

**RELIGION DEPARTMENT  
2011-2012 FALL  
COURSE OFFERINGS**

**Undergraduate Program**

**REL SEM**

**Required Colloquium for Junior Majors**

**Professor(s): AnneMarie Luijendijk**

**Day/Time:**

F 10:00-11:50

**Description:** First semester Junior Majors participate in a required workshop on research and writing that culminates in a ten-page research paper. The colloquium is a non-credit fifth course. The grade for the colloquium is factored into the final grade for the junior independent work. **Students do not need to add this course on SCORE.**

**JDS 202 / REL 202**

**Great Books of the Jewish Tradition**

**Professor(s): Peter Schafer**

MW 1:30-2:50

**Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean**

**Description:** This course is intended to introduce students to the classical Jewish tradition through a close reading of portions of some of its great books. These books include the Bible, rabbinic midrash, the Talmud, Rashi's commentary on the Torah, Maimonides' Guide for the Perplexed, the Zohar (the central work of Kabbalah), Moses Mendelssohn's Jerusalem, Salomon Maimon's Autobiography, Leo Baeck's The Essence of Judaism, and Gershom Scholem's The Messianic Idea in Judaism. As we read, we will consider what these works tell us about creation, revelation, and salvation in Jewish tradition and how they come to define that tradition.

**REL 225**

**The Buddhist World of Thought and Practice**

**Professor(s): Jacqueline I. Stone**

MW 1:30-2:20

**Department Area Requirement: Religions of Asia**

**Description:** This course surveys the development of Buddhism from its beginnings in India through some of its later forms in East Asia, Tibet, and the West. Attention will be given to continuity and diversity within Buddhism, its modes of self-definition as a religious tradition, the interplay of its practical and trans-worldly concerns, and its transformations in specific historical and cultural settings.

**REL 230/ JDS 230**

**Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel**

**Professor(s): Naphtali S. Meshel**

MW 12:30-1:20

**Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean**

**Description:** A critical introduction to the Hebrew Bible in its historical, ideological and intellectual setting within the ancient Near East will be offered. Central problems in Biblical studies will be addressed, e.g., the historical value of Biblical narrative, the documentary hypothesis, and the process of canonization. A selection of texts from the Hebrew Bible will be read in class (in translation) from a broader, comparative point of view, including the narratives of the Deluge and of Samson and Delilah, the pentateuchal dietary laws, and the poetry of Song of Songs.

**NES 240 / REL 240**

**Muslims and the Qur'an**

**Professor(s): Muhammad Q. Zaman**

MW 10:00-10:50

**Department Area Requirement: Islam**

**Description:** A broad-ranging introduction to pre-modern, modern, and contemporary Islam in light of how Muslims have approached their foundational religious text, the Qur'an. Topics include: Muhammad and the emergence of Islam; theology, law and ethics; war and peace; mysticism; women and gender; and modern debates on Islamic reform. We shall examine the varied contexts in which Muslims have interpreted their sacred text, their agreements and disagreements on what it means and, more broadly, their often competing understandings of Islam and of what it is to be a Muslim.

**REL 241/JDS 241****Jewish Philosophy in the 20th Century****Professor(s): Michael Morgan**

TTH 1:30-2:50

**Department Area Requirement: Critical Thought**

**Description:** From 1870 to the late 20th century, Jewish thought and philosophy attempted to understand Judaism in response to the developments and crises of Jewish life in the modern world. In this course we shall explore the responses of figures such as Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig, Hermann Cohen, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Joseph Soloveitchik, Emil Fackenheim, and Emmanuel Levinas. Central topics will concern ethics and politics, faith and revelation, redemption and messianism, and the religious responses to catastrophe and atrocity.

**REL 252****The Early Christian Movement****Professor(s): Elaine H. Pagels**

MW 11:00-11:50

**Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean**

**Description:** How did the movement that began with a few followers of Jesus of Nazareth become a world religion? We will investigate the earliest primary sources, gospels and historical accounts, Jewish and Roman, showing what was known about Jesus--including secret gospels; letters written to and from Roman emperors about whether to kill Christians to stop the movement; first hand accounts of trials, prison diaries, and martyrdoms; Paul's writings on sexual practices and gender; what converts wrote about why they chose Christianity, despite the dangers; how emperor Constantine--and, shortly after, Augustine--influenced what we know as Christianity today.

**REL 261/CHV 261****Christian Ethics and Modern Society****Professor(s): Eric S. Gregory**

MW 1:30-2:20

**Department Area Requirement: Critical Thought**

**Description:** An introduction to Christian ideals of conduct, character, and community, and to modern disputes over their interpretation and application. Are Christian virtues and principles fundamentally at odds with the ethos of liberal democracy oriented toward rights, equality, and freedom? What do Christian beliefs and moral concepts imply about issues related to feminism, racism, and pluralism? What is the relationship between religious convictions, morality, and law? Special emphasis on selected political and economic problems, sexuality and marriage, bioethics, capital punishment, the environment, war, and the role of religion in public life.

