

## RELIGION (Div II)

**Chair: Professor Jeffrey Israel**

- Zaid Adhami, Assistant Professor of Religion and Faculty Affiliate in Anthropology & Sociology; affiliated with: Religion, Anthropology & Sociology
- Magnús T. Bernhardtsson, Brown Professor of History and Faculty Affiliate in Arabic Studies, Leadership Studies and Religion, Chair of Global Studies; affiliated with: History, Global Studies, Religion, Leadership Studies
- Denise K. Buell, Cluett Professor of Religion
- Edan Dekel, Garfield Professor of Ancient Languages, Chair of Jewish Studies Program; affiliated with: Classics, Religion
- Georges B. Dreyfus, Jackson Professor of Religion; on leave Spring 2024
- Kim Gutschow, Senior Lecturer in Religion and Anthropology/Sociology; affiliated with: Religion, Anthropology & Sociology
- Jacqueline Hidalgo, Professor of Latina/o/x Studies and Religion; affiliated with: Religion, Latina/o Studies; on leave 2023-2024
- Jeffrey I. Israel, Chair and Associate Professor of Religion
- James A. Manigault-Bryant, Chair and Professor of Africana Studies and Faculty Affiliate in Anthropology and Sociology and Religion; affiliated with: Africana Studies, Religion, Anthropology & Sociology
- Neil Roberts, Associate Dean of the Faculty, John B. McCoy and John T. McCoy Professor of Africana Studies and Faculty Affiliate in Political Science and Religion; affiliated with: Dean of the Faculty's Office, Africana Studies, Religion, Political Science
- Jason Josephson Storm, Professor of Religion, Chair of Science & Technology Studies; affiliated with: Religion, Science & Technology Studies; on leave 2023-2024
- Saadia Yacoob, Assistant Professor of Religion; on leave Spring 2024

### MAJOR

The major in Religion is designed to perform two related functions: to expose the student to the methods and issues involved in the study of religion as a phenomenon of psychological, sociological, and cultural/historical dimensions; and to confront students with the beliefs, practices, and values of specific religions through a study of particular religious traditions. It is a program that affords each student an opportunity to fashion their own sequence of study within a prescribed basic pattern constructed to ensure both coherence and variety. Beginning with the class of 2016, the major in Religion will consist of at least nine semester courses as follows:

#### Required Sequence Courses

REL 200 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion

One 300-level seminar or tutorial

REL 401 Senior seminar

#### Elective Courses

Six electives at the 100-, 200-, or 300-level (with a maximum of one 100-level class to count towards major).

In addition, each major will select a specialization route in the major in conversation with and with the approval of the department. The specialization will consist of at least four courses. There are two ways to meet this requirement. A major could fulfill the requirement by concentration in one of the College's coordinate programs or by designating four specialization courses that can be supported by the resources of the Religion department faculty and the College. In other words, these four courses might be from among the six electives and one 300-level seminar or tutorial or might include additional coursework from other programs and departments (whether cross-listed or not).

The major will culminate in a year-long senior project. The first semester will remain a seminar (REL 401) on a topic in the study of religion set by the faculty member in consultation with incoming seniors. The spring semester will consist of participation in a research colloquium (not a course taken for credit). In this colloquium, each senior major will present their individual research projects, begun in the senior seminar, drawing on their specializations and advised by members of the faculty.

For those who wish to go beyond the formally-listed courses into a more intensive study of a particular religious tradition, methodological trend, or religious phenomenon (e.g., ritual, symbol-formation, mysticism, theology, etc.), there is the opportunity to undertake independent study or, with the

approval of the department, to pursue a thesis project.

The value of the major in Religion derives from its fostering of a critical appreciation of the complex role religion plays in every society, even those that consider themselves non-religious. The major makes one sensitive to the role religion plays in shaping the terms of cultural discourse, of social attitudes and behavior, and of moral reflection. But it also discloses the ways in which religion and its social effects represent the experience of individual persons and communities. In doing these things, the major further provides one with interdisciplinary analytical tools and cross-cultural experience and opens up new avenues for dealing with both the history of a society and culture and the relationships between different societies and cultures. What one learns as a Religion major is therefore remarkably applicable to a wide range of other fields of study or professions.

Students declaring Religion as a major will identify an area of specialization and link it to their senior seminar final paper and be expected to present it in a spring colloquium during their senior year.

### **THE DEGREE WITH HONORS IN RELIGION**

The degree with honors in Religion requires the above-mentioned nine courses and the preparation of a thesis of 75+ pages with a grade of B+ or better. A thesis may combine revised work done in other courses with new material prepared while enrolled either in Religion 493-W31 or Religion W31-494. Up to two-thirds of the work in the thesis may be such revised work, but at least one-third must represent new work. The thesis must constitute a coherent whole either by its organizing theme or by a focus on a particular religious tradition. Candidates will also be expected to present the results of their thesis orally in a public presentation. Students who wish to be candidates for honors in Religion will submit proposals and at least one paper that may be included in the thesis to the department in the spring of their junior year. Students must normally have at least a 3.5 GPA in Religion to be considered for the honors program.

The chair will serve as advisor to non-majors.

### **STUDY ABROAD**

The Williams College Religion Department encourages potential majors to study abroad in order to enhance their education and gain international perspectives on religious studies. There are many excellent study abroad opportunities offering students a variety of possible experiences: among them cultural immersion, field work, intensive language learning, independent study, participation in another educational system. Many of our majors study in the Williams College Oxford Program, but our majors also regularly pursue a semester or year-long study in other programs.

### **FAQ**

Students **MUST** contact departments/programs **BEFORE** assuming study away credit will be granted toward the major or concentration.

**Can your department or program typically pre-approve courses for major/concentration credit?**

Yes, in many cases, though students should be sure to contact the department.

**What criteria will typically be used/required to determine whether a student may receive major/concentration credit for a course taken while on study away?**

Course title and description. Sometimes a course title is sufficient, but for many courses we also need to see a description of some sort because the title is unclear.

**Does your department/program place restrictions on the number of major/concentration credits that a student might earn through study away?**

No.

**Does your department/program place restrictions on the types of courses that can be awarded credit towards your major?**

No.

**Are there specific major requirements that cannot be fulfilled while on study away?**

Yes. 3 courses: Religion 200, one 300-level Religion seminar or tutorial, and Religion 401 Senior Seminar.

**Are there specific major requirements in your department/program that students should be particularly aware of when weighing study away options? (Some examples might include a required course that is always taught in one semester, laboratory requirements.)**

Yes. Make sure that they have or will be able to take REL 200, because it is offered only once a year.

**Give examples in which students thought or assumed that courses taken away would count toward the major or concentration and then learned they wouldn't:**

None to date.

As Henry David Thoreau put it, "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation," attempting to fill the void of their existence with sex, money, ephemeral amusements, and the steady accumulation of unnecessary possessions - basically killing time until the day they die. For some people this might seem to be enough, but this course is for those of us who lie awake at night wondering things like: "Why are we here?" "What does it mean to live a good life?" "How can I be happy?" "What is our duty to others?" "What really matters?" and the biggest question of them all: "What is the Meaning of Life?" This course will trace the diverse responses to these important questions offered by philosophers and religious thinkers in different cultures and time periods. We will read their texts critically and discuss how they can be directly relevant to our lives. Students will also be introduced to abstract theorizing in Religious Studies about how different cultures and traditions have historically come to live meaningfully. Authors and texts to be read may include Aristotle, Hannah Arendt, Marcus Aurelius, the Bhagavad Gita, H. H. Dalai Lama, the Dhammapada, Viktor Frankl, Søren Kierkegaard, Martin Luther King Jr, Shantideva, Peter Singer, Leo Tolstoy, Ibn Tufayl, Max Weber, and Slavoj Žižek.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** attendance and participation, journal and short writing assignments, midterm and final exams

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 40

**Enrollment Preferences:** potential religion majors

**Expected Class Size:** 40

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 105 (F) Introduction to European Art Before 1700**

**Cross-listings:** ARTH 101

Secondary Cross-listing

A team-taught introduction to the art and architecture of Europe from the ancient Mediterranean to Baroque Italy. This course celebrates the glory of works of art as physical objects, to be viewed and contemplated, to be sure, but also often to be worshiped, worn, touched (even licked), held, exhibited, bought and sold, passed through or around, and lived in. To help students begin to appreciate how these works of art might have been understood by those who originally made and used them, the course sets its objects of study within a number of revealing historical contexts, from the social and the political to the philosophical and the art historical. To give students time with original works of art, our discussion-centered conferences use the wealth of art resources in Williamstown: the Clark Art Institute, the buildings and sculpture of the Williams College Campus, and the Williams College Museum of Art.

**Class Format:** This course has 2 components: lectures and conferences. The lectures will be twice or three times weekly, the conferences once per week. Both lectures and conferences will be held in person.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Three shorter essays (one of which may be in the form of a take-home final exam), several quizzes, and engaged participation in conference sections

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 60

**Enrollment Preferences:** Preference will be based on a short questionnaire, which students will be asked to complete if the course is over-enrolled.

**Expected Class Size:** 60

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 105(D2) ARTH 101(D1)

**Attributes:** ARTH pre-1800

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 107 (F) Islamophobia: A Global Perspective (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** PSCI 173 / GBST 105

Secondary Cross-listing

This course's goal is to show how the racialization of Islam and Muslims has been constitutive to the latter's imagination. It looks at how difference works and has worked, how identities and power relationships have been grounded in lived experience, and how one might both critically and productively approach questions of difference, power, and equity. The course goes back to the founding moments of an imagined white-Christian Europe and how the racialization of Muslim bodies was central to this project and how anti-Muslim racism continues to be relevant in our world today. The course will give a global perspective on Islamophobia and how it is structuring and used by political actors in various territories. The course will show how Muslims were constructed as subjects in history, politics, and society from the very beginning of the making of Europe and the Americas to the end of the Cold War to the post-9/11 era. The course is based on the literature of multidisciplinary studies by leading scholars in the field, drawing from anthropology, gender studies, history, political science, religious studies, postcolonial studies, decolonial studies, and sociology. This course's goal is to show how the racialization of Islam and Muslims has been constitutive to the latter's imagination. It looks at how difference works and has worked, how identities and power relationships have been grounded in lived experience, and how one might both critically and productively approach questions of difference, power, and equity. The course goes back to the founding moments of an imagined white-Christian Europe and how the racialization of Muslim bodies was central to this project and how anti-Muslim racism continues to be relevant in our world today. The course will give a global perspective on Islamophobia and how it is structuring and used by political actors in various territories. The course will show how Muslims were constructed as subjects in history, politics, and society from the very beginning of the making of Europe and the Americas to the end of the Cold War to the post-9/11 era. The course is based on the literature of multidisciplinary studies by leading scholars in the field, drawing from anthropology, gender studies, history, political science, religious studies, postcolonial studies, decolonial studies, and sociology.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Class participation and two papers, in these proportions: 10% attendance; 20% participation; 35% first paper (7 pages); 35% second paper (7 pages). No final exam.

**Prerequisites:** no

**Enrollment Limit:** 35

**Enrollment Preferences:** freshmen and concentrations

**Expected Class Size:** 30

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

PSCI 173(D2) REL 107(D2) GBST 105(D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** The course critically examines difference, power, and equity. Thematically, it looks at the racialization of Islam and the intersection of race, religion, class, and gender in the construction of the 'Muslim problem' from a historical as well as a global contemporary perspective. On one side, the course content explores forms of difference and power. On the other side, the course attempts to help students to engage in alternative forms of action to address these inequalities.

**Attributes:** GBST Borders, Exiles + Diaspora Studies Electives

Fall 2023

LEC Section: 01 M 7:00 pm - 9:40 pm Farid Hafez

## **REL 109 Apocalypse (WS)**

An end of days. A utopia to come. A great cosmic reversal of fortune. A revelation of truth that leads to radical transformation. Each of these themes and many more fall under the genre of imagination that we associate with the apocalypse. In order to understand the persistence and prevalence of apocalyptic imaginations, we will move back and forth through time. On the one hand, we will read the Book of Revelation in relationship to a selection of ancient Zoroastrian, Jewish, Greek, Christian, and Muslim texts identified with apocalyptic traditions. On the other hand, we will read these texts in relationship to and alongside select literature and movements of apocalypse in the U.S.A. We will pay particular attention to how apocalyptic imaginations reflect upon and interact with social structures of class, colonization, ethnicity, gender, race, and sexuality.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** grading will be based on participation, short P/F papers, a graded 3-page essay that will be revised, a 5-page second essay, and a final 7- to 10-page paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Enrollment Preferences:** first-years and sophomores preferred or Religion majors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:****Distributions:** (D2) (WS)

**Writing Skills Notes:** As a WS course, grading will be based on short, weekly P/F papers, a graded 3-page essay that will be revised for credit, a 5-page second essay, and a final 7- to 10-page paper for which a draft will be peer reviewed. Students will receive from the instructor timely comments on their writing skills, with suggestions for improvement.

Not offered current academic year

**REL 110 (S) Religion in Everyday Life (WS)**

When studying religions, people generally turn to studying scriptures, the life and teachings of the religion's founder, and the fundamental doctrines of the religion. What this approach does not allow us to understand, however, is the way that such religious traditions actually manifest themselves in the world. This course introduces students to an alternative approach to studying religion, by exploring the way these religions are lived and experienced by individuals and communities in a variety of contexts. We will see how religion intersects with people's lived experiences of gender, race, class, sexuality, and broader socio-cultural and political contexts. We will explore this approach to religion through an engagement with ethnography (the qualitative research method in the social-sciences generally described as "participant-observation"). Students will not only learn about the theory and practice of this methodology, but will also conduct their own ethnographic research project over the course of the semester. This will involve: designing a feasible project and research question, selecting local research sites and subjects, taking field-notes and conducting interviews, and finally analyzing data and writing an ethnographic essay.

**Class Format:** Semester-long community-based field research. Regular in-class peer-review exercises.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** regular reading responses, semester-long research project with frequent small assignments building up to the final product (class presentation and approximately 10-page paper)

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** first-year students and sophomores; students interested in Religious Studies

**Expected Class Size:** 10-12

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (WS)

**Writing Skills Notes:** Students will learn a specific mode of qualitative/ethnographic writing through a semester-long field-based project. This involves many scaffolded assignments of field-based research and writing, for which they receive very regular feedback from the instructor, as well as extensive peer-review exercises. There will be a number of readings on writing style and technique, as well as class discussion and workshopping activities. The final essay will itself be developed in multiple steps.

**Attributes:** EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Not offered current academic year

**REL 112 (F) Sex, Gender, Religion**

**Cross-listings:** WGSS 112

Primary Cross-listing

The relationship between sex, gender, and religion is one that is hotly debated in our current political context. Many contemporary issues such as abortion, sexual identity, transgender rights are all informed by religious traditions. While religion is most often critiqued for its misogyny and homophobia, it also opens up unexpected possibilities for gender and sexual diversity. This course will consider both these paradoxes and contradictions in religious traditions and their engagement with gender and sexuality. The course will consider how religious traditions have shaped our current discourses on sexual and gender diversity, how religious tradition understand and interact with modern constructions of sexual and gender identity, and how religious queer communities imagine queer possibilities in conversation with their religious traditions. In exploring these topics, the course will cover global religious traditions both historically and in the contemporary.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly responses, midterm essay, final project.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 40

**Enrollment Preferences:** first years

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 112(D2) WGSS 112(D2)

Fall 2023

LEC Section: 01 Cancelled

**REL 115 (F) Latina Feminist Spiritualities (DPE) (WS)**

**Cross-listings:** LATS 115 / WGSS 115

**Secondary Cross-listing**

Self-proclaimed feminist activists, who hail from a variety of ethnic Latina/o/x/e (Latine) backgrounds, have often appealed to "ancestral" and "spiritual traditions" as integral to their activism and commitments. Some Latine feminists turned to "spiritual" traditions including brujería/witchcraft; curanderismo and Indigenous healing traditions; Santería/Lukumí and other AfroDiasporic traditions; astrology; home altars; various "mystical" traditions such as Kabbalah and Sufism, as well as Christian mystics like Teresa of Avila or Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Others have turned to the appropriation of "Eastern" traditions such as yoga, Tibetan Buddhism, and Zen Buddhism. This course engages students in an intensive introduction to some of the varieties of Latine feminist thought and contexts, including how activists, writers, and artists think about women, gender, sexuality, race, class, colonialism, the earth, healing, and a better world. How do these feminists of different Latine backgrounds and contexts imagine a better world? How and why do they appeal to spiritual traditions as a source of wisdom, healing, and lived practice for a better world? In this course, we seek to understand both particular Latine feminist spiritual practices on their own terms, as well as why such writers and activists appeal to "the spiritual" in Latine contexts. We will also consider how they frame notions of "the spiritual" in relationship to notions of "the religious" and "the secular."

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Grading is based on 5-6 page papers written on alternating weeks and brief 1-2 page response papers shared on alternating weeks as well as participation and two paper revisions.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** Latina/o Studies concentrators, religion majors, first-year students interested in Latina/o Studies and/or religion

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

LATS 115(D2) REL 115(D2) WGSS 115(D2)

**Writing Skills Notes:** Grading is based on alternating weeks writing a lead paper and other weeks writing a brief response paper. This course will require students to write regularly and revise two of their lead papers for grades.

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** This course examines how Latine feminists have responded to a variety of differential power inequities, especially in terms of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, language, and class. It also considers the ways they have imagined better and more equitable worlds, and with what consequences they have done so.

