

Religion (REL)

Course information contained within the Bulletin is accurate at the time of publication in July 2024 but is subject to change. For the most up-to-date course information, please refer to the Course Catalog.

REL 0802. Race & Identity in Judaism. 3 Credit Hours.

Investigate the relationship between race and Judaism from Judaism's early period through today, looking both at how Jews have understood their own racial identity and how others have understood Jews' racial identity. You will explore the idea of racial identity in Judaism in order to examine the complex network of connections between racism and anti-Semitism, as you read primary and secondary texts in Jewish philosophy and history and in the study of race and racism. We hope to illuminate these complex issues as well as to engage with them on a personal and political level, examining the relationship between issues of race, religion, identity, and social justice and injustice, and inquiring into how we, as informed citizens in a global society, can affect change for the better. NOTE: This course fulfills the Race & Diversity (GD) requirement for students under GenEd and Studies in Race (RS) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for this course if they have successfully completed any of the following: Jewish Studies 0802/0902 or Religion 0902.

Course Attributes: GD, SF

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 0811. Asian Behavior & Thought. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is an introduction to some of the major philosophical and religious traditions of Asia, and their roles in Asia and the world today. You will learn about some of the dominant features of these traditions and be exposed to several important ideas, institutions, and practices. How do these ideas influence the behavior of individuals and communities? How do individual and communal behaviors and beliefs differ regionally and historically? We will read and discuss selections from primary works as well as secondary scholarship, while surveying key doctrines and historical developments. Note: This course fulfills the Human Behavior (GB) requirement for students under GenEd and Individual & Society (IN) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for this course if they have successfully completed any of the following: ASST 0811, CRIT 0811, PHIL 0811, CHI 0811, JPNS 0811 or REL 0911.

Course Attributes: GB

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 0833. Race & Poverty in the Americas. 3 Credit Hours.

The transatlantic slave trade was one of the most brutal and momentous experiences in human history. Attitudes toward Latino, Caribbean, African, and Asian immigrants in the United States today can only be fully understood in the contexts of slavery and the "structural racism," "symbolic violence" (not to mention outright physical violence), and social inequalities that slavery has spawned throughout the region. Although focusing primarily on the United States, we will also study the present entanglements of poverty and race in Brazil, Haiti, and other selected nations of "The New World," placing the U.S. (and Philadelphia in particular) experience in this historical context. NOTE: This course fulfills the Race & Diversity (GD) requirement for students under GenEd and Studies in Race (RS) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for this course if they have successfully completed REL 0933, LAS 0833/0933, ANTH 0833, or SOC 0833.

Course Attributes: GD, SI

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 0863. Religion in the World. 3 Credit Hours.

Learn about the major religious traditions found worldwide today: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and several indigenous traditions. Examine the beliefs, practices, and values of these groups in order to understand the worldviews and ways of life of the people who practice them. Our interdisciplinary analysis and interpretation of specific examples of religious experience will help shed light on the overall meaning of religion and human existence. We will carefully consider examples while also focusing on particular thematic issues, like cosmology and ritual. Develop appreciation for the religious vibrancy and diversity that exist in human cultures while you actively engage in the learning process through class presentation, class participation, paper-writing, and a self-selected field trip. NOTE: This course fulfills the World Society (GG) requirement for students under GenEd and International Studies (IS) for students under Core. Duplicate Credit Warning: Students may take only one of the following courses for credit; all other instances will be deducted from their credit totals: Religion 0863, 0963, 1101, C053, Asian Studies 0863, Critical Languages 0863, or Philosophy 0863.

Course Attributes: GG

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 0876. Religion in Philadelphia. 3 Credit Hours.

The argument is sometimes made that religion in dense urban spaces is characteristically very different from religion as it appears elsewhere. A study of religion in Philadelphia provides numerous ways to explore that idea, especially since the city encompasses a variety of ethnic and immigrant groups, encouraging the generation of new and hybrid forms of religious life that are less possible in smaller populations. Learn how ideas of toleration and freedom, the urban environment, and immigration helped to define the role of religion in the life of this city. Study various religious traditions as they are manifested in the greater Philadelphia area and look at the influences religion has had on the fabric of Philadelphia's history and cultural life including politics, art, education, journalism and popular culture. You will visit and write about various religious sites and institutions. NOTE: This course fulfills the U.S. Society (GU) requirement for students under GenEd and American Culture (AC) for students under Core. Duplicate Credit Warning: Students cannot receive credit for Religion 0876 if they have successfully completed Religion 0976, 1003, 1903, C052, H092, History 0876 or 0976.

Course Attributes: GU

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 0902. Honors Race & Identity in Judaism. 3 Credit Hours.

Investigate the relationship between race and Judaism from Judaism's early period through today, looking both at how Jews have understood their own racial identity and how others have understood Jews' racial identity. You will explore the idea of racial identity in Judaism in order to examine the complex network of connections between racism and anti-Semitism, as you read primary and secondary texts in Jewish philosophy and history and in the study of race and racism. We hope to illuminate these complex issues as well as to engage with them on a personal and political level, examining the relationship between issues of race, religion, identity, and social justice and injustice, and inquiring into how we, as informed citizens in a global society, can affect change for the better. (This is an Honors course.) NOTE: This course fulfills the Race & Diversity (GD) requirement for students under GenEd and Studies in Race (RS) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for this course if they have successfully completed any of the following: Jewish Studies 0802/0902 or Religion 0802.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: GD, HO, SF

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 0911. Honors Asian Behavior & Thought: Four Asian Models Shaping Your Action. 3 Credit Hours.

We incessantly engage ourselves in doing things. We are beings-at-doing. We define ourselves by the kind of actions we perform. How we act or conduct ourselves is shaped by the kind of self we construct for ourselves. And that self is shaped by the society into which we happen to be born. Self-identity, which is socially and culturally constructed by our experiences and interactions with others, carries a personal as well as an interpersonal meaning. Learn the four Asian paradigmatic cases of self-identity and examine your self in light of them. NOTE: This course fulfills the Human Behavior (GB) requirement for students under GenEd and Individual & Society (IN) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for this course if they have successfully completed any of the following: ASST 0811, CRIT 0811, PHIL 0811, Chinese 0811, Japanese 0811 or Religion 0811.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: GB, HO

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 0933. Honors Race & Poverty in the Americas. 3 Credit Hours.

The transatlantic slave trade was one of the most brutal and momentous experiences in human history. Attitudes toward Latino, Caribbean, African, and Asian immigrants in the United States today can only be fully understood in the contexts of slavery and the "structural racism," "symbolic violence" (not to mention outright physical violence), and social inequalities that slavery has spawned throughout the region. Although focusing primarily on the United States, we will also study the present entanglements of poverty and race in Brazil, Haiti, and other selected nations of "The New World," placing the U.S. (and Philadelphia in particular) experience in this historical context. (This is an Honors course.) NOTE: This course fulfills the Race & Diversity (GD) requirement for students under GenEd and Studies in Race (RS) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for this course if they have successfully completed REL 0833, LAS 0833/0933, ANTH 0833, or SOC 0833.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: GD, HO, SI

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 0957. Honors Sport & Leisure in American Society. 3 Credit Hours.

In this course, we explore the complexity and diversity of American society through the study of sport and leisure. How does the way we play or watch sports reflect, and contribute to, American values? We will also pay careful attention to the globalization of sport and the role of U.S. sports in the world today. Issues of religion, race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, and socio-economic class will be prominently featured. There will also be a primary focus on raising ethical questions through a discussion of case studies based on real events. NOTE: This course fulfills the U.S. Society (GU) requirement for students under GenEd and American Culture (AC) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for this course if they have successfully completed AAAS 0857, AAS 0857, SOC 0857 or STHM 0857.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: GU, HO

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 0963. Honors Religion in the World. 3 Credit Hours.

Learn about the major religious traditions found worldwide today: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and several indigenous traditions. Examine the beliefs, practices, and values of these groups in order to understand the worldviews and ways of life of the people who practice them. Our interdisciplinary analysis and interpretation of specific examples of religious experience will help shed light on the overall meaning of religion and human existence. We will carefully consider examples while also focusing on particular thematic issues, like cosmology and ritual. Develop appreciation for the religious vibrancy and diversity that exist in human cultures while you actively engage in the learning process through class presentation, class participation, paper-writing, and a self-selected field trip. NOTE: This course fulfills the World Society (GG) requirement for students under GenEd and International Studies (IS) for students under Core. Duplicate Credit Warning: Students may take only one of the following courses for credit; all other instances will be deducted from their credit totals: Religion 0863, 0963, 1101, C053, Asian Studies 0863, Critical Languages 0863, or Philosophy 0863.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: GG, HO

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 0976. Honors Religion in Philadelphia. 3 Credit Hours.

The argument is sometimes made that religion in dense urban spaces is characteristically very different from religion as it appears elsewhere. A study of religion in Philadelphia provides numerous ways to explore that idea, especially since the city encompasses a variety of ethnic and immigrant groups, encouraging the generation of new and hybrid forms of religious life that are less possible in smaller populations. Learn how ideas of toleration and freedom, the urban environment, and immigration helped to define the role of religion in the life of this city. Study various religious traditions as they are manifested in the greater Philadelphia area and look at the influences religion has had on the fabric of Philadelphia's history and cultural life including politics, art, education, journalism and popular culture. You will visit and write about various religious sites and institutions. NOTE: This course fulfills the U.S. Society (GU) requirement for students under GenEd and American Culture (AC) for students under Core. Duplicate Credit Warning: Students cannot receive credit for Religion 0976 if they have successfully completed Religion 0876, 1003, 1903, C052 or H092, History 0876 or 0976.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: GU, HO

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 1001. Religion and Society. 3 Credit Hours.

Religion and Society serves as the introductory course that all majors and minors in Religion must take. This course deals with such issues as: What is the nature of religion? What impact does it have on personal identity, social life, and political structures? What ethical issues arise out of the tensions between religion and society? Emphasis on contemporary Western society and forms of religion. Some historical background provided. NOTE: This course can be used to satisfy the university Core Individual & Society (IN) requirement. Although it may be usable towards graduation as a major requirement or university elective, it cannot be used to satisfy any of the university GenEd requirements. See your advisor for further information.

Course Attributes: IN

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 1002. Racial Justice: A Religious Mandate for Obedience and Revolt. 3 Credit Hours.

This introductory course on race and religion examines the emergence and development of religious faith and social protest thought, in order to propose critical options that foster emancipatory practices in the contemporary struggle for racial justice. NOTE: This course can be used to satisfy the university Core Studies in Race (RS) requirement. Although it may be usable towards graduation as a major requirement or university elective, it cannot be used to satisfy any of the university GenEd requirements. See your advisor for further information.

Course Attributes: RS

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 1003. Religion in America. 3 Credit Hours.

A historical and sociological study of practices and beliefs of various religious groups that have shaped American culture, with special attention to ethnic and racial minorities, and to women, as well as to traditional main-line groups and newer movements. NOTE: This course can be used to satisfy the university Core American Culture (AC) requirement. Although it may be usable towards graduation as a major requirement or university elective, it cannot be used to satisfy any of the university GenEd requirements. See your advisor for further information.

Course Attributes: AC

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 1101. Introduction to World Religions. 3 Credit Hours.

Introduction to the major world religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam) as a way of coming to know and appreciate the world-views of other cultures. Attention to beliefs, values, and practices of these religions as ways of dealing with the issues basic to human life. NOTE: This course can be used to satisfy the university Core International Studies (IS) requirement. Although it may be usable towards graduation as a major requirement or university elective, it cannot be used to satisfy any of the university GenEd requirements. See your advisor for further information.

Course Attributes: IS

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 1102. Introduction to Asian Religions. 3 Credit Hours.

Introduction to the major Asian religious, philosophical, and cultural traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto) with emphasis on the cultural roots of each religious tradition, the analysis of its principal teachings and practices, and the major cultural expressions in religious art, ritual, poetry, music, and scriptures. NOTE: This course can be used to satisfy the university Core International Studies (IS) requirement. Although it may be usable towards graduation as a major requirement or university elective, it cannot be used to satisfy any of the university GenEd requirements. See your advisor for further information. In addition to meeting the university Core International Studies requirement, this course meets the Non-Western/Third World IS requirement for Communication Sciences majors.

Course Attributes: IS

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 1902. Honors Introduction to Asian Religions. 3 Credit Hours.

Introduction to the major Asian religious, philosophical, and cultural traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto) with emphasis on the cultural roots of each religious tradition, the analysis of its principal teachings and practices, and the major cultural expressions in religious art, ritual, poetry, music, and scriptures. NOTE: This course can be used to satisfy the university Core International Studies (IS) requirement. Although it may be usable towards graduation as a major requirement or university elective, it cannot be used to satisfy any of the university GenEd requirements. See your advisor for further information. In addition to meeting the university Core International Studies requirement, this course meets the Non-Western/Third World IS requirement for Communication Sciences majors.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: HO, IS

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 1903. Honors Religion in America. 3 Credit Hours.

A historical and sociological study of practices and beliefs of various religious groups that have shaped American culture, with special attention to ethnic and racial minorities, and to women, as well as to traditional main-line groups and newer movements. NOTE: This course can be used to satisfy the university Core American Culture (AC) requirement. Although it may be usable towards graduation as a major requirement or university elective, it cannot be used to satisfy any of the university GenEd requirements. See your advisor for further information.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: AC, HO

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2000. Topics in Religious Studies I. 3 Credit Hours.

The topic for this course changes each semester. Consult the instructor or an advisor in the Religion Department for specific details.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

REL 2001. Women in Religion and Society. 3 Credit Hours.

A study of both the roles and understanding of women in major premodern and modern religious traditions, particularly of the West, including an investigation of the authoritative writings and practices of the various traditions.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2002. Religion and Human Sexuality. 3 Credit Hours.

The goal of this course is to examine the attitudes and practices of the major world religions regarding human sexuality. Topics to be covered will include marriage and procreation, and such controversial issues as abortion, homosexuality and sexual activity outside of marriage. Note: Religion and Human Sexuality is taught as a cross-listed course in Religion; Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies; and LGBT Studies. Students may receive credit for only one of the following courses: REL 2002, LGBT 2002, GSWS 2202, WMST 2202.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2003. Religion and the Arts. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is designed to explore the nexus of Religion and Art both philosophically and aesthetically. Various theories of aesthetics will be analyzed and compared. Focuses on the artistic expression of theological themes in a given religious tradition. Students explore the varieties of art in that tradition, learning to recognize the plastic (architecture, sculpture, metal), visual (painting, glass, fabric), and musical art forms. Analyzing how these forms function in prayer, liturgy, and theology is of primary importance. In addition, the fundamental questions of how the religion deals with the tension between iconic/aniconic, eternal/finite, and divine/human are covered. Course also deals with what religious art "means" in a secular context. [Duplicate Credit Warning: The prior number for this course was Religion 4002; students who successfully completed that version of the course will not earn additional credit for this version.]

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2004. A History of the Devil. 3 Credit Hours.

The Devil made me do it. Devil may care. The Devil's in the details. Speak of the Devil. Give the Devil his due. Deviled eggs, the Tazmanian Devil, Devil's Food cake, playing Devil's advocate, Sympathy for the Devil, The Devil Wears Prada ... The Devil is everywhere in the way we speak, in the food we eat, in the clothing we wear, in the art we produce and consume, and in the values and encouragements and warnings we convey and heed. But all of this emerges from the place the Devil has obtained within Jewish, Christian, and Islamic religious traditions, where he (and often, she) is a symbol of evil incarnate and a source of temptation. This course will look at the way those traditions have shaped concepts of the Devil, of evil, and community and individual religious identity across centuries and into the present. Students will encounter ancient Babylonian and biblical texts about chaos monsters and sacred geography, imperial mythologies in antiquity and the way these led to the embodiment of otherness in the figure of Satan in early and Medieval Christianity, the synthesis of the Devil in Islamic ritual and philosophical texts, and the way these have affected modern concepts of the Devil in contemporary religious life and popular culture.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2005. Religion and Sports. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is an introduction to religion and sport that explores whether sport is a kind of religion, how different religious traditions have both connected to and conflicted with sports, and religious responses to ethical dilemmas in sports. It approaches these questions through an examination of case studies. Students will be expected to attend and participate in class, do weekly readings and activities based on the cases, and research and create cases of their own. There will be a final take-home examination. Note: Students who have already taken REL 2905 will not receive duplicate credit for REL 2005.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2006. Death and Dying. 3 Credit Hours.

This course focuses upon dying and bereavement in today's cultural and medical environment, and then on death, mourning and immortality from the perspectives of the world's religious traditions. We will examine psychological, ethical and philosophical perspectives on the process of dying, care for the dying, and issues of mourning. What are the principle beliefs and practices about personal identity, the nature of God or ultimate reality, death and post-death existence?

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2007. Religion in Film. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will approach the features and problems of Religion in Eastern and Western societies through the medium of film and/or film as a medium for performing religion. The course, depending on who teaches, will ask students to consider the relationships among and between film, ritual, belief, myth, and communal engagement even as it looks at how specific traditions are depicted on screen. Students will view works by filmmakers representing a global spectrum and examine how these films provide insights into these larger issues regarding popular culture, art, performance and specific religious traditions and societies. Students will be required to watch one film per week (on their own time; films will be made available via DVD on reserve or through special internet streaming resources); this will be accompanied by two regular class sessions where the film, assigned readings and the range of critical issues regarding the film's connection to world religious traditions will be discussed. The goal of the course is to provide students with the intellectual tools to "read" films as vehicles for social and religious expressions, and to come to a more thorough understanding of how experiences and perceptions cross various cultural and religious boundaries.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2008. Religion in America. 3 Credit Hours.

A historical and sociological study of practices and beliefs of various religious groups that have shaped American culture, with special attention to ethnic and racial minorities, and to women, as well as to traditional main-line groups and newer movements.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2101. Indian Philosophies and Religions. 3 Credit Hours.

An introduction to the foundations, the nature, and the principles of classical Hinduism. An introduction to the fundamentals of Buddhism and Jainism. (Formerly known as Religions of India.) Note: This course is cross-listed with Asian Studies 2101. Students may only receive credit for one of these courses: ASST 2101 or REL 2101.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2102. Introduction to Buddhism. 3 Credit Hours.

Introduction to the historical development of Buddhism in relation to other East Asian religions. Topics include the Four Noble Truths of basic Buddhism and the Hinayana-Mahayana controversy over the Buddhist Dharma and practice, as well as the development of Buddhist thought throughout Asia. Note: This course is cross-listed with Asian Studies 2102. Students may only receive credit for one of these courses: ASST 2102 or REL 2102.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2201. Chinese Religions - Confucius to Mao. 3 Credit Hours.

Critical study of the development of Chinese religions from the time of Confucius to Mao, including the problem of ideological continuity in contemporary China (Maoist Marxism versus Confucianism). Note: This course is cross-listed with Asian Studies 2201. Students may only receive credit for one of these courses: ASST 2201 or REL 2201.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2301. Zen Buddhism. 3 Credit Hours.

This course surveys the historical development of Zen Buddhism as it unfolds in India, China, and Japan, and focuses on the examination of the nature of satori experience. It analyzes its existential meaning from perspectives of therapy, Zen practice, and philosophy. NOTE: Formerly titled "Introduction to Zen Buddhism." Students who earned credit under its original title will not receive additional credits for this course. Also, this course is cross-listed and students will earn credit only once for either REL 2301 or ASST 2301.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2401. Religion in the Ancient Near East. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will explore the religion of the pre-Biblical Near East. We will read texts from Akkadian, Egyptian, Ugaritic, Phoenician, and Mesopotamian cultures and civilizations. Special emphasis will be put on the differences and competing aspects of these religions with Israelite religion.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2403. Introduction to Judaism. 3 Credit Hours.

Introduction to the variety of rituals, customs, and practices of the Jewish people in a historical context. Compares and contrasts liberal and traditional Jewish religion with Zionism. Contemporary Jewish novels, poetry, and drama. Note: Formerly titled "What is Judaism." Students who earned credit under the prior title will not receive additional credits for this course. This course is equivalent to JST 2403; students may receive credit for either JST 2403 or REL 2403.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2407. The Body and The Bible. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will explore how the Hebrew Bible and other ancient Near Eastern literature use the body to conceptualize issues of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, disability, social class, religious expression and so on. Other issues considered in this course include the portrayal of divine bodies, the social, cultic, and literary significance of bodily changes and practices, the costuming of the body, disguising one's appearance, and passing as a member of another identity group. We will examine a number of these issues both in their ancient Near Eastern context and throughout the history of biblical interpretation. The course will be structured around readings of both recent biblical scholarship on these topics and the biblical texts discussed in this scholarship.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2447. Kabbalah and Mysticism. 3 Credit Hours.

Introduction to the basic concepts, worldview and psychology of the Kabbalah. Mystical experiences and spiritual practices of the Kabbalists are situated within the context of comparative mysticism.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2496. Introduction to the Bible. 3 Credit Hours.

Introduction to the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament). What is the Bible? Where did it come from? How can there be so many different interpretations of the Bible? This course provides an examination of the historical, archeological, literary, and religious backgrounds of the Old Testament. This course is designed as a Writing Course for the University, so the assignments will reflect the writing requirements.

Course Attributes: WI

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2501. Early Christian Literature: New Testament, Gnostic Tracts, and Early Fathers. 3 Credit Hours.

This class explores the rich and diverse literature of Early Christianity, as Christianity emerged in the social/religious context of second Temple Judaism in the Roman Empire and in Palestine in the first century, when Jesus was born. Students will study the entire spectrum of early Christian literature, including the New Testament as well as other views of Jesus in Gnostic tracts. We will also talk about various writings of first century Fathers of the Church that did not make it into the New Testament, such as the letters of Clement and Barnabas. As such the class covers both literary and historical topics of the first and early second century when Christianity emerged in the Roman world. (Former course title: Introduction to New Testament)

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2502. Jesus in the Media. 3 Credit Hours.

This class will explore the ever-changing identity of Jesus in both academic and popular culture. The class will study Jesus in the Gospels first, as a foundation for further analysis. The class then moves to the images of Jesus in various media today: award-winning novels, academic "Jesus" books, and films. We shall address these questions: who is Jesus for each one? why does each author/director emphasize different teachings or aspects of Jesus? what is their ultimate purpose? (Former course title: Jesus in the Gospels)

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2596. What Is Christianity?. 3 Credit Hours.

The development of the Christian religion from the Bible to today. What are the principal beliefs of Christianity? How did they come to be so? What have been the major criticisms of Christianity? How can we understand the variety of Christian churches as they face the modern world?

Course Attributes: WI

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2602. Islam in America. 3 Credit Hours.

This course deals with Islam in the United States, including the history, practice, lifestyles, and experiences of American Muslims. Islam in America is presented in all its variety, with special attention to Philadelphia, which is a major center of American Islam. The contribution of both African American Muslim movements and recent immigrant Muslim groups is covered.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2606. Introduction to Islam. 3 Credit Hours.

A general survey of the religion of Islam, including history, beliefs, sacred texts (Qur'ân and Hadîth) and their interpretation, religious law, Sûfism, philosophy, art, and science. Particular attention also is given to actual Muslim practice and to Islam as a way of life.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2666. Zombie Apocalypse: Holy Land, Haiti, and Hollywood. 3 Credit Hours.

This course combines several academic disciplinary approaches to explore the intellectual and cultural histories of two highly influential and essentially religious ideas, that of the zombie and that of the apocalypse, and to critically trace their relatively recent merger in popular culture and imagination - as of 1968 - and to investigate that merger's significations about the human condition. The former is a rather modern idea rooted in Haitian Vodou and its African and European religious antecedents, while the latter is an ancient one rooted in Zoroastrianism and the Bible and widely expanded in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and is arguably one of the most influential ideas in world history. In the interim, the zombie has eclipsed the vampire and Frankenstein as the most prolific monster in popular American culture and consciousness, pervading video games, novels, novelties, the silver screen, and the touch screen. As such, the first two-thirds of the course will be comprised of biblical studies, African studies, Caribbean studies, and the sociology and history of religion, while the final third will trace the merger of the two ideas and their manifestation in popular culture, drawing upon readings in cultural studies, literary analysis, critical race theory, and cinema studies.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2701. Introduction to African American Religion. 3 Credit Hours.

Examines African American religion in the context of four periods of African American history: the exercise of slave religious leadership in the "invisible church"; during the post-Emancipation period (1863-1900), the development of institutionalized Black religion, that is, the Black church; in the period of northern immigration (1916-1945), the evolution of many aspects of Black liturgy - especially Black gospel music; and the civil rights struggle of the 1960s and '70s.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2702. Religion in Contemporary Africa. 3 Credit Hours.

This course draws upon leading scholarly literature on religion in post-colonial Sub-Saharan Africa. Substantive examples will be drawn from South Africa, Ghana, Senegal, Uganda, Rwanda, and Congo to understand the role of religion in the creation of and the struggle against poverty, political turmoil, civil war, and the AIDS epidemic.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2705. Anti-Semitism/Holocaust/Racism. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines the history of antisemitism with a focus on the Holocaust and racism. It investigates the development and implementation of racial antisemitism in Germany and compares Nazi antisemitism with other forms of racism and antisemitism in Europe and America. The course also explores the social construction of race, the connection between antisemitism and anti-Zionism, the growth of neo-Nazism, the complex relationship between American Jews and African Americans, and racism in the world today. Be advised that students will only receive credit once for JST 2705, REL 2705, or HIST 2705.