**GSS 302 / REL 300/LAS 314****Topics in the Study of Gender: Gender, Sexuality, and Religion in Colonial Latin America****Professor(s): Jessica Delgado**

M 1:30-4:20

**Department Area Requirement: Religion in America**

**Description:** This seminar will explore recent scholarship on gender, sexuality and religion in colonial Latin America. Students will be asked to consider the connections between church teachings, spiritual and sexual practices, gendered social relations, and ideas about sex and sexuality in the colonial period. They will also be challenged to think critically about how scholars have portrayed these connections in recent decades.

**JDS 302/NES 302/REL 302****Elementary Biblical Hebrew I****Professor(s): Naphtali S. Meshel**

MW 10:00-10:50

**Department Area Requirement: Does NOT satisfy sub-field requirement; does NOT count as departmental.****Majors may petition to count this as a cognate course (in addition to the 8 required courses for the major).**

**Description:** Students will achieve a basic ability to read the prose sections of the Hebrew Bible in their original language. During the semester, students will learn the script and the grammar, develop a working vocabulary, and read passages from the Bible itself.

**REL 306****Theories of Secularization****Professor(s): Samuel Goldman**

TTH 11:00-12:20

**Department Area Requirement: Critical Thought**

**Description:** This course surveys debates about the meaning and extent of secularization since around 1650. We will pay particular attention to the secularization of political norms and institutions. In the first unit, we will consider the early-modern shift from theological conceptions of reality to naturalism, from public sanctity to private faith, and from revealed to civil law. In the second unit, we will consider theories of secularization from the 19th and 20th centuries that emphasize the superficiality or failure of these shifts. Finally, we will consider two influential defenses of secularization.

**REL 324****Mind and Meditation****Professor(s): Jonathan C. Gold**

T 1:30-4:20

**Department Area Requirement: Religions of Asia**

**Description:** This course examines the philosophy, history, and methods of Buddhist meditation. Primary readings will be Buddhist works on the nature of the mind and the role of meditation on the path to liberation (nirvana). We will ask how traditional Buddhist views have been reshaped by modern teachers, and we will interrogate the significance of current research on meditation in the fields of neuroscience, psychology and the philosophy of mind. In addition to other coursework, students will be practicing meditation and keeping a log and journal. Some coursework in Philosophy or Religion is expected.

**REL 328 / GSS 328 CANCELLED****Women and Gender in Islamic Societies****Professor(s): Shaun E. Marmon**

W 1:30-4:20

**Department Area Requirement: Islam**

**Description:** This course will focus on the many factors, historical and contemporary, that have shaped and continue to shape the lives of women and girls in the Islamic world. We will also explore diverse perspectives on gender, sexuality and the body in Islamic thought and practice in the past and the in the present. Course materials include: readings from the fields of religious studies, history, anthropology, sociology and gender studies; feature films, documentaries and television shows from the Muslim world; primary sources in translation; images and music; websites and other media for journalism, advertising and popular culture.

**NES 334 / REL 334****Modern Islamic Political Thought****Professor(s): Muhammad Q. Zaman**

M 1:30-4:20

**Department Area Requirement: Islam**

**Description:** An examination of major facets of Islamic political thought from the late nineteenth century to the present in a broadly comparative framework and against the backdrop of medieval Islamic thought. Topics include: the "fragmentation" of religious authority and its consequences for Muslim politics; conceptions of the shari'a and of the Islamic state; and Islamist discourses on gender, violence, and relations with non-Muslims.

**REL 340/JDS 340****Ancient Judaism and the Dead Sea Scrolls****Professor(s): Martha Himmelfarb**

MW 11:00-12:20

**Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean**

**Description:** This course studies the history of Judaism in ancient Palestine from the emergence of the Torah as an authoritative document under Persian rule in the middle of the fifth century BCE through the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, with an emphasis on the critical reading of primary sources. Much of the second half of the course is devoted to the Dead Sea Scrolls and their implications for our understanding of ancient Judaism.

**REL 353****Inspiration, Revelation, and Conversion****Professor(s): Elaine H. Pagels**

T 1:30-4:20

**Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean****ENROLLMENT BY APPLICATION OR INTERVIEW. DEPARTMENTAL PERMISSION REQUIRED.**

**Description:** A seminar to explore how various people understand inspiration, revelation, and conversion through a wide range of sources, primarily first person accounts from Jewish and Christian, but also Greek, Egyptian, Muslim, Native American, and Buddhist sources, as well as sociological and psychological analyses of these. Includes Israel's prophets, Jesus, Paul, and Augustine to Malcolm X, Leo Tolstoy, George Fox, Frederick Douglass, Annie Dillard, Dorothy Day, and Desmond Tutu. Students are invited to introduce other sources of particular interest to me for research and presentation to seminar.

**REL 356 / HIS 339****Religion and War in America****Professor(s): Kathryn A. Gin**

TTH 11:00-12:20

**Department Area Requirement: Religion in America**

**Description:** Scholars have devoted much attention to wars in American history, but have not agreed as to whether religion was a major cause or simply a cover for political, economic, and other motives. We will compare interpretations that leave religion out, with those that take it into account. We will also look at the impact of war on the religious lives of ordinary Americans. We will examine both secondary as well as primary sources, beginning with King Philip's War in the 17th century, and ending with the "War on Terror" in the present day.

**AAS 358/REL 379****Sexuality and Religion in America****Professor(s): Wallace D. Best**

W 7:30-10:20

**Department Area Requirement: Religion in America**

**Description:** Sexuality has long been a contested and contentious issue within American religions, yet only recently have scholars and practitioners begun to forthrightly address it. This course will explore the emerging literature on sexuality and religion as a way to understand how approaches to sex and sexuality within "sacred spaces" have shaped private behavior and public opinion. We will give particular attention to American Catholic and African American religious expressions for the way they have been especially influential in framing (and inhibiting) sexual discourse and practices in the US and throughout the world.

**REL 367 / AAS 346****The American Jeremiad and Social Criticism in the United States****Professor(s): Eddie S. Glaude**

MW 10:00-10:50

**Department Area Requirement: Religion in America**

**Description:** This course examines the religious and philosophical roots of prophecy as a form of social criticism in American intellectual and religious history. Particular attention is given to what is called the American Jeremiad, a mode of public exhortation that joins social criticism to spiritual renewal. Michael Walzer, Sacvan Bercovitch, and Edward Said serve as key points of departure in assessing prophetic criticisms, insights and limitations. Attention is also given to the role of black prophetic critics such as James Baldwin, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Cornel West.

**REL 371****Religious Radicals****Professor(s): Albert J. Raboteau**

T 1:30-4:20

**Department Area Requirement: Religion in America**

**Description:** This seminar offers students an opportunity to reflect upon the lives and writings of several 20th century American religious figures whose socially radical visions were based upon religious experiences and ideals. Examining the relationship between biographical, historical, social, intellectual, and religious factors in the lives of these figures will be a major focus of our discussion, as will be the interrelationship and cross influences among them.

**REL 373****Studies in Religion - Holy Ordinary: Religious Dimensions in Contemporary Fiction****Professor(s): Albert J. Raboteau**

TH 1:30-4:20

**Department Area Requirement: Does NOT satisfy sub-field requirement; DOES count as departmental.**

**Description:** Through close reading and critical discussion of authors such as William Faulkner, George Bernanos, James Baldwin, and Walker Percy; and that of some contemporaries (Mark Saltzman, Marilyn Robinson, William Trevor, and Manil Suri), this seminar will focus on the moral and religious values they discover in the "holy ordinary" of their characters' lives. These works offer an alternative and often surprising mapping of the location and the meaning of sanctity, religion, and the sacred, exemplifying the insight of the 20th century French poet Paul Eluard, who once wrote, "There is another world, but it is within this one."

**REL 388****Rituals, Symbols, and Body Politics****Professor(s): Jeffrey L. Stout**

TH 1:30-4:20

**Department Area Requirement: Critical Thought****ENROLLMENT BY APPLICATION OR INTERVIEW. DEPARTMENTAL PERMISSION REQUIRED.**

**Description:** This seminar will examine the nature, meaning, and effects of scripted religious practices. We will assess accounts of ritual behavior as a means of symbolic expression (Durkheim, Douglas, Turner, Geertz) and as a discipline that creates subjects with bodies, habits, and identities of certain kinds (Mauss, Bourdieu, Asad). We will also consider how scholars concerned with gender and sexuality (Jay, Butler, Mahmood, Rogers) have drawn on and challenged theories of ritual. Topics will include purity and sanctification, sacrifice and religious violence, the creation and subversion of sex-based hierarchies, and the issue of same-sex marriage.

**REL 389 / GSS 388****Women, Religion, and Human Rights****Professor(s): Alison L. Boden**

TTH 1:30-2:50

**Department Area Requirement: Critical Thought**

**Description:** This course will examine the intersection of women's rights and religious practices. We shall study the theological perspectives of Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity in regard to the human being, freedom, equality, and women. We shall then consider three questions that complicate the enjoyment of particular rights norms by religious women, namely relativism, privacy, and agency.

**NES 418/REL 418/POL 418****Religion and State Relations in Comparative Perspective****Professor(s): Mirjam Kunkler**

T 1:30-4:20

**Department Area Requirement: Does NOT satisfy sub-field requirement; does NOT count as departmental.****Majors may petition to count this as a cognate course (in addition to the 8 required courses for the major).**

**Description:** In this comparative seminar we examine models of secularism in contemporary Europe, North America, South Asia and the Middle East, and explore the implications of religion-state relations for the quality of democratic citizenship. We start with an overview of the relationship between religion, democracy and secularism and ask what role religion should and should not play in democratic public discourses. We then compare the institutional models of secularism. In a final section, we study the relationship between religious freedom and human rights, and the challenge religious laws can create for democratic and democratizing politics.

**For more detailed information on each course, please visit:**

**<http://registrar1.princeton.edu/course/course.cfm>**