
Religious Studies

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The Program in Religious Studies, which is housed in the Department of Classics, Archaeology, and Religion, investigates basic issues about human experience, surveying and analyzing how people have understood, shaped, and expressed what it means to be human. Religious Studies majors explore the roles religion plays in societies, the ways that religious institutions grow and change, the meanings of scriptures from around the world, the extraordinary experiences of religious specialists, and much more. The Religious Studies Program offers a BA degree with a major in Religious Studies with concentrations in Global Religions, Religious Literacy for Professionals, and Religions, Cultures, and Societies. A minor in Religious Studies is also available.

Faculty

Associate Professors S. M. Cohen*, R. Gregory*, D. Kelley*

Assistant Professors D. Cohen*

Professor Emeritus B. Flanagan, J. Raitt*

* Graduate Faculty Member - membership is required to teach graduate-level courses, chair master's thesis committees, and serve on doctoral examination and dissertation committees.

** Doctoral Faculty Member - membership is required to chair doctoral examination or dissertation committees. Graduate faculty membership is a prerequisite for Doctoral faculty membership.

Undergraduate

- BA in Religious Studies (<http://catalog.missouri.edu/collegeofartsandscience/religiousstudies/ba-religious-studies/>)
- Minor in Religious Studies (<http://catalog.missouri.edu/collegeofartsandscience/religiousstudies/minor-religious-studies/>)

The department's field of study includes religious expressions from many cultures and in every period of history. Systematic study of this rich world of expression employs the widest range of academic tools and competencies, from the skills of the literary critic and historian to the analytic abilities of the social scientist and anthropologist. Because of this broad base, study in the department promotes fundamental academic skills and critical judgment and provides deeper understanding of national and international cultures. Thus, the religious studies major provides students with a foundation to pursue careers in business, government, counseling, law, medicine and journalism, as well as advanced professional study in religion. The department offers the BA in Religious Studies. A minor is also available.

Double Majors

Students are encouraged to pursue dual majors that combine religion with other interests. A double major is a good way of integrating

two related areas of interest, such as related humanities and social science fields (Psychology, Political Science, History, English, Ancient Mediterranean Studies). Students looking forward to a career in medicine or the sciences may use a double major (Biology or Chemistry, for instance) to ensure a thorough background in the humanities to balance their scientific studies. Usually minor or related field requirements for each major are satisfied by major courses in the other department. Consult with departmental advisors about specifics.

Graduate

While MU does not offer graduate degrees specifically in religious studies, the University does offer graduate degree opportunities in a number of related areas, both within the College of Arts and Science, and in the other Schools and Colleges that make up the University. The catalog provides a complete list of these degree options (<http://catalog.missouri.edu/degreesanddegreeprograms/>).

REL_ST 1100: Introduction to Religion

Engages students in reflection on the religious questions that human existence poses, and introduces them to conceptual tools for understanding and evaluating answers which have emerged in human history.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Sections are restricted to Freshmen and Sophomores only or Juniors and Seniors only

REL_ST 1100H: Introduction to Religion - Honors

Engages students in reflection on the religious questions that human existence poses, and introduces them to conceptual tools for understanding and evaluating answers which have emerged in human history.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Sections are restricted to Freshman and Sophomores only and Juniors and Seniors only. Honors eligibility required

REL_ST 1500: Religion and Culture

The study of religion as expressed in art, literature, music, dance, drama, architecture.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Restricted to Freshmen and Sophomores only

REL_ST 2005: Topics in Religious Studies-Humanities

Organized study of selected topics which vary by semester and are announced at time of registration.

Credit Hour: 1-3

REL_ST 2042: Religion and STEM Disciplines

This course examines the origins of STEM disciplines in religious societies. Our readings focus on the historical contexts of knowledge production in varied religious cultures including, but not limited to Indigenous traditions, Medieval Islam, Talmudic scholarship, Hindu cosmology, as well as the dialogue between Buddhism and modern science. Learning the historical contexts of scientific thought aids in a deep understanding of the importance of scientific thinking and the many ways that, contrary to American Evangelical anti-scientific movements, religion and science together have been and still are powerful ways to find human meaning in the natural world.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2100: Indigenous Religions

(same as ANTHRO 2100). Explores the central aspects of religious life in indigenous communities. Focusing on specific groups, it considers individual and group identity, the meaning of the sacred, and the impact of foreign domination.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2100H: Indigenous Religions - Honors

(same as ANTHRO 2100H). Explores the central aspects of religious life in indigenous communities. Focusing on specific native communities, it considers individual and group identity and the meaning of the sacred.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Honors eligibility required

REL_ST 2110: Global Religions

This course explores approaches to the academic study of religion and introduces students to a variety of global religious traditions through the study of their myths, rituals, beliefs, and practices.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2110H: Global Religions - Honors

(same as REL_ST 2110). Explores the differing ways in which Asian and Western religions interpret life and reality. Includes study of Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese and Japanese religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Honors eligibility required

