

**RELIGION DEPARTMENT
2008-2009 SPRING
COURSE OFFERINGS**

Undergraduate Program

REL 219

**Business Ethics and Modern Religious Thought
(EM) na, npdf**

Total Course Enrollment: 25

Professor(s): David W. Miller

Department Area Requirement: Critical Thought

Description/Objective:

The course objective is to learn basic ethics theory and develop practical tools for business ethics, with particular attention throughout the course to the role of religion and spirituality in ethical formation, frameworks, and decision making. This will be applied to contemporary business ethics case studies.

REL 222

**Religion in Modern Thought and Film
(EC)**

Professor(s): Jeffrey L. Stout

Department Area Requirement: Required Course, Departmental

Description/Objective:

This course surveys conceptions of religion that have been influential in the modern period, and critically examines the theories of knowledge, interpretation, society, and culture associated with them. Among the approaches considered are Augustinian theology, Enlightenment skepticism, Marxism, cultural anthropology, phenomenology, feminism, and Freudian psychology. Films by such directors as Hitchcock and Von Trier are used to explore the main issues covered.

REL 226 /EAS 226

**The Religions of China
(EM)**

Professor(s): Stephen F. Teiser

Department Area Requirement: Religions of Asia

Description/Objective:

A thematic introduction to the history of Chinese religion. Topics include cosmology, ancestors, gods, mythology, ethics, shamanism, divination, gender, and mortuary ritual. Readings drawn from a wide range of sources, including sacred scriptures, philosophical texts, popular literature, and modern ethnography.

REL 236 /NES 236

**Introduction to Islam
(SA)**

Professor(s): Shaun E. Marmon

Department Area Requirement: Islam

Description/Objective:

This introductory course provides a thematic overview of Islamic beliefs, rituals and practices. We will study both majority Muslim societies and Muslim minority communities in the past and present. The course will highlight commonalities among Muslims but will also focus on historical, geographical and cultural diversities. Course materials include primary sources in translation, academic articles and books, feature and documentary films, fiction in translation, internet sites and power point presentations. Students will be required to participate in at least one of two possible field trips in the New York/New Jersey area.

REL 311**Religious Existentialism****(EC)** *na, npdf***Total Course Enrollment:** 15**Professor(s):** Leora F. Batnitzky**Department Area Requirement:** **Critical Thought****Description/Objective:**

An in-depth study of existentialist philosophies of, among others, Søren Kierkegaard, Simone Weil, Martin Heidegger, Hans Jonas, and Emmanuel Levinas. The course will focus on their respective arguments about the relations between philosophy and existence, reason and revelation, divine law and love, philosophy, religion, and politics, and Judaism and Christianity.

REL 313**Pragmatism and Religion: James and Dewey****(EC)** *no audit***Total Course Enrollment:** 15**Professor(s):** Eddie S. Glaude**Department Area Requirement:** **Critical Thought****Description/Objective:**

This seminar will examine the works of two important classical pragmatists, William James and John Dewey, and their views about religion. Several questions will guide our efforts: how do James and Dewey understand and respond to evil and death? Is a conception of God important to their thoughts about religion? Attention will be given throughout the course to the concepts of nature, experience, and piety.

REL 320 /AAS 320**African American Religious History****(HA)****Professor(s):** Judith L. Weisenfeld, Wallace D. Best, Eddie S. Glaude, Albert J. Raboteau**Department Area Requirement:** **Religion in America****Description/Objective:**

Reading, reflection, discussion, and writing upon the religious history and culture of African-Americans with particular attention to ritual, music, literature, and creative expression. Folktales, blues, spirituals, gospel music, the chanted sermon, worship traditions, magical-medicinal practices among black Americans will be examined through literary texts, visual presentation, public performances, and film.

REL 322 /EAS 322**Buddhism in Japan****(HA)****Total Course Enrollment:** 20**Professor(s):** Jacqueline I. Stone**Department Area Requirement:** **Religions of Asia****Description/Objective:**

This course will examine representative aspects of Buddhist thought and practice in Japan from the sixth century to the present. We will focus on the major Buddhist traditions--including Lotus, Pure Land, esoteric Buddhism, and Zen--as well as Buddhism and the literary arts, modern challenges to traditional Buddhism, and contemporary Buddhist movements. Readings will include scriptures, sermons, tales, and philosophical essays, as well as selected secondary sources. Some background in either Japan or Buddhism is strongly recommended.

REL 323**Buddhist Philosophy in India and Tibet****(EC)** *na, npdf***Total Course Enrollment:** 15**Professor(s):** Jonathan C. Gold**Department Area Requirement:** Religions of Asia**Description/Objective:**

This course examines the Buddhist philosophical traditions of India and Tibet, beginning with basic Buddhism, and then focusing on the major schools of "Great Vehicle" thought: the Middle Way and Mind-Only traditions. Some course work in Philosophy or Religion is expected. No background in the study of Buddhism is required.

REL 324**Mind and Meditation****(EC)** *na, npdf***Total Course Enrollment:** 15**Professor(s):** Jonathan C. Gold**Department Area Requirement:** Religions of Asia**Description/Objective:**

An examination of the philosophy, history, and methods of Buddhist meditation. Buddhist theoretical works will be studied in their traditional contexts and considered in the light of modern philosophy of mind and cognitive science regarding the emotions, the will, and the effects of meditation. Some coursework in Philosophy or Religion is expected.

