

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES (RELS)

## RELS 120 Philosophy and Religion 3 Credit Hours

An examination of how basic concerns of philosophy impinge on questions of religious beliefs. Using philosophical texts, the course will explore such questions as the following: Does God exist? Does human life have a purpose? How can we know whether religious claims are true?

## RELS 201 Religions of the World 3 Credit Hours

A study of religion in essence, in manifestation, and in relationship with the other dimensions of culture. Surveys major world religions.

## RELS 313 African American Religious Experience 3 Credit Hours

Full Title: African American Religious Experience This lecture course presents a survey of African American expressions across diverse religious traditions including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, and will explore contested forms of spiritual expression such as secularism and new religious movements. The course tracks these experiences from the late 18th to the 21st century in light of the contemporaneous context of social, political, and economic forces in the United States. No prerequisites. (YR).

## RELS 327 Gods, Myth and Worship 3 Credit Hours

Full Course Title: Gods, Myth and Worship in Classical Art- This course examines the way that gods, goddesses, heroes, and myths are depicted in Greek and Roman art, and how they were central to the religious and cultural life of these civilizations. We study the art, architecture, literature, and archaeology of ancient Greece and Rome as we explore how religious priorities, social needs, and political ideologies shaped the artistic choices behind the representations of deities and legendary figures and stories.

## RELS 329 Jesus and the Gospels 3 Credit Hours

Full Title: Jesus and the Gospels: Between Fact and Fiction Who was Jesus or Nazareth? For centuries people seeking an answer have turned to the four gospels of the New Testament. But how reliable are these texts? Were they written as biographies, histories, or to fulfill other purposes? This course will address these and other questions associated with the quest for the historical Jesus. Students will be introduced to a variety of approaches involved in the literary-historical study of the gospels and New Testament backgrounds and learn about the methods scholars employ to move from these texts and context. (S)

## RELS 331 Early Christian Byzantine Art 3 Credit Hours

Borrowing its formal language from late antiquity and its symbolism from other mystery cults, the art of early Christianity emerged from the Roman catacombs to monumental expression under emperors Constantine and Justinian. Special attention will be devoted to the invention of a new symbolic language in art and to the development of church architecture.

**Prerequisite(s):** ARTH 101 or ARTH 102 or ARTH 103 or ARTH 104 or ARTH 106

## RELS 332 The Reformation Era: 1500-1648 3 Credit Hours

A study of the nature, course, and impact of the Protestant Reformation in Europe, Humanism, the Counter-Reformation, and the cultural and social implications of Protestantism also receive attention. (YR).

## RELS 333 Intro to Gospel Music 3 Credit Hours

This course explores the history and aesthetics of Black sacred music within cultural context. Major figures (Thomas A. Dorsey, Mahalia Jackson, The Winans Family, Kirk Franklin), periods (slavery, Great Migration, Civil Rights movement), and styles (folk and arranged Negro spirituals, congregational songs, and gospel songs - traditional to contemporary) will be studied through recording, videos, film and at least one field experience. Underlying the course is the theory (Mellonee Burnim and Pearl Williams-Jones) that gospel music is an expression of African American culture that fuses both African and European elements into a unique whole. (OC).

## RELS 335 Women in Medieval Art 3 Credit Hours

Women have often been regarded as the second sex of the middle ages due to the misogynistic attitudes of that era. Recent scholarship, however, has unearthed a significantly more complex picture. Through a study of visual representations of women in medieval art, this course will examine women's roles in the creation and patronage of art and literature, economic and family issues, and women's participation in new and innovative forms of religious piety.

## RELS 337 Islamic Movements Mid East Hist 3 Credit Hours

Will compare several Islamic movements in Middle Eastern history, starting with the rise of Islam in Mecca and Medina. Later impulses toward Islamic revival all looked back to the first movement, and hoped to capture both its spirit and its success. With this as background, the course will move to address two questions; How did later Islamic movements understand the history of the rise of Islam? How have later Islamic movements had to adapt their methods and their ideology to different historical circumstances? (AY).

## RELS 338 Women & Islam Mid East to 1900 3 Credit Hours

This course covers the historical development of Islam's normative stance towards women and gender roles in the Middle East from the rise of Islam to the earliest stirrings of feminist activism.

## RELS 341 Religion and Literature 3 Credit Hours

An investigation of the ways in which religious ideas and practices have informed works of literature, and vice versa. Surveying a variety of genres and themes, the course will focus mainly on British and/or American literature and its engagement with Judeo-Christian religion, though some attention may be devoted to other literary and religious traditions (e.g., ancient and medieval texts, European and world literature, Islam and Eastern religions).