REL_ST 2220: Death and Dying in the Western World

Death is a topic most Americans wish to avoid. Once we were very familiar with it since people before the mid-19th c. usually died at home, their bodies mourned at home, and then buried either in a designated public space or on their property (especially in the South). Today, most people die in hospitals or medical-oriented institutions (like nursing homes). Because death is so hidden (even disguised) most of us have never seen a dead body except in film or on television and those bodies are often a result of an exceptionally gruesome, yet highly staged death. Hidden death in everyday life has led to the fact that most Americans are unfamiliar with death and even outright afraid of it. People unconsciously treat death, the process of dying, and grief as a sort of infectious disease. However, death surrounds us both personally and collectively and this means that the living and the dead do not exist (and have never existed) in completely separate realms. This class explores how death has historically been approached in the Western world and familiarizes us with different types of death (natural death, death by execution, death from illness, and death by murder). Using a religious studies and American studies approach we will examine overarching themes of grief, loss, mourning, and even anger in association with death and dying.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2230: Religion and Popular Culture in the U.S.

Explores intersections of religion and popular culture and methods for analysis.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2240: Harry Potter, Magic, and Religion

This course explores religious themes in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series. Topics include ancient Greek, Roman, Celtic, and Norse mythological themes, the relationship between religion and magic, and reactions to the books among various religious groups.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2240H: Harry Potter, Magic, and Religion - Honors

This course explores religious themes in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series. Topics include ancient Greek, Roman, Celtic, and Norse mythological themes, the relationship between religion and magic, and reactions to the books among various religious groups. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Honors eligibility required

REL_ST 2260: Gods, Dwarves, and Dragons: Introduction to Old Norse Mythology

This course is an introduction to the pre-Christian religion and mythology of Northern Europe. Topics covered include Old Norse society, gender roles, and values. Main deities and mythological figures are explored through images and texts. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2270: Religion and Literature

This course explores religious themes such as myth, rituals and rites, sacred power, transcendence, salvation, and pilgrimage in secular literature. Selections in English, include novels and short stories from a variety of cultures and religious traditions.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2310: Religions of China and Japan

Introduction to the religions of East Asia, focusing on both popular beliefs and institutionalized religion. Topics include: Buddhist, Confucian, and Daoist traditions of China; Buddhism and Shinto in Japan; self-cultivation practices; spirit mediumship; ritual; cosmology; religion and society; religion and the state.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2310H: Religions of China and Japan - Honors

Introduction to the religions of East Asia, focusing on both popular beliefs and institutionalized religion. Topics include: Buddhist, Confucian, and Daoist traditions of China; Buddhism and Shinto in Japan; self-cultivation practices; spirit mediumship; ritual; cosmology; religion and society; religion and the state.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Honors eligibility required

REL_ST 2500: Introduction to the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible and its World

An introduction to the literature of the Hebrew Bible in its Ancient Near Eastern cultural context. Students are exposed to the art, archaeology, literature, and histories of the great civilizations of the Ancient Near

East and their impact on Israelite history and the formation of the Hebrew Bible. Emphasis is placed on the development and changes in Israelite theology in response to historical circumstances over the centuries that witnessed the Hebrew Bible's composition, compilation, and canonization.

Credit Hours: 3

Recommended: REL_ST 1500

REL_ST 2500H: Introduction to the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible and its World - Honors

An introduction to the literature of the Hebrew Bible in its Ancient Near Eastern cultural context. Students are exposed to the art, archaeology, literature, and histories of the great civilizations of the ANE and their impact on Israelite history and the formation of the Hebrew Bible. Emphasis is placed on the development and changes in Israelite theology in response to historical circumstances over the centuries that witnessed the Hebrew Bible's composition, compilation, and canonization.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Honors eligibility required

REL_ST 2510: Introduction to the World of the New Testament

An introduction to the books of the New Testament and the methods and principles guiding its academic study. Emphasis is placed on Jesus' and his disciples' Jewish heritage and the relationship and interactions between Judaism and Christianity over the decades the NT books were written and compiled. Attention is given to the character of the Roman world in which Christianity grew and found the bulk of its converts. Finally, stress is given to the texts that were not accepted into the canonical NT, the Christians whose views those texts represent, and their differences from those Christians whose views became orthodox.

Credit Hours: 3

Recommended: REL_ST 1500

REL_ST 2630: History of Christian Traditions

(same as HIST 2630). An overview of the origins and development of Christianities from the first century of the Common Era to the present day. Topic will include competing Christian theologies, colonialism, conversion narratives, globalization, religious violence, and heresy. May be repeated for credit.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2630H: History of Christian Traditions - Honors

(same as HIST 2630). An overview of the origins and development of Christianities from the first century of the Common Era to the present day. Topic will include competing Christian theologies, colonialism, conversion narratives, globalization, religious violence, and heresy. May be repeated for credit.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Honors eligibility required

REL_ST 2630HW: History of Christian Traditions - Honors/Writing Intensive

(same as HIST 2630). An overview of the origins and development of Christianities from the first century of the Common Era to the present day. Topic will include competing Christian theologies, colonialism, conversion

narratives, globalization, religious violence, and heresy. May be repeated for credit.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Honors eligibility required