REL 352**Jesus: From Earliest Sources to Contemporary Interpretations****(HA)** *na, npdf***Enrollment by application or interview. Departmental permission required.****Total Course Enrollment:** 15**Professor(s):** Elaine H. Pagels**Department Area Requirement:** Ancient Mediterranean**Description/Objective:**

In this seminar we will investigate the earliest known sources--both gospels in the New Testament and "gnostic gospels" outside the NT, including the [Gospels of Thomas], [Mary Magdalene], and [Philip]; second, we will explore a range of attempts to place Jesus in historical context, third, we will look at interpretations of Jesus in some poetry, theology, fiction, and film.

REL 364**Love and Justice****(EM)** *na, npdf***Enrollment by application or interview. Departmental permission required.****Total Course Enrollment:** 15**Professor(s):** Eric S. Gregory**Department Area Requirement:** Critical Thought**Description/Objective:**

Analysis of philosophical and theological accounts of love and justice, with emphasis on how they interrelate. Is love indiscriminate and therefore antithetical to justice, or can love take the shape of justice? What are the implications for moral, political, and legal theory? Attention will be given to discussions of citizenship, welfare reform, forgiveness and reparations, and criminal punishment. The seminar also considers recent efforts to revive a tradition of political theology in which love's relation to justice is a prominent theme.

REL 388**Religious Experience and Mysticism****(EC)** *na, npdf***Total Course Enrollment:** 15**Professor(s):** Stephen S. Bush**Department Area Requirement:** **Critical Thought****Description/Objective:**

This seminar covers important attempts to understand the nature of religious experiences and mysticism. We will trace the history of the concepts of religious experience and mysticism and then examine debates about what the relationship between religious experiences, language, and culture is and whether religious experiences justify religious beliefs.

REL 389 /WOM 388**Women, Religion, and Human Rights****(EM)****Total Course Enrollment:** 35**Professor(s):** Alison L. Boden**Department Area Requirement:** **Critical Thought****Description/Objective:**

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.

Cross-Listed Courses**AAS 318 / REL 318 (LA)****Black Women and Spiritual Narrative**

Wallace DeNino Best

Department Area Requirement: **Religion in America**

This course will analyze the narrative accounts of African American women since the 19th century. Drawing on the hypothesis that religious metaphor and symbolism have figured prominently in black women's writing (and writing about black women) across literary genres, we will explore the various ways black women have used their narratives not only to disclose the intimacies of their religious faith, but also to understand and to critique their social context. We will discuss the themes, institutions, and structures that have traditionally shaped black women's experiences, as well as the theologies black women have developed in response to them. The basic framework of the course will be chronological and thematic, drawing upon literary criticism and feminist theory.

EAS 327 / REL 327 (LA)**Religion, Poetry, and Memory in Ancient China**

Martin Kern

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

The seminar explores the interplay of religious and aesthetic -- especially poetic -- practice in ancient China, and how the performance of texts in religious contexts contributed to the formation of Chinese cultural memory and identity. Combining anthropological, art historical, and literary analysis, the discussion centers on the performative nature and functions of texts and artifacts (including texts as material artifacts) in their social and religious spaces. Emphasis on close analysis of original texts (in English translation) and visuals, including works in the Princeton Art Museum.

JDS 303 / NES 311 / REL 303
Elementary Biblical Hebrew II

Simeon B. Chavel

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

Students will achieve a basic ability to read the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament in its original language. During the semester, students will continue studying grammar and developing vocabulary. Upon completing the grammar textbook, students will read large passages from the Bible from all genres.

JDS 345 / REL 345 (HA)
The Laws of Moses

Simeon B. Chavel

Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean

What are the laws of Moses? What did they mean in their original context? How do they measure against laws in the world around them? This course will look at such laws and institutions as sacrifice, slavery, eye-for-an-eye, sabbath, dietary laws, and more; as well as their literary representation and its significance.

JDS 386 / REL 386 (HA)
God and Creation in Ancient Judaism

Michael Fishbane

Peter Schäfer

Department Area Requirement: Ancient Mediterranean

This seminar will be a close study of the variety of textual sources dealing with the subject of creation and cosmology in Hellenistic and especially rabbinic Judaism, and also selected early Christian materials (with ancient Jewish sediments). Traditions will be examined exegetically, with an emphasis on comparative intra-cultural and interdisciplinary analysis.

NES 329 / REL 342 (HA)
Religion in Culture--Culture in Religion: A History of Religion of the Ancient Near East

Beate Pongratz-Leisten

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

The geographical setting for this course is the region corresponding roughly to modern Syria, Iraq, Levant and Turkey from the fourth through the first millennia B.C. Religion represents an essential part of the cultural system of the civilization of the Ancient Near East. We will explore the worldview, cosmologies, concepts of divinity and mankind, destiny, mortality, as well as official and personal cults, the position of the king in his intermediary function between the gods and the people. Primary sources and a range of scholarly literature will be the basis for our discussion.

NES 340 / REL 338 (HA)
Muslim South Asia

Muhammad Qasim Zaman

Department Area Requirement: Islam

Religious, cultural, and political developments in South Asia, home to nearly a third of the world's Muslim population, have long exerted considerable influence on the greater Muslim world. This seminar is concerned with religio-political thought and movements in Muslim South Asia from the 18th century to the present. Topics include: Sufi ethics; the impact of colonialism on Islamic thought and institutions; evolving Islamist trends from late colonial times to the present; and debates on Islamic law and the position of women in India and Pakistan.

NES 418 / POL 418 / REL 418 (SA)
Religion and State Relations in Comparative Perspective

Mirjam Künkler

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

This upper-level undergraduate seminar examines different models of religion-state constellations in Europe, North America, Asia, and the Middle East of the 20th century.

****Students may request approval as a cognate, if the course is related to their focus of study. See Departmental Representative.**

For more detailed information on each course, please visit:
<http://registrar1.princeton.edu/course/course.cfm>