**Attributes:** LATS Core Electives

Fall 2023

TUT Section: T1 Cancelled

**REL 121 (S) Getting Spiritual With Rumi: From Sufism to Self-Help**

Although he lived about 800 years ago, Rumi is often described as the "best-selling poet in the United States." His poetry and sayings are shared endlessly on the internet and social media, celebrating above all his inspiring words on love and beauty. Rumi's spiritual wisdom is seen as transcending the confines of organized religion, with its divisive dogmas and restrictive rules. What is much less well-known is that Rumi was a devout Muslim mystic, a practitioner of the Islamic spiritual tradition of Sufism. This course will take the poetry and teachings of Rumi as a lens to reflect on

spirituality, both in a practical and introspective way, as well as a matter of historical and cultural analysis. We will read two types of translations of Rumi: those that adapt Rumi's work for a modern Western audience, and those that are more direct translations of Rumi's work in its original Islamic idiom. We will also do some broader readings to contextualize the medieval Sufi background that Rumi functioned within, as well as the contemporary scene of popular spirituality and self-help in the US. Through these comparative readings, we will consider the following: What does spirituality and self-cultivation mean to you personally? How does the experience and significance of spirituality change, from the context of traditional Sufism, to 21st century self-help and popular spirituality? What does this tell us about broader trends and conditions in our society? What do these intersecting traditions have to offer us in our world today?

**Class Format:** This course is part of a joint program between Williams' Center for Learning in Action and the Berkshire County Jail in Pittsfield, MA. The class will be composed equally of nine Williams students and nine inmates and will be held at the jail. An important goal of the course is to encourage students from different backgrounds to think together about issues of common human concern. Transportation will be provided by the college. \*Please note the atypical class hours, Th. 4:45-8:30 pm

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Personal journaling; Short response papers; Creative final project

**Prerequisites:** None

**Enrollment Limit:** 9

**Enrollment Preferences:** Demonstrated interest in problems of mass incarceration, criminal justice, etc. As well as interest in spirituality.

**Expected Class Size:** 9

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**Attributes:** EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 R 4:45 pm - 8:30 pm Zaid Adhami

## **REL 126 (F) Religion, Politics, and Society: A Global Perspective (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** PSCI 181 / GBST 101

**Secondary Cross-listing**

In spite of predictions that religion would wither away in the face of modernization, even casual observation indicates that it remains a powerful force in contemporary political life. Our goal is to obtain an enhanced understanding and appreciation of the salience of religion in public life. The course will be divided into three parts. The first part focuses on different theoretical approaches to making sense of the relation between religion, politics, and society, discussing especially the concept of the 'secular' in Western thought and decolonial critique thereof. The second part will take a global perspective on the relation between religion and politics. We will discuss cases of Buddhism, Christianity (Catholicism and Protestantism), Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam (Sunni and Shi'a), and Judaism. The third part focuses on religion in the USA. Here, we will discuss the role of religion in American political culture, the relation of religion to the state, the relevance of religious interests and their political mobilization, religious minorities in the United States, and many other aspects of religion in the US society. Although the study of religion and politics raises a host of deep philosophical questions, the principal aim of the course is to understand how religion affects politics (and vice versa), rather than to explore the normative dimensions of questions raised by the interaction of these two forces.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Class participation and three papers, in these proportions: 10% attendance; 20% participation; 20% first paper (7 pages); 30% second paper (8-10 pages); and 20% third paper (7 pages). No final exam.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 35

**Enrollment Preferences:** Global Studies concentrators and intended concentrators; Religion majors and intended majors

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Unit Notes:** Core course for GBST

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

PSCI 181(D2) GBST 101(D2) REL 126(D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** An engagement with religious difference in the world, with a spotlight on how religion and politics--that is, power--interact globally and in the USA.

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 149 (S) The Sacred in South Asia**

**Cross-listings:** ANTH 249 / ASIA 242

#### **Secondary Cross-listing**

Is religious identity necessarily singular and unambiguous? The jinn - Islamic spirits born of fire - are sought out for their healing and other powers not only by Muslims in India, but by Hindus, Christians and Sikhs, as well. In parts of Bengal statues of the Hindu goddess Durga are traditionally sculpted by Muslim artisans. Buddhist pilgrimage sites in Sri Lanka contain tombs of Muslim Sufi saints and shrines of Hindu deities. South Asia - where a fifth of humanity lives - provides some of the most striking examples of pluralism and religiously composite culture in our contemporary world. Yet at the same time, strident religious majoritarianism has been a defining feature of the politics of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka for decades, and haunts Nepal and Bangladesh as well. Are these two modes of religious being - pluralistic and composite on the one hand, singular and majoritarian on the other - reflective of two different conceptions of selfhood? What if we turn from questions of community and identity to questions of unseen power and the sacred? This course is an exploration of lived religion in South Asia. It is simultaneously a study of popular Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam and an introduction to the anthropology of religion. Centered on in-depth studies of popular sites of 'syncretic' ritual practice (shared across religious difference) as well as studies of mass mobilizations that seek to align the religious community with the nation, we approach from multiple angles what the sacred might mean in modernity.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly (1 page) posts on readings, two short (5 page) papers, and one (12-14 page) final research paper.

**Prerequisites:** Interest in the topic!

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** Students in all fields of study are most welcome; if overenrolled, priority will be given to majors in Anthropology, Sociology, Religion and Asian Studies.

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 149(D2) ANTH 249(D2) ASIA 242(D2)

**Attributes:** GBST South + Southeast Asia Studies Electives

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 166 (F) Being Muslim, Being American: American Muslim Literature in the 21st century (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** AMST 166 / ENGL 268 / COMP 166

#### **Primary Cross-listing**

Islam and Muslims in the United States are the subject of extensive public scrutiny and media coverage in broader public discourses. It is less common, however, to hear Muslims' own voices speak about their lives, experiences, beliefs, and commitments. This course will take a literary approach to exploring American Muslims' own narratives about themselves, which will serve as an introduction to religion in contemporary U.S. culture. We will address questions such as: How do American Muslims attempt to fashion their identity in the wake of 9/11? What are the pressures and demands of American national belonging and cultural citizenship that Muslims must navigate? How are race, gender, ethnic heritage, and immigration definitive of Muslim experiences and self-understandings? How are Muslims approaching the tensions between communal belonging and individuality? What are the competing claims and contestations about authentic expressions of Islam? We will be engaging such themes through an analysis of popular memoirs, autobiographies, novels, short stories, poetry, films, and comedy.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** regular reading responses, short midterm essays, and final paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** First-year students and sophomores

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

AMST 166(D2) ENGL 268(D1) COMP 166(D1) REL 166(D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** This course will explore the intersections of power in American Muslim life, such as: Muslims as a religious minority in the context of the War on Terror; racial and ethnic differences in Muslim communities; immigration and national belonging; competing claims to religious authenticity and authority; and conflicting gendered norms. Students will learn to identify these multiple layers and configurations in the texts, and how to analyze their workings in nuanced multidimensional ways.

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 200 (S) What is Religion? Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion**

To explore the meaning of religion, this course will introduce the debates around which the discipline of religious studies has been constituted. At stake are questions such as: How does one go about studying religion? Is "religion" a cultural universal? What is religion's relationship to the "European Enlightenment"? to race? to science? to society? to secularism? to colonialism? to ethics? to politics? to violence? to sex? to freedom? Has religion changed fundamentally in modernity? And if so, what is its future?

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, weekly short (max 2 page) writing assignments, a 5-page midterm paper, and a 10-page final paper

**Prerequisites:** none, although a previous course on religion is recommended

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors and prospective majors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Zaid Adhami

### **REL 203 (F) Judaism: Before The Law**

**Cross-listings:** JWST 101

Primary Cross-listing

This course introduces the academic study of Judaism through a humanistic exploration of "the Law" as a concept in Jewish thought and practice. Coverage will include the Law of Moses in the Hebrew Bible, the rabbinic distinction between "Oral Law" and "Written Law," medieval philosophical justifications for the Law, modern interpretations of the Law as Moral Law, Hasidic challenges to the centrality of the Law, and twentieth-century Jewish fiction that is haunted by a felt absence of the Law. Topics may also include the nature of rabbinic authority, methods of Jewish legal interpretation and innovation, and Jewish law as it pertains specifically to women, gentiles, idolaters, food consumption, and the Land of Israel. Course materials will include classical sources such as the Talmud and Midrash, modern philosophical texts, Franz Kafka's *The Trial* with his parable "Before The Law," ethnographic accounts of contemporary Jewish observance, and much else. *All readings will be in translation.*

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, three short papers, and a final longer paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Enrollment Preferences:** Jewish Studies concentrators, Religion majors and students who are considering these options

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

JWST 101(D2) REL 203(D2)

**Attributes:** JLST Interdepartmental Electives JWST Gateway Courses

Not offered current academic year

## REL 204 (S) What is Islamic Art? (DPE) (WS)

**Cross-listings:** ARTH 206

### Secondary Cross-listing

Through a deep engagement with primary sources--visual, performative and textual--this tutorial introduces students to global cultures that have participated in the production of Islamic art and culture through the centuries. Through a diverse set of readings, we will discuss how Islamic art is viewed today. How did, for instance, Colonialism and Orientalism from the 18th to the 20th centuries create an entrenched narrative for the study of the field, that continues to hold sway to this day? How have Muslim cultures defined their own artistic production? In particular, how can specific artworks, such as figural painting or palace architecture, be understood as "Islamic"? What are some key scholarly debates around the term "Islamic Art"? The tutorial is specifically designed keeping in mind the period of soul-searching the field is currently going through, even to the point of questioning the very term "Islamic art" and its epistemological parameters. By familiarizing students to an important discipline in art history, the aim of the tutorial is to provide alternate methodologies as well as epistemologies that run parallel to more mainstream or familiar avenues of study.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** focused bi-monthly writing assignments, 5-7 pages in length, and bi-monthly peer response papers, 2 pages in length.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** Art History majors and seniors, Religion majors

**Expected Class Size:** 8

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ARTH 206(D1) REL 204(D2)

**Writing Skills Notes:** This tutorial helps students develop writing skills in terms of grammar, structure, and organization. It is designed to teach students how to make clear, well-articulated arguments. Students will receive extensive feedback every other week on their writing assignments from the instructor and their peers. There will also be a comprehensive mid-semester review from the instructor.

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** In addition to introducing students to an important field of art history, the tutorial analyzes how Islamic art was codified and examined during the colonial and post-colonial periods, and how that understanding has come to define the field over the last century. The course will encourage students to challenge longstanding biases and assumptions when studying these artworks.

Not offered current academic year

## REL 205 (S) Ancient Wisdom Literature

**Cross-listings:** JWST 205 / CLAS 205 / COMP 217

### Primary Cross-listing

The Biblical books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job are often grouped together under the Hebrew category of *hokhmah*, 'wisdom.' Although these books are very different in content, they can all be interpreted as meditations on ethical and practical philosophy. In this way, they represent the Hebrew Bible's canonical embrace of a widespread Near Eastern literary phenomenon. From the instructional literature of Egypt and Mesopotamia to Greek didactic poetry and fables, ancient Mediterranean cultures offer a wide range of texts that engage the issues of personal behavior, leadership, and justice. Starting with the central wisdom books of the Hebrew Bible and moving through relevant material from the Apocrypha, New Testament, and the Egyptian and Babylonian traditions, this course will examine the literature of wisdom throughout the ancient world with an eye toward understanding its various social, political, and philosophical contexts. We will then consider the Greek wisdom tradition in such texts as Hesiod's *Works and Days*, Aesop's fables, and fragments from the pre-Socratic philosophers. Finally, we will explore the influence of these ancient sources on later expressions of wisdom in medieval European literature, as well as more recent examples such as Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanack*. *All readings are in translation.*

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, short written assignments, and two longer papers

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

JWST 205(D2) REL 205(D2) CLAS 205(D1) COMP 217(D1)

**Attributes:** JWST Core Electives

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 206 (S) The Book of Job and Joban Literature**

**Cross-listings:** JWST 206 / COMP 206

#### **Primary Cross-listing**

The Book of Job has often been described as the most philosophical book of the Hebrew Bible. The story of one man's struggle to understand the cause of his suffering and his relationship to God represents the finest flowering of the Near Eastern wisdom literature tradition. Through its exploration of fundamental issues concerning human suffering, fate and divinity, and the nature of philosophical self-examination, Job has served as a touchstone for the entire history of existential literature. At the same time, the sheer poetic force of the story has inspired some of the greatest artistic and literary meditations in the Western tradition. This course will engage in a close reading of the Book of Job in its full cultural, religious, and historical context with special attention to its literary, philosophical, and psychological dimensions. We will then proceed to investigate key modern works in several genres that involve Joban motifs, themes, and text both explicitly and implicitly. These texts will include Franz Kafka's *The Trial*, Archibald MacLeish's *J.B.*, Robert Frost's "Masque of Reason," Carl Jung's *Answer to Job*, and William Blake's *Illustrations to the Book of Job*. All readings are in translation.

**Class Format:** For the spring of 2021, this course will be taught online. The seminar will meet at the regularly scheduled time twice a week.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Evaluation will be based on class participation, weekly short written assignments, and two longer papers.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 12

**Enrollment Preferences:** If the course is overenrolled, preference will be given to students who have already taken a course in biblical literature.

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 206(D2) JWST 206(D2) COMP 206(D1)

**Attributes:** JWST Core Electives

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 207 (F) From Adam to Noah: Literary Imagination and the Primeval History in Genesis**

**Cross-listings:** COMP 250 / CLAS 207 / JWST 207

#### **Primary Cross-listing**

How long did Adam and Eve live in the Garden of Eden? What was the mark of Cain? Why did Enoch not die? Who was Noah's wife? How did Giants survive the Flood? These are only a few of the fascinating questions that ancient readers and interpreters of the Book of Genesis asked and attempted to answer. The first ten chapters of Genesis present a tantalizingly brief narrative account of the earliest history of humankind. The text moves swiftly from the Creation to the Flood and its immediate aftermath, but this masterful economy of style leaves many details unexplained. This course will explore the rich and varied literary traditions associated with the primeval history in the Genesis. Through a close reading of ancient noncanonical sources such as the Book of Enoch, Jubilees, and the Life of Adam and Eve, as well as Jewish traditions represented in Josephus, Philo, and Rabbinic literature and other accounts presented in early Christian and Gnostic texts, we will investigate the ways in which the elliptical style of Genesis generated a massive body of ancient folklore, creative exegesis, and explicit literary re-imagining of the early history of humankind. We will then turn to some continuations of these variant traditions in medieval literature, with particular attention to the material on the figures of Cain and Noah. All readings are in translation.

**Class Format:** For the fall of 2020, this course will taught online. The seminar will meet at the regularly scheduled time twice a week.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Class participation and several writing assignments.

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Enrollment Limit:** 12

**Enrollment Preferences:** If the class is overenrolled, preference will be given to students who have already taken a course in Biblical literature.

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 207(D2) COMP 250(D1) CLAS 207(D1) JWST 207(D2)

**Attributes:** JWST Core Electives

Not offered current academic year

## **REL 209 (S) Jewish America**

**Cross-listings:** JWST 209

### **Primary Cross-listing**

Who and what counts as "Jewish" in America? Does stand-up comedy have a distinctly Jewish pedigree? What about neoconservatism? How is it possible to answer such questions without falling into what David Hollinger has called the "booster-bigot trap"? How is it possible, that is, to avoid answers that uncritically celebrate "Jewish contributions" or perniciously suggest "Jewish influence"? This course will explore the various meanings of Jewishness in American culture as expressed by artists, rabbis, activists, intellectuals, boosters, bigots and others. We will seek to avoid the booster-bigot trap by focusing vigilantly on what is at stake wherever Jewishness is invoked, defined or ascribed. We will draw methodological support from scholars like Hollinger, Jonathan Freedman, Laura Levitt, Yuri Slezkine, Shaul Magid, Andrea Most and others. Particular attention will be given to the appearance of Jewish themes and involvement in popular culture and political action, as well as to Jewish American communal institutions, the everyday lives of Jewish Americans, and Jewish variations on American religion. Coursework will involve some historical, sociological and ethnographic readings, but will focus primarily on close analysis of films, literary fiction, stand-up comedy, political magazines, theological texts, and television shows. We may, for instance, watch films like *The Jazz Singer* (1927 and 1980), *Exodus* and *Annie Hall*; read John Updike's *Bech: A Book*, Philip Roth's *Operation Shylock* or Cynthia Ozick's *The Puttermessa Papers*; listen to the comedy of Mort Sahl, Lenny Bruce and Sarah Silverman; read from Henry Ford's *Dearborn Independent*, the *Menorah Journal* or *Commentary*; study works by Rabbis Stephen Wise, Abraham Joshua Heschel and Meir Kahane; and watch episodes of *Bridget Loves Bernie*, *Northern Exposure* and *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. We will also study arguments about the role and meaning of Jewishness in American secularization, "therapeutic culture," the civil rights movement, the sexual revolution, and feminism.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, two short papers, a midterm take-home exam, and a final paper interpreting an example of Jewishness in America chosen by the student

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors, Jewish Studies concentrators, and students who are interested in either of these options

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 209(D2) JWST 209(D2)

**Attributes:** JWST Core Electives

Not offered current academic year

## **REL 210 (F) Distant Encounters: East Meets West in the Art of the European Middle Ages (WS)**

**Cross-listings:** ARAB 212 / ARTH 212

### **Secondary Cross-listing**

In this tutorial, students will investigate the rich artistic consequences -- in architecture, manuscript illumination, mosaic, sculpture, panel painting, fresco, metalwork, and other minor arts -- of European contact with the Eastern Mediterranean between approximately 300 and 1450 CE. From the beginnings of Christianity, pilgrims from Europe made the long journey to sacred sites in what they called the Holy Land (extending across parts of

present-day Egypt, Israel, Syria, and Turkey), the place of Christ's life, death, and believed resurrection. Large numbers of pilgrims even made the long journey to the Holy Land, and especially to Jerusalem, to visit a range of sacred sites related to Christ and his saints. When these sites became less accessible with the spread of Islam in the seventh century -- and even before this time -- Europeans sought to recreate many of them at home. Later, from 1095 onward, Christian Europeans attempted to reclaim and hold the Holy Land from non-Christians by force, through an ill-fated series of five major and several lesser "crusades." Over the centuries, before, during, and after the Crusades, exposure to the peoples, ideas, and cultures of the Eastern Mediterranean also came through trade and through the travel and settlement of non-Europeans in Europe itself, particularly in Spain, Sicily, and Venice. Through all of these centuries, moreover, the Christian, Greek-speaking empire of Byzantium, focused on its great capital of Constantinople (present-day Istanbul), interacted in myriad ways, both friendly and hostile, with the Latin-speaking polities of Western Europe, focused at least symbolically on their ancient capital of Rome. Together, by way of open discussion, we will explore artistic production within each of these different cross-cultural contexts of East-West encounter. In the process, we will reflect on how art could function as a conduit for the exchange of ideas in the Middle Ages, and how it could be used both to negotiate and to intensify cultural difference.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** participation in discussion; five 4-5-page papers; five 1-2-page papers; and one 6-8-page final paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** first- and second-year students, but open to all

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 210(D2) ARAB 212(D1) ARTH 212(D1)

**Writing Skills Notes:** In this tutorial, students will develop skills of critical reading and focus on how to craft clear and persuasive arguments of their own. To help them achieve these goals, they will receive timely comments on their written work, especially the five 4-5-page papers they will submit, with suggestions for improvement.