REL_ST 2630W: History of Christian Traditions - Writing Intensive

(same as HIST 2630). An overview of the origins and development of Christianities from the first century of the Common Era to the present day. Topic will include competing Christian theologies, colonialism, conversion narratives, globalization, religious violence, and heresy. May be repeated for credit.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2700: Islam

Examines the historical development of Islamic traditions, noting the manner in which various sects & factions understand religion, humanity and God.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2850: Religious History of the Middle East I

An introduction to the early history and development of religion in the Middle East. The course begins with the religious traditions of ancient Egypt, Anatolia, and Mesopotamia; describes how these traditions shaped the subsequent development of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; and concludes with the transformation of the religious landscape following the Islamic conquests. In addition to mapping out these historical linkages, the course will focus on using the category of religion as a unique method in the study of social and political history. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2860: Religious History of the Middle East II

This course is a historical introduction to the religions of the pre-modern and modern Middle East. It follows the histories of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam from the defeat of the Mongol army in Palestine in 1260 to the present day. In particular it focuses on the social, political, and economic interactions of the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim populations, and the role religion has (and has not) played in the formation and development of the modern Middle East. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2900: Contemporary Religious Thought

Explores issues within contemporary Christian theology that cut across denominational lines such as: the nature and existence of God; secularization, relativism, and humanism; the authority of the Bible; attitudes toward other religions; the moral integrity of Christianity; and the purpose of human existence.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2910: Religion and Contemporary Social Issues

Study of the social ethics of Jewish and Christian theologians and movements of the 19th and 20th centuries and an examination of selected social problems in light of these systems.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2930: Religion and Psychological Perspectives

(same as PSYCH 2930). Examines how religion is understood from various psychological perspectives, and how psychological theories reflect religious presuppositions about the nature and purpose of human life.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2939: Religion and Human Sexuality

Examines attitudes within the Christian tradition toward sexuality, with particular reference to the alternatives of patriarchy and feminism, especially as they consider issues such as the meaning of bodiliness, masturbation, pornography, prostitution, homosexuality and sexual pluralism.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 2950: Directed Readings in Religious Studies

Independent readings selected in consultation with supervisory faculty member. May not be repeated.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: instructor's consent

REL_ST 3000: History of Religion in America to the Civil War

(same as HIST 3000). Surveys major American religious traditions, patterns, and themes from 1492 to the Civil War, especially the role of religion in American social, cultural, and political developments.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: sophomore standing or instructor's consent

REL_ST 3005: Topics in Religious Studies-Humanities

Organized study of selected topics which vary by semester and are announced at time of registration.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3020: Religion, Health, and Healing

What does it mean to "be healthy" and "to heal" in different contexts? What sorts of medical, ritual, or religious expertise authorizes different sorts of healers and forms of healing? What conceptions of human bodies and their capabilities are assumed? These questions probe entanglements of religion, culture, and medicine in everyday life. This course focuses on ways in which these issues might inform, challenge, and enrich thinking about global health. We will examine moral and religious histories of the global health movement alongside pressing contemporary questions such as, how do disease epidemics shape religious practice? How does religious belief shape the reception of biomedical technologies? We will consider examples from a range of contexts and traditions. Topics include colonialism, medical missionaries, social gospel and public health, human rights, bioethics, and liberation theology. Throughout the course, we will discuss the relevance of socio-economics, race, gender, and sexuality. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3042: Sacred Humor: Tricksters, Clowns, and Contraries

This class will explore the notion that humor plays an important role in conveying sacred meaning. To that end, we will need to adopt a fairly

common vocabulary regarding the concepts "humor" and "sacred," and will do so while exploring some of the key aspects of the sacred humor discourse, especially the "trickster," "clown," and "contrary" motifs in mythic narrative.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3100: Religious Literacy for the Public and Professions

This course teaches students to engage and encounter religion in day-to-day life and in the professional workplace. Its primary goal is to examine religious diversity in private and professional contexts from a practical standpoint by examining a variety of case studies.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3200: Hinduism

(same as S_A_ST 3200). Origin and development of central themes of traditional Hinduism from earliest times to the modern period. Topics include: the Vedic tradition, rituals and practice, varieties of yoga, and meditation, Indian religious thought, and devotional Hinduism.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3200W: Hinduism - Writing Intensive

(same as S_A_ST 3200). Origin and development of central themes of traditional Hinduism from earliest times to the modern period. Topics include: the Vedic tradition, rituals and practice, varieties of yoga, and meditation, Indian religious thought, and devotional Hinduism.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3210: History of Religion in Post-Civil War America

(same as HIST 3210). Surveys major American religious traditions, patterns, and themes from 1865 to the present, especially the role of religion in American social, cultural and political developments.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3210H: History of Religion in Post-Civil War America - Honors

Surveys major American religious traditions, patterns, and themes from 1865 to the present, especially the role of religion in American social, cultural and political developments. Prerequisites: Honors Eligibility Required.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: sophomore standing or instructor's consent