Course Attributes: SI

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2900. Honors Topics in Religious Studies I. 3 Credit Hours.

For description, see the Honors section of the course schedule of the semester.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: HO

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

REL 2905. Honors Religion and Sports. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is an introduction to religion and sport that explores whether sport is a kind of religion, how different religious traditions have both connected to and conflicted with sports, and religious responses to ethical dilemmas in sports. It approaches these questions through an examination of case studies. Students will be expected to attend and participate in class, do weekly readings and activities based on the cases, and research and create cases of their own. There will be a final take-home examination. Note: Students who have already taken REL 2005 will not receive duplicate credit for the honors version.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: HO

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 2996. Honors Death and Dying. 3 Credit Hours.

Concepts, attitudes, and practices associated with death and dying in the major religious traditions and in literature, philosophy, and psychology. Contemporary implications for related fields such as medicine, psychiatry, social work, and education.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: HO, WI

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3000. Topics in Religious Studies II. 3 Credit Hours.

Arranged each semester, please consult with the instructor.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

REL 3001. Earth Ethics. 3 Credit Hours.

What ethical relationship do human beings have to the natural world? What cultural and religious values, conceptions, and assumptions have shaped human interactions with the environment? Through also examining practical issues such as sustainability, technology, and urban living, students will assess individual life-styles and alternative visions of the good life on planet Earth. Note: This course is cross-listed with Environmental Studies 3001 and Asian Studies 3001. Students may only receive credit once for these courses: ASST 3001, ASST 3904, ENST 3001, ENST 3904, REL 3001, or REL 3904.

Course Attributes: SF, SS

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3002. Philosophy of Religion. 3 Credit Hours.

Issues in philosophy of religion, including the nature of religion, the relation between reason and faith, concepts of God and proofs of the existence of God, religious and mystical experience, the nature of religious language, the problem of evil, the relation of religion to morality, concepts of death and immortality, conflicting truth-claims of different religions, and interreligious dialogue.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3003. Religion and Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

Course examines major psychological thinkers' views on religion's origins, functions, and meanings. What personality factors create and sustain religiousness? Some attention to the formation of new religious groups as well as individual spiritual life.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3004. Religion and Science. 3 Credit Hours.

This course offers a historical examination of the relationship of religion and science, leading up to current debates. A variety of views are considered, ranging from those who have viewed the relationship in terms of conflict, to those who see the two as operating in separate spheres, to those who believe that each influences the other in important and often beneficial ways.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3005. Martyrs and Suicides: Religion and Self-Chosen Death. 3 Credit Hours.

This course investigates the way religious traditions have both extolled and condemned self-chosen deaths, and how they have drawn lines that carefully distinguish the honorable and heroic from the cowardly, sinful, and crazy among those who choose their own deaths. This topic will be examined from within a variety of traditions, using a range of methods: theological, philosophical, historical, social scientific.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3011. Monks, Masters, and Magicians: Religion in Premodern Chinese Literature. 3 Credit Hours.

This course offers an introduction into the rich heritage of Chinese literature before 1911 with a focus on religious culture. We will follow Buddhist nuns and monks, Daoist masters and Confucian scholars on their adventures through 2000 years of Chinese history. Thematically, the class will focus on texts that show how Chinese religious traditions (Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism) were depicted in secular literature, but will also include narrative religious texts. From 3rd century miracle tales, to the classical novels of the Ming and Qing dynasty, we will look at Chinese religion through the lens of literature. Next to the readings themselves, we will cover more general aspects such as the relationship of literature to historical facts and notions of genre and motif as they apply to China. NOTE: Students will receive credit only once for either REL 3011 or ASST 3011.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3082. Independent Study. 3 Credit Hours.

Individual research project with a specific faculty member. Permission of the professor the student wishes to work with must be given in writing, and registration is completed in the Religion Department.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

REL 3101. Yoga & Tantric Mysticism. 3 Credit Hours.

This course introduces the students to the history, philosophy, literature, and culture of Classical Indian Yoga and Tantra traditions. Note: This course is cross-listed with Asian Studies 3101. Students may only receive credit once for these courses: ASST 3101 or REL 3101.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3102. Buddhist Philosophy. 3 Credit Hours.

This course surveys philosophical dimensions of Buddhism. We will discuss several important issues that are raised in Buddhist texts and analyze their logic, implications, and relevance. Among the topics we will discuss are ontology (what is), epistemology (how we know), and normative ethics (what we should do), which in Buddhist terms gets expressed as: view, meditation, and action. Although there is no prerequisite for this course, this class will be demanding: you will be required to read and analyze primary texts in translation that are challenging and foreign (linguistically, conceptually, and philosophically). Since this course is thematically-driven, the readings draw from across time and space (i.e., the spectrum of the Buddhist world, historically and geographically). At the end of the course, we will do a close reading of a polemical twentieth-century text in order to look deeper into a single Buddhist philosophical tradition within a particular cultural and historical context. Active participation in this course will give you a general knowledge of Buddhist philosophy, as well as a taste of the complexity and diversity of Buddhist philosophical traditions.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3201. I-Ching, Tao, and Ch'an/Zen. 3 Credit Hours.