**Attributes:** ARTH pre-1800

Fall 2023

TUT Section: T1 TBA Peter D. Low

### **REL 211 Christians versus Pagans: Ancient Egypt**

This course explores the religious terrain of ancient Egypt in the Greek and Roman periods. Focused mostly on the rise of Christianity, this course asks big questions about what changes and what stays the same when major religious movements emerge in a place. What parts of Christianity were new to Egypt and were premised upon a rejection and displacement of Egyptian religious practices and beliefs? What parts of Egyptian religious life, rather than being replaced or transformed by Christianity, were adopted into Christianity? And what parts of Egyptian religious practice resisted Christianity? And how and where did it resist?

**Requirements/Evaluation:** 1-2 page weekly papers, final paper, participation

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion Majors

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Grading:**

**Distributions:** (D2)

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 213 (F) Patrons, Rituals, and Living Images in Japanese Buddhism**

**Cross-listings:** ARTH 205 / ASIA 205

Secondary Cross-listing

This course introduces students to Buddhist art and architecture in Japan from its introduction in the sixth century through the present. We focus on

the ways different communities--the imperial court, immigrant artists, monks, women, and commoners--employed and venerated Buddhist images for political legitimacy, personal salvation, and worldly benefit. This course also examines how Japanese Buddhist imagery became aestheticized in the early twentieth century and appropriated later in modern and contemporary visual cultures. Some of the topics to be discussed include the reception of continental styles of Buddhist sculpture, the relationship between mandalas and rituals, the role of women in developing Buddhist embroideries, and the Western reappraisal of Zen arts. Students will develop familiarity with the concepts and ideas underlying the production of Buddhist images and will gain foundational skills in analyzing the visual, material, and iconographic qualities of Japanese Buddhist art. For the final project, students will design a digital exhibition focused around one of the topics of the course.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** attendance, class participation, 4 reading and object response papers (2-3 pages), midterm, non-cumulative final exam, and digital exhibition project with an 8-10 minute presentation

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Enrollment Preferences:** First and second-year students, but open to all

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 213(D2) ARTH 205(D1) ASIA 205(D1)

**Attributes:** ARTH pre-1800

Not offered current academic year

## **REL 215 (F) Religion in Latinx Literature, Art & Film**

**Cross-listings:** LATS 219

Secondary Cross-listing

**LATS 219--Religion in Latinx Literature, Art & Film** This course will examine how a selective range of US Latinx writers, artists, and filmmakers--particularly in fiction, memoir, visual arts and films by and about Latinidad--depict, describe, and discuss religious themes, broadly considered. Latinx-authored novels and memoirs, artwork by Latina/o/x visual artists, and films depicting Latinx life through the lens of Latinx film-makers will be read, viewed, and studied to facilitate discussion about what it means to be Latina/o/x *and* religious. How do fictional, autobiographical and artistic depictions of Latinx people, communities, and their religiosity/spiritualities promote or deter understanding of *Latinidad* in the U.S.A.?

**Requirements/Evaluation:** In this course, students will read and write short essays about novels and/or memoirs (4-5 pages), critically analyze film and artwork in short papers (3-4 pages), and write a research paper (8-10 pages) that analyzes the nexus of Latinx religion and art, whether fiction, film, memoir, or the visual arts. Attendance, participation, Glow discussion forums, and written assignments will all constitute assessment tools for this course.

**Prerequisites:** No prerequisites.

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** Students with at least one prior LATS or Religion course will be given preference if an enrollment overload. Also sophomores, juniors, and seniors will be given preference over first year students.

**Expected Class Size:** 15-20

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

LATS 219(D2) REL 215(D2)

**Attributes:** LATS Core Electives

Fall 2023

SEM Section: 01 W 1:10 pm - 3:50 pm Efrain Agosto

## REL 217 (F) Religion and American Politics

**Cross-listings:** HIST 257

### Primary Cross-listing

In this course, students will explore the history of religion and American politics, from the colonial era to the present. In the process, they will tackle such questions as: Were Anglo-American colonies 'cities on a hill' or bastions of intolerance? Was the First Amendment designed to protect the state from religion, or religion from the state? Has American religion primarily served to justify the *status quo* or inspire revolutionary change? How have religious ethics shaped responses to racial, gender, and class inequality? How has religious conflict impacted civic unity and political polarization? What role *should* religion play in American political life? The course will cover such topics as: Anglo-colonial treatment of heretics and blasphemers; the meaning of the First Amendment; religious conflict over slavery; state regulation of sexuality and polygamy; state treatment of religious minorities; the Scopes Trial and scientific modernity; Christian responses to industrial capitalism; theologies of civil disobedience and nonviolence; and 20th-century religious battles over school prayer, civil rights, the military draft, abortion, and democracy itself.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Class participation; five informal response papers (350-450 words); two unit papers (4-6 pages); final paper (8-10 pages).

**Prerequisites:** None; open to all students.

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion and History majors, in order of descending seniority.

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 217(D2) HIST 257(D2)

**Attributes:** HIST Group F Electives - U.S. + Canada

Not offered current academic year

## REL 218 (F) Foundations of China

**Cross-listings:** GBST 212 / CHIN 214 / ASIA 211 / ANTH 212 / HIST 214

### Secondary Cross-listing

This course examines the foundational period of Chinese civilization, from the earliest evidence of human activity in the geographical region we now call China, through the end of the Han dynasty in the early third-century CE. This is the period that saw the creation and spread of the Chinese script (a writing system that would be the dominant one in East Asia for thousands of years), the teachings of Confucius (whose ideas continue to play a role in the lives of billions of people today), the construction of the Great Wall (which is not, as it turns out, visible from space), and the creation of the imperial bureaucratic system (that was, in essence, the progenitor of the modern bureaucratic state). We will proceed chronologically but focus on a set of thematic topics, including language and writing, religion and philosophy, art and architecture, politics and economics, and science and technology. While this course is entitled "Foundations of China," we will take a critical perspective on narratives, both Chinese and Western, that see Chinese history as an unbroken history of a single "civilization."

**Requirements/Evaluation:** short writing assignments (approximately 750-1000 words each), quizzes, a mid-term, and a final exam

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 40

**Enrollment Preferences:** Chinese majors, History majors, Religion majors, and Anthropology majors

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 218(D2) GBST 212(D2) CHIN 214(D1) ASIA 211(D1) ANTH 212(D2) HIST 214(D2)

**Attributes:** HIST Group B Electives - Asia HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

Not offered current academic year

## REL 219 (F) Realizing Utopias

**Cross-listings:** STS 219

### Primary Cross-listing

***Our world can be better.*** We are faced with unfolding global catastrophes, such as the pandemic, anthropogenic climate change, economic crises, racialized injustice, and political polarization, and many people seem to have lost their capacity to imagine better futures. Perhaps that is why we as a society have no problem picturing the end of the world--fictional dystopias and apocalypses are abundant while (e)utopias are scarce. This a problem because, as numerous political theorists have observed, it is hard to organize meaningful change around cynicism and nihilism. But our dystopian present makes it even more important to imagine and even realize utopias. This course will help us do so. Our core collective goal will be to explore pragmatic realizations of radical hope. Complementing urgent efforts to resist or mitigate intense injustice in the present, we will aspire to articulate bold visions for emancipatory communities of the future. Rather than primarily focusing on the limitations of existing institutions, this seminar will treat these as problems to be solved rather than as reasons to accept the status quo, and we will embrace affirmative projects of designing the frameworks for better worlds. But we also don't want to blind ourselves to the challenges of being visionary. In brief, we will engage in serious explorations of the underlying principles and rationales for various emancipatory political communities while also pragmatically assessing their potential difficulties. We will spend the first part of the course reading political theory (on issues such as resource allocation, collective decision making, and social justice) alongside various artistic and political manifestos. We will spend one week reading utopian novels (including as possibilities socialist, anarchist, techno-futurist, ecotopias, Afrofuturist, queer utopias, and many more). But the majority of the course will be project-based. Students will form small teams to engage in radical thought experiments and then construct and refine their ideas of better possible societies/political communities. These teams will produce 1) policy papers to address how their utopian societies would deal with real world issues, and 2) artifacts (such as art, manifestos, pamphlets, short stories, videos, or the like) that might appear in the futures they envision, exploring both their ideals and their limits. The semester will culminate in a public exhibition of these works. Thinkers to be considered may include: Marx & Engels, José Esteban Muñoz, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Lucy Sargisson, David Schweickart, Colin Ward, Erik Olin Wright, and others.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** attendance and participation, short writing assignments, group policy papers, and artifacts (e.g., art, manifestos, pamphlets, short stories, or videos) for end of semester exhibit.

**Prerequisites:** none.

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** If overenrolled students will be asked for a statement of interest and utopian project idea.

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

STS 219(D2) REL 219(D2)

Not offered current academic year

## REL 220 (F) History of Islam and the Middle East since 1453

**Cross-listings:** HIST 206 / ARAB 206

### Secondary Cross-listing

This course offers an introduction to the major political and societal institutions that evolved under the aegis of what we might call "Islamic civilization" since the Ottoman conquest of Byzantine Constantinople in 1453. The principal geographic areas covered are the Middle East, North Africa, and to some extent the Balkans. Major topics include the rise of the Ottoman sultanate and their consolidation of rule, the Persian Safavid Empire, the rise of Western intervention and colonialism, nationalism, and state formation, and the challenges of and responses to modernization.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** attendance, participation, map exercise, 2 papers, midterm and take-home final

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Enrollment Preferences:** History and Arabic Studies majors, seniors

**Expected Class Size:** 30

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

HIST 206(D2) ARAB 206(D2) REL 220(D2)

**Attributes:** HIST Group E Electives - Middle East HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

Not offered current academic year

### REL 222 (F) The Jewish Art of Interpretation

**Cross-listings:** JWST 222

Primary Cross-listing

*Turn it and turn it, for everything is in it.* This famous rabbinic dictum offers an enigmatic yet comprehensive account of the principles that have defined the Jewish practice of interpretation for over two millennia. The imperative to keep a text, word, image, or concept in constant motion, in order to generate as many meanings and cross-meanings as possible, challenges us to transform the act of interpretation itself into a virtuosic craft or art that can engage the human imagination as diversely and powerfully as the creation of the works being interpreted. At the same time, emphasis on the dynamism between text and interpreter should dispel the notion that only expansive works have expansive meanings. If interpretation itself is an art, then even the shortest text can contain "everything" within it when it participates in that art. This course will engage students in a radical experiment in the art of interpretation. Through a deep encounter with a selection of miniature texts, ranging from ancient rabbinic proverbs and medieval fables to the modern parables and fragments of Franz Kafka, as well as folklore and jokelore from every period in Jewish history up to the present, we will develop an interpretive practice that combines analytic, critical, and creative principles in both written and oral contexts. The goal throughout is to explore interactively how the making of meaning is an integral part of the human experience.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, regular short written and oral assignments, and a final project

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Enrollment Preferences:** If the class is overenrolled, preference will be given to Jewish Studies concentrators and Religion majors.

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

JWST 222(D2) REL 222(D2)

**Attributes:** JWST Core Electives JWST Gateway Courses

Fall 2023

SEM Section: 01 TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am Jeffrey I. Israel, Edan Dekel

### REL 224 (S) U.S. Latinx Religions

**Cross-listings:** AMST 224 / LATS 224

Secondary Cross-listing

In this course, we will engage aspects of Latinx religious experiences, practices, and expressions in the United States of America. Given the plurality of Latinx communities and religious lives in the U.S.A., we can only consider select contexts that help us understand the challenges of studying and defining the "religious" and "hybridity" in Latinx contexts. We will survey certain selected religious traditions and practices--such as popular Catholic devotions to Guadalupe, crypto-Judaism, *curanderismo*, Latinx Pentecostalism, Latinx Muslims, and Santeria, as well as Latinx approaches to traditional US religious expressions of Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. We will do so by focusing on particular moments of religious expression as elucidated in specific historiographies, ethnographies, art, literature, and film.

**Class Format:** discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, discussion forum posts, a 3-4 short essay on the nature of Latinx spirituality; a 5-page essay on a religious tradition previously unfamiliar to the student, and an 8-10-page final research paper doing comparative religious study.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Enrollment Preferences:** LATS concentrators and AMST and REL majors

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 224(D2) AMST 224(D2) LATS 224(D2)

**Attributes:** AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora LATS Core Electives

Spring 2024

LEC Section: 01 TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm Efrain Agosto

### **REL 232 (S) Islam in Africa (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** AFR 232 / HIST 202 / ARAB 232 / GBST 232

#### **Primary Cross-listing**

Islam in Africa is often relegated to the peripheries in the study of Islam, a religion most associated with Arabs and the Middle East. On the flip side, Islam is also portrayed as foreign to African belief systems and institutions. The relationship between Islam and Africa, however, begins with the very advent of Islam when early Arab Muslim communities took refuge in the Abyssinian empire in East Africa. This course explores the history of Islam and Muslim societies on the African continent by focusing on the localized practices of Islam while also connecting it to Islam as a global phenomenon. The course will begin with a historical focus on the spread of Islam in Africa from East Africa and North Africa in the seventh century all the way to the spread of Islam through Sufi brotherhoods in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The course will also take an anthropological approach, exploring the diverse practices of Islam in African Muslim communities and the social and cultural impact of Islam on African societies. Among the topics the course will cover include African Muslim intellectual traditions, local healing practices, religious festivals, early modern African Muslim abolitionist movements, and the historical interactions between African and Asian Muslim communities in the Indian ocean world.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Two essays during the semester and final project.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Enrollment Preferences:** REL, HIST, ARAB, AFR, GBST majors

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

AFR 232(D2) HIST 202(D2) REL 232(D2) ARAB 232(D2) GBST 232(D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** The course will urge students to consider how scholars construct centers and peripheries through a study of Islam in Africa that is often rendered to the peripheries in the study of Islam. The course will also explore the diversity of African Muslim communities, getting students to think about the diversity of human experiences and interpretations of shared sacred texts.

**Attributes:** HIST Group A Electives - Africa

**Not offered current academic year**

### **REL 235 (S) The Garden in the Ancient World**

**Cross-listings:** ENVI 232 / COMP 235 / CLAS 235

#### **Secondary Cross-listing**

Drawing on the literature, art, and archaeology of ancient gardens and on real gardens of the present day, this course examines the very nature and experience of the garden and the act of gardening. Using a multi-disciplinary approach, we will explore the garden as a paradise; as a locus for philosophical discussion and religious encounter; as a site of labor, conquest, and resistance; and as a place for solace, inspiration, and desire. This course will be grounded in crucial readings from antiquity, such as the Hebrew Bible, Homer, Sappho, Cicero, Lucretius, Vergil, Horace, Columella, and Augustine, and in the perspectives of more modern writers, from Jane Austen and Tom Stoppard to contemporary cultural historian George McKay. Ultimately, our goal is to analyze conceptions and expressions of beauty, power, and love-in the garden. All readings are in translation.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, short written assignments, and a final project

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** Classics majors

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ENVI 232(D1) REL 235(D2) COMP 235(D1) CLAS 235(D1)

**Attributes:** ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 236 (S) Reading the Qur'an**

**Cross-listings:** COMP 213 / ARAB 236 / GBST 236

#### **Primary Cross-listing**

In the nearly 1500 years of Islamic history, the Qur'an has been a central source of spiritual insight, ethical and legal guidance, sacred stories, and theological principles. Considered the divine word of God, the Qur'an is central to devotional life. This course will explore the Qur'an as a text that is always in a state of production. We will focus significantly on close readings of the text of the Qur'an, in addition to pre-modern and modern Qur'anic exegesis. The course will begin with a historical account of the revelation and collection of the Qur'an, placing the form and content of the text in the context of 7th century Arab society and the life of the Prophet. We will then study Qur'anic commentaries to discuss how Muslims have drawn theological, legal, philosophical, and mystical meaning from the Qur'an. We will pose some of the following questions: What do the different exegetical methods tell us about the intertextual nature of the Qur'an? How have these shifting notions affected the meaning made from Qur'anic verses and passages? What role do interpretive communities play in determining what the Qur'an says? Lastly, through an exploration of the art of Qur'an recitation, calligraphy, and Qur'an manuscripts, we will explore the ways in which the Qur'an is also an object of devotion in Muslim life.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, weekly reading responses, 3- to 4-page midterm paper, and a final project with a media component and a 4- to 6-page analytical essay

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion and Arabic Studies majors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

COMP 213(D1) ARAB 236(D2) GBST 236(D2) REL 236(D2)

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 237 (F) Islam in the United States: Race, Religion, Politics (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** AAS 237 / AFR 237 / AMST 237

#### **Primary Cross-listing**

Malcolm X is one of the most iconic yet controversial figures in the black freedom struggle in the United States. He is also arguably the most prominent and influential Muslim in the history of the United States. His story and legacy powerfully illustrate the complex intersections of Muslim identity, political resistance, and national belonging. From the early period of "Black Muslim" movements represented by Malcolm X, to the current "War on Terror" era, American Muslims have faced a complex intersection of exclusions and marginalization, in relation to national belonging, race, and religion. Taking Malcolm X as our point of departure, this course examines how American Muslims have navigated these multiple layers of marginalization. We will therefore consider how the broader socio-political contexts that Muslims are a part of shape their visions of Islam, and how they contest these competing visions among themselves. In so doing, we will examine the complex relation between religion, race, and politics in the United States. Throughout the course, we will be engaging with historical and anthropological material, autobiographies, documentaries, films, historical primary-source documents, music, and social media materials. The course fosters critical thinking about diversity by challenging assumptions of who

Muslims are, what being American means, and what Islam is. It also focuses on the complex interaction of different dimensions of diversity, from religion to ideology, race, nationality, ethnicity, culture, gender, and language.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** regular reading responses, 2 midterm essays, final exam

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** Majors and concentrators in REL, AFR, and AMST

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

AAS 237(D2) AFR 237(D2) AMST 237(D2) REL 237(D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** The course fosters critical thinking about diversity by challenging assumptions of who Muslims are, what being American means, and what Islam is. It also focuses on the complex interaction of different dimensions of diversity, from religion to ideology, race, nationality, ethnicity, culture, gender, and language.

**Attributes:** AAS Non-Core Electives AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

Fall 2023

SEM Section: 01 MW 8:30 am - 9:45 am Zaid Adhami

### **REL 238 (F) Islam and Reason (DPE)**

In an essay on the "reality of Islam," the popular New Atheist writer, Sam Harris, concludes: "All civilized nations must unite in condemnation of a theology that now threatens to destabilize much of the Earth... It is time we realized that the endgame for civilization is not political correctness. It is not respect for the abject religious certainties of the mob. It is reason." These words forcefully express the common sentiment that the fanatical blind faith demanded by "mainstream Islam" poses a major threat to the so-called civilized world. Islam is thus seen as exemplifying the irrational dogmatism of religion par excellence. This course will critically examine such assumptions, by exploring how Muslim philosophers and theologians throughout the history of Islam have addressed a variety of questions, such as: Is faith compatible with reason and rationality? What is the relation between reason and scripture? What modes of perception, reasoning, and knowledge are involved in religious belief? What room is there for doubt, skepticism, and critique in Islam? We will explore these questions through an array of primary and secondary readings in Islamic theology, philosophy, mysticism, and ethics, as well as anthropological engagements with lived Islam. Through these explorations, we will also critically reflect on our own cultural assumptions about religious belief, the nature of reason and knowledge, and the politics and power-dynamics of reason and rationality.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Regular discussion posts; Midterm essay; Final essay

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors

**Expected Class Size:** 5-10

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** This course requires students to engage deeply with a very different philosophical universe than that of the modern West. This is also meant to prompt a critical engagement with our own cultural and philosophical assumptions about reason, knowledge, and religious belief. Finally, we will also reflect on the politics and power-dynamics of reason and rationality, considering how dominant modes of thinking are designated as "reason" and others are relegated to being objects of critique.

**Attributes:** PHIL Related Courses

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 239 (F) The Modern Middle East (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** HIST 207 / LEAD 207 / ARAB 207 / GBST 102 / JWST 217

Secondary Cross-listing

This survey course addresses the main economic, religious, political and cultural trends in the modern Middle East. Topics to be covered include the cultural diversity of the Middle East, relations with Great Powers, the impact of imperialism, the challenge of modernity, the creation of nation states and nationalist ideologies, the discovery of oil, radical religious groups, and war and peace. Throughout the course these significant changes will be evaluated in light of their impact on the lives of a variety of individuals in the region and especially how they have grappled differently with increasing Western political and economic domination.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** participation, online responses, quizzes, midterm, and final exam

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 40

**Enrollment Preferences:** History & Arabic majors, and Jewish studies concentrators; completion of course admission survey if overenrolled

**Expected Class Size:** 30-40

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

HIST 207(D2) LEAD 207(D2) ARAB 207(D2) GBST 102(D2) JWST 217(D2) REL 239(D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** This course introduces students to the incredible diversity of the Middle East. It will explore how people of different backgrounds and in different situations have responded in diverse ways to the problems of the day. Students will acquire the critical tools to assess a number of interpretations of the past and how to understand and appreciate the many narratives in the Middle East today that have profound political and cultural implications.

**Attributes:** GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives HIST Group E Electives - Middle East JWST Elective Courses LEAD Facets or Domains of Leadership

Fall 2023

LEC Section: 01 MW 11:00 am - 12:15 pm Magnús T. Bernhardtsson

## **REL 241 (F) History of Sexuality**

**Cross-listings:** HIST 292 / WGSS 239 / GBST 241

### **Primary Cross-listing**

Is sexuality an immutable aspect of who we are or is it socially constructed? How have people understood sex and sexuality throughout history? Why does religion have any say in the sexual lives of individuals and society? What are sexual transgressions and why are they punished? Is sex a commodity that can be exchanged for money? Is sex political? This course will explore these questions through a historical approach, focusing in particular on the shifting understanding of sex and sexuality across historical time and different geographical regions. In investigating the category of sexuality, this course will push us to consider three key questions: 1) Is sexuality a useful category for historical analysis, 2) how have our assumptions regarding sexuality and sexual ethics taken shape and changed over time and 3) how do social, cultural, political, and economic conditions affect changing meanings of sexuality. Historical studies will be read in conjunction with different theoretical frameworks about sexuality. Reading historical accounts of sexuality alongside theoretical pieces will allow us to consider how historians construct an argument and the influence of theoretical frameworks in shaping scholarship. Some of the theorists we will read in the course include: Michel Foucault, David Halperin, Afsaneh Najmabadi, Valerie Traub, and Carla Freccero.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** reading responses, two essays, and final research paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion, History, and Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies majors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

HIST 292(D2) WGSS 239(D2) REL 241(D2) GBST 241(D2)

**Attributes:** HIST Group G Electives - Global History

Not offered current academic year

**REL 242 (S) Women, Gender, and Sexuality in Islam (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** ARAB 242 / WGSS 242

**Primary Cross-listing**

The figure of the Muslim woman is an object of intense scrutiny in Western society. Claims that Muslim women are oppressed and the incompatibility of Islam and feminism abound. This course will consider women and gender roles in the Islamic tradition and how Muslim women have interpreted and negotiated these discourses. We will explore questions of masculinity, femininity, and sexuality across various historical periods as well as through contemporary Muslim feminist scholarship and literature (including film and novels). We will begin with insights into the politics of representing Muslim women, exploring how Muslim women are depicted in popular culture and media and ask the crucial question: do Muslim women need saving? We will then explore: how Muslim women have claimed religious authority through scriptural interpretation; how they have negotiated their position in Islamic law both historically and in contemporary Muslim societies; and the lives of pious women in Sufism--the mystical tradition of Islam. We will conclude with Muslim feminist scholarship and recent works on Islamic masculinities. Throughout the course, emphasis will be placed on the diversity of interpretations in Islam around women, gender, and sexuality and on Muslim women's own articulations about their religious identity and experiences. Some of the topics covered in this course include: marriage and divorce, slavery, modesty and veiling, and homosexuality.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly discussion post, midterm essay, and final paper (6-8 pages)

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies and Arabic majors

**Expected Class Size:** 14

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ARAB 242(D2) WGSS 242(D2) REL 242(D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** This course explores the relationship between gender, authority, and civilizational discourse. To that end, the course will explore: 1) how assumptions about gender shaped the legal and Quranic exegetical tradition and Muslim feminist critiques. 2) The construction of the oppressed Muslim woman in justifying military invasion and nationalistic rhetoric. This course will introduce students to critical tools in decolonial feminism and the relationship between gender and power.

Not offered current academic year

**REL 243 (F) Islamic Law: Past and Present**

**Cross-listings:** WGSS 243 / ARAB 243 / HIST 302

**Primary Cross-listing**

From fear of the Shari'a to its implementation in so called "Islamic countries," Islamic law is perhaps best associated with draconian punishments and the oppression of women. Islamic law is ever present in our public discourse today and yet little is known about it. This course is designed to give students a foundation in the substantive teachings of Islamic law. Islamic law stretches back over 1400 years and is grounded in the Quran, the life example of the Prophet Muhammad, and juridical discourse. Teetering between legal and ethical discourse, the Shari'a moves between what we normally consider law as well as ethics and etiquette. The course will explore four key aspects of the law: its historical development, its ethical and legal content, the law in practice, and the transformation of Islamic law through colonialism and into the contemporary. Specific areas we will cover include: ritual piety, family and personal status law, criminal law, and dietary rules.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly responses, midterm essay, final essay

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** majors

**Expected Class Size:** 17

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

WGSS 243(D2) ARAB 243(D2) HIST 302(D2) REL 243(D2)

**Attributes:** HIST Group B Electives - Asia HIST Group E Electives - Middle East HIST Group P Electives - Premodern JLST Interdepartmental Electives

Fall 2023

SEM Section: 01 Cancelled

### **REL 244 (F) Mind and Persons in Indian Thought**

**Cross-listings:** PHIL 245 / ASIA 244

#### **Primary Cross-listing**

In this course, we follow the Indian philosophical conversation concerning the self and the nature of consciousness, particularly as they are found in its various Yogic traditions. We start with some of the Hindu views about the self and the mind and consider their ethical implications. We then consider a range of Buddhist critiques of these views, focusing more particularly on the Madhyamaka, which radicalizes the critique of the self into a global anti-realist and skeptical stance. We also examine the Yogacara school, which offers a process view of reality focusing on the analysis of experience. We conclude by considering some of the later Hindu holistic views of the self as responses to the Buddhist critique. In this way we come to realize that far from being the irrational foil of "the West," Indian tradition is a rich resource for thinking through some of the central questions that have challenged philosophers in both traditions.

**Class Format:** discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** full attendance and participation, three short essays (6 pages each)

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Enrollment Preferences:** selection based on the basis of relevant background

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

PHIL 245(D2) ASIA 244(D2) REL 244(D2)

**Attributes:** GBST South + Southeast Asia Studies Electives

Fall 2023

LEC Section: 01 M 7:00 pm - 9:40 pm Georges B. Dreyfus

### **REL 247 (S) Anti-Muslim Racism: A Global Perspective (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** GBST 243 / PSCI 244

#### **Secondary Cross-listing**

The racialization of Islam and Muslims has been constitutive to how they have been imagined in Europe and elsewhere. This course looks at how difference works and has worked, how identities and power relationships have been grounded in lived experience, and how one might both critically and productively approach questions of difference, power, and equity. It goes back to the founding moments of an imagined white (at the beginning Christian) Europe and how the racialization of Muslim and Jewish bodies was central to this project, and how anti-Muslim racism continues to be relevant in our world today. The course will not only show how Muslims were constructed as subjects in history, politics and society from the very beginning of the making of Europe and the Americas to the end of the Cold War to the post-9/11 era. Rather, it also looks at how Muslims live through Islamophobia. It looks at processes of racialization of Muslims within the Muslim community and between Muslim communities, while also considering which agencies Muslims take to determine their own future. The course draws from anthropology, gender studies, history, political science, religious studies, postcolonial studies, decolonial studies, and sociology.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Active class participation, two response papers, and a comprehensive, open-book and open-note final exam.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Enrollment Preferences:** Global Studies concentrators and Religion majors

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Unit Notes:** Also qualifies for the GBST Urbanizing World track

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

GBST 243(D2) PSCI 244(D2) REL 247(D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** The course critically examines difference, power, and equity. Thematically, it looks at the racialization of Islam and the intersection of race, religion, class and gender in the construction of the 'Muslim problem' from a historical as well as a global contemporary perspective. It aims to promote a self-conscious and critical engagement with the practice and experience of difference, especially as it relates to the dynamics of power in structuring that experience.

**Attributes:** GBST Borders, Exiles + Diaspora Studies Electives

Not offered current academic year

**REL 249 (S) Anti-Semitism (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** JWST 249

Primary Cross-listing

This course will investigate intellectual traditions, political movements, and cultural objects that portray Jews, Jewishness, or Judaism as essentially pernicious. We will analyze materials from a variety of times and places, including the ancient world, the medieval period, and the present day. We will assess the impact of anti-Semitism on the lives of Jews and non-Jews. But we will also read theoretical approaches to the study of anti-Semitism that raise key questions for our investigation. Where does the term "anti-Semitism" come from and how exactly should it be defined? Is anti-Semitism a continuous phenomenon that connects every claim of Jewish perniciousness, wherever it is alleged, for over two thousand years of human history? Or should every context be treated as fundamentally distinct, so that the claim of Jewish perniciousness is presumed to have a distinct meaning, origin, and purpose in each case? What motivates charges of Jewish perniciousness? What are the particular threats typically alleged to be posed by Jews, Jewishness, and Judaism? How do constructions of Jewish perniciousness fit with constructions of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, class, sexuality, and nationality in different times and places?

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Three 5-7 page papers, class participation

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Jewish Studies concentrators, Religion majors, and students who have taken JWST 203

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 249(D2) JWST 249(D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** This course will introduce students to discursive, institutional, and social structures that have organized the stigmatization, domination, and persecution of Jews in various geographic locations for over two thousand years. An understanding of these structures is crucial to understanding contemporary dynamics of difference and power. Students will also learn how anti-Semitism intersects with constructions of race, gender, class, religion, ethnicity, and nation.

**Attributes:** JWST Core Electives

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 Cancelled

## REL 250 (F) Scholars, Saints and Immortals: Virtue Ethics in East Asia

**Cross-listings:** ASIA 250

### Primary Cross-listing

In East Asian cultures, as in the United States, popular conceptions of morality typically take their shape, not from explicit rules, but from *moral paragons*--stylized figures that are said to embody a distinctive cluster of virtues. For example, American Christians invoke not only Jesus, but also a pantheon of "secular saints" as diverse as Martin Luther King Jr. and General Patton, George Washington and Cesar Chavez. This course will explore the cultural functions of moral paragons and philosophies of virtue in East Asia by introducing students to examples from Chinese and Japanese history, ranging from Confucian articulations of the ideal scholar-bureaucrat to Buddhist conceptions of the Bodhisattva to Taoist immortals. It will also address the history of ethical thought in East Asia, focusing particular attention on conceptions of "Virtue Ethics." This approach has come to be seen by some contemporary analytic philosophers as a way out of the impasse produced by ethical relativism and the loss of theological rationales for moral action. Readings will include Euro-American philosophers such as Nietzsche and MacIntyre as well as primary texts in translation by Chuang-tzu, Confucius, Shantideva and others. The fall 2021 iteration of the course will have a special focus with a few additional readings on idealized communities and political "utopias."

**Class Format:** discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active participation, short writing assignments, midterm, and a self-scheduled final exam

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion and Asian Studies majors

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ASIA 250(D2) REL 250(D2)

**Attributes:** GBST East Asian Studies Electives PHIL Related Courses

Not offered current academic year

## REL 254 (F) The Theory and Practice of Meditation in the Modern World

This course invites students to examine theoretically and experientially meditation. Throughout the course, we examine meditations belonging to various Buddhist traditions through our own practice. We study some of the manuals where these meditations are taught and connect these practices to some of the more important ideas of the tradition. In studying and practicing meditation, we follow a gradual approach, starting from the most basic practices to more advanced ones. We also connect the practices and ideas we consider with modern scientific approaches, examining practices such as mindfulness therapy and the practice of positive emotions from a psychological perspective. In the process, we re-contextualize Buddhist ideas by connecting them with modern approaches, particularly those inspired by biology, psychology and ecology. Throughout the course, students will keep a daily practice of meditation and record their experiences in a journal so as to be able to come to an informed understanding combining a theoretical grasp of the issues raised by meditation and their own personal appreciation.

