

SPRING 2024 COURSE OFFERINGS

REL 101.01 Religions in World Cultures MWF 9:30-10:20 am Professor Carr

REL 101.02 Religions in World Cultures MWF 10:35-11:25 am Professor Carr

This course introduces religion by surveying the worldviews, practices, and institutions of global religious traditions. It considers both common and distinctive spiritual preoccupations of religious practitioners and the astounding variety of religious expression across the human family. It examines the historical development of religions, their sacred writings, their myths, rituals, and symbols, and their contemporary forms. The course is also concerned with methods of studying religion. [GM2, H, V]

REL 102 Contemporary Religious Issues MW 11:40-12:55 pm Professor Quick

An exploration of how religious people and ideas shape contemporary life. The course examines religiously-influenced issues such as the separation of church and state, the role of religion in violence and terrorism, and debates between religion and science. The course also looks at positive roles of religion and spirituality in modern culture. [SS, V]

REL 212 Buddhism: TR 2:45-4:00 pm Professor Rinehart

From India to Asia and Beyond

Our primary objective in this course is to learn about the origins and development of Buddhism and its spread throughout Asia and other parts of the world. We begin with the rise of Buddhism in India, focusing on the development of philosophical concepts and religious practices. We then examine varieties of Buddhism as practiced in Southeast Asia, China, Tibet, Japan, and the West, giving special attention to the changes and adaptations Buddhism undergoes as it encounters new cultural and religious environments. We consider the religious practices of Buddhist monks and nuns, Buddhist laypeople, and their interactions. We will study examples of the ways in which Buddhist principles and practices have played a role in social structures, politics, and social movements. [GM1, GM2, H, V]

REL 213 Judaism: WF 2:45-4:00 pm Professor Carr

Faith, Communities, Identity

An introduction to the religion, history, and literature of the Jewish people. Among the areas covered are: the biblical heritage; the development of rabbinic Judaism; ritual and practice; medieval philosophy and practice, and the reactions of Jews to modernity, such as political emancipation, immigration to America, the Holocaust, the state of Israel, and issues of gender. [GM1, H, V]

REL 214 Christianity: MW 1:15-2:30 pm Professor Quick

From Jesus to the Third Millennium

A study of the main branches of Christianity—Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant—with reference to their common biblical inheritance, historical developments, characteristic doctrines, institutional expressions, and global spread. Readings are assigned in authors representing the viewpoints studied. [GM2, H, V]

REL 215 Islam: TR 11:00-12:15 pm Professor Patel
History, Faith, and Practice

An introduction to Islam, a religion that flowered into a world civilization. It covers the vast and dynamic range of Muslim religious life from Muhammad's time to the present. The broad survey spans the foundational texts of the Quran and prophetic traditions as well as later Islamic thought, including jurisprudence, theology, and mysticism. The course highlights modern debates within and about Islam. Topics include political Islam, religious pluralism, the limits of jihad, and the possibilities of Islamic feminism. [H, V]

REL 217 Latino/a Religions WF 1:15-2:30 pm Professor Hendrickson

A study of the religious traditions of Latinas and Latinos in the United States. The course looks at various forms of Catholicism, the growth of Protestantism in Hispanic communities, and a variety of Afro-Caribbean religions. Emphases are placed on the lived devotions of Latinas/os, on the differences among Mexican, Caribbean, Central and South American groups, and on the role of religion in ethnic identity formation and maintenance. [GM1, H, V]

REL 222 Interreligious Cooperation & Conflict TR 9:30-10:45 am Professor Patel

This course explores the intersection of religion, ethics and politics through the lens of interreligious cooperation and conflict. It focuses on the connected histories of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam-the "Abrahamic faiths"-through a study of doctrine, ritual, and social life. Special attention is given to practices of representing "nonbelievers" and to historical interactions between the religious communities in order to highlight the complexity, fluidity and dynamism of religious identity. [GM1, H, V] *Pre-Req: REL 101 or instructor permission

REL 223 Religious Healing & Health MW 8:00-9:15 am Professor Hendrickson

An examination of how various religious traditions understand sickness and health and how they try to restore wholeness to sick individuals and groups. The efficacy of religious healing, the interface between modern medicine and folk healing, and the importance of cultural narratives in restoring the sick to health are all considered. Academic analysis of religious healing as well as firsthand accounts of religious and folk healthcare are studied. [H, SS]

REL 240 Theories of Religion TR 1:15-2:30 pm Professor Rinehart

What is religion? What is the nature of religious belief? What roles does religion play in society? How can we study and understand religion? There have been many attempts to answer these questions from sociology, anthropology, philosophy, psychology, comparative religion, and the feminist critique of religion. This course examines representative theories of the nature and study of religion, paying close attention to the contexts within which these theories arise, and how effective they are in leading to an understanding of religious beliefs and practices.

[H, SS, W]

REL 260 Global Muslim Literature & Film M 1:15-4:00 pm Professor Patel

This course introduces students to global Muslim culture and civilization through literature and film. Geographic regions include the Middle East, South Asia, Africa, North America and Europe; historical periods span both pre-modern and modern. Topics covered include but are not limited to: constructions of race, religion, and gender; diaspora and immigration; political Islam and Islamophobia in cultural contexts. Course materials focus on fictional storytelling although characters and plots may be rooted in actual historical events. [H, GM2]