REL_ST 3220: Tibetan Buddhism

This course explores the Buddhist tradition in Tibet, from its introduction in the 8th century to the present. Topics include the merger of Indian Buddhism with the local Bon religion, the relationship between Tibetan Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism, the Tibetan Buddhist canon, lamas and tulkus, religion and material culture in Tibet, and the influence of Tibetan Buddhism in Central Asia. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3230: Buddhism and Environmental Ethics

(same as S_A_ST 3230). Global environmental crisis is associated with rapidly expanding human population. Buddhist teachings about

the interdependent aspects of existence and interrelatedness of all life may provide critical insights for how humanity can achieve balance and reciprocity with nature.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3240: Buddhism of South and Southeast Asia

(same as S_A_ST 3240). Examines the origins of Buddhism in India, the narratives of the life of the Buddha, the development of early Buddhist schools, the extension of Buddhism into Central and Southeast Asia, and the current practice of Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3250: Buddhism in East Asia

This course will trace the transmission of Buddhism from the Indian subcontinent to China, and from there to Korea and Japan. We will examine the historical development of East Asian forms of Buddhism, deal with key issues of Buddhist thought and practice, and look at the role of Buddhism in modern East Asian societies.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: REL_ST 2110, REL_ST 2310 or REL_ST 3200, or instructor's consent

REL_ST 3260: Hindu Goddesses

(same as S_A_ST 3261). This course examines the vast range of Hindu Goddesses and their worship in South Asia. It includes information about goddess origins, mythology, symbolism, and attendant ritual practices. In order to approach this topic, background information about the history of Hinduism, major religious narratives, devotional practices, and iconographic representations of the divine are discussed. The course introduces the approaches of various scholars to Hindu Goddess worship within the context of religion, social relations, and gender roles, and explores ways in which South Asian women experience and negotiate feminine power in contemporary socio-cultural contexts.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3270: Yoga and Meditation in the Modern World

(same as S_A_ST 3270). This course explores the practice of Yoga and meditation, both as an ancient tradition of India and as an example of the globalization of religion. It will examine how the ancient Hindu religious tradition of Yoga was reinvented against the backdrop of India's colonial experience. Then it will look at a variety of emerging and transforming varieties of Hindu inspired yoga and meditation that spread globally in the context of increasing transnational interaction. To better appreciate both the traditional and the modern aspects of yoga and meditation, a secular meditation practice is included as an instructional and experiential component of this class.

Credit Hours: 4

REL_ST 3350: Monsters in Western Religion and Folklore

This course focuses on monsters found in Western cultures and more specifically how monsters are instantiated and put to use in contexts of popular culture. Theoretical and methodological approaches to the material are drawn from both Religious Studies and Folkloristics. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3350W: Monsters in Western Religion and Folklore - Writing Intensive

This course focuses on monsters found in Western cultures and more specifically how monsters are instantiated and put to use in contexts of popular culture. Theoretical and methodological approaches to the material are drawn from both Religious Studies and Folkloristics. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3360: Cults and New Religious Movements

While religious traditions constantly change, and new religions emerge in every historical time period, the new religious movements of the past century (many of which are often referred to negatively as "cults") present a particular challenge to contemporary cultures and societies. We will begin with a theoretical overview of new religious movements (NRMs) and will proceed gradually to discuss in detail the religion of the Peoples Temple and its charismatic leader and founder, Jim Jones. Recommended: An introductory course in any of the following disciplines/area studies: Religious Studies, Psychology, Communication Studies (emphasis on Media and Society/Media Theory); or Sociology.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Sophomore standing

REL_ST 3380: Native American Religions

(same as ANTHRO 3380). Investigation of religious lives of the native peoples of the Americas through cultural contact with modernity. Perspectives based on historical, anthropological and native texts.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3445: The Body in Western Christianity

This course is a survey of Western Christian Perspectives of the human body ranging from the Early Church Fathers to trends in contemporary American culture.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3445W: The Body in Western Christianity - Writing Intensive

This course is a survey of Western Christian Perspectives of the human body ranging from the Early Church Fathers to trends in contemporary American culture.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3451: Religion in Science Fiction

Investigation of religious themes in science fiction novels, short stories and films. Themes include the nature of the sacred, the limits of human knowledge, understanding and experiencing transcendence, revelation and apocalypse.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3451W: Religion in Science Fiction - Writing Intensive

Investigation of religious themes in science fiction novels, short stories and films. Themes include the nature of the sacred, the limits of human knowledge, understanding and experiencing transcendence, revelation and apocalypse.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3455: Robots and Religion: Reflection on Self, Soul, and Humanity

This course explores ancient and modern texts about robots, androids, and other artificial and virtual humans in order to analyze cultural and religious notions of what it means to be human. Course readings include ancient Indian, Tibetan, and Chinese robot stories in translation, medieval Jewish legends about golems, as well as contemporary Western science fiction

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3500: Judaism in the Time of Jesus

This course is an introduction to the origin and development of Judaism from the time of the destruction of the first Jerusalem temple (587 BCE) to the Bar Kochba revolt (132-135 CE).