**Class Format:** mixture of lecture, discussion, and practice of meditation

**Requirements/Evaluation:** full attendance and participation, regular practice of meditation, two middle-length essays, and a meditation journal

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors, students who have taken REL 288

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Fall 2023

LEC Section: 01 MWF 8:30 am - 9:45 am Georges B. Dreyfus

## **REL 255 (F) Buddhism: Ideas and Practices**

**Cross-listings:** ANTH 255 / ASIA 255

### **Primary Cross-listing**

This course introduces students to Buddhism by examining its ideas and practices as they have taken place in actual social contexts rather than as disembodied textual objects. After examining the main ideas and narratives of the tradition, we turn our attention to Thailand where we examine how these ideas and narratives have shaped a whole range of practices, from meditation to shamanistic rituals. We then consider the transformations that Buddhism is undergoing in contemporary society, examining the rise of meditation movement, the changing role of monks and laity, the resurgence of the nun order, the rise of Buddhist social activism and the development of new Buddhist social philosophies. We ask questions such as: How can Buddhism adapt to a modern global consumerist society? What are the transformations involved in this process and the role that Buddhism can play in such a global society? Should Buddhists take advantage of the opportunities of this new global culture or should they adopt a critical stance toward its consumerist values?

**Class Format:** discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** full attendance and active participation; two essays

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ANTH 255(D2) REL 255(D2) ASIA 255(D2)

**Attributes:** GBST South + Southeast Asia Studies Electives PHIL Related Courses

**Not offered current academic year**

## **REL 258 (F) Buddhism, Social Change, & Reproductive Justice in the Anthropocene (DPE) (WS)**

**Cross-listings:** ASIA 258 / WGSS 225 / ANTH 258

### **Secondary Cross-listing**

This course considers how three women profoundly shaped the Buddha's life and legacy in terms of social change & reproductive justice. Our central characters are Maya--the Buddha's mother, who died shortly after delivering him; Pajapati--the Buddha's stepmother & aunt who raised him; and Yasodhara--his wife, whom he abandoned when he left home to seek enlightenment. We explore the classical Buddhist discourses and modern biographies to explore how these three women impacted what the Buddha taught and practiced in terms of social and gender justice. These women helped shape the Buddha's radical decision to found the first renunciate order for women in Asian history and helped shape Buddhist attitudes towards female empowerment, bodily autonomy, and reproductive justice for that past 2500 years. Our historical genealogy will explore how Buddhism continues to disrupt modern hierarchies of sex, gender, caste, & class while claiming reproductive and social justice. Along the way we consider: How did these three women reject existing social hierarchies in the Buddha's day and with what impacts for modern Buddhist practices and institutions? How do the social transformations of the Buddha's day still impact modern struggles for gender justice & reproductive justice in the Anthropocene?

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Attendance, writing weekly essays or written feedback. There are no grades first half of the semester but weekly feedback on writing.

**Prerequisites:** none, but a course in ANTH or REL is preferred

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** ANTH, REL, WGSS majors and ASIA concentrators

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ASIA 258(D2) WGSS 225(D2) REL 258(D2) ANTH 258(D2)

**Writing Skills Notes:** We write every week--either 1500 word lead essays, or written feedback (and oral responses) to the lead essay and weekly text. We have a mid semester 'writing chat' with the instructor where we discuss strengths and weakness of individual student writing.

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** We explore the three women who left a lasting legacy on the Buddha's teachings and practices in terms of gender egalitarianism, social justice, and reproductive justice. Our historical genealogy explores how Buddhism continues to disrupt modern hierarchies of sex, gender, caste, & class while claiming reproductive and social justice.

Fall 2023

TUT Section: T1 TBA Kim Gutschow

## **REL 262 (S) Time and Blackness**

**Cross-listings:** AFR 208 / AMST 208

### **Secondary Cross-listing**

The concept of time has been one of the most examined, yet least explicitly theorized, concepts in Africana Studies. While the field is saturated with historical studies and literary analyses that take up issues of cultural memory--which involves thinking about time--time itself has rarely the subject of sustained inquiry. This may be due to its abstractness as an idea, and the level of analysis its conceptualization demands, or because time in the Black experience cannot be understood outside of the meaning of race, which itself is not completely tangible. In this tutorial, "Time and Blackness," we will explore how Black writers across a number of genres--spiritual autobiography, fiction, memoir, literary criticism, and cultural theory--understand time, and create paradigms of time to organize their work. The following questions will structure our investigation: What are the constituent elements of time in Black writings? How does race shape the ways Black writers conceive the experience of time? And, finally, to what can we attribute the recent surge in explicit, theoretical examinations of "time and blackness"?

**Requirements/Evaluation:** assignments will include six 2-page response papers; two 5-page writing assignments; and a final, 10-page review essay on how time is understood in a genre of writing

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** concentrators in Africana Studies, majors in Religious Studies, and majors in American Studies

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 262(D2) AFR 208(D2) AMST 208(D2)

**Attributes:** AFR Core Electives AMST Arts in Context Electives AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

**Not offered current academic year**

## **REL 263 (S) Giving God a Backbeat: Rap Music, Religion & Spirituality**

**Cross-listings:** AFR 221

### **Secondary Cross-listing**

On the surface, religion and rap music may seem as if they have little in common. Yet, like other Black musical traditions such as spirituals and the blues, rap is rooted in African American religious traditions. In this course, we will explore the ways in which rap music intersects with the sacred and secular worlds. Through an examination of black religious traditions, lyrics, music videos, and digital media, we will unearth what Anthony Pinn calls the "spiritual and religious sensibilities" of rap music. Grounded in culture-centered criticism, we will investigate the rhetoric of rap and religion through the theoretical ideas of Black Liberation Theology and hip-hop feminism.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** students will be evaluated on their class participation, Twitter threads, response papers, quizzes, and a final class group project

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Enrollment Preferences:** First year, sophomore, and juniors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

AFR 221(D2) REL 263(D2)

**Attributes:** AFR Core Electives AFR Culture, Performance, and Popular Technologies AMST Arts in Context Electives

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am VaNatta S. Ford

**REL 264 (F) The Bible and Slavery (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** AFR 264

**Primary Cross-listing**

This course will examine issues related to the intersection of "slavery" and "Bible." We will consider topics as varied as the story of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage, the laws surrounding slavery in the Torah, the continuation of slavery into early Christianity, and the arguments surrounding slavery in the United States in the antebellum period. Our conversation will tackle a series of questions including the following ones: What role did these themes play in later Jewish communities? What role did the enslaved play in the development of the Christ-following communities? What were the key passages (and, arguments) supporting the racialized version of U.S. slavery? What are the legacies of the history of slavery that continue to haunt us?

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, short (2-3 page) writing assignments, one (mid-term) examination, and a final 8-10 page paper

**Prerequisites:** none, although a previous course on religion is recommended

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors or at least one course in Religion

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 264(D2) AFR 264(D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** This course will address discursive and institutional bases of oppression that remain potent in the United States and beyond. An understanding of slavery as a thematic element in Biblical texts (and their ongoing reception) is indispensable to the critical analysis of racial injustice and human freedom.

**Not offered current academic year**

**REL 268 (S) Where are all the Jews? (DPE) (WS)**

**Cross-listings:** ARAB 363 / JWST 268 / COMP 363

**Secondary Cross-listing**

Until four decades ago, many Maghrebi and Middle Eastern cities and villages teemed with Jewish populations. However, the creation of the Alliance Israelite Universelle's schools (1830s), the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the decolonization process in the Maghreb and the Middle East, and the Arab defeat in the Six-Day War accelerated the departure of Arab and Berber Jews from their homelands to other destinations, including France, Israel, Canada, the United States, and different Latin American countries. Arab and Berber Jews' departure from their ancestral lands left a socioeconomic and cultural void that Maghrebi and Middle Eastern cultural production has finally started to address, albeit shyly. The course will help students understand the depth of Jewish life in the Maghreb and the Middle East, and interrogate the local and global factors that led to their disappearance from both social and cultural memories for a long time. Reading fiction, autobiographies, ethnographies, historiographical works, and anthropological texts alongside documentaries films, the students will understand how literature and film have become a locus in which amnesia about Arab/Berber Jews is actively contested by recreating a bygone world. Resisting both conflict and nostalgia as the primary determinants of Jewish-Muslim relations, the course will help students think about multiple ways in which Jews and Muslims formed communities of citizens despite their differences and disagreements.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** 400-word weekly, focused responses on Glow; a book review (600 words); two five-page papers as mid-terms; one ten-page final paper; one presentation.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 14

**Enrollment Preferences:** students interested in critical and comparative literary, religious or historical studies.

**Expected Class Size:** 14

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ARAB 363(D1) JWST 268(D2) REL 268(D2) COMP 363(D1)

**Writing Skills Notes:** Students are required to present an outline of their papers before submitting a draft paper. The professor will give feedback on each written work to improve students' writing skills. Students are required to incorporate the feedback to improve their drafts before they become final. Students will receive detailed and consistent feedback about their writing. Students will receive from the instructor timely comments on their writing skills, with suggestions for improvement.

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** Students in this course will understand the historical process that lead to the disappearance of Arab/Berber Jews. Students also will work out alternative ways to grasp Jewish-Muslim relations beyond nostalgia and conflict. Finally, students enrolled in the course will grapple with and try to disentangle the complexity of Jewish-Muslim citizenship in both pre-colonial and postcolonial contexts.

**Attributes:** JWST Core Electives

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Brahim El Guabli

**REL 269 (F) Mindfulness Examined: Meditation, Emotion, and Affective Neuroscience** (DPE) (WS)

**Cross-listings:** ASIA 269 / STS 269 / ANTH 269

**Primary Cross-listing**

This course asks students to practice and study mindfulness while observing their own minds, emotions, and behavior for an entire semester. We examine the historic roots and current applications of mindfulness, both as a Buddhist meditation practice as well as a secular tool to improve our awareness of awareness. Throughout, we are interested in the nexus of mind, brain, and emotions and the ways that mindfulness has been studied within contemplative and affective neuroscience, integrative neurobiology, and evolutionary psychology. How and why has the research on mindfulness and other meditative practices exploded since 2000? How has this research helped us understand and explain how our minds as well as brains shape everyday emotions and behaviors? We examine the ways evolutionary psychologists, clinical psychiatrists, neuroscientists, clinicians, and medical anthropologists have studied and applied mindfulness to better understand human emotions. We consider the applications of mindfulness for clinicians, therapists, and educators--all of whom attend to how emotions impact interpersonal relationships. We will train in a variety of meditation practices all semester, while learning to better appreciate our own minds, emotions, and relationships.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly tutorial papers and discussion

**Prerequisites:** A prior class or some experience with meditation is recommended

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** ANTH, SOC, REL, ASST majors; PHLH, STS concentrators; seniors and juniors

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ASIA 269(D2) STS 269(D2) REL 269(D2) ANTH 269(D2)

**Writing Skills Notes:** This class will involve weekly tutorial essays or oral responses, intensive written feedback on every essay, and a mid-semester 'writing chat' with the instructor.

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** This class fulfills the Difference, Power, and Equity requirement because it will explore the ways that mindfulness can address the growing epidemic of anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues we find in the US today. We study mindfulness from an intersectional perspective and relate its benefits to intersecting inequities and intergenerational trauma in the US today.

**Attributes:** GBST South + Southeast Asia Studies Electives PHLH Social Determinants of Health

Fall 2023

TUT Section: T1 TBA Kim Gutschow

**REL 270 (S) Reading Jesus, Writing Gospels: Christian Origins in Context (WS)**

**Cross-listings:** COMP 263 / CLAS 270

**Primary Cross-listing**

What were the religious and cultural landscapes in which Christianity emerged? How did inhabitants of the ancient Mediterranean world speak about the concept and significance of religion? How have scholars of early Christianity answered these questions? What are the implications of their reconstructions of early Christian history? The course is divided into four parts. The first part establishes the courses's interpretive approach. The second part of this course explores aspects of the formation of Christianity from its origins as a Jewish movement until its legalization. The third part of the course focuses on the earliest literature produced to memorialize Jesus. The final part of the course emphasizes modern interpretations of Jesus and the movement of which he was a part; here we shall be examining how scholars make use of ancient materials to frame their arguments and the modern contexts and legacies of making meaning out of biblical and other ancient materials.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** three 3-page papers (with revisions), one 5- to 7-page paper (that builds on one of the earlier 3 page papers), and a final paper (7-10 pages, that draws on some of the earlier writing in addition to new writing)

**Prerequisites:** none; open to all

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Enrollment Preferences:** sophomores, especially potential majors in Religion, Classics, and Comparative Literature

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 270(D2) COMP 263(D1) CLAS 270(D1)

**Writing Skills Notes:** Students will write a series of short essays, with required revisions, to develop their skills in close reading of ancient texts and interpretive analysis of modern scholarship about Christian origins. In each successive section of the course, writing from the prior unit will inform the subsequent papers.

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Denise K. Buell

**REL 272 (F) Art of the Noble Path: Buddhist Material Culture Across Asia**

**Cross-listings:** ARTH 272 / ASIA 272

**Secondary Cross-listing**

Buddhism has spread throughout Asia and beyond since its emergence in India in the 5th century BCE, providing a shared philosophical and cosmological framework for diverse cultures. Artistic expression, regional politics and cultural landscapes have been shaped by its remarkable influence. With patrons ranging from powerful monarchs and monks to merchants and tradespeople, Buddhist art has historically reflected the religion's social inclusivity. This course will survey the architecture, painting and material culture of Buddhism in Asia, tracing its influence in diverse media, from rock-cut architecture to Zen painting. A close reading of primary texts, such as architectural inscriptions in India, manuscripts from Tibet, and travelogues of Chinese pilgrims, will provide greater context for the artworks.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** 3 ten-minute quizzes, weekly Glow responses, a midterm, and a final exam

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Art History majors, Asian Studies majors, Religious Studies majors, Art Studio majors

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 272(D2) ARTH 272(D1) ASIA 272(D1)

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 274 (F) Ritual, Power and Transgression**

**Cross-listings:** ANTH 299

Secondary Cross-listing

The focus of this course is on the role of ritual in harnessing political power. In the first part of the semester, we examine some of the ways in which different cultures manufacture social order and political power through categories of inclusion and exclusion, clean and dirty, proper and improper, and licit and illicit. We will be particularly attuned to the ways in which these categories are performed through and maintained by rituals and how bodies are deployed in ritual spaces as instruments of persuasion and control. We will also look in depth at a variety of ritual forms, including scapegoating and sacrifice, and how they serve as engines of political control and protest, and we will examine the uses of dead bodies and memorials as vehicles for gaining and maintaining political power and the destruction and desecration of bodies and memorials as a form of political protest and dissent. Throughout the semester, we will be relating theoretical texts and historical cases to current political struggles in this country and abroad.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, biweekly responses to instructor prompts, two short (500 words) response papers, and one 12-page (2400 words) research paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** ANSO and REL majors, open to first-years

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ANTH 299(D2) REL 274(D2)

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 275 (F) Martyrdom Then and Now: Christianity, Violence, and Identity**

This course explores the complex legacy of Christian traditions of martyrdom. The idea of suffering or death as a subversive "witness" was not a uniquely Christian phenomenon in the Mediterranean cultures of late antiquity in which Christianity emerged, as texts such as Socrates' Apology or the Jewish 4 Maccabees demonstrate. In what senses might martyrdom nonetheless be considered a distinctly Christian invention? What is the particular political context within which ideals and practices of martyrdom emerge and flourish? To what or whom are martyrs said to give witness? What is the distinctive relationship of martyrdom to identity? Finally, is the fateful linking of truth, faithfulness, and creativity with violence, testing, and suffering a holy or an unholy heritage for Christians and others who are called to give witness in current contexts? While most of the course will address these questions through close readings of texts deriving from the formative period of martyrdom's history, we shall also keep contemporary contexts in our sights. The last segment of the course will turn to consider the role of martyrdom in resistance to violence against BIPOC and LGBTQIA people, with special focus on the critique of martyrdom generated within the Black Lives Matter movement, as it also potentially applies more broadly.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** The requirements for this course include participation in discussion (10%), weekly reflection papers (ca. 300 words each) (20%), three essays (ca. 1500 each) (20% each, or 60% total), one oral report (5%), and one art report posted online (5%).

**Prerequisites:** None

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Fall 2023

SEM Section: 01 TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm Virginia Burrus

**REL 276 (S) Gnosis, Gnostics, Gnosticism (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** COMP 258

**Primary Cross-listing**

Reality is not what it seems. Salvation by knowledge, arch-heresy, an eternal source of mystical insights and experiences, secret esoteric teachings available only to a few. All these and more have been claims made about gnosis, Gnostics, and Gnosticism. This course will introduce you to the key ancient texts and ideas associated with Gnostics in modern forms of esotericism and spiritualities. We shall explore how claims about gnosis offer modes of critiquing and seeking to transform unjust social and political systems.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly GLOW posts, 1 textual analysis paper, 1 historiographical analysis paper, and a final paper that entails a revision and expansion of earlier writing for the course.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** students with prior coursework in biblical or other ancient literature or history

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

COMP 258(D1) REL 276(D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** This course situates "gnosis" as a practical epistemological orientation used both to disrupt and challenge power arrangements deemed unjust and to empower those who are marginalized within dominant power structures. At the same time, the course interrogates "gnostic" epistemological claims as capable of being used to reinstall hierarchical power structures. Attention to power and equity and how difference is produced is at the center of the course.

Not offered current academic year

**REL 279 (S) Islam on the Indian Ocean**

**Cross-listings:** GBST 279 / ARAB 279 / ASIA 279

**Primary Cross-listing**

While colonial and Eurocentric geographies speak in terms of continental separation, historically the continents of Africa and Asia have been connected to one another through a dual link: Islam and the Indian Ocean. Indian Ocean trade and travel have historically connected East Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, South Asia, and South East Asia, shaping the lives of people and communities who lived not only along the coasts but also inland. This course focuses on these transregional connections, looking at the Indian ocean as a connective space that binds people and regions together rather than separating them. The course will also examine the role of Islam as a religious, economic, social and political force that brought together Muslim communities throughout the regions along the Indian ocean. In exploring these connections, the course will cover a broad historical period, from the 7th century with the rise of Islam to European colonialism and the emergence of a global economy in the nineteenth century.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly responses, midterm essay, final paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** majors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

GBST 279(D2) ARAB 279(D2) REL 279(D2) ASIA 279(D2)

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01    Cancelled

### **REL 281 (S) Religion and Science**

**Cross-listings:** STS 281

**Primary Cross-listing**

In the last few years the deniers of religion such as Dennett and Dawkins have forcefully argued that recent scientific developments show the degree to which religion is irrelevant to a modern understanding of what it means to be human. Atran and Boyer have made a similar case, arguing that recent progresses in our understanding of human cognition demonstrate that religion is a purely natural phenomenon that has little if any value for human development. Theologians such as Haught and Polkinghorne have rejected these views, arguing that a proper understanding of scientific developments such as evolution and quantum mechanics suggests religiously relevant views of the universe and our place therein. This course considers these competing perspectives while offering critical reflections on the views and categories involved in these controversies. We also examine the works of reflective naturalists such as Bellah and Herrstein, who argue that far from showing the irrelevance of religious ideas and practices, the new mind and life sciences suggest a much more nuanced view according to which religion is both grounded in the natural world and central to the development of human culture. Hence, it cannot be easily discounted as irrelevant to a scientifically informed understanding of what it means to be human.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** tutorial format. one paper every two weeks

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** preference for religion majors or future religion majors

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

STS 281(D2) REL 281(D2)

**Not offered current academic year**

### **REL 283 (F) Religion and American Capitalism**

**Cross-listings:** HIST 383

**Primary Cross-listing**

Was Jesus a revolutionary socialist or a savvy salesman? Does capitalism bring prosperity to the virtuous or lead us to worship Mammon? Shall the meek inherit the earth or should the hand of the diligent rule? Is it holy to be poor or is prosperity our moral duty? These questions have long preoccupied religious believers, and their changing answers have transformed the history of American capitalism. This course invites students to study that history, from the early 19th century to the present. It will cover such topics as: utopian communes; the political economy of slavery; working-class religion and labor organizing; Christian and Jewish socialism; big business and the Prosperity Gospel; 'New Age' spirituality and the counterculture; liberation theology and racial capitalism; and conservative Christianity in the age of Wal-Mart and Chick-Fil-A.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Participation in group discussion; five response papers (300-400 words); two essays (4-6 pp); final research paper (8-10 pp).

**Prerequisites:** None; open to all students.

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion and History majors.

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

HIST 383(D2) REL 283(D2)

**Attributes:** HIST Group F Electives - U.S. + Canada

Not offered current academic year

**REL 284 (S) From the Battlefield to the Hermit's Cell: Art and Experience in Norman Europe (WS)**

**Cross-listings:** WGSS 284 / ARTH 218

**Secondary Cross-listing**

This tutorial provides students with the chance to investigate in-depth three of the most astonishing works of art created during the entire Middle Ages: the Bayeux Tapestry (c.1077-1082), the Cappella Palatina (c.1130s-1166), and the Psalter of Christina of Markyate (1120s-1160s). Created within a hundred years of each other all within territories controlled by the Normans--a warrior dynasty that settled in northern France in the 10th century and then expanded north into England and south into Italy in the 11th and 12th centuries--each of these works is unprecedentedly ambitious in scale, dazzling in its material properties, and survives in its original wholeness, a rarity in the medieval world. Despite these similarities, however, each work is very different from the other two and so sheds light on very different aspects of Norman experience, across Europe. The Bayeux Tapestry, likely made by female embroiderers for a baronial hall, is a giant textile (over 70 meters long) that in gruesome and fascinating detail tells the story of the Norman invasion of England by William the Conqueror in 1066. The Cappella Palatina in Palermo, in turn, commissioned by King Roger II, is a royal chapel covered in sumptuous mosaics that reveals through its decoration and ritual the dynamic interaction of Islamic, Byzantine, and Latin Christian traditions in the multicultural Norman kingdom of Sicily in the 12th century. And the Psalter of Christina of Markyate, a large prayerbook made for the use of a female recluse in southern England, contains 40 full-page paintings and 215 decorated initials, a vast and inventive program of imagery that through its creative profundity helped reshape private devotional art and culture for centuries to come. Through their variety, then, these three objects--an embroidery, a building, and a book--give students insight into the rich array of concerns and aspirations, from the political to the spiritual and from the public to the private, that gave substance and meaning to 11th- and 12th-century European life, for women as well as men. What is more, these three remarkable works of art have been the focus of much interesting scholarship in recent years, so an exploration of some of that literature provides a compelling introduction to the discipline of art history itself, past and present.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Participation in discussion; five 5-7-page tutorial papers; five 1-2-page response papers.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** First years and sophomores, but open to all.

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

WGSS 284(D2) ARTH 218(D1) REL 284(D2)

**Writing Skills Notes:** In this tutorial, students will develop skills of critical reading and focus on how to craft clear and persuasive arguments of their own. To help them achieve these goals, they will receive timely comments on their written work, especially the five 5-7-page papers they will submit, with suggestions for improvement.

**Attributes:** ARTH pre-1800

Not offered current academic year

**REL 285 (S) Haunted: Ghosts in the Study of Religion**

Haunting offers a powerful way to speak about forces that affect us profoundly while remaining invisible or elusive. "What is it that holds sway over us like an unconditional prescription? The distance between us and that which commands our moves-or their opposite, our immobility-approaches us: it is a distance that closes in on you at times, it announces a proximity closer than any intimacy or familiarity you have ever known" (Avital Ronell, Dictations: On Haunted Writing [1986] xvi-xvii). The figure of the ghost has been developed by those seeking to grapple with the ongoing effects of modern slavery, colonialism, state-sponsored terrorism, the holocaust, and personal trauma and loss. Building upon the insights about memory, history, and identity that haunting has been used to address, this course will challenge you to explore the study of religion by way of its "seething absences." We shall ask how the study of religion has endeavored to address loss, trauma, and its persistent effects, what "holds sway" over various approaches to the study of religion, as well as how "religion" constitutes its own ghostly presence, haunting other domains.

**Class Format:** tutorial; meeting in pairs, each student will either write and present a paper or respond to their partner's paper

**Requirements/Evaluation:** two 1-page papers (written and presented), five 5-page papers, and five oral critiques (based on written notes) of their partner's paper; students will revise two papers

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Spring 2024

TUT Section: T1 TBA Denise K. Buell

### **REL 286 (F) The Bible and Migration: Latinx Perspectives**

**Cross-listings:** LATS 285

#### **Primary Cross-listing**

This course seeks to understand migration in the current historical moment, around the globe but especially on the US border. The lenses through which we will explore migration include Religion, with special focus on the Christian Bible. We will explore instances of and reflections on migration in the Bible, as well as various interpretations of the Bible emerging today in debates over migration. The course will approach US migration from the perspective of Latinx communities in the US - historically, culturally, politically, and religiously. Readings will include: The Bible, monographs and essays on the Bible and Migration, especially from the perspectives of Latinx authors and thinkers.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Participation in class discussions; two to three short essays (3-5 pages each) analyzing selected readings; a longer final research paper (7-10 pages) on an aspect of Bible and Migration of interest to the student defined in consultation with the professor.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors and Latinx Studies concentrators, and those interested in these areas of study

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 286(D2) LATS 285(D2)

**Attributes:** LATS Core Electives

**Not offered current academic year**

### **REL 288 (F) Embodiment and Consciousness: A Cross-Cultural Exploration**

**Cross-listings:** PHIL 288

#### **Primary Cross-listing**

This course examines some of the central questions raised by the study of the consciousness: the place of intentionality, the role of emotions, the relation with the body, the nature of subjectivity, the scope of reflexivity, the nature of perceptual presence, etc. In confronting these difficult questions, we do not proceed purely theoretically but consider the contributions of various observation-based traditions, from Buddhist psychology and meditative practices to phenomenology to neurosciences. We begin by examining some of the central concepts of Buddhist psychology, its treatment of the mind as a selfless stream of consciousness, its examination of the variety of mental factors and its accounts of the relation between cognition and affects. We also introduce the practice of meditation as a way to observe the mind and raise questions concerning the place of its study in the mind-sciences. We pursue this reflection by examining the views of James, Husserl, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, particularly as they concern the methods for the study of the mind and the relation between consciousness, reflexivity and the body. In this way, we develop a rich array of analytical tools and observational practices to further our understanding of the mind. But we also question the value of these tools based on first person approaches by relating them to the third person studies of the mind. In this way, we come to appreciate the importance of considering the biology on which mental processes are based and the light that this approach throws on the nature of consciousness. We conclude by considering the relation between first and third person studies of the mind, focusing on the concept of the embodied mind as a fruitful bridge between these different traditions.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** regular practice of meditation, a class presentation, a short essay (6-pages); a long final research paper (15 pages)

**Prerequisites:** any introduction to philosophy and at least two upper level courses in PHIL, at least one of which meets the Contemporary Metaphysics or Epistemology distribution requirement for the major, no exceptions;

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion and Philosophy majors

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Unit Notes:** there is no need to email the professor in advance to indicate interest in the course

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 288(D2) PHIL 288(D2)

**Attributes:** COGS Interdepartmental Electives PHIL Contemp Metaphysics + Epistemology Courses

Not offered current academic year

## **REL 291 (S) Religion and Ecology in America (WS)**

**Cross-listings:** ENVI 291 / SOC 291

Secondary Cross-listing

This course examines the relationship between religious and environmental thought in America. Exploring a broad range of practices, symbols, and beliefs, we will examine the religious roots and branches of modern environmentalism. Rather than survey the formal teachings of organized religious groups, we will explore the creation and contestation of environmental meaning in the public sphere through literature, art, philosophy, and popular culture. How have writers, thinkers, and artists from different religious and cultural backgrounds shaped the way we think about nature? How have they shaped the way we think about politics, science, and social justice? How have they influenced each other to produce distinctively American forms of eco-spirituality? In pursuit of these questions, we will consider a diverse array of topics and cases, including struggles to protect Native American sacred places, the role of Black churches in fighting environmental racism, Protestant outdoorsmanship, Catholic climate activism, Jewish eco-mysticism, atheist biology, Buddhist therapy, and more.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Each week each student will either write a 5- to 7-page essay on assigned readings or offer a 2-page critique of their partner's paper.

**Prerequisites:** ENVI 101 or instructor permission

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** Environmental Studies majors and concentrators

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ENVI 291(D2) REL 291(D2) SOC 291(D2)

**Writing Skills Notes:** Each student will write five five-page papers and five two-page papers in this class. They will be given extensive weekly feedback on their writing in the form of one-on-one meetings and written comments, and they will be given multiple opportunities for revision. Emphasis will be placed on the mechanics of argumentation, logic and rhetoric, and the development of a distinctive voice.

**Attributes:** AMST Space and Place Electives ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives

Spring 2024

TUT Section: T1 Cancelled

## **REL 292 (F) Religion and Politics in the Caribbean and the Diaspora**

**Cross-listings:** LATS 253

Secondary Cross-listing

This course analyzes the role of religion in Caribbean history and politics, with a focus on Puerto Rico and Cuba. These Caribbean Islands have lived

out contested colonized histories and experiences, as well as diasporic realities in several key US communities, such as New York City and Miami. The US government and military have played a significant role in both since the turn of the last century, forcibly shaping their economies and politics. Religion, particularly the Protestant missionary enterprise since the US invasions in 1898, has also shaped histories and politics on the islands and throughout their diasporas. We will explicate the role and impact of Protestant religion in these historically indigenous, African descendent, and Roman Catholic religious spaces, as well as how these religious engagements and theologies impacted migration and the creation of diasporic communities in the US. Both the role of religion in the imperialist endeavor and the solidarity movements that responded will occupy our time in this course, with special attention to key figures in both sides of such efforts. With some enhanced understanding of the intertwining of religion and politics in Puerto Rico, Cuba and their diasporic communities, participants in this class will also consider implications for other Caribbean nations, such as the Dominican Republic, as well as Latin American countries that have experienced US interventions and the creation of diasporic communities.

**Class Format:** This course will follow a lecture-discussion format, in which students are expected to come to class prepared to address the assigned readings, to have completed short assignments in preparation for discussions, to make presentations to the class, and/or to lead discussions.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Evaluation in this course will be based on class participation, online discussion forum posts based on readings, two short 5-page essays on an aspect of Puerto Rican or Cuban political/religious reality discussed in class, and a final 8-10 page research essay on a theme in the course agreed upon by student and professor.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Enrollment Preferences:** LATS concentrators and Religion majors, and those with expressed interest in these fields

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 292(D2) LATS 253(D2)

**Attributes:** LATS Core Electives

Fall 2023

LEC Section: 01 TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am Efrain Agosto

### **REL 294 (S) Paul and Early Christianity: Race, Ethnicity, Empire, and the New Testament**

In the Christian New Testament, 13 letters are attributed to "Paul" (out of a total of 27 documents that comprise the New Testament). These letters have been a rich source for a host of political and theological debates over the last two millennia, but in this course, we will examine them as expressions of earliest Christianity's encounter with race, ethnicity, gender, and the ethics of a new religious movement, established in the midst of the oppressive Roman imperial order. Seven of these letters were almost certainly written by someone known to us as Paul of Tarsus. How Paul, a devout Jew, addressed controversial issues in his newfound communities, often in equally controversial ways, will guide our discussions of the role of religion and politics in his world as well as our own. Reading the letters of Paul and related documents in the New Testament, and interpretations of Paul over the centuries, including in modern scholarship, especially by African American, Asian American, and Latinx biblical scholars, theologians, artists, and thinkers will focus our study of religion and politics, ancient and modern.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Students will prepare oral and written summaries of the letters (at least one per student) from their own perspectives in conversation with scholarly interpretation, as well as write short papers (two for the semester, 3-4 pages each) on relevant themes for today inherent in these ancient documents. There will also be a final, research paper (8-10 pages) examining race, ethnicity, gender, and/or politics -- then and now -- using several of the letters as sources for the written exploration.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** juniors and seniors, either Religion majors, concentrators, or at least one course in Religion

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Not offered current academic year

## REL 295 (S) Foundations of Confucian Thought (DPE) (WS)

**Cross-listings:** CHIN 215 / ASIA 215

### Secondary Cross-listing

How should people treat each other? What constitutes human nature and does it tend towards good or evil? How should we organize society, by focusing on laws and regulations, or on ritual and moral guidance? What is the nature of moral rulership? What is the proper relationship between the individual and larger units of society, from the family to the state? These are some of the key questions that the school of thought that has come to be known as "Confucianism" addresses. As the dominant moral and political philosophy for thousands of years in much of East Asia, Confucianism has shaped our world, past and present, in innumerable ways. In this class we will focus on the foundational texts of the Confucian tradition: the *Analects* (purported to record the words of Confucius himself), *Mengzi* (often romanized as "Mencius"), and *Xunzi*. Beyond those questions noted above, we will further examine how these texts construct their arguments; how they were first composed, compiled, and circulated; how they employ such key concepts as "humaneness" (*ren*), "moral power" (*de*), and "ritual propriety" (*li*); and how they functioned as part of the larger philosophical, linguistic, political, and historical context that we now think of as "early China."

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Evaluation is based on writing assignments (3-4 pages, 5-6 pages, and 10-12 pages) and participation in class discussions.

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Enrollment Preferences:** Enrollment priority goes to current or prospective majors in the Department of Asian Languages, Literatures, and Cultures; current or prospective Asian Studies concentrators; and Religion majors.

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 295(D2) CHIN 215(D1) ASIA 215(D1)

**Writing Skills Notes:** Writing will include short writing assignments (1 paragraph, 3-4 pages, and 5-6 pages) that will involve drafts, feedback and revision, and one longer final paper of 10-12 pages that will involve close consultation with the instructor during the writing process.

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** Throughout the course we will examine how these texts deal with issues of differentials of power, both political and social, in a range of contexts. In particular, we will discuss how these texts conceptualize political and social power and how they see hierarchy and difference functioning in both beneficial and deleterious ways in society.

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am Christopher M. B. Nugent

## REL 299 (S) Shakespeare's Torah

**Cross-listings:** JWST 299

### Primary Cross-listing

For readers and speakers of the English language over the past five centuries, no literary body of work has been more central than the writings of William Shakespeare. His plays and poems have shaped the linguistic, philosophical, and artistic representation of human experience in ways that permeate every aspect of our lives. Shakespeare's capacious work and its central preoccupation with the essential questions of humanity have also inspired an extensive tradition of commentary, interpretation, and performance. In this regard, his work occupies a position similar to the one held by the collection of writings known in the Jewish tradition as *Torah*. This term refers both to the set of books contained in the Hebrew Bible and to the rabbinic tradition that emerged from reading those books, which in turn has provided the core principles for over two millennia of Jewish interpretive practice. This course invites students to read Shakespeare as Torah by applying the essential features of that practice to his extraordinary work. Through a deep and sustained encounter with four plays in four different genres (*Hamlet*, *Henry IV*, *Twelfth Night*, and *The Tempest*), we will combine analytic, critical, and creative principles to make meaning in and out of these texts. The goal throughout is to explore how the Jewish art of interpretation can illuminate our experience of Shakespeare's humanity.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, regular short written and oral assignments, and a final project

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Enrollment Preferences:** If the class is overenrolled, preference will be given to Jewish Studies concentrators, Religion majors, and students who have taken REL/JWST 222.

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

JWST 299(D2) REL 299(D2)

**Attributes:** JWST Core Electives

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am Jeffrey I. Israel, Edan Dekel

### **REL 303 (F) Augustine's Confessions**

**Cross-listings:** CLAS 307 / PHIL 307

**Secondary Cross-listing**

No thinker has done more to shape the Western intellectual tradition than Augustine (354-430 CE), and no book displays Augustine's dynamic vision of reality more compellingly than the *Confessions*. Its probing and intimate reflections on the meaning of human life, the nature of God and mind, time and eternity, will and world, good and evil, love and sexuality have challenged every generation since Augustine's own. The seminar will be structured around a close, critically engaged reading of the *Confessions* (in English translation) and will give attention to its historical context and significance as well as to its philosophical and theological ideas. (There will be optional, supplementary opportunity to engage with the Latin text for interested students with some facility with Latin.)

**Class Format:** Class meetings will consist primarily in student presentations and open, directed discussion of assigned readings.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Regular reading assignments from the *Confessions* and related secondary literature. Weekly participation in online discussion on Glow (15% of final grade); 3 class presentations (of various lengths and kinds) (20%); a short paper (maximum 1500 words) due around the middle of the semester (20%); a term paper in two drafts (maximum 3000 words) due near and the end of the semester (40%); preparation for and participation in class that shows thoughtful engagement with the assigned readings (5%).

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Advanced students in Philosophy, Religion and/or Classics

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

CLAS 307(D1) REL 303(D2) PHIL 307(D2)

**Attributes:** PHIL History Courses

**Not offered current academic year**

### **REL 306 (F) Feminist Approaches to Religion (WS)**

**Cross-listings:** WGSS 307

**Primary Cross-listing**

What does feminist theory have to offer the study and practice of religion? How have participants in various religious traditions helped to produce and enact different kinds of feminist approaches to critique and transform religions? Feminisms and religions have a long though often troubled history of interconnection. In this course, we shall explore a range of feminist analyses that have either emerged out of particular religious contexts or have been applied to the study of religious traditions and practices. The course prioritizes attention to the intersections and interactions of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and nationality (among other factors) with religion.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly GLOW posts before class, one "position paper" for class discussion (3 pages), a research question with rationale

for interest and potential action plan (1 page), exploratory research statement (2 pages), essay on interpretive approach to research project (3 pages), participation in writing workshop on 7-page early drafts of final papers, one 15-page final paper.

**Prerequisites:** none; open to all

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion and Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies majors have priority, and then students who have taken either REL 200 or WGSS 101.

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

WGSS 307(D2) REL 306(D2)

**Writing Skills Notes:** This course features a series of scaffolded writings assignments that will culminate in a final research project.

**Attributes:** WGSS Theory Courses

Fall 2023

SEM Section: 01 TF 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Denise K. Buell

### **REL 308 (S) What is Power?**

**Cross-listings:** SOC 308 / STS 308 / PSCI 306

#### **Primary Cross-listing**

*What is power?* Despite the importance of notions of power across the social sciences, there is a broad lack of consensus. Is power essentially domination or resistance? Is it freedom, empowerment, privilege, or oppression? Are there forms of unequal social power which are morally neutral or even good? Is power the kind of thing held by individuals, races, genders, classes, discourses, causal mechanisms, institutions, or social structures? What is the connection between social and physical power? Does power obey laws? How does power relate to technology? Or knowledge? Or agency? Or ideology? This course begins with the observation that power is often described as a causal relation--an individual's power is supposed to equal their capacity to produce a change in someone else's behavior. This suggests that the better we can understand the nature of cause and effect, the better we can understand power. Fortunately, in recent decades philosophers have made significant progress in theorizing causation. Hence, this seminar will put two very different bodies of theory in conversation: **critical theory about power** and **philosophy of science about cause and effect**. We will touch on classic philosophical accounts of power and causation, but focus our attention on more recent developments in philosophy of science, political theory, and other fields. The insights we gain in this course from analyzing the nature of power should empower us to more effectively transform society. It will help students in the social sciences to understand the nature of causation in the social world, and it will help students interested in political action to better understand the nature of power. Thinkers to be considered may include: Aristotle, Amy Allen, Hannah Arendt, Bourdieu, Judith Butler, Nancy Cartwright, Foucault, Gramsci, Byung-Chul Han, Han Feizi, Giddens, Steven Lukes, Machiavelli, J.L. Mackie, Marx, Nietzsche, and Max Weber. **(Note that in 2023 this course will also fulfill the senior seminar requirement for STS)**

**Requirements/Evaluation:** critical annotations for every class, midterm review essay (4-6 pages), final essay (10-12 pages)

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** STS concentrators, then Religion, Sociology, and Political Science majors.

**Expected Class Size:** 14

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

SOC 308(D2) STS 308(D2) PSCI 306(D2) REL 308(D2)

**Attributes:** PHIL Related Courses STS Senior Seminars

**Not offered current academic year**

### **REL 312 (S) The Mughal Empire: Power, Art, and Religion in India**

**Cross-listings:** HIST 312 / GBST 312 / ASIA 312

**Secondary Cross-listing**

Established in the early 1500s, the Mughal Empire was one of the grandest and the longest to rule the Indian subcontinent for over three hundred years. Commanding unprecedented resources and administering a population of 100 to 150 million at its zenith--much larger than any European empire in the early modern world--the Mughals established a centralized administration, with a vast complex of personnel, money, and information networks. Mughal emperors were also political and cultural innovators of global repute. Moreover, while the Mughal dynasty was brought to an end with British colonial rule over India in 1857, the Mughal administrative structures and cultural influences continued to have a lasting impact on the British and later Indian states that followed. Centered around the intersection of the themes of power, patronage of art and architecture and religion, this course will ask: What factors contributed to the durability of the Mughal Empire for three centuries? How did global trade and innovations in taxation contribute to its wealth and stability? How did this dynasty of Muslim monarchs rule over diverse, and largely non-Muslim populations? How did they combine Persian cultural elements with regional ones to establish an empire that was truly Indian in nature? How were the Mughals viewed in their contemporary world of gunpowder empires like the Safavids of Persia and the Ottomans of Turkey? Readings will include the best of the recent scholarship on this vastly influential empire and a rich collection of primary sources, including emperor's memoirs, accounts of European travelers, and racy biographies, which will allow students make their own analysis. They will also have the opportunity to interpret paintings (some of which are held in the WCMA collections) and architecture. They will also discuss how the Mughals are remembered in South Asian film and music.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** participation, several short essays, one final paper

**Prerequisites:** none, open to first-year students with instructor permission

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** History majors and potential History majors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

HIST 312(D2) REL 312(D2) GBST 312(D2) ASIA 312(D2)

**Attributes:** HIST Group B Electives - Asia HIST Group G Electives - Global History HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 Cancelled

**REL 316 (F) Social Ontology**

**Cross-listings:** STS 316

**Primary Cross-listing**

**What is society? What is the social world made of?** The obvious answer--individual people--was for a long time dominant in the social sciences. Indeed, many theorists argued that there was no such thing as society distinct from individual humans and their intentional actions. While this mode of theorizing had some advantages, it has recently fallen out of vogue because of its inability to explain group norms, institutions, corporations, and other collectives. Explanations at the individual level are not necessarily incorrect, but rather philosophers have increasingly come to see them as incomplete. Society seems to more than an aggregate of individuals. Hence, philosophers have increasingly turned to questions of social ontology and produced fresh theories about the nature of the fundamental constituents of the social world. We will explore this research, but with the added intuition that looking beyond humans to other social animals can provide a fresh theoretical vantage. **We will set out from the idea that the social world is composed not just out of humans, but also out of materialized signs produced by social animals** (e.g., a no-smoking sign or an ant's chemical trail). This seminar will offer an advanced survey of current debates about the ontology, methodology, and aims of the humanities and social sciences. We will address questions such as: *Is there a difference between explaining and understanding social actions? Should explanation in the humanities and social sciences follow the model of explanation in the natural sciences, or are there peculiarities about social phenomena that demand a different approach? What are social structures, practices, norms, institutions? How might social structures exist over and above individuals? Do social groups have agency in their own right? What are social kinds and what is their relationship to natural kinds? How do debates in the social sciences look different if we attend to other social animals and their materialized signs?* Course readings will come from a variety of areas including: sociology, semiotics, feminist theory, philosophy of science, and philosophy of mind. When possible, we will supplement these with readings on research into animal behavior.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Attendance and participation. Weekly critical responses/comments. 10-12 page final research paper.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** STS concentrators, Religion or Biology majors, and then other students majoring/concentrating in DIV II areas.

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Unit Notes:** advanced theory seminar with difficult readings.

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 316(D2) STS 316(D2)

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 318 (S) Myths and the Making of Latine California (WS)**

**Cross-listings:** AMST 318 / LATS 318 / COMP 328 / ENVI 318

Secondary Cross-listing

California is home not only to the largest ethnic Mexican population in the USA but also to the largest Central American population, while also being home to long-standing Latine communities hailing from Chile to Cuba. Since the era of Spanish colonization, especially starting in 1769, California has been woven into fantastic imaginations among many peoples in the Americas. Whether imagined as Paradise or Hell, as environmental disaster or agricultural wonderland, as a land of all nations or a land of multiracial enmity, many myths have been inscribed onto and pursued within the space we call California. In a state whose name comes from an early modern Spanish novel, how did certain narratives of California come to be, who has imagined California in certain ways, and why? What impact have these myths had on different Latine populations in the history of California, and how have different Latines shaped, contested, and remade these myths as well as the California landscape that they share with other peoples? In this course, we consider "myth" as a category of socially powerful narratives and not just a simple term that refers to an "untrue story." We examine myths by focusing on a few specific moments of interaction between the Latine peoples who have come to make California home and the specific places in which they have interacted with each other. Of special interest are select creation stories (found in Jewish, Christian, and Indigenous traditions), imaginations of the Spanish missions, the Gold Rush, agricultural California, wilderness California, California as part of Greater México, California as "sprawling, multicultural dystopia," and California as "west of the west," including its imagination as a technological and spiritual "frontier."

**Requirements/Evaluation:** this course will be mostly discussion oriented, with grading based upon participation, short writing exercises, one 3-page review essay with mandatory revision, one 5- to 8-page midterm review essay, and a final 10- to 15-page comparative review essay

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Enrollment Preferences:** Latina/o Studies concentrators, Religion majors, American Studies majors, Environmental Studies majors and concentrators, Comparative Literature majors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 318(D2) AMST 318(D2) LATS 318(D2) COMP 328(D1) ENVI 318(D2)

**Writing Skills Notes:** The students are expected to engage in regular writing of response papers, a mandatory revision of their first essay after receiving instructor feedback, a second essay, and a scaffolded final project with instructor and peer feedback at different stages. Attention to writing and the ways that writing interacts with myths, peoples, and place-making is part of the practice and the theoretical orientation of the course.

**Attributes:** AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora AMST Space and Place Electives ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives LATS Core Electives

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 Cancelled

## **REL 319 (S) Milton's Paradise Lost**

**Cross-listings:** ENGL 315

### **Secondary Cross-listing**

If you know anything about John Milton, you probably think of him as some blind guy who wrote a really long poem about the Bible. It's hard to shake the feeling that Milton is the fustiest of English poets--dull, pious, brilliant and all, and not someone you would read if you didn't have to. But then what are we to make of the following? The first piece that Milton wrote that was read widely throughout Europe was a boisterous defense of the English Revolution. Milton was most famous in his lifetime as the poet who went to bat for the Puritan insurgents--the poet who came right out and said that the king looked better without his head. Of all the major English poets, Milton is the revolutionary. So a course on Milton is by necessity a course on literature and revolution. We will read *Paradise Lost*, widely regarded as the greatest non-dramatic poem in English, and a few other books to help us prepare for that big one. Some questions: How did the mid-seventeenth century, probably the most tumultuous decades in the history of modern Britain, transform the culture of the English-speaking world? What is the relationship between literature and the state or between literature and radical politics? Is there a poetics of revolution? How can a poet who seems to be writing for Sunday school--about God and Adam and Eve and the serpent--really have been writing about rebellion all along?

**Requirements/Evaluation:** one 6- to 8-page paper, one 10- to 12-page paper, informal weekly writing assignments, and active seminar participation

**Prerequisites:** a 100-level ENGL course, or a score of 5 on the AP English Literature exam, or a score of 6 or 7 on the Higher Level IB English exam. If you are interested in taking the course without the prereq, do contact Prof. Thorne.

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Enrollment Preferences:** English majors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ENGL 315(D1) REL 319(D2)

**Attributes:** ENGL Literary Histories A

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Christian Thorne

## **REL 320 (F) "You Do You!" The Ethics and Politics of Personal Authenticity**

From the breathtaking expansion of the "self-help" industry to corporate advertisement, from the fashion and entertainment industries to cultural politics around sexuality and race, the rhetoric and ideal of personal authenticity pervades our daily existence. From every corner we are told: "To thine own self be true!" This powerful moral ideal has arguably become an inescapable and hegemonic frame of U.S. cultural life in the 21st century (and more broadly middle-class life around the globe). The imperative of authentic self-realization -- to discover and become your "true self," in opposition to mere conformity to social conventions and independent of external expectations -- is seen as essential if we are to live a healthy and fulfilling life, and to fully realize what it means to be human in the deepest sense. This course will interrogate this ideal and imperative of personal authenticity from several angles. We will begin by examining some contemporary manifestations of this ethos. We will then explore the historical roots and evolution of the emphasis on authentic selfhood in the modern West, as well as comparable notions of sincerity, selfhood, interiority, and introspection in other (non-liberal, non-Christian) cultural contexts and religious traditions. We will also consider the ideal of authenticity in light of contemporary social theory, as well as engage a variety of ethical-political critiques of authenticity. Through this, we will investigate a number of important questions: Is there such a thing as the "true self" that is autonomous and free of social influences and norms, and how does one discover this true self? What are the limits and social consequences of this aspiration towards authentic selfhood? What are the effects of the widespread commodification of authenticity, and how should we understand the relation between personal authenticity and the conditions of late-stage capitalism? Is the rhetoric of personal authenticity simply an expression of narcissistic individualism, or is there a higher moral value and ideal that it speaks to? Can community cohesion and shared collective purpose be sustained alongside the imperative of authenticity? How does the ideal of authentic selfhood interact with collective or socially-conferred identities (like race, heritage, or religion)? Is personal authenticity ultimately just a white secular value, or is it an available and achievable ideal for those who do not fit this hegemonic mold?

**Requirements/Evaluation:** In-class participation; Personal journaling; Semester-long research project with multiple stages and steps, culminating in a final 12-15 page paper; 3 reading response papers (that serve as steps towards research project)

**Prerequisites:** None

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors; Juniors and seniors

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Fall 2023

SEM Section: 01 MW 11:00 am - 12:15 pm Zaid Adhami

### **REL 325 (F) Faith and Profit in the Medieval Mediterranean**

**Cross-listings:** HIST 325

#### **Secondary Cross-listing**

In many historical societies, there have been tensions between the demands of economic and religious life. What can I sell, what should I do with money, and how shall I interact with strangers? What is the relationship between religious ideals and the habits of everyday life? These questions can become especially acute when representatives of two or more competing belief systems interact with each other. The medieval Mediterranean provides numerous rich examples of societies and individuals facing these questions. In this class, we will look at how medieval Jews, Christians, and Muslims resolved these and other dilemmas in the market societies surrounding the Mediterranean basin, as they created their own forms of religious law and economic philosophy. In the process, we will gain a more profound understanding of the roots of modern debates about capitalism, property, and economic justice.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Attendance and participation, two short papers, one final 12-15-page research paper

**Prerequisites:** None

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Enrollment Preferences:** Junior and senior History majors

**Expected Class Size:** 15-20

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 325(D2) HIST 325(D2)

**Attributes:** HIST Group C Electives - Europe and Russia HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

Fall 2023

LEC Section: 01 MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm Joel S. Pattison

### **REL 330 (S) Modern Jewish Political Theory**

**Cross-listings:** PSCI 375 / JWST 492

#### **Primary Cross-listing**

By the late 19th century, Jews across Europe were faced with an urgent political problem. Amidst burgeoning national self-consciousness throughout the continent, despite the liberatory promises of the Enlightenment, Jews remained a vulnerable, segregated, and stigmatized minority population. Jews had to decide where to pin their hopes. Should they ally themselves with the liberals or the communists? Should they embrace nationalism or cosmopolitanism? Should they, perhaps, abandon Europe altogether and re-constitute themselves elsewhere? If so, should they focus their efforts on relocation to the historical land of Israel? Or could they go anywhere? Wherever they might go, should they aspire to build a modern Jewish nation-state, a semi-autonomous Jewish community, or some other arrangement? Should this coincide with the cultivation of a distinctively Jewish modern language? If so, should it be Hebrew or Yiddish? In this course we will assess various answers to these questions proffered by Jewish political thinkers in the modern period. We will pay particular attention to the construction of "Jews" and "Judaism" in these arguments. And we will ask persistently: what constitutes a "Jewish justification" for a political claim in modern Jewish political theory? Coverage will include: Jewish liberalism, political Zionism, Yiddishist autonomism, messianic quietism, and other views. We will read mostly primary sources, including texts by: Hermann Cohen, Theodore Herzl, Chaim Zhitlowsky, Franz Rosenzweig, Leo Strauss, Hannah Arendt, and many others.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** six short (1-2 pages) response papers; two 6- to 8-page papers, each analyzing a different view in depth; a final 18- to 20-page paper that incorporates the two previously submitted 6-8 page papers, but also compares the two views and adjudicates between them

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors, Jewish Studies concentrators, and Political Science students on the "Theory" track

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 330(D2) PSCI 375(D2) JWST 492(D2)

**Attributes:** JWST Capstone Course JWST Core Electives

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 332 (S) Islam and Feminism**

**Cross-listings:** WGSS 334 / ARAB 332

Primary Cross-listing

This course examines the relationship between feminism and Islam, focusing particularly on Islamic feminist scholarship. We will take a genealogical approach to our study of Islamic feminism tracing the different discourses that have informed and shaped the field. The first part of the course will begin with a critical examination of orientalist and colonial representations of Muslim women as oppressed and in need of liberation. We will then explore Muslim responses to such critiques that were entwined with nationalist and independence movements. This historical backdrop is critical to understanding why the question of women and their rights and roles become crucial to Muslim self-understanding and Islamic reform. The second part of the course will focus on major intellectuals and thinkers who have influenced Islamic feminism. Finally, the last part of our course will explore the breadth of Islamic feminist literature, covering the following themes: 1) feminist readings of scripture; 2) feminist critiques of Islamic law; and 3) feminist theology.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly responses, midterm essay, final research paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion, Arabic Studies, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, History majors

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 332(D2) WGSS 334(D2) ARAB 332(D2)

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 Cancelled

### **REL 333 (S) The Politics of Myth**

Myths animate ethical and political life. Shared stories that function as sources of justification and motivation are reflected in our anxieties and aspirations, in how we talk, and in how we perform our identities. These are stories about the origins of our world, the founding of the political order, the forging of groups, the menace of enemies, the triumph of heroes, the ultimate destiny of humankind. In this course, we will explore the meaning of "myth" in our ethical and political lives. We will read and discuss a wide range of approaches to myth. For instance, readings may include works by Plato, medieval Jewish and Islamic philosophers, Friedrich Nietzsche, Georges Sorel, Ernst Cassirer, and Walter Benjamin. Particular attention will be given to a set of mid-twentieth century theorists of myth who have had an especially strong impact on the meaning of myth in American popular culture: Carl Jung, Mircea Eliade, and Joseph Campbell. We will assess the enduring resonance of their ideas and explore new opportunities to think critically and imaginatively about myth in this tradition, reading works by Wendy Doniger, Jeffrey Kripal, and other contemporary scholars in religious

studies. These theoretical explorations will serve to enrich our efforts, throughout the course, to uncover the myths that animate our own lives. We will explore *our myths* through sustained introspection, interpretations of popular culture, and opportunities for myth-criticism and myth-making. Thus, in addition to the critical analysis of myths and myth theories, students will have the opportunity to play creatively with the possibilities of myth. The course will culminate in a final creative project engaging with the idea of myth.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Two 5-7 page papers and either a final annotated creative project or a final 7-10 page paper.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors and students who have taken a course in the Religion department.

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 334 (S) Imagining Joseph**

**Cross-listings:** JWST 334 / ANTH 334 / COMP 334

Secondary Cross-listing

Beloved son, rival brother, faithful servant, dreamer, seer, object of desire, lover, husband, bureaucrat, Joseph is one of the most fully-limned and compelling figures in the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim scriptural traditions. The story of Joseph unfolds over fourteen chapters in the Hebrew Bible, and is the subject of the fourth longest sura in the Qur'an. Through millennia, the story of Joseph has inspired a wealth of interpretations, commentary, apocrypha, re-tellings, and back-story, including an apocryphal book of scripture about Joseph and his wife, Asenath, Sufi poetry about Joseph and Zuleikha (Potiphar's wife), a trilogy by the 20th century German novelist Thomas Mann, a musical by Andrew Lloyd Weber, and many expressions in Western visual art. The course will explore these various expressions, looking to them for the ways in which Joseph has captured the imaginations of peoples and cultures across time and space. The course will be organized as a collaborative seminar in which the class will read the foundational scriptures together, followed by thematic discussions to which students will contribute insights from their own readings of particular peripheral texts. Students will learn the pleasures of close and intense exegetical reading in approaching the Hebrew Bible and Qur'an, as well as the more expansive pleasures of linking post-scriptural expressions together.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** occasional response papers; substantial final project and paper; class participation

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 12

**Enrollment Preferences:** based on responses to a questionnaire

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

JWST 334(D2) ANTH 334(D2) REL 334(D2) COMP 334(D1)

**Attributes:** JWST Core Electives

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 W 1:10 pm - 3:50 pm Thursday Org Mtg 7:30 pm - 7:55 pm Peter Just

### **REL 338 (F) Transhumanism: Religion, Technoscience, Obsolescence**

**Cross-listings:** STS 338 / SOC 338

Secondary Cross-listing

This interdisciplinary seminar invites students to pursue sociohistorical analysis and sustained critical discussion of the transhumanist movement and its overriding aims: the augmentation, transformation, and eventual transcendence of human biological constitution; the realization, through speculative technoscientific means, of an enhanced or even "postbiological existence"--a "posthuman condition," "Humanity 2.0." Through close readings of primary historical documents, transhumanist texts, scholarship on transhumanism, works of science-fiction film, literature, and popular

culture, we will position the movement as an empirical conduit through which to explore the sociohistorical conditions under which transhumanist ideas and practices have emerged, circulated, and taken up residence. To that end, we will consider the ties of transhumanism to eugenics and massive investments in pharmaceuticals, anti-aging medicine, and so-called "GNR" technologies (i.e. genetics, nanotechnology, and artificial intelligence and robotics); the movement's affinities with neoliberalism and what some have pointed to as transhumanism's racialized subtext of whiteness. We will furthermore devote considerable attention to the technological singularity, the figure of the cyborg, mind-uploading, space colonization, and cryonic suspension, all of which, like transhumanism broadly, suggest that science and technology have in some sense come to operate as powerful channeling agents for the very sorts of beliefs, practices, and forms of association that theorists of secularization expected modernity to displace. Lastly, throughout the course of the seminar we will take transhumanism as a provocation to think broadly and seriously about religion, technology, embodiment, and ways of being human.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** informal weekly writing, two short review essays, and one 15-page seminar paper

**Prerequisites:** Prior coursework in sociology-anthropology, history, religion, or science and technology studies.

**Enrollment Limit:** 14

**Enrollment Preferences:** Anthropology and Sociology majors and Science and Technology Studies concentrators

**Expected Class Size:** 14

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

STS 338(D2) SOC 338(D2) REL 338(D2)

Not offered current academic year

#### **REL 340 Science, Religion, and the (post)colony: Critical approaches to the global history of knowledge (DPE)**

Histories of science and religion have been deeply intertwined with colonial and postcolonial history. Colonial claims to legitimacy were often rooted in perceptions of scientific and technological superiority, and colonial expansion often marched in lockstep with missionary activity and forced conversions. In the process, race and human difference emerged as concepts at the intersection of scientific and religious discourses and was forged within the colonial framework. This colonial history of science and religion impacted how scientific and religious thought, practices and institutions developed through the period of decolonization and into today. Similarly, the attendant history of race and human difference continues to influence postcolonial and contemporary discourses around race, ethnicity, identity and migration. In this course, we will trace key moments in the history of science and religion and their relation to coloniality. We will start in the sixteenth century with the rise of modern European empires, move into the height of modern colonialism, indigenous genocides and chattel slavery, and trace decolonization from the middle of the nineteenth into today. Throughout, we will investigate how science and religion emerged as concepts, practices and institutions, and how these narratives impacted, and were impacted by colonial expansion and history. We will pay particular attention to questions of race, gender, sexuality and human difference as key concepts and practices that emerged at the intersections of science, religion and (post)colonialism

**Requirements/Evaluation:** 2 response papers (3-5pages each) + final project (could be a 10-15p paper or creative project of any kind)

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Enrollment Preferences:** Concentrators, followed by seniors and juniors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:**

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** The course addresses questions of race, gender, sexuality and human difference as seen through the history of science, technology and medicine. Students will creatively engage with critical race theory, postcolonial theory and queer theory. They will also investigate human suffering as a category that provides a deeper understanding of difference, diversity and equality.

Not offered current academic year

#### **REL 355 (S) Foucault: Confessions of the Flesh**

**Cross-listings:** COMP 359 / STS 355

Primary Cross-listing

The French philosopher, historian, and social critic, **Michel Foucault** (1926-1984) has had a massive influence across a range of disciplines. Indeed, in 2019, Google Scholar ranked Foucault as **the number one most highly cited scholar in the Humanities and Social Sciences**. While many of his contemporaries have faded in importance, Foucault's writings on power, madness, the history of sexuality, and the structures of domination and governmentality have become central to the theoretical canon of a range of academic disciplines. To be a scholar in the humanities today is often to be in Foucault's shadow. But despite the many references to his work, Foucault is frequently misunderstood and subsequent scholars often attribute to him positions he would have repudiated. Now almost forty years after his death, his work is also long overdue for a reappraisal as we come to understand Foucault better as a person and especially as the final, and posthumous, volume of his History of Sexuality, ***Confessions of the Flesh***, has only just appeared and been translated into English. In this course we will mainly read Foucault supplemented with occasional contextual readings. Although we will touch on his earlier writings, this seminar will emphasize his middle-to-late period (beginning with ***The Archaeology of Knowledge***) and including selections from his later monographs, lectures, interviews, and short writings. It will culminate in the unfinished intellectual and political project that occupied Foucault in his last days. We will think with and often against Foucault, focusing primarily on questions of power, knowledge, truth, and addressing his later emancipatory gesture toward "technologies of the self." We will also appraise the methodologies that Foucault described as "archaeology" and "genealogy." We will historicize Foucault in his life and cultural context and ask how much of his arguments still apply today. What blind-spots did he have? Which of his ideas are worth consolidating and which need repudiating? How might we go beyond Foucault?

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, weekly critical responses, 10- to 12-page final paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** In order of preference, Religion majors, STS concentrators, Comp Lit majors, and then Philosophy majors.

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Unit Notes:** in-depth seminar on a difficult philosopher who we'll be reading closely

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

COMP 359(D1) STS 355(D2) REL 355(D2)

Not offered current academic year

## **REL 358 (F) Religion and Law (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** GBST 358

Primary Cross-listing

This course explores the concept of "law" through an investigation of the complex relationship between law, ethics, and religion. In doing so, we will look at legal theoretical texts as well as legal anthropological studies to pose critical questions about the nature of law, the functioning logic of law, the relationship between law and lived experience, and the legal construction of categories and facts. In the course, we will consider two intersections of religion and law: the particularities of religious legal traditions and the relationship between religion and secular law. Topics will include the secular legal construction of religion, the relationship between law and ethics, the nature of legal hermeneutics, and the racial, gender, and sexual politics of legal interpretation.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** reading response, two essays, final research paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 358(D2) GBST 358(D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** Law is seen as both a repressive and liberatory force. In taking a critical approach to the nature of law and legal interpretation, this course prepares students to think about the language of "rule of law," "order," and "justice" as a complex relationship between law and power.

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 360 (F) The Gothic Cathedral: An Art History**

**Cross-listings:** ARTH 360

#### **Secondary Cross-listing**

Through their enormous scale, through the gravity-defying complexity of their construction, and through the sumptuousness of their materials and decoration, Gothic cathedrals -- the medieval equivalent of the blockbuster movie, and then some -- have amazed visitors for centuries. The widespread social media reaction of shock and dismay to the fire at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris four years ago, moreover, indicates that this power of the cathedral to dazzle and to capture hearts remains very much alive. But how have art historians, specifically, made sense of these extraordinary, and extraordinarily complex, monuments? And how have the questions they have asked about the cathedral changed over time? Through a close examination of a number of influential books, in particular -- each one of them a kind of miniature cathedral in its own right -- this 300-level seminar will investigate the shifting interpretation of the Gothic Cathedral over the past 150 years. In so doing, the seminar aims to shed light not only on the fascinating multiplicity of realities that make up the Gothic cathedral but also on the changing shape of the discipline of art history itself, from its beginnings to the early 2020s.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** participation in class discussion; 1 or 2 oral presentations; four 3-4-page papers, and a 6-8-page paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** art majors and sophomores, but open to all

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ARTH 360(D1) REL 360(D2)

**Attributes:** ARTH pre-1800

Fall 2023

SEM Section: 01 F 1:10 pm - 3:50 pm Peter D. Low

### **REL 397 (F) Independent Study: Religion**

Religion independent study.

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Fall 2023

IND Section: 01 TBA Jeffrey I. Israel

### **REL 398 (S) Independent Study: Religion**

Religion independent study.

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Spring 2024

IND Section: 01 TBA Jeffrey I. Israel

### **REL 401 (F) Issues in the Study of Religion**

To be conducted as a working seminar or colloquium. Major issues in the study of religious thought and behavior will be taken up in a cross-cultural context enabling the student to consolidate and expand perspectives gained in the course of the major sequence. Topics will vary from year to year. In keeping with the seminar framework, opportunity will be afforded the student to pursue independent reading and research.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class presentations, short writing assignments to build towards final project, and a substantial research project

**Prerequisites:** senior Religion major or permission of instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** senior Religion majors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Fall 2023

SEM Section: 01 W 1:10 pm - 3:50 pm Denise K. Buell

### **REL 412 (F) Gandhi: History, Ideas and Legacy (WS)**

**Cross-listings:** GBST 412 / HIST 496 / ASIA 412 / LEAD 322

#### **Secondary Cross-listing**

This course studies the life, work, and ideas of M.K. Gandhi (1869-1948), one of the most influential thinkers of the non-western world. Gandhi is well known today for his philosophy of non-violent resistance and its application in India's freedom struggle as well as his influence on the work of leaders like Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. Hailed as the 'father of the Indian nation', however, Gandhi is not only known for his political ideas but also for his deep engagement with aspect of everyday human behavior and morality: truth, vegetarianism, sex and celibacy, to name just a few of his obsessions which contributed to making his broader philosophy. It is this commitment to a morally pure life that earned him the title of 'Mahatma' or Great Soul in India. This tutorial will focus on three key aspects of Gandhi: his ideas of peaceful protest as means of social and political change, his contemplations on moral philosophy, and on his legacy in modern India and the world. Students will read a combination of Gandhi's own writings as well as journal articles, monographs and films. The course will probe questions such as: What was the context and nature of Gandhian nationalism? Did it help to integrate the Indian nation? Was Gandhi truly a Great Soul, a saint or a shrewd politician? In what ways is Gandhi received and remembered by the Indian nation today? How does understanding a figure like Gandhi facilitate our understanding of modern nationalism, citizenship and political action?

**Requirements/Evaluation:** 5-7-page essays or 2-page critique due each week and a final report (3-4 pages) at the end of the semester.

**Prerequisites:** None, except students who have taken HIST488T will not be permitted to take this class.

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** Senior history majors and students who have previously taken HIST221. Students who have previously taken HIST488T will not be permitted to take this class.

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

GBST 412(D2) HIST 496(D2) ASIA 412(D2) LEAD 322(D2) REL 412(D2)

**Writing Skills Notes:** As a tutorial, this course is Writing Intensive as students not only write weekly papers but they also develop critical tools to engage in close reading of texts and interpret them and the facts therein. Each week, they will develop their writing by providing constructive criticism of their partner's paper, and in turn, learn to receive and build on critiques of their own work. Students will be given the opportunity to substantively revise their work on a regular basis.

**Attributes:** HIST Group B Electives - Asia

**Not offered current academic year**

### **REL 420 (F) Islam and the Image (DPE) (WS)**

**Cross-listings:** ARTH 521

**Secondary Cross-listing**

This seminar responds to a recent incident at a US liberal arts university where a professor was sacked for showing images of Prophet Muhammad as part of her section on Islamic art. Why is image-making so hotly contested in Islam? What is the history of figural depictions in this tradition? The seminar explores artworks made for Muslim patrons from the medieval period to the modern era, considering how paintings produced for Muslim audiences can be situated within the frameworks of "Islamic art," a loaded historiographical term that has been questioned in recent times. The seminar also addresses some of the major problems that continue to haunt art scholarship in the field. For most of its history, the academic study of Islamic art has seldom considered contemporaneous literary voices that shed light on the motivations behind artworks. Furthermore, the historiography, deeply entrenched in its colonial and orientalist roots, has largely isolated images from their supporting texts--a curious oversight in light of the fact that painting in Muslim lands has historically been primarily an art of the book. These biases have affected the way museums have collected, displayed and interpreted paintings. For example, Western museums continue to place figural depictions made for books and albums in "South Asian" collections while textual manuscripts and calligraphic specimens made for the same Muslim audiences--even at times bound in the same albums--are categorized as "Islamic art." What does this isolation of text from image imply about prevailing views of Islamic art? To better understand the cultural, historical and religious context surrounding artworks students will read primary literature ranging from autobiography to devotional poetry, often written by the very patrons and subjects of the paintings to be discussed.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, short weekly writing assignments, final essay project

**Prerequisites:** Undergraduates wishing to enroll must have taken at least one art history course or one religious studies course. Undergraduates must email indicating their interest in the course prior to enrolling.

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Enrollment Preferences:** MