "Pastoral Epistles" (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus), the former championing a female, cross-dressing ascetic Christ-missionary and the latter, in pseudepigraphical epistolary texts written in the dead Paul's name, insisting on patriarchal family life and women's adherence to traditional roles. In this course we shall read both sets of texts carefully in Greek, noting points of similarity and contestation, and test various models of how these sources—each of which seeks to "fix" the Pauline legacy in its own way—are related to one another. Time allowing, we shall also look at the later reception of the cult of Saint Thecla and late antique interpretations of "the apostle," Paul, on these issues of sexuality and gender roles, and their perduring influence in contemporary debates.

Instructor(s): Margaret Mitchell Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): At least one year of Greek, or equivalent.

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

Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 42035, GNSE 22035, GREK 37423, HCHR 42035, GREK 27423, FNDL 22035, BIBL 42035

### **RLST 22100. Introduction to Zen Buddhism. 100 Units.**

This course will consist of the close reading and discussion of primary texts (in translation) of the Chan Buddhism of China and Zen Buddhism of Japan (#--more commonly known in English by the Japanese name, Zen), supplemented by secondary readings on Zen institutions and cultural influences. As our foundation, we will begin with an overview of basic Buddhist tenets, and then work through key Mahāyāna ideas and sūtra passages, focusing on the ideas of Emptiness, Buddha-nature, and Mind-only. Then we will turn to the unique syntheses of these ideas in the early Chan movement in medieval China and their various deployments in the contending interpretations and methodologies of later Chan and Zen, including the Platform Sutra of Huineng, the kōan (Ch: gong-an) literature of the Song dynasty, and the essays of Dōgen. This will be done both with an eye to the historical development of these schools of thought and practice within the context of East Asian Buddhism in general, and for whatever transhistorical philosophical and religious valences we care to derive from the texts. All readings will be in English.

Instructor(s): Brook Ziporyn Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): This course counts as a Gateway course for RLST majors/minors. This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.

Equivalent Course(s): EALC 22100, DVPR 32100, HREL 32100, EALC 32100

### **RLST 22110. Religion in the Enlightenment: England and 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, HIST 47510, AMER 22110, RAME 42100, HCHR 42200, HIST 27510, AMER 42100

### **RLST 22202. Black Religious Protest in the U.S. 100 Units.**

This course examines African American religious protest against the American nation for its actual history and its ideals in view of black oppression. The course begins with David Walker's *Appeal* (1829) and ends with debates around Jeremiah Wright's "God damn America" sermon. The course situates black religious protest amidst discussions of the American Jeremiad, a particular critique of the nation in relation to the divine, American exceptionalism, and racial injustice. We attempt to trace continuity and discontinuity, hope versus pessimism, and visions of a more perfect union in these public critiques of the nation.

Instructor(s): Curtis Evans Terms Offered: Winter

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

Equivalent Course(s): RAME 42202, HCHR 42202, RDIN 23202, HIST 47416, AMER 42202, HIST 27416, AMER 22202

**RLST 22303. Second Isaiah. 100 Units.**

This course is a reading course on Second Isaiah (Isaiah 40-66). It is meant both for students who have completed the first year Hebrew sequence in the Divinity School and others who would like to read Second Isaiah in Hebrew. We will focus on interpreting texts by attending to their grammatical, literary, and historical features.

Instructor(s): Jeffrey Stackert Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): One year of Biblical Hebrew

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

Equivalent Course(s): BIBL 45400

**RLST 22667. The Christian Right. 100 Units.**

From the Gilded Age to the age of Donald Trump, conservatives Christians have played a major role in shaping American politics and culture. This course will use primary and secondary sources to explore the development of the Christian Right in the United States. We will answer essential questions about the movement: Who joins it? Who leads it? And who funds it? We will examine how conservative Christians approach not only "moral" issues like abortion but also issues like economic regulation and foreign policy. Finally, we will seek to answer the question: What is the future of the Christian Right in an increasingly diverse America?

Instructor(s): William Schultz Terms Offered: Winter

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

Equivalent Course(s): HCHR 35700, HIST 37719, AMER 35700, AMER 22667, RAME 35700, HIST 27719

**RLST 22723. Guardians of knowledge: scribes and books from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. 100 Units.**

Books have been a fundamental part of the transmission of knowledge and more generally, human communication. They collect thoughts, experiences, feelings, knowledge and ideas into a material artifact that is distributed to an audience of readers. The work of scribes and scholars is the silent agent of this millennial enterprise. The process of book-production involves a large number of different skills from these artisans: material manufacture, preparation of writing surfaces and inks, writing skills, calligraphy, binding, distribution. In this course students will study the history of books, from Antiquity to the invention of the printing press, and their makers. The topics covered will include scribal training, book manufacture, circulation and trade of books, readership, and other such topics around the world of books and scholars. The course will focus on books as artifacts, as transmitters of knowledge and literary creativity.

Instructor(s): Sofia Torallas Tovar. Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): BIBL 34723, NEHC 23723, NEHC 34723, CLAS 34723, CLCV 24723

**RLST 22812. Introduction to Hinduism. 100 Units.**

What is Hinduism? And what does it mean to be Hindu? This class offers an introduction to the classical texts and contemporary practices from a diverse set of traditions collectively called "Hinduism." Beginning with a brief overview of its ancient Indian textual sources and philosophical debates, our course readings take us through the mythic and epic narratives that have been central to many Hindus for centuries. Later, we follow the devotional poetry and sacred imagery that enliven contemporary Hinduism and adapt to various socio-political contexts: colonization, nationalism, and globalization. Throughout the course, we focus on different types of media (oral, textual, visual, digital) that reshape the way Hindu texts and deities are perceived and understood. In the final weeks, our class focuses on Hinduism beyond India and considers what it means when Hindu gods and traditions thrive in the United States. No prior knowledge expected.

Instructor(s): Andrew Kunze Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): This course counts as a Gateway course for RLST majors/minors.

Equivalent Course(s): SALC 22812

**RLST 22906. The Book of Ezekiel. 100 Units.**

A seminar for reading the Book of Ezekiel (in English; optional reading group for those who read biblical Hebrew), the Bible's most bizarre and challenging Prophetic work. It features Ezekiel's close encounters with a brutal divine, instantaneous transportation to future spaces and faraway places, dream-scenes that become real, mortifying dramatizations, and surreal sensory overload. Ezekiel says he played the role of a crude mime, a confounding cryptic, and an erotic singer. This charged and disturbing work generated a variety of literary and speculative Jewish and Christian traditions, like the Apocalyptic and the Mystical. Modern Bible critics discount its retrospective frame, consider it a repository of historical materials, and probe Ezekiel for personality disorders. We will engage it the way it presents itself to us, as literature, in a which a character tells his glorious and troubled story, and explore its frame, content, poetics, Judean literary traditions, contemporary Babylonian scene, and historical message.

Instructor(s): Simeon Chavel Terms Offered: Winter

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

Equivalent Course(s): HIJD 32906, JWSC 22906, NEHC 32906, NEHC 22906, BIBL 32906

**RLST 23104. Immanuel Kant's Critique of Practical Reason. 100 Units.**

Contemporary ideas about Human Rights, the relation of moral norms and the good life, the character of human freedom, conceptions of human evil, and the very definition of morality and ethics have been decisively shaped by the work of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). This course is the examination of one of Immanuel Kant's magisterial works in moral philosophy, *The Critique of Practical Reason*. The course is a careful reading of Kant's text in order to grasp the argument and to assess its significance for current work in Ethics. The course ends with one of Kant's famous political essays, "On Perpetual Peace." Engaging Kant's work will enable student to engage a

wide range of thinkers from the 19th to the 21st centuries who accept, modify, and reject his work. In this way, the course is crucial for further work in philosophical and religious ethics. This class will be conducted through conversation over assigned reading. Those who can read German may use those texts and bring them to class. There will be two papers for the class on topics assigned by the instructor. The papers are to be 5-7 pages in length, double spaced.

Instructor(s): William Schweiker Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Graduate students must petition to enroll.

Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 23104, FNDL 23104

**RLST 23202. Li Zhi and 16th Century China: The Self, Tradition, and Dissent in Comparative Context. 100 Units.**

The 16th century Chinese iconoclast Li Zhi (Li Zhuowu) has been rightly celebrated as a pioneer of individualism, one of history's great voices of social protest, an original mind powerfully arguing for genuine self-expression, and more. He was a Confucian official and erudite in the classics, yet in his sixties he takes the Buddhist tonsure, and late in life befriends the Jesuit Matteo Ricci. He sought refuge in a quiet monastery devoting his life to scholarship, yet invited constant scandal. His *A Book to Burn* "sold like hotcakes," and attracted enough trouble that reportedly readers would surreptitiously hide their copies tucked up their sleeves, and was later banned by the state soon after his death. In this seminar, we will place Li both within the context of the history of "Confucian" thought, and within the literary, religious, and philosophical conversations of the late Ming. Using his writings as a productive case study, we will think about topics including "religion," tradition and innovation, "spontaneity" and "authenticity," and the relationship between "classics" and commentaries. Throughout, we will bring our discussions into comparative analysis, considering views of thinkers and traditions from other times and places. Chinese not required; for those interested, we will read select essays of Li's in Chinese and students may choose translation as a final project.

Instructor(s): Pauline Lee Terms Offered: Autumn

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

Equivalent Course(s): EALC 23202, FNDL 23202, HIST 34519, EALC 33202, HREL 33202, HIST 24519, DVPR 33202

**RLST 23503. What is Nature? - 20th-Century Continental Philosophy. 100 Units.**

In this course, we follow the topic of the meaning of nature in philosophy, beginning our exploration right around the point when explicit discussion of nature becomes less prominent. We intend to develop a coherent narrative about major philosophical developments from Nietzsche through Derrida through the lens offered by this question, examining existentialism, phenomenology, and deconstruction along the way. Students should come away from this course with a grounded sense of what each term means, resulting in foundational knowledge of Continental philosophy after Nietzsche. We will take an interdisciplinary approach, as the question of nature often emerges for our authors in engagement with art, whether drama, poetry, or painting, all of which will be addressed. This course's starting point for our reflections on nature is Nietzsche's notion of the death of God, a theme to which we will return with all three of our main authors, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Derrida. Recurrent themes will be: nature and eros, nature and human finitude, the human being as (un)natural, and the very viability of the concept of nature. Additional authors include Aristotle, Plato, Sappho, Sophocles, Friedrich Hölderlin, Leo Strauss, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Judith Butler, and discuss paintings by Paul Cézanne and Vincent van Gogh. An interesting question to pose along the way will be the relationship (or lack thereof) between the views of nature on offer to our ecological concerns today.

Instructor(s): Mat Messerschmidt Terms Offered: Winter. Winter 2024

Equivalent Course(s): SETH 20683, GRMN 23683, SETH 30683

**RLST 23550. Slavery and Social Justice in the Hebrew Bible. 100 Units.**

What is a "just" society? And how do we know if justice has been achieved? This course is both an overview of the concept of a "just society" and a thematic survey of the narratives of the Hebrew Bible (the Jewish Tanak, the Christian Old Testament) through the lens of social justice. In this course we will examine several perspectives within the Hebrew Bible on what makes a just society, with particular emphasis on the narratives and legal corpora of the Pentateuch, the historical narratives of the former prophets, and the sayings and exhortations of the "writing" prophets. We will aim to understand more clearly what the ancient Israelites would have likely understood by the notion of a "just society," and how those understandings may differ from our own. Through our discussions, students will develop their skills in close-reading of texts and literary analysis of biblical narratives. In this course we will study several social issues and their reflections in biblical texts. Among the possibilities are: slavery, the treatment of the poor, the rights of the community vs. the individual, the treatment of the disabled, homicide, war, revenge, animal rights and environmentalism, inheritance, and immigration.

Instructor(s): David Harris Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 20552, JWSC 20550

**RLST 23600. Evil: Myth, Symbol and Reality. 100 Units.**

From the horrors of the Shoah to violence suffered by individuals, the question of the origin, meaning, and reality of evil done by humans has vexed thinkers throughout the ages. This seminar is an inquiry into the problem of evil on three registers of reflection: myth, symbol, and reality. We will be exploring important philosophical, Jewish, and Christian texts. These include Martin Buber, Good and Evil, Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem, Immanuel Kant, Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone, Paul Ricoeur, The Symbolism of Evil, Edward Farley, Good and Evil, Hans Jonas, Mortality and Morality and Claudia Card, The

Atrocity Paradigm. There will also be a viewing of the movie *Seven* (1995) directed by David Fincher and written by Andrew Kevin Walker. Accordingly, the seminar probes the reality of evil and the symbolic and mythic resources of religious traditions to articulate the meaning and origin of human evil. The question of "theodicy" is then not the primary focus given the seminar's inquiry into the fact and reality of human evil. Each student will submit a 5-7 page critical review of either Jonathan Glover's *Humanity: A Moral History of the 20th Century* or Susan Neiman's, *Evil in Modern Thought*. Each Student also will write a 15 page (double spaced; 12pt font) paper on one or more of the texts read in the course with respect to her or his own research interests.

Instructor(s): William Schweiker Terms Offered: Autumn

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

Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 23600, RETH 33600, JWSC 23600, THEO 33600, GRMN 33623, GRMN 23623

#### **RLST 23630. Introduction to Islamic Philosophy. 100 Units.**

This course offers an introduction to the terms and concepts current in Arabic philosophical writings in the classical period of Islamic thought (roughly 9th to 17th century). It begins with the movement to translate Greek texts into Arabic and the debate among Muslims about the validity of philosophy versus revelation. From a close reading of key works (in English) by important philosophers such as al-Kindī, al-Rāzī, al-Sijistānī, al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), al-Ghazzālī, Ibn Bājja, Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Suhrawardī, and Mullā ḥadrā, a series of lectures will follow the career of philosophy in the Islamic world, first as a 'foreign' science and then, later, as selectively rejected but also substantially accepted as a natural component of sophisticated discourse.

Instructor(s): Paul Walker Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): ISLM 30630, NEHC 30630, NEHC 20630

#### **RLST 23816. Hope in Theological, Philosophical, and Political Perspective. 100 Units.**

What is hope? What role does it play in our lives? What role can it play in our politics? Is it a virtue-theological or otherwise? When is hope problematic? What happens when people lose hope? To address questions like these, this course will consider a wide range of recent work on the topic, from authors including Gabriel Marcel, Josef Pieper, Adrienne Martin, Cheshire Calhoun, Katie Stockdale, Kelly Brown Douglas, and Michael Lamb.

Instructor(s): Kevin Hector Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 23816

#### **RLST 23880. Villains: Evil in Philosophy, Religion, and Film. 100 Units.**

You don't really understand an antagonist," screenwriter John Rogers writes, "until you understand why he's a protagonist in his own version of the world." This principle holds true of movie villains, but also raises important questions about disagreement, dehumanization, and the diabolical in the real world. Are our enemies truly malicious, or just misunderstood? How does a person become a monster, and how does a person avoid it? Why are some villains so compelling, and what does this say about the good life? Do Hollywood movies enrich or distort how we imagine and respond to real-world evil? Did Thanos do anything wrong? This course combines readings from philosophical classics and religious traditions with comparative analyses of villains in films from 101 Dalmatians (1956) and Jaws (1975) to The Dark Knight (2008) and Black Panther (2018). Students will discuss antagonists' motivations, evaluate the visions of morality filmmakers are presupposing, and develop more nuanced understandings of ethics and moral psychology. No prior experience in religious studies or film criticism is required.

Instructor(s): Russell Johnson Terms Offered: Winter

#### **RLST 24001. Modern European Philosophy of Religion: 17th Century to the Present. 100 Units.**

This course will examine the historical emergence of the philosophy of religion, in the European context, as a discrete area of inquiry. Thinkers to be considered include Descartes, Pascal, Spinoza, Locke, Leibniz, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Feuerbach, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Arendt. No prerequisites.

Instructor(s): Ryan Coyne Terms Offered: Winter

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

Equivalent Course(s): THEO 34001, DVPR 34001

#### **RLST 24102. Justice in an Unjust World: Theories of Justice. 100 Units.**

Justice as a possibility, an ideal, and as a telos is fundamental to theological and philosophical systems of ethics. Yet, each theory was formulated within and against a deeply unjust world. Every theory of justice implies an anthropology and an ontology, and each asks the question: Why isn't life fair? How can we create a just society against a world that is so obviously unjust? Each theory then proposes a just solution and every theory implies a set of practices that can be interrogated. As our contemporary society becomes more sharply divided, the issues of distribution, obligation, entitlement, fair exchanges of social goods and labor, and the fair sharing of social burdens becomes more important and demanding of more inquiry. This seminar will interrogate several theories of justice, beginning in classic Hellenistic texts and moving forward to the animating theories of the classic liberal tradition: libertarianism, utilitarianism, social contract theory, and Marxism. We will then turn to other sources of justice theory such as Catholic liberation theology, capacity theory, and Jewish justice theory. We will also use our seminar to explore contemporary cases in law, medicine, science and policy that raise issues of justice and injustice. While the seminar will focus on distributive practices, we will also explore how these practices structure our systems of retributive and restorative justice.

Instructor(s): Laurie Zoloth Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): This course counts as an elective course for the "Inequality, Social Problems, and Change" minor.

Equivalent Course(s): PBPL 23305, GLST 24202



**RLST 24115. Chinese Thought and The Good Life. 100 Units.**

This course examines the ideas of thinkers with vastly different responses to the question: What is the life well lived? In our study, we will focus on early China (5th century to 221 BCE), a seminal and vibrant period in Chinese thought. Some thinkers (such as "Laozi") argue the good life is the simple one, others (Xunzi) insist that it is the life of achieved great intellectual, aesthetic, or moral ambition. Yet others argue that central to the life well lived are rich, nuanced, and strong ties to family (Confucius), acting on one's developed intuitions (Mengzi), or developing one's capacity to play in the moment whatever the circumstances (Zhuangzi). Two thinkers we will study focus on the means for making the social world supportive of a life that is good. Hanfeizi argues for the importance of well-defined, objective, enforced laws. Sunzi illuminates the art of war. We will explore topics such as notions of the self, conceptions of the greater cosmos, the role of rituals, ideas about human nature, and the tension between tradition and self-expression. The course includes lectures, class discussions, self-designed spiritual exercises, creating a class "Commentary" on the Analects, essays of varied lengths, and writers' circles.

Instructor(s): Pauline Lee Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 24115, EALC 24120

**RLST 24550. Major Trends in Islamic Mysticism. 100 Units.**

This course examines Islamic mysticism, commonly known as Sufism, through an exploration of English translations premodern and contemporary Sufi literature in Arabic and Persian. The goal is to gain firsthand exposure of a broad spectrum of literary expressions of Islamic spirituality in their historical context, and to understand exactly what, how, and why Sufis say what they say. Each of the units will comprise of lectures and close readings of excerpts from the text in Arabic/Persian and English translation. The average reading load per week is 80 pages.

Instructor(s): Yousef Casewit Terms Offered: Autumn

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

Equivalent Course(s): ISLM 32419, GLST 24550, SIGN 26068, MDVL 24550

**RLST 24590. Early Islamic Theological (Kalām) Texts. 100 Units.**

This course offers the opportunity of engaging first-hand with the Arabic texts that define the discussions and polemics in Islamic theology of the formative period (7-10th centuries). Besides studying texts from different genres and produced by authors of differing theological orientations, we will discuss a wide range of themes, such as faith, free will, God's attributes, revelation, etc., in their intellectual and polemical contexts. The study of the primary readings will be supplemented by secondary scholarly literature. The main objective of this course is to enable students to understand the early theological texts in their religious and historical contexts, which will also inform their study of the major theological works of the Islamic tradition in the later periods.

Instructor(s): Mehmetcan Akpınar Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): 2 years of Arabic required.

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

Equivalent Course(s): ISLM 34590, NEHC 24590, MDVL 24590, NEHC 34590

**RLST 24600. Buddhist Meditation: Tradition, Transformation, Modernization. 100 Units.**

From the Satipatthāna sutta of the Paṭi canon to the "mindfulness" boom of recent years, Buddhism and meditation often appear inseparable. The aim of this seminar is to historicize and critically question this seemingly natural intimacy, for while it certainly cannot be denied that the various Buddhist traditions have always had on offer a plethora of techniques for mental (and physical) cultivation, it is far from clear how or even if all these could be subsumed under the in its current usage relatively recent category of "meditation". Drawing on Buddhist meditation literature from various traditions, historical periods, and literary genre, in this seminar we will take up a twofold question: First, how has the encounter with Buddhist techniques of cultivation shaped the modern understanding of "meditation", and second, up to which extend, and at what cost, has this very modern understanding conversely conditioned us to see Buddhism as a "meditative religion" par excellence?

Instructor(s): Stephan Licha Terms Offered: Spring

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

Equivalent Course(s): SALC 24600, EALC 24609, HIST 34122, SALC 34600, HREL 34600, EALC 34600, HIST 24122

**RLST 24806. Creation and Human Creatures: Theological Explorations. 100 Units.**

This course will explore the intersection between theological symbols (doctrines) of creation and human creatures. How are macrocosm and microcosm drawn into theological reflection and construction? How have human and other living creatures and nature served as reference points, exemplars, even counter examples for interpreting divine creation and the enhancement (or diminishment) of life? Explorations will include traditional theological themes of human creatures as the imago Dei and of nature as a mirror of God's providence and majesty, as well as philosophical and literary texts on human and animal nature, the moral sense of nature, and cultivation and devastation.

Instructor(s): Kristine Culp Terms Offered: Spring

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

Equivalent Course(s): THEO 44806, CHSS 44806

**RLST 24901. Religion and Human Rights. 100 Units.**

Religion played a crucial, but often overlooked, role in the development of post-World War II conceptions of human rights, providing principles and ideas that continue to influence contemporary human rights debates in the fields of law, public policy, and international relations. This no-prior-knowledge-necessary course



explores the complex, sometimes fraught, relationship between religion and human rights from World War II to the present. We will begin by juxtaposing the role religious ideas played in the drafting of core post-war human rights documents (e.g. the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, etc.) with the decision by drafters to omit direct references to the divine or the beliefs of specific religious communities. Using case study analysis and close reading of primary religious texts, scholarly commentary, and historical accounts, we will examine the ways in which individuals and groups from multiple religious (and non-religious) traditions both apply and push back against existing human rights norms. Throughout the course we will discuss the role religion might play in debates surrounding emerging, but still contentious, conceptions of human rights. This includes: universal healthcare, LGBTQIA+ rights, ever more complex manifestations of religious freedom, as well as whether human rights as conceived of in the mid-20th Century can be reconciled with decolonial and post-colonial perspectives.

Instructor(s): John Sianghio Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): This course counts as an approved course for the Democracy Studies minor.

Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 24901, GNSE 24903, GLST 24902

#### **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 alternatives to Christian faith and practice in the late fourth century. That argument will invite us to examine the implications of religious faith for human well-being and on how religious convictions affect the quality of human relationships, self-knowledge, and the emotions. We'll thus 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 (among other things), Is religion a source of personal healing and 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, whether we are responsible for what happens in our dreams, what it means to be a friend to others—and how Augustine's answers to these questions presuppose a wider account of divine justice, charity, and the ordering of the cosmos.

Instructor(s): Richard B. Miller Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 25102, FNDL 27002

#### **RLST 25218. Suhrawardi and His Interpreters. 100 Units.**

Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī (d. 1191), the founder of the *ishrāqī* philosophical tradition, is undoubtedly one of the most innovative and influential philosophers in the history of Islamic thought. In this seminar, we will examine major themes in the writings of Suhrawardī along with excerpts from Arabic commentaries by Muslim and Jewish authors such as Ibn Kammūnah (d. 1284), Shahrāzūrī (d. 1288), Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1311), Dawānī (d.1502), Dashtakī (d. 1542), Qarabāghī (d. 1625) and Harawī (d. 1689). Topics include, Suhrawardī's understanding of the history of philosophy, light and the order of existence, virtues and human happiness, self-knowledge and self-awareness, conceptual and non-conceptual knowledge, and theory of ritual actions.

Instructor(s): Nariman Aavani Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): 2 years of Arabic.

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

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 25218, MDVL 25218, ISLM 35218, FNDL 25218, NEHC 35218

#### **RLST 25400. The Bible in U.S. Politics: The Use and Abuse of Sacred Texts in the Public. 100 Units.**

People across the political spectrum continue to cite the Bible to justify their viewpoints. Black Lives Matter protestors carried signs citing scriptural support for the rights of African Americans to life and justice, while some of those who stormed the U.S. Capitol on January 6th first marched around their state capitols in recreation of biblical Israel's circling of the doomed city Jericho. How can the same book serve the political ends of such ideologically distinct movements? In this course, we will explore the variety of ways in which the Bible, especially the Christian New Testament, informs contemporary political discourse. We will discuss what the Bible is and where it comes from, and how an interpreter's social location and culturally and historical-bound assumptions shape their interpretation. We will build upon this foundation by examining several contentious political issues in which the Bible is commonly invoked, including abortion, sexuality, immigration, and gun rights. We will analyze the key passages used by supporters of various policy positions to support their claims, situating these texts in their original contexts and highlighting the historical distance that problematizes their use today. Prior familiarity with biblical literature is not required.

Instructor(s): Douglas Hoffer Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): AMER 25400, KNOW 25400, FNDL 25405, GNSE 25403

#### **RLST 25561. Justice at the Margins: Religion, Race, and Resistance Ethics. 100 Units.**

How does race shape what we think about what is right and wrong, just and unjust? How about religion? Is "justice" a universal idea that stretches across social groups, or do our experiences as members of a religious and/or racial group have fundamentally affect our understanding(s) of justice? We'll begin by examining works by Aristotle, King, Rawls, and Nussbaum, asking what each theorist thinks justice entails and why. Along the way, we'll ask how stated and suppressed understandings of both "race" and "religion" inform their theories, as well as complicate and challenge them. Then we'll set these theories of justice in conversation with works by Francisco de Vitoria, W.E.B. Du Bois, James Baldwin, Cornel West, Traci C. West, and the Movement for Black

Lives, each of which offers a protest against injustice in which "race" and "religion" play a prominent role. No previous knowledge required.

Instructor(s): Derek Buyan Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): This course counts as an elective course for the "Inequality, Social Problems, and Change" minor and as an approved course for the Democracy Studies minor.

Equivalent Course(s): RDIN 22561, CRES 22561, HMRT 25561

**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 Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Graduates may enroll only with permission of the instructor.

Equivalent Course(s): PBPL 25706, RDIN 25706, KNOW 25706, GLST 25766, GNSE 25702, HMRT 25706, ENST 25706, CEGU 25706

**RLST 25840. Philosophical Approaches to Peace of Mind: The Zhuangzi in Dialogue. 100 Units.**

Philosophical activity across cultures and times has been closely associated with the management of affective states. One common goal is to minimize negative emotions by changing how events are interpreted and appraised. This course will focus on three strategies that appear across different traditions. The first argues that events are outside of our control, in some cases appealing to fate but in other cases appealing to chance. The second strategy is a skeptical approach that attacks our ability to judge any event as bad or good. The third strategy undermines the ontological status of the kinds of things we become attached to, either by rejecting the ultimate reality of individual substances or arguing that diverse things form a single whole. All of these strategies appear prominently in the classical Chinese text the Zhuangzi. The core of this course will consist of a close reading of parts of the Zhuangzi, considering these strategies as they intersect with and shed light on its various philosophies. We will also read in a comparative context. The other traditions used will be guided by student interest, but the most likely choices would be Stoicism and Epicureanism (for the first strategy), Sextus Empiricus (for the second), and arguments appearing South Asian Buddhist philosophies (for the third). Aside from better understanding the Zhuangzi, the goal of the course is to consider how similar strategies function in significantly different cultural contexts.

Instructor(s): Frank Perkins Terms Offered: Spring

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

Equivalent Course(s): HREL 35840, EALC 35840, EALC 25840, KNOW 35840, DVPR 35840

**RLST 25845. Readings in Later Daoist Thought. 100 Units.**

The goal of this course is to read and explore primary sources (in classical Chinese) in Daoist philosophical thought written after the founding documents of the classical period (i.e., the Daodejing and Zhuangzi). Texts to be read will most likely be selected from such sources as the Liezi ###the Yinfujing ###and the Guanyinzi ### ##.

Instructor(s): Brook Ziporyn Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Classical Chinese proficiency required.

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

Equivalent Course(s): DVPR 51415, HREL 51415, EALC 51415, EALC 21415

**RLST 26006. Embodiment and the Senses. 100 Units.**

This course approaches bodies as points of insight into governance, the varied experiences of being governed, and efforts to evade and reconfigure institutional expressions of authority. First, we will examine bodies as targets of governance, objects to be reformed, regulated, contained, disciplined, educated, incarcerated, treated, trained, and "cared" for. Next, we will consider how bodies accrue power as sites of resistance, refusal, and critique. Certain bodies in certain places elicit discomfort, unsettling familiar divisions such as of private and public space, of developed and backward, of religious and secular, of reason and madness, of citizenship and (often racialized) non-citizenship. Finally, we will ask how bodies and sensory practices figure in ethical projects of crafting exemplary kinds of subjectivity or collectivity. In this way, the course will introduce students to anthropological approaches to embodiment as well as related questions of bio-politics, gender and race, political subjectivity, care and self-making, post/colonialism, sensory politics and the aesthetic. Along the way, students will gain a new appreciation of the political potency of bodies and bodily practices near and far-from Lenin's preserved body to Trump's "small" hands, reproductive labor to sex work, dirty protest to women's marches, indigenous eco-rituals to queer intimacies.

Instructor(s): Mareike Winchell

Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 20006, GNSE 24006

**RLST 26103. Dreams, Visions, and Mystical Experience. 100 Units.**

An exploration of primary literature and secondary scholarship on dream interpretation, luminous vision, and religious experience, with a focus on the writings of figures from the late North African Sufi tradition such as 'Alī al-Jamal and 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Dabbagh.

Instructor(s): Yousef Casewit Terms Offered: Autumn

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

Equivalent Course(s): ISLM 36103, NEHC 36103, NEHC 26103

**RLST 26105. Queering God. 100 Units.**

Can God be an ally in queer worldmaking? Is God queer? What does queerness have to do with Judaism, Christianity, or Islam? This course introduces students to foundational concepts in queer and trans studies by focusing on queer Jewish, Christian, and Islamic theologies. We will analyze the ways that contemporary artists, activists, and scholars are using theology to reimagine gender and experiment with new relational forms. Our readings will include a variety of genres: memoir, letters, scriptural interpretation, and a novel. There will be no presumption of previous acquaintance with any of the readings or topics discussed, or indeed with any academic theology or queer theory at all.

Instructor(s): Olivia Buston Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 26105, GNSE 12124

**RLST 26106. From Satyr to Satirist: Moral Outrage in Literature, Visual Culture, and Religion. 100 Units.**

The figure of the satyr is arguably the joker in literature's deck of cards: neither merely tragic nor merely comic, at once threatening and amusing, puncturer of pretension with no apparent balloon on which any of its objects of disdain might the favor. Uncivil, unfair, unrelenting: the satyr is pious about its impiety, and at various moments in its long and vexing career, has brought this disposition to bear on religion. This course is about a select few of such moments: Aristophanes, Lucian, Petronius, Rabelais, Swift, Hogarth, Goya. Selections from the plethora of contemporary examples to be determined by the class.

Instructor(s): Richard Rosengarten Terms Offered: Spring

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

Equivalent Course(s): RLVC 46106

**RLST 26313. Judaism, Medicine, and the Body. 100 Units.**

For centuries the "Jewish doctor" has existed as an archetype, but is there such a thing as Jewish medicine? Does Judaism teach a distinct approach to the body, illness, and healing? And more significantly, why should religion have anything to do with one's health today? In this course we will grapple with our assumptions regarding modern Western medicine by discussing topics in Jewish medical thought and ethics. We will study how Judaism - its texts, history, laws, and traditions - intersect with issues of science, medicine, and the body. In particular we will think about how a Jewish approach to medicine, and more broadly a religious approach, might complicate contemporary assumptions about the body and healing. We will also consider how Jewish bodies have been imagined and stereotyped, and think about how that might affect Jewish approaches to disease and medical ethics. This course will thus offer students a way to think about alternatives to assumptions about medicine, the body, and ethics in the secular West, which will be explored both in class materials and in personal projects. No prior work in Jewish studies, medical ethics, or religious studies necessary.

Instructor(s): Ranana Dine Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): CCTS 21022, JWSC 26313, HIPS 26313, HLTH 26313, GNSE 26313, KNOW 26313

**RLST 26600. Violence, Religion, and the Human Community. 100 Units.**

Why do disputes about religion so often break out into violent conflict? How does violence in literature relate to real world violence? Would a more secular world be more peaceful? This course will examine the role of violence in ancient and modern societies. We will focus on the recurring connection between violence and the divine. The first part of the course will explore how human communities depict violence in sacred texts, works of literature, and political rhetoric. Why do myths frequently portray the relationship between gods and humans as a violent one? What role does violence play in religious rituals? What is it that makes violence destructive under certain conditions and unifying under others? The second part of the course will examine classic theories of sacred violence to examine how theorists have explained the centrality of violence within religious narratives and the ways religion both facilitates and opposes violence. No previous coursework is required to enroll.

Instructor(s): Joseph Haydt Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 26615, GRMN 26600

**RLST 26660. Global Studies and Religion. 100 Units.**

Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Christianity have all flourished in the contexts of neoliberal capitalism, mass migration, and online communities. While many predicted that globalization would bring a wave of secularization, it has actually given rise to a global revival of religious life and religious institutions. This undergraduate seminar seeks to understand this phenomenon through a series of case studies of globalized religions in China, Indonesia, India, Nigeria, Italy, and the US. These case studies will highlight historical through-lines from colonization to globalization, ethnographic data of religious motivations and belonging, and social scientific theory of diaspora and nationalism. This course is tailored for Global Studies and Religious Studies majors or double majors, but all undergraduates are welcome.

Instructor(s): Andrew Kunze Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): GLST 26660

**RLST 26674. The Global Black Panther Party. 100 Units.**

In America, the Black Panther Party and its leaders, like Fred Hampton in Chicago, are famous for their revolutionary fight against white supremacy and their violent suppression by US government forces. But what does a Global Studies approach teach us about the Black Panthers? This seminar explores how the Black Panther Party's worldwide networks impacted global understandings of politics, race, and religion. Our readings

examine a series of comparative case studies, including the Dalit Panther Party in India, the Mizrahi Black Panther Party in Israel, and the Polynesian Panthers in New Zealand. We analyze primary sources, such as the various Panther Parties' publications, their mainstream press coverage, and their pop cultural representations, like Ta-Nehisi Coates' Black Panther graphic novel and the film Black Panther: Wakanda Forever. In this course, students learn the global Black Panther Parties' roles in reshaping worldwide conceptions of race, caste, and religion through their encounters with the Nation of Islam, Hindu Nationalism, Zionism, and Indigenous rights. No prior knowledge or coursework is required.

Instructor(s): Andrew Kunze Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): RDIN 26674, ANTH 20537, GLST 26674

#### **RLST 26676. Law and Culture in Rabbinic Literature. 100 Units.**

An introduction to the legal genres of classical rabbinic Judaism by applying the standard tools of source-, form-, redaction-, and literary criticism. Having established a working vocabulary, a map of the sources, and some facility with the tools, we will proceed to complicate the boundaries between law and aggadah (non-legal tradition) in its various forms (aphorism, parable, narrative cycle, case-law, ethical instruction, and more.) Having appreciated how law and aggadah interact in rabbinic literature to produce meaning, we will work on contextualizing their dialectic in light of multiple branches of a specific theory of meaning, culture, with a special focus on interpretive/symbolic anthropology.

Instructor(s): James Adam Redfield Terms Offered: Spring

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

Equivalent Course(s): HIJD 39300, RLVC 39400, JWSC 29300

#### **RLST 27140. Truth, Half-Truth, and Post-Truth. 100 Units.**

This course examines the philosophical and ethical issues surrounding lying, truth-telling, and everything in between. Students will put classics of the Indian and Western philosophical traditions into conversation with contemporary analyses of "alternative facts" and postmodern criticisms of absolute truth. Questions to be considered include: Are half-truths just another kind of lie, or stepping-stones to a more complex understanding? Is it even possible to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth"? Is it morally permissible to mislead someone for their own good, or for a leader to deceive their citizens? How can we act responsibly when there are two sides to every story?

Instructor(s): Russell Johnson Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 27140

#### **RLST 27555. Staging Islam: Traps and Trappings of Representation. 100 Units.**

From terrorists to "good Muslims," standards in the racial, cultural, and religious representations surrounding Islam have fluctuated across U.S. media. How do we conceptualize the nature of visual perception and reception? The history of colonialism, secular modernity, gender, patriarchy, and the blurred distinctions between religion and racialization have all contributed to a milieu of visual cultures that stage visions of and arguments about Islam. Hostility towards Muslims has not abated as we venture well into the 21st century, and many remain quick to blame an amorphous media for fomenting animosity towards the "real" Islam. We take these essentialist terms of engagement as the start of our inquiry: what is the promise of a meaningful image? What processes of secular translation are at work in its creation and consumption? Is there room for resistance, legibility, and representation in U.S. popular culture, and what does representation buy you in this age? We will pair theoretical methods for thinking about imagery, optics, perception, and perspective alongside case studies from film, stage, comedy, streaming content, and television shows, among others. Students will critically engage and analyze these theories in the contexts from which these works emerge and meld into a mobile and diasporic U.S. context. Together, we will reflect on the moral, political, and categorical commitments vested in different forms of media against historical trends of the 20th & 21st century.

Instructor(s): Samah Choudhury Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): RDIN 32500, ENGL 22505, RDIN 22500, ENGL 32505, CRES 22500

#### **RLST 27601. Women and Islam. 100 Units.**

This course is an introduction to the field of women, gender and Islam. We will examine the literature on Islamic legal, historical, Quranic and sacred textual constructs of women as well as critically explore the lived realities and experiences of Muslim women living in Muslim-majority societies and in the west. In centering the work of Muslim feminist scholars, students will gain an understanding of the contemporary debates around women's rights, sexuality, roles, responsibilities and gender relations in the context of Islamic law and the hadith literature. The discursive constructions and social realities of Muslim women are critically examined through historic and literary representations, ethnographic accounts, human rights discourses, sexual politics and secular and Islamic feminism(s). Moreover, this course situates Muslim women as complex, multidimensional actors engaged in knowledge production and political and feminist struggles, as opposed to the oppressed, victim-centered images that have regained currency in the representation of Muslim women in the post 9/11 era.

Instructor(s): Maliha Chishty Terms Offered: Autumn

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

Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 27608, ISLM 37601, GLST 27601, GNSE 37608, HMRT 27601

#### **RLST 27617. Introduction to Global Catholicism. 100 Units.**

With over a billion adherents, Catholicism is both the largest Christian denomination and a global religious tradition. This course introduces students to multiple ways Catholicism shapes the moral and political

commitments of believers and how it informs politics and the larger society. How does the Catholic church, at once centralized and internally diverse, exist as a multilingual and multicultural community? How has Catholicism responded to increasingly secularized cultures in industrialized nations? What place do religious beliefs have in the public sphere? We will examine the different ways Catholics approach these moral, social, and theological questions and how their answers shape and are shaped by their cultural locations. No previous coursework is required to enroll.

Instructor(s): Joseph Haydt Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 27617, GLST 27617, GRMN 27617

**RLST 27719. Jewish Thought in the Postcolonial World. 100 Units.**

Jewish thought has often been a powerful source for critiquing the Christian West and the exclusionary paradigms of nation, citizen, religion, race, and belonging. Yet how have Jewish thinkers-and thinking about Jews-intersected with other minority and racialized communities? And how have these discourses evolved in the aftermath of the Holocaust and the rise of Zionism and the State of Israel? Together we will examine central categories of Jewish thought and history such as exile, diaspora, race, nation, and alterity and place them in conversation with similar reflections emerging out of the histories of colonialism and postcolonialism. We will also explore the contemporary politics of Jewish thought, anti-Semitism, and anti-Zionism and the ways that perception of "the Jew" has changed in the postwar period from being a figure of difference to included within a purported "Judeo-Christian civilization." Finally, we will explore the emerging links between Postcolonial and Jewish Studies and the possibilities enabled by thinking about these discourses in relation to one another. No prior knowledge is required, and this course will serve as an excellent introduction to a variety of sources in Jewish and Postcolonial Studies.

Terms Offered: not offered 23-24

**RLST 28025. Religion and politics in a post-secular age. 100 Units.**

The confluence and discord between religious freedom, religious institutions, and the state drives many contemporary human rights challenges. This course examines the impact of religion and secularism on global topics from constitutionalism to nationalism to development. It will also consider the impact of religion and religiosity on multiple policy domains, including social issues, the welfare state, and foreign policy. Course discussions will include multiple traditions, including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and atheism. Our overall goal is to improve students' ability to recognize the historic and cultural contexts at work in debates about religion, secularism, and political issues. Students will analyze and discuss academic work studying the impact of religious belief on policy preferences and of state policies on religious behavior. They will also apply the course material to contemporary issues in (religious and secularism) politics.

Instructor(s): Hannah Ridge, Pozen Center for Human Rights Social Science Teaching Fellow Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 24325, MAPH 34325, HMRT 34325

**RLST 28132. Science/Fiction/Theory. 100 Units.**

Science fiction has enjoyed an extraordinary and still growing resurgence in popularity over the last two decades - through literature, film, video games, and even universities, where it is the subject of ever more courses being taught. Why has science fiction become so popular? Does it express the anxieties of a way of life that can't be sustained, is in decline, and might soon end, in the face of intractable war, lurching financial crises, recurrent pandemics and unchecked climate change? Does it speak to the senses of radical hope and irreparable despair about the future that seem to characterize our time? If so, then science fiction today is grappling with traditionally theological themes: fate and finitude, immortality and the nature of divinity, the place of the human within a cosmic scale, and the possibilities for redemption and messianic rupture. This course will explore these themes by pairing sci-fi literature and film with readings in philosophy and social theory. Throughout, we will ask how science fiction's propensity toward the theological allows it to grapple with the unique forms of hope and despair in our time, and in times past.

Instructor(s): Alireza Doostdar and Hussein Ali Agrama

Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 22132

**RLST 28280. The Good Place and the Bad Place: Judgement, Punishment, and Living a Good Life. 100 Units.**

Do you believe that you are a good person and, if so, why are you good? This course will investigate the connections between personal intentions to be a "good person" and the fear of punishment. What do we owe each other as ethical actors? Do the intentions of our actions matter or only the results of our actions? How can one be good in an increasingly complicated web of intersecting needs, social developments, and understandings of morality? This course will examine conceptions of hell, eternal punishment, and justice in a variety of religious traditions. In addition to reading authors such as Dante and John Milton, students will critically engage *The Good Place*, a sitcom which tackles deep questions of faith, morality, and the complexity of the human person. We will think through competing understandings of justice (retributive, distributive, and restorative) alongside our individual beliefs surrounding fairness and deservingness. No prior knowledge of religious studies or ethics is expected.

Instructor(s): Foster Pinkney Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 28280, FNDL 28280



**RLST 28311. Image, Iconoclasm, 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. These historical issues cannot be separated, in our scholarly approaches and responses, from a vibrant contemporary culture around question of virtuality, animation, image-worship and image-destruction in the current world. The course will provide space to reflect on the problems raised by this. The course will be taught over the first four and a half weeks in the Spring Quarter on an intensive schedule. It will be examined on the basis of a paper, due on a subject to be agreed and on a date to be agreed at the end of the Spring quarter.

Instructor(s): Jas Elsner Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): The course will be taught over the first 4 and a half weeks in the Spring Quarter on an intensive schedule.

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

Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 38311, MDVL 28311, ARTH 28311, CLCV 25923, KNOW 38311, CLAS 35923, RLVC 38311

**RLST 28325. Art and Description in Antiquity and Byzantium. 100 Units.**

This course explores the rich tradition of ekphrasis in Greco-Roman antiquity and Byzantium - as it ranges from vivid description in general to a specific engagement with works of art. While the prime focus will remain on texts from Greece, Rome and Byzantium - in order to establish what might be called the ancestry of a genre in the European tradition and especially its fascinating place between pagan polytheistic and Christian writing -- there will be opportunity in the final paper to range beyond this into questions of comparative literature, art (history) writing and ekphrasis in other periods or contexts, depending on students' interests and needs. A reading knowledge of Greek in particular could not be described as a disadvantage, but the course can be taken without knowing the ancient languages. The course will be taught over the first 4 and a half weeks in the Spring Quarter on an intensive schedule. It will be examined on the basis of a paper, due on a subject to be agreed and on a date to be agreed at the end of the Spring quarter.

Instructor(s): Jas Elsner and Karin Krause Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): The course will be taught over the first 4 and a half weeks in the Spring Quarter on an intensive schedule.

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

Equivalent Course(s): RLVC 38325, KNOW 38325, CLAS 38323, MDVL 28325, ARTH 28325, CLCV 28323, ARTH 38325

**RLST 28328. Africa's Byzantine Heritage: Religion and Art in Pluralistic Societies. 100 Units.**

This quarter-length course is conceived around themes and artifacts of an innovative special exhibition titled *Africa & Byzantium* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art that we will be visiting together (Feb. 16-18, 2024). It will be the first time a museum has showcased the important contributions of Africa's multiethnic societies to the cultural and religious life of the Christian Empire of Byzantium. In addition, the Met boasts a world-renowned permanent collection of Byzantine artifacts, several of which we will be studying as well during our field trip. The Byzantine Empire (4th cent.-1453) encompassed large parts of the Mediterranean, the Balkans, Anatolia, and the Middle East, with North and East Africa forming part of the empire from the fourth century CE to the Islamic conquest (early 7th cent.). Under Islamic rule, the African continent's Byzantine-Christian legacy continued to be influential and has a rich afterlife to this day. The field trip will enable students hone their competence in visual analysis through close-up study of artworks representing a range of artistic media and techniques. The classroom sessions will illuminate the historical and cultural framework in which the artifacts are situated. Africa's Byzantine heritage is an emerging field of study and in this course students who wish to pursue their own research projects will have ample opportunity to do so. Students will also attend weekly discussion sections led by the TA.

Instructor(s): Karin Krause Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Students enrolled in this course will participate in a \*mandatory\* three-day field trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Feb. 16-18, 2024). Travel and lodging will be fully covered through a Curricular Innovation and Undergraduate Research grant provided by the College.

Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 28328, CLCV 25323, ARTH 28328

**RLST 28405. Religion in Anime and Japanese Pop Culture. 100 Units.**

How does Spirited Away reflect teachings of Japanese Buddhism and Shinto? Or what about Neon Genesis Evangelion? What can pop culture tell us about religion? In this course, we will consider what Japanese religions are (and are not) by looking at their representations in popular cultural forms of past and present. Sources are drawn from a range of popular cultural forms including anime and manga, but also literature, artistic performances, visual arts, and live-action movies. The course covers foundational aspects of Japanese religious life through non-traditional sources like *Bleach*, *The Tale of Genji*, and *Your Name*. At the end of the course, students will be able to speak to the great diversity of religious practices and viewpoints in Japan, not only its centers but also its peripheries and minorities. Meanwhile, we will consider broader questions about the complex connections between religion and popular culture. No prior knowledge of Buddhism, Shinto, or Japanese history is expected.



Instructor(s): Bruce Winkelman Terms Offered: Winter  
 Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 28405, EALC 28405, MAAD 14805

**RLST 28410. Proust: The first volume. 100 Units.**

This course will undertake in-depth readings of the first volume of Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*. While we will use a translation, any student who can read the French is strongly encouraged to do so (alongside the English, to facilitate class discussion). By doing close readings, we will explore the famous Proustian world, its textual and cultural complexities, the literary style it inaugurates, as well as the belle époque it depicts. The course will thus consider social, literary, historical, and critical approaches to this seminal text.

Instructor(s): Françoise Meltzer Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): The course is intended for graduate students, but advanced undergraduates (third or fourth years) can take the course with the permission of the instructor.

Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 42410, FREN 32410, FREN 22410, CMLT 22410, DVPR 42410

**RLST 28449. The End is Near: The Bible and Apocalypse. 100 Units.**

The rise of nuclear weapons, the global warming crisis, and the Covid-19 pandemic have reignited debates about the fate and meaning of human history. If it is the end of the world as we know it, how should we act, and what-if anything-comes next? For centuries, the Bible has been a source for people thinking about end of time. In this course, we examine how the Bible and other ancient texts portray human catastrophe and the possibility of new beginnings. From national upheavals and the dawn of a final political order, down to the fate of the individual and the destiny of the cosmos at large, this course exposes students to the multiplicity of ways that the End is envisioned throughout the Bible and later interpretation. How do biblical authors interpret the meaning of existence in light of the End? What stands out about ancient literature when we understand it as anticipating the End, and how can these texts help us understand contemporary fears about the End? No background knowledge about the Bible or the ancient world is required for the course.

Instructor(s): Jonathan Wegner Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 28449

**RLST 28507. Narrative: Text, Theory, Event. 100 Units.**

Study of narrative as form of generic classification in the study of religion and its literatures (both sacredly designated and not), including autobiography, novel, film, and historical events.

Instructor(s): Richard Rosengarten Terms Offered: Spring

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

Equivalent Course(s): RLVC 48507

**RLST 28602. Topics in EALC: Nature & Dao. 100 Units.**

This course is about ways some fundamental questions about life have been asked and answered in Chinese traditions. What is the world-especially what we today might call the "natural" or "living" world? How should one live, and see one's life, within it? What is our relationship with it? How can we best understand it? How should our understanding guide our own lives and practices? We'll explore some traditional Chinese responses to these questions as they have been expressed in religious practice, painting, literature, philosophy, gardening, and travel. Programmatically, the course is a hybrid: a "great works" course in the classic mold grafted onto a survey of some recent writings in the "environmental humanities." These texts will both provide a set of conversation partners for our classic Chinese works and outline possible resources for reading and thinking about them here in our present age of ecological catastrophe generated, in large part, by our modern human practices. Note: This course is open only to students in the College. There are no prerequisites.

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

Equivalent Course(s): EALC 10502

**RLST 28882. Magic and Divination in the Islamic World. 100 Units.**

From weather forecasts to stock market speculations, our modern world is saturated with predictions for the future. In spite of this, other divinatory methods such as astrology are often portrayed as superstitious, irrational, or unreligious. This course will introduce students to the unexpected interaction of science, magic, and religion through the exploration of divination in the Islamic world. We will ask how divination can be a part of religious practice and how methods of future-telling are said to "work" from the perspective of the philosophers and scientists who practiced them. We will also explore the arguments against divination and identify and understand religious and/or scientific objections to the practice. All readings will be in English translation.

Instructor(s): Alex Matthews Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 28882, NEHC 28882, CCTS 21020, HIPS 28882, KNOW 28882

**RLST 28901. Religion, Science, Naturalism: Is There a Problem? 100 Units.**

The idea that "religion" and "science" are basically at odds with one another - that they involve, indeed, essentially different kinds of rationality - is surely foremost among the ideas that arguably distinguish modernity. This class will consider some of the various ways in which that conclusion has been resisted by some twentieth- and twenty-first-century thinkers, drawing on a range of philosophical and religious perspectives - those, for example, of the Anglo-Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (who would complicate our understanding of what it means to "believe" anything); the German theologian Rudolf Bultmann (whose method precisely distinguished existential questions from scientific ones); and the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet (who thinks it imperative that the limits of scientific understanding be acknowledged in light of a Buddhist critique). Particular attention will be given to early writings from American pragmatist philosopher-scientists (William James, C. S.

Peirce, and John Dewey), who argued that it is a mistake in the first place to think religion necessarily concerns anything "supernatural"; religion, for these thinkers, can therefore be understood as wholly consistent with naturalism.

Instructor(s): Daniel A. Arnold Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 27901, SIGN 26072, KNOW 28901

**RLST 28903. Religion and Civic Leadership in Chicago. 100 Units.**

From Islamic organizations advocating for legislative changes to incarceration policies, to Buddhist environmental activists holding oil divestment demonstrations, to Christian organizations providing safety net healthcare, religion often plays a leading role in civic life. Religious beliefs can influence the ways individuals and communities vote and engage with public issues and institutions. This course explores different models of religious civic leadership by having students observe first-hand the operation, action, and activism of religiously motivated communities, NGOs, and political organizations in and around the city of Chicago. Using a small working group format, students will directly engage with religiously-motivated groups, as well as analyze cases discussing the ways that the interpretation of religious ideas from different traditions define the parameters and goals of civic engagement for particular communities. Throughout the course we will discuss how issues of community life might qualify and inform religious conceptions of the public good and preferred methods of civic engagement.

Instructor(s): John Sianghio Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): This course counts as an approved course for the Democracy Studies minor.

Equivalent Course(s): AMER 28903, CHST 28903

**RLST 29000. The American Culture Wars. 100 Units.**

Should we tear down statues of Confederate soldiers? Should religious institutions be exempt from public health regulations? How (if at all) should we regulate abortion? These questions are only the latest battlefields in the "culture wars," the long-running conversation-or, more often, shouting match-about how Americans ought to live. This seminar will explore how Americans have wrestled with questions of morality and national identity since the country's founding. Two questions will drive our discussion. First, why do certain issues become the subject of fierce cultural conflict? Second, do these conflicts enrich or undermine American democracy?

Instructor(s): William Schultz Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): This course counts as an approved course for the Democracy Studies minor.

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 27715, AMER 29000, CRES 27000, GNSE 29000

**RLST 29003. Islam Beyond the Human: Spirits, Demons, Devils, and Ghosts. 100 Units.**

This seminar explores the diverse spiritual and sentient lifeforms within Islamic cosmology that exist beyond the human-from jinn, angels, and ghosts to demons and devils. We will focus on theological, scientific, philosophical, anthropological, and historical accounts of these creatures across a variety of texts, as well as their literary and filmic afterlives in contemporary cultural representations. In so doing, we consider the various religious, social, and cultural inflections that shape local cosmological imaginaries. We ask how reflecting on the nonhuman world puts the human itself in question, including such concerns as sexuality and sexual difference, the boundaries of the body, reason and madness, as well as the limits of knowledge.

Instructor(s): Alireza Doostdar and Hoda El Shakry Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Enrollment by Consent Only (for both grads and undergrads). Students should send the instructors a paragraph explaining their interest and prior preparation or familiarity with the themes in the course.

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

Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 49003, NEHC 29003, ANTH 49003, CMLT 29003, GNSE 49003, ISLM 49003, NEHC 49003, GNSE 29003, AASR 49003, ANTH 29003, KNOW 49003

**RLST 29030. Islam, Race and Decoloniality. 100 Units.**

This course explores the historical and discursive practices through which the racialization of Muslims and Islamic cultures developed and remains sustained within colonial and neo-colonial contexts, modalities and relations. Particular attention to the "threat of Islam" is examined in various literary, media and ethnographic narratives. This course examines how race is constituted within contemporary imperialist practices, specifically the global war on terror's focus on constructing Islam and Muslim cultures as uncivilized, inferior, and oppressive. Using a de-colonial framework, the course will engage the politics of pluralism, multivocality and resistance.

Instructor(s): Maliha Chishti Terms Offered: Winter

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

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 29030, KNOW 39030, ISLM 39030, NEHC 39030

**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 Research Seminar I. 100 Units.**

This class meets weekly to provide guidance for planning, researching, and writing the BA research paper. The two-quarter senior sequence 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 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 Research Seminar convened by a preceptor during Autumn and Winter Quarters of their senior year. This seminar will allow students to prepare their bibliographies, hone their writing, and present their research.

Instructor(s): Mendel Kranz Terms Offered: Autumn. Mendel Kranz will be both instructor of this course and BA Preceptor.

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 29900. BA Research 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. The two-quarter senior sequence 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 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 of their senior year. This seminar will allow students to prepare their bibliographies, hone their writing, and present their research.

Instructor(s): Mendel Kranz Terms Offered: Winter. Mendel Kranz will be both instructor of this course and BA Preceptor.

Note(s): Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form.