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3550: Introduction to the Qur'an

This course is meant to introduce students with little or no background to the history, content, and interpretive traditions of the Qur'an. Given the text's unfamiliarity to most non-Muslim readers, students will spend the first half of the semester learning to navigate and read the Qur'an. Students then spend the second half of the semester examining what Muslims have said about and done with the Qur'an, with an emphasis on the diversity of voices - both past and present - engaged with the text. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3610: Angry Theologians

This course examines how intense debates and furious prose helped define many of modern Christianity's most widely agreed upon tenets of faith. Through close readings of theological treatises laced with profanity, insults, and outrage, we shall explore how central Christian theological convictions about baptism, the nature of Jesus, gender roles, sin, salvation, and other topics were constructed through argumentation and compromise. Though some theological disputes were settled politely through votes at church councils, even these peaceable compromises often emerged through a spate of insults and red-faced polemic. We shall read and discuss some of the most colorful--and enduringly influential--cases of theology developing through brash confrontation, from the Luther Insult Generator to the fiercely angry articulations of Christian theology in contemporary America. Students will learn to understand the logic and purpose behind these vehement arguments in their historical context and practice evaluating competing claims about complex issues such as the Trinity, the path to salvation, and sin. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3610W: Angry Theologians - Writing Intensive

This course examines how intense debates and furious prose helped define many of modern Christianity's most widely agreed upon tenets of faith. Through close readings of theological treatises laced with profanity, insults, and outrage, we shall explore how central Christian theological convictions about baptism, the nature of Jesus, gender roles, sin, salvation, and other topics were constructed through argumentation

and compromise. Though some theological disputes were settled politely through votes at church councils, even these peaceable compromises often emerged through a spate of insults and red-faced polemic. We shall read and discuss some of the most colorful--and enduringly influential--cases of theology developing through brash confrontation, from the Luther Insult Generator to the fiercely angry articulations of Christian theology in contemporary America. Students will learn to understand the logic and purpose behind these vehement arguments in their historical context and practice evaluating competing claims about complex issues such as the Trinity, the path to salvation, and sin. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3619: Religion and Race in the U.S.

This course explores intersections of race and religion in the United States. Areas explored in this course include but are not limited to: the role of religious institutions in the construction of race and racialization; the complex relationships between race, religion, and U.S. law, as well as historical and contemporary theologies of race. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

Recommended: REL_ST 1100, REL_ST 2110

REL_ST 3650: Paganism and Christianity

(same as AMS 3650). A study of the transition from Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire, as seen by observers contemporary with the events. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

Recommended: AMS 1060, REL_ST 1100

REL_ST 3710: Reality of God

Will explore the meaning of "the loss of God" (Tillich) and various modern and contemporary attempts to reaffirm the reality of God.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3740: Religion and Film

Addresses issues of interpretation and analysis in the convergence of religion and film. Addresses three areas under this broad rubric: 1) film representations of established religions; 2) film and the construction of social values; 3) film as contemporary "myth". Treating films as social texts, we will ask what such representations of ourselves to ourselves suggest about culture in general.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Sophomores and above

Recommended: Before taking this course, students take an introductory film, religious studies, or social science course such as sociology or anthropology

REL_ST 3760: Geography of the World's Religions

(same as GEOG 3760). Explores the significance of place in the origin, diffusion, distribution and practice of religions, emphasizing imprints of religion on the cultural landscape and connections between culture, politics, economics, and religion.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: 1000/2000 level Geography course; junior standing or instructor's consent

REL_ST 3760W: Geography of the World's Religions - Writing Intensive

(same as GEOG 3760). Explores the significance of place in the origin, diffusion, distribution and practice of religions, emphasizing imprints of religion on the cultural landscape and connections between culture, politics, economics, and religion.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: 1000/2000 level Geography course; junior standing or instructor's consent

REL_ST 3840: Religion and Criminal Justice

This course helps students become more familiar with a religious, sociological, and American studies approach toward understanding the complicated relationship between religion and the U.S. prison system. It addresses the influence of religion on the development of the justice system in the United States and enables students to understand how this influence extends into the present day. Unit one centers on understanding religion and familiarizing ourselves with certain components of the criminal justice system. Unit two examines the direct relationship between the two institutions, and Unit three is an exploration specifically of religion and capital punishment (the death penalty). Throughout this class we will also explore via the podcast "Serial", as well as other sources both fictional and nonfictional that give students the opportunity to contemplate complex concepts frequently taken for granted such as criminality, justice, punishment, and of course - guilt and innocence. Recommended: Introductory courses in one or more of the following disciplines: Sociology, Religious Studies, Psychology, Philosophy, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Political Science.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3900: Islam and the Myth of Religious Violence

This course explores the widespread claim that Islam is an inherently violent religion. After an overview of the history of Islam, and an introduction to the concepts of myth, religion, and violence, we examine systematically the historical, social, political, and religious contexts of a series of case studies. These case studies will underscore the nature of religious language and motivation within specific contexts, exposing students to a much more complex picture of the means and ends of so-called religious violence. No prior knowledge of Islam is required. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 3990: Majors Seminar