This course covers selected topics in the history of Taoist ideas and religious practice, which have broadly influenced China for two and a half millennia. Discussion topics include: symbols and divination; the philosophy of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu; the interaction between Taoism and Ch'an/Zen Buddhism; the Taoist/Ch'an influence on the Chinese literary tradition and ideals of beauty; the Taoist view on ch'i energy, meditation, sexuality, and the good life; and Taoism/Zen in America today. Note: This course is cross-listed with Asian Studies 3201. Students may only receive credit once for these courses: ASST 3201 or REL 3201.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3222. Sociology of Religion. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines the role of religion in constructing human realities. It emphasizes how human understandings of the world and of reality are constructed socially through collective action with religion playing a prominent role. It looks at how religion influences individual and collective action; the intersection of religion with politics and media; religion's connection to race, gender, class, and sexual orientation; and the connection between religion and science.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3301. Japanese Religions. 3 Credit Hours.

An introduction to Japanese religions, their origins and development in the social, cultural, and intellectual history of Japan. Religions covered are: Shinto, Japanese Buddhism, folk religions, Japanese Confucianism, and the New Religions. Some attention to the expression of Japanese spirituality in the fine arts, martial arts, festivals, and rituals.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3302. Japanese Buddhism. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is an introduction to Japanese Buddhism, covering some of the major Buddhist figures including Kukai, Dogen, Shinran, Hakuin, Takuan, and Myoe. In order to understand how Japanese Buddhism accepted Indian and Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, the course traces some of the prominent conceptual frameworks of Mahayana Buddhism which were developed in India and China. The methodological orientation of the course is philosophical or intellectual. NOTE: Students will receive credit only once for either REL 3302 or ASST 3302.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3403. Biblical Archaeology. 3 Credit Hours.

An introduction to the history, theory, and methods of Near Eastern Archaeology and its relation to Biblical Studies. Tracing the history of Biblical Archaeology from its roots in the treasure hunters of the 18th century down to the present, we will examine the changing philosophy of archaeology, and the evolving techniques of excavation, by studying several sites and archaeologists.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3405. Judaism and Literature. 3 Credit Hours.

Readings of various Jewish literatures focusing on America and issues of immigration and cultural assimilation.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3411. The Philosophies of Judaism. 3 Credit Hours.

Close study of works by one or more Jewish and political philosophers, stressing their relevance to an understanding of contemporary politics and issues of Jewish identity, culture, and religion.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3502. Global Pentecostalism. 3 Credit Hours.

The meteoric rise of Pentecostalism throughout the world in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries has been so impressive that some scholars speak of it as a "new Reformation." This course is a comparative historical and anthropological investigation of this important development in world Christianity, with specific substantive units of analysis drawn globally and locally; i.e., from Africa, Asia, and Latin American and from Philadelphia.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3601. The Islamic State. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines both the classical theory and modern theory and practice of self-described Islamic states in the modern world. Main focus is on the Middle Eastern area.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3602. Women in Islam. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will explore the issues confronting women in the religion of Islam and how the surrounding cultures, Indian, Arab, Egyptian, American, Eastern European, Indonesian, African (to name a few) react to these issues. Topics of Feminism, Imperialism, Westernization, and endemic religious culture will organize the course. The syllabus will include Islamic female and male authors on these topics.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3603. Islamic Mysticism. 3 Credit Hours.

Introduction to the doctrines, practices, and history of Sufism. Analysis of the nature of mystical experience and Sufi principles. The course also includes a survey of Sufi literature and will discuss the brotherhoods, their relationship with orthodoxy, and al-Ghazali's synthesis.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3702. African Religions and New World Culture. 3 Credit Hours.

African religion and culture continues to exist in the religious and cultural life of African Americans. Using an interdisciplinary approach, we will examine African American religion, folklore, literature, music, and communication in order to assess the continuation and transformation of African culture in the world-view of African Americans.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3882. Independent Study. 2 Credit Hours.

Individual research project with a specific faculty member.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

REL 3900. Honors Topics in Religious Studies. 3 Credit Hours.

The topic of this course changes each semester that it is taught, since different professors teach it. Check the course offerings online each semester.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: HO

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

REL 3901. Honors Contemporary Religious Thinkers. 3 Credit Hours.

This course explores work of various thinkers from different World Religions organized around themes of cosmology, theology, ethics, mysticism, and global politics. NOTE: Students who received credit for REL 3801, the non-honors version of this course, may not receive additional credit for 3901.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: HO

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 3904. Honors Earth Ethics. 3 Credit Hours.

What is, or should be, our relation to the natural world? Especially since we are presently living in a modern urban environment, have we perhaps outgrown nature? Is it something we have mastered? Is it primarily a luxury of sorts that we can go to for periodic enjoyment or relaxation? On the other hand, why do we seem to be in a burgeoning environmental crisis? Is it just greed? Too many people? Insufficient technology? How did we get to where we are? Or more immediately--and perhaps deeply--what fundamental beliefs, attitudes, and values shape our everyday actions, how we perceive and use (or misuse) the earth? What creative alternatives can we find, and how can we apply them? In addressing these kinds of questions we will explore both Western and Asian ways of conceiving and interacting with the natural world, past and present. Our approach will also be interdisciplinary, including materials from art, film and literature, as well a range of academic disciplines. NOTE: This is an University Honors course.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: HO, SF, SS

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 4000. Topics in Religious Studies I. 2 Credit Hours.

The topic for this course changes each semester. Consult the instructor or an advisor in the Religion Department for specific details.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

REL 4003. Comparative Mysticism East and West. 3 Credit Hours.

In this class the students will be introduced to the mysticism of certain eastern religions and certain western religions, which will be determined by the instructor. They will be chosen from Japanese Buddhism, Hinduism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Judaism, Islam. The students will read primary texts from these traditions. Understanding the practice of mysticism in these traditions, as well as the theoretical systems that support these practices -- in a comparative framework -- will organize the readings and the lectures for the semester.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of C- in any REL course numbered 0802 to 4002.

REL 4010. Topics in Religious Studies. 3 Credit Hours.

The topic changes each semester. See the course schedule for the topic in a specific semester.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

REL 4082. Independent Study. 3 Credit Hours.

Individual research project with a specific faculty member. Permission of the professor the student wishes to work with must be given in writing, and registration is completed in the Religion Department.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

REL 4096. Capstone Seminar in Religion. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is designed to be the final culminating class experience for undergraduate Religion majors at Temple. The topic of the course is: "Theories of Religion and Secularism." The course first will consider the history of the terminology, ideology, and underlying theories about religion and those concepts that religion has been defined against from ancient times to the present, but mainly concentrating on modern western discourses, which are those that have primarily informed the prevailing definitions. Second, we will consider various theories currently challenging or seeking to modify this received tradition of religious studies. In doing this, we will also consider the relations of the field of religious studies with other academic fields as well as with current public discourses, especially those in our country, but also to some extent those in the rest of the world. NOTE: Capstone course in major. Typically offered only in Spring semester. Students must have completed at least 5 major courses prior to taking this course.

Class Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Classes: Senior 90 to 119 Credits, Senior/Fifth Year 120+ Credits.

Course Attributes: WI

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 4406. Ancient Judaism. 3 Credit Hours.

Ancient Jewish history is usually narrated as if Jews went directly from Torah to Talmud, with nothing in between. Such an account privileges the authoritative religious developments and the leadership first, of the priests who collated the core of the Torah, and second, of the early Rabbis, who collated the Mishnah, the earliest strata of the Talmud. This course explores the explosive and intriguing history between these two religious moments, and in doing so, rejects the religious chronology as the basis of historiography. The history and textual materials from these periods in Jewish History raise many of the perennial themes that have come to inform Jewish social life over the centuries. In fact, during this period in which Jews first become Jews, these issues arise for the first time: exile, political decentralization, disagreements between Jews about what constitutes the parameters of the Jewish community; peoplehood, nation, and the boundaries of group identity, intermarriage, conversion, and the movement of Jewish identity from a territory-based definition to an ethnic definition, to a definition based in piety. Note: Prior to summer 1, 2016, the course title was "Secular Study of Ancient Jewish History: Between the Torah and the Talmud." Duplicate credit warning: Students who took REL 4406 or JST 4406 under the previous title will not earn additional credits for this course.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 4411. Secularism: Jewish and Muslim Women. 3 Credit Hours.

In its three-hundred-year history as a Western concept, secularism is often defined as the opposite of religion. Religious women have alternately found western secularism to be a source of liberation (as it grants them greater civil rights) and a source of oppression (as it putatively shrinks the religious sphere). In creating feminisms through Jewish and Muslim experience, feminisms that are both secular and religious, these religious women have complicated the meanings of secularism. They have also challenged the notion that feminism is necessarily secular. This course looks at examples of Jewish and Muslim women's lives and feminist thought in the US, Europe, and the Middle East. The course will compare and contrast the feminism of these two groups of religious women, in order to more fully understand the role of concepts like secularism, feminism, and religion. NOTE: Students will receive credit only once for either REL 4411, GSWS 4411, or JST 4411.

Course Attributes: SI

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

REL 4882. Independent Study. 1 to 4 Credit Hour.

Individual study with a specific faculty member. Permission of the professor the student wishes to work with must be given in writing, and registration is completed in the Religion Department.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

REL 4900. Honors Topics in Religious Studies II. 3 Credit Hours.

For description, see the Honors section of the course schedule of the semester.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: HO

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

REL 4901. Honors Comparative Philosophy of Religion. 3 Credit Hours.

An introduction to comparative philosophy of religion, Asian and Western. After asking what is meant by "comparative philosophy of religion," we will focus on comparative philosophical study of basic concepts and issues in Western and Asian religious traditions. For example: concepts of divine or ultimate reality; arguments for the existence of an ultimate reality; the relation of faith and reason; critiques of religion; the problem of evil; concepts of personal destiny and immortality; the relation of religion to morality; religious and mystical experience; the nature of religious language; the problem of conflicting truth-claims and religious pluralism.

Cohort Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Cohorts: SCHONORS, UHONORS, UHONORSTR.

Course Attributes: HO

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.