**Prerequisite(s):** (COMP 106 or COMP 220 or COMP 270 or COMP 280 or Composition Placement Score with a score of 40 or Composition Placement Score with a score of 107) and (ENGL 230 or ENGL 205 or ENGL 206 or ENGL 231 or ENGL 232 or ENGL 233 or ENGL 235 or ENGL 236 or ENGL 237 or ENGL 238 or ENGL 239 or ENGL 200)

## RELS 346 Bible and Western Tradition 3 Credit Hours

A detailed study of major episodes from the Bible, first as a literary work, and second as it is reflected in both poetry and the visual arts during the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Included are selected works by such masters as John Donne, George Herbert, and John Milton in poetry and Michelangelo, Raphael, and Leonardo da Vinci in painting and sculpture.

**RELS 349 The Bible In/As Literature 3 Credit Hours**

This course will study selected readings from the Bible, first in regard to their own literary, historical, and cultural contents, and then in regard to their reception, interpretation, and reapplication by later literary tradition. Biblical selections may cover both the Old and New Testaments as well as Apocryphal traditions, while readings from later non-biblical texts will be drawn from various literary periods.

**Prerequisite(s):** (COMP 106 or COMP 220 or COMP 270 or COMP 280 or Composition Placement Score with a score of 40 or Composition Placement Score with a score of 107) and (ENGL 230 or ENGL 231 or ENGL 232 or ENGL 233 or ENGL 235 or ENGL 236 or ENGL 237 or ENGL 239 or ENGL 200)

**RELS 355 Religion and Politics 3 Credit Hours**

The primary focus of the course is on political movements or systems that take a religious form or have a religious base or use a religiously-rooted ideology. Possible themes or cases covered include the Catholic Church as a political system, Evangelical politics in America, religious uprisings, and Islamic political movements. (AY)

**RELS 360 Myth, Magic, and Mind 3 Credit Hours**

A broadly based introduction to the range of human mythical and magical traditions. Sophomore standing; ANTH 101 highly recommended. (YR).

**RELS 3634 History of Islam in the US 3 Credit Hours**

This course traces the long history of Islam and of Muslims in the United States (1730s-present), paying careful attention to the interaction among Muslims across the dividing lines of race, gender, immigrant generations, sect, political orientation, and class, and between Muslims and other Americans.

**Restriction(s):**

Can enroll if Class is Freshman or Sophomore or Junior or Senior

**RELS 365 Introduction to the Qur'an 3 Credit Hours**

This course is an introduction to the Qur'an. This class will cover the historical and the cultural factors in which the Qur'an appeared. The class will also examine some of the major themes covered in the Qur'an such as gender, science, pluralism, worldview and so forth. Also, will cover major schools of interpretations and methodologies ranging from the literary to the scientific. The class will be conducted in English and knowledge of Arabic is desired but not required. No prerequisites. The class will consist of lectures, discussions, and movies.

**RELS 367 Religion and Resistance 3 Credit Hours**

This course examines how religion and spirituality as cultural form has been instrumental in influencing social, political, and economic thought and the action of violent and nonviolent resistance. In such, African Americans have affirmed their humanity, their citizenship, and have exerted mechanisms of protest and change that have in-kind influenced similar thought and activity around the globe. When contemporary students are aware of this history at all, it is often without the knowledge or understanding of the various forms of resistance and the range of reason and spirituality behind this activity. The course will present key figures from within this range (AY).

**RELS 384 Islamic Decorative Arts 3 Credit Hours**

This course in an in-depth investigation of the decorative arts of the Islamic Middle East from the seventh through the eighteenth century including the lands of Islamic Spain and North Africa and extending east to Afghanistan. The course traces the development of decorative styles in objects of daily and courtly life, particularly ceramics, metal work, glass, wood and ivory carving, textiles and rugs. The central role played by calligraphy in all of the arts in emphasized as well as in manuscript production and the Arts of the Book. As a religion, but also a way of life, Islam fostered a distinctive artistic production reflected in these decorative arts.

**Prerequisite(s):** ARTH 101 or ARTH 102 or ARTH 103 or ARTH 104 or ARTH 106 or HUM 201 or RELS 201

**RELS 385 Philosophy of Religion 3 Credit Hours**

A philosophical examination of basic religious problems, such as the nature and grounds of religious belief, the existence and nature of God, human immortality, the relations of religion and science, and the nature or religious language. Students electing this course must have successfully completed a previous course in philosophy or have permission of the instructor.

**Prerequisite(s):** PHIL 100 or PHIL 120 or PHIL 233 or PHIL 234 or PHIL 240 or PHIL 253 or PHIL 301 or PHIL 302 or PHIL 303 or PHIL 304 or PHIL 305 or PHIL 310 or PHIL 315 or PHIL 320 or PHIL 365 or PHIL 340 or PHIL 335 or PHIL 350 or PHIL 369 or PHIL 371 or PHIL 375 or PHIL 380 or PHIL 390 or PHIL 441 or PHIL 442 or PHIL 445 or PHIL 485 or PHIL 490 or RELS 120

**RELS 390 Topics in Religious Studies 3 Credit Hours**

Examination of problems and issues in selected areas of religious studies. Title in Schedule of Classes will change according to content. Course may be repeated for credit when specific topics differ. Junior standing required.

**Restriction(s):**

Cannot enroll if Class is Freshman or Sophomore

Can enroll if Level is Undergraduate

**RELS 393 Black Women, Rel & Spirituality 3 Credit Hours**

This lecture course surveys descriptive and critical literature relevant to the religious and spiritual experience and thought of African diasporic women. Studying religiosity and spirituality among this population helps students understand this influential, culturally-constructed world view of Black women as they engage in a variety of institutions including healthcare, economic activity, the criminal justice system, politics, and social relationships. The course gives particular attention to Black feminist and Womanist literature on these topics. (F).

**Restriction(s):**

Cannot enroll if Class is Freshman

**RELS 401 Religion in Contemp US Culture 3 Credit Hours**

The purpose of this course is to provide people in contemporary multi-religious America foundational information about beliefs and practices of several of the world's religions sufficient to engage in inter-religious dialogue. Special emphasis will be given to changes the American religious landscape after 1965 with the passage of new immigration laws. The course will combine lectures and visits to a variety of Metropolitan Detroit religious centers including Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Sikh, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Native American. (S).

**RELS 404 Medieval Mystical Writers 3 Credit Hours**

A study of the genre of mystical writing as it was developed and practiced throughout the Middle Ages and in 14th century England particularly. Attention will be given to the historical, religious, and cultural contexts that enabled and were created by mystical texts. In addition, the course will explore how traditional and contemporary trends in the fields of religious and literary studies can be brought to bear on the genre of mystical writing. (OC)

**Prerequisite(s):** (COMP 106 or COMP 220 or COMP 270 or COMP 280 or Composition Placement Score with a score of 40 or Composition Placement Score with a score of 107) and (ENGL 200 or ENGL 230 or ENGL 231 or ENGL 232 or ENGL 233 or ENGL 235 or ENGL 236 or ENGL 237 or ENGL 239)

**RELS 440 Religion and Culture 3 Credit Hours**

What is religion and how does it shape us? This course begins to answer these questions by exploring religious diversity around the world through the lens of a variety of topics in the anthropology of religion. These include sacred symbols, ritual and rites of passage, prayer, shamanism, witchcraft, and spirit possession. We examine changing approaches to the study of religion and address the myriad ways religion intersects with other aspects of social life including kinship, food, and politics. Students end the course by conducting their own ethnographic research of a religious event, ritual specialist, or sacred place. (AY). (YR).

**Prerequisite(s):** ANTH 101 or ANTH 202 or ANTH 303 or HUM 303 or PSYC 303 or SOC 303 or WGST 303 or SOC 200

**RELS 455 Sociology of Religion 3 Credit Hours**

Religion as a social institution; its purposes, methods, structure, and beliefs, and its relation to other institutions.

**Prerequisite(s):** SOC 200 or SOC 201

**RELS 498 Independent Study 3 Credit Hours**

This course provides an opportunity for qualified students interested in Religious Studies to pursue independent research under the direction of a qualified faculty member. The project must be defined in advance, in writing, and must be a topic not currently offered in the regular curriculum.

**Prerequisite(s):** HUM 201 or PHIL 120

**Restriction(s):**

Can enroll if Class is Junior or Senior

\*An asterisk denotes that a course may be taken concurrently.

**Frequency of Offering**

The following abbreviations are used to denote the frequency of offering: (F) fall term; (W) winter term; (S) summer term; (F, W) fall and winter terms; (YR) once a year; (AY) alternating years; (OC) offered occasionally