In this seminar religious studies majors will be encouraged to form a community of inquiry focused on the subject of religion and public life. Graded on S/U basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Religious Studies majors in their junior year

REL_ST 4001: Topics in Religious Studies-General

Organized study of selected topics which vary by semester and are announced at time of registration.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: junior standing or instructor's consent

REL_ST 4005: Topics in Religious Studies-General

Organized study of selected topics which vary by semester and are announced at time of registration.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4100: Advanced Theories and Methods

(cross-leveled with REL_ST 7100). The course investigates the history of the modern academic study of religion, closely exploring influential theories and methods that have shaped scholarly perspective. May include approaches such as structuralism, phenomenology, Durkheimian and Weberian sociology, Marxism, feminism, thick description, psychoanalysis, and others.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Restricted to Religious Studies majors and MA students

REL_ST 4100W: Advanced Theories and Methods - Writing Intensive

(cross-leveled with REL_ST 7100). The course investigates the history of the modern academic study of religion, closely exploring influential theories and methods that have shaped scholarly perspective. May include approaches such as structuralism, phenomenology, Durkheimian and Weberian sociology, Marxism, feminism, thick description, psychoanalysis, and others.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4110: Religious Myth and Ritual

(cross-leveled with REL_ST 7110). This course will unpack theoretical and methodological issues surrounding the study of embodied religious practice and the nature of religious narrative using myths and rituals from around the world's religious traditions.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4130: Haunting and Healing: The Supernatural in American Culture

This course explores instances, stories, and representations of haunting in the United States. We apply a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches to illuminate the diversity of meanings, functions, and contexts of supernatural beings in American popular and folk cultures.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4150: Religion, Spirituality, and the Brain

(cross-leveled with REL_ST 7150). Explores neuropsychology of religion, spirituality, transcendence, and mystical experience. Covers development in neuroscience about how the brain works in a variety of religious and spiritual contexts, including prayer, meditation, and altered states of consciousness.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Restricted to juniors and seniors only

REL_ST 4210: African-American Religion

(same as BL_STU 4210). Historical and thematic examination of African American religious traditions and practices. Addresses intersections of religious expression with race, identity, culture, and society.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4280: Archaeology of Religion

(same as ANTHRO 4280; cross-leveled with REL_ST 7280, ANTHRO 7280). This course examines how anthropologists conceptualize religious behavior, and how archaeologists use material remains to examine past religious behavior, rituals, religious practitioners, cosmological constructs, worldview and ideology in the Americas.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: ANTHRO 2020 and/or REL_ST 2100

REL_ST 4287: Empire: Intellectual History, Literature, and Society

(same as PEA_ST 4287; cross-leveled with REL_ST 7287, PEA_ST 7287). Intellectuals and writers passionately debated the wisdom of colonies, free trade, and war as economies became increasingly global over the centuries. The proponents, critics, and interpreters of Empire will offer us rich examples of themes and theories in the culture of specific nations and eras. Intellectual life will be studied in the context of developments in social inequality, the culture of classes, media of communication, education, identities, transnational governance, and the nation-state. The course will be offered with different national and historical foci under different instructors, and may be repeated for credit with different instructors. Counts as the capstone experience for Peace Studies and is open to majors of other disciplines.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: junior standing, senior standing preferred

REL_ST 4320: Introduction to Daoism

An introduction to the Daoist religious tradition, beginning with its background in earlier forms of philosophy, ritual, and belief. We will follow the development of the various Daoist schools and movements over the centuries and examine key aspects of their belief and practice, both historical and contemporary.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4380: Anthropological Theories of Religion

(same as ANTHRO 4380; cross-leveled with REL_ST 7380, ANTHRO 7380). Course provides a critical evaluation of anthropological explanations of various forms of traditional religious behavior such as magic, shamanism, divination, ritual, mythology, and witchcraft. The anthropological explanations examined range from nineteenth century classics to the current approaches of today.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: ANTHRO 2030, ANTHRO 2100 or REL_ST 2100, or instructor's consent

REL_ST 4400: The Catholic Intellectual Tradition

(cross-level with REL_ST 7110). Students will read the great thinkers of the Catholic church such as Augustine, Abelard, Bernard of Clairvaux, Aquinas, Bonaventure, Nicholas of Cusa, Pascal, Newman, Maritain, Rahner, Johnson, Tracy. The theme examined may vary from year to year.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4400H: The Catholic Intellectual Tradition - Honors

(cross-level with REL_ST 7110). Students will read the great thinkers of the Catholic church such as Augustine, Abelard, Bernard of Clairvaux, Aquinas, Bonaventure, Nicholas of Cusa, Pascal, Newman, Maritain,

Rahner, Johnson, Tracy. The theme examined may vary from year to year.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Honors eligibility required

REL_ST 4410H: Major Religious Thinkers - Honors

Concentrated study of one or more selected theologians, such as Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Buber, Tillich, and Rahner.

Prerequisites: Honors eligibility required

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4500: Greek and Roman Religion

(same as AMS 4500; cross-leveled with REL_ST 7500). Survey of religious development among the Greeks and Romans.

Credit Hours: 3

Recommended: AMS 1060 and junior standing

REL_ST 4535: Monastic Worlds

(same as MDVL_REN 4535; cross-leveled with REL_ST 7535, MDVL_REN 7535). Monastic Worlds is an experiential learning course designed to serve as a Humanities Field School in medieval and early modern studies. It will be taught by faculty from UMKC and UMC through the Intercampus Course Sharing initiative. The class introduces students to humanities research methodology and the religious history and culture of premodern Europe and the contemporary Midwest by using the monastic communities as a focal point to learn about musicology, history, art history, literature, and religion. Following two weeks of online course modules, students will travel to the Benedictine communities of Conception Abbey in Conception, Missouri and Mount Saint Scholastica's in Atchison, Kansas, for additional face-to-face classes and research projects. On-site, students will participate in communal living and attend face-to-face classes on the historical and cultural worlds of medieval and early modern Europe. They will practice ethnography through observation of and participation in communal life of prayer, study, book production, and labor. Students will also have the opportunity to work with the manuscripts and rare books owned by these communities and visit the largest reliquary collection in North America, housed at the nearby Benedictine community of the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Clyde, MO. This course has an associated fee. Contact teaching faculty for this year's fee details. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4630: Sanskrit I

(same as S_A_ST 4630). This intensive course will cover the essentials of Sanskrit grammar in one semester and prepare students for further readings in Hindu and Buddhist Literature.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4640: Sanskrit II

(same as S_A_ST 4640; cross-leveled with REL_ST 7640). This course is intended as a "sampler" of Sanskrit literature. We will read Sanskrit texts in the original. The objectives of the course are 1) Expanding the students' knowledge of the Sanskrit language, 2) To acquaint the students with a broad range of textual genres in Sanskrit literature, and 3) To acquaint the students with some central ideas of Hindu and Buddhist philosophy.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4704: Religion and Black Freedom

(same as BL_STU 4704). In this course, we will explore the role of religion in the shaping of the African diaspora in the Americas through discussions of the readings. We will focus on the use of religion to pursue emancipation from enslavement and the concept of full freedom. Research and theories from mainly history, religious studies, and literature will be used to examine some of the ways in which black people have improved their condition through religion. The main objective of this course is to study the connections between religion and the fashioning of black resistance to slavery and systems of domination after slavery.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4750: Women, Religion and Culture

(same as WGST 4750; cross-leveled with REL_ST 7750, WGST 7750). An advanced study of the role of women in religion, focusing on the methods of determining the significance of gender in religious life, sacred texts, symbols, rituals and/or beliefs. Traditions studied include Christianity, Islam, contemporary pagan communities, and Native American traditions.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 4950: Undergraduate Research in Religious Studies

This course offers students the opportunity to plan and carry out an independent research project with the goal of presenting their findings at an academic conference or other appropriate venue.

Credit Hour: 1-3

Prerequisites: Instructor permission

Recommended: Sophomore standing

REL_ST 4960: Directed Readings in Religious Studies

Independent readings selected in consultation with supervisory faculty member. May be repeated up to 6 hrs.

Credit Hour: 1-6

Prerequisites: instructor's consent

REL_ST 4990: Senior Seminar in Religious Studies

A seminar in which Religious Studies majors use methods of understanding and comparing religions by focusing on times and places of significant contact among peoples of different religions.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7001: Topics in Religious Studies-General

Organized study of selected topics which vary by semester and are announced at time of registration.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7005: Topics in Religious Studies - General

Organized study of selected topics which vary by semester and are announced at time of registration.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7100: Advanced Theories and Methods

(cross-leveled with REL_ST 4100). The course investigates the history of the modern academic study of religion, closely exploring influential theories and methods that have shaped scholarly perspective. May include approaches such as structuralism, phenomenology, Durkheimian and Weberian sociology, Marxism, feminism, thick description, psychoanalysis, and others.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Restricted to Religious Studies major or minor or instructor's consent

REL_ST 7110: Religious Myth and Ritual

(cross-leveled with REL_ST 4110). Comparative analysis of religious mythologies and symbolism as well as the ritual systems associated with those mythologies.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7150: Religion, Spirituality, and the Brain

(cross-leveled with REL_ST 4150). Explores neuropsychology of religion, spirituality, transcendence, and mystical experience. Covers development in neuroscience about how the brain works in a variety of religious and spiritual contexts, including prayer, meditation, and altered states of consciousness.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7280: Archaeology of Religion

(same as ANTHRO 7280; cross-leveled with REL_ST 4280, ANTHRO 4280). This course examines how anthropologists conceptualize religious behavior, and how archaeologists use material remains to examine past religious behavior, rituals, religious practitioners, cosmological constructs, worldview and ideology in the Americas.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: ANTHRO 2020 and/or REL_ST 2100

REL_ST 7287: Empire: Intellectual History, Literature, and Society

(same as PEA_ST 7287; cross-leveled with REL_ST 4287, PEA_ST 4287). Intellectuals and writers passionately debated the wisdom of colonies, free trade, and war as economies became increasingly global over the centuries. The proponents, critics, and interpreters of Empire will offer us rich examples of themes and theories in the culture of specific nations and eras. Intellectual life will be studied in the context of developments in social inequality, the culture of classes, media of communication, education, identities, transnational governance, and the nation-state. The course will be offered with different national and historical foci under different instructors, and may be repeated for credit with different instructors. Counts as the capstone experience for Peace Studies and is open to majors of other disciplines.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7380: Anthropological Theory of Religions

(same as ANTHRO 7380; cross-leveled with REL_ST 4380, ANTHRO 4380). Course provides a critical evaluation of anthropological explanations of various forms of traditional religious behavior such as magic, shamanism, divination, ritual, mythology and witchcraft. The anthropological explanations examined range from nineteenth century classics to the current approaches of today.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7500: Greek and Roman Religion

(cross-leveled with REL_ST 4500, AMS 4500). Survey of religious development among the Greeks and Romans.

Credit Hours: 3

Recommended: AMS 1060 and junior standing

REL_ST 7510: The Catholic Intellectual Tradition

(cross-leveled with REL_ST 4400), Students will read the great thinkers of the Catholic church such as Augustine, Abelard, Bernard of Clairvaux, Aquinas, Bonaventure, Nicholas of Cusa, Pascal, Newman, Maritain, Rahner, Johnson, Tracy. The theme examined may vary from year to year.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7535: Monastic Worlds

(same as MDVL_REN 7535; cross-leveled with MDVL_REN 4535, REL_ST 4535). Monastic Worlds is an experiential learning course designed to serve as a Humanities Field School in medieval and early modern studies. It will be taught by faculty from UMKC and UMC through the Intercampus Course Sharing initiative. The class introduces students to humanities research methodology and the religious history and culture of premodern Europe and the contemporary Midwest by using the monastic communities as a focal point to learn about musicology, history, art history, literature, and religion. Following two weeks of online course modules, students will travel to the Benedictine communities of Conception Abbey in Conception, Missouri and Mount Saint Scholastica's in Atchison, Kansas, for additional face-to-face classes and research projects. On-site, students will participate in communal living and attend face-to-face classes on the historical and cultural worlds of medieval and early modern Europe. They will practice ethnography through observation of and participation in communal life of prayer, study, book production, and labor. Students will also have the opportunity to work with the manuscripts and rare books owned by these communities and visit the largest reliquary collection in North America, housed at the nearby Benedictine community of the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Clyde, MO. This course has an associated fee. Contact teaching faculty for this year's fee details. Graded on A-F basis only.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7630: Sanskrit I

(same as S_A_ST 7630). This intensive course will cover the essentials of Sanskrit grammar in one semester and prepare students for further readings in Hindu and Buddhist literature.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7640: Sanskrit II

(same as S_A_ST 7640). This course is intended as a "sampler" of Sanskrit literature. We will read Sanskrit texts in the original. The objectives of the course are 1) Expanding the students' knowledge of the Sanskrit language, 2) To acquaint the students with a broad range of textual genres in Sanskrit literature, and 3) To acquaint the students with some central ideas of Hindu and Buddhist philosophy.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7720: Introduction to Daoism

An introduction to the Daoist religious tradition, beginning with its background in earlier forms of philosophy, ritual, and belief. We will follow the development of the various Daoist schools and movements over the centuries and examine key aspects of their belief and practice, both historical and contemporary.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7750: Women, Religion and Culture

(same as WGST 7750; cross-leveled with REL_ST 7750, WGST 7750). An advanced study of the role of women in religion, focusing on the methods of determining the significance of gender in religious life, sacred texts, symbols, rituals and/or beliefs. Traditions studied include Christianity, Islam, contemporary pagan communities, and Native American traditions.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 7990: Independent Readings in Religious Studies

Independent readings and research selected in consultation with supervisory faculty.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 8005: Topics in Religious Studies-Humanities

Organized study of selected topics which vary by semester and are announced at time of registration.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 8090: Research and Thesis in Religious Studies

Research and writing for master's thesis. Graded on S/U basis only.

Credit Hour: 1-6

Prerequisites: Instructor's consent

REL_ST 8200: Religious Texts and Interpretation: The Veda

(same as S_A_ST 7200). This course examines the Veda, the foundational scripture of Hinduism. It includes close study of Vedic texts and rituals and the influence, interpretation, and application of the Veda in the later Hinduism.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 8210: Indian Buddhism

This course examines the role of sacred texts in the Theravada and Mayayana Buddhist traditions. The course will emphasize canon formation and ideas about sacred texts in Buddhist traditions.

Credit Hours: 3

REL_ST 8700: Seminar in Folklore

(same as ANTHRO 8157 and ENGLSH 8700). Focus on the roots of folklore scholarship and methodology and their evolution in modern approaches to the study of oral, traditional verbal genres and their performance in natural folk groups.

Credit Hours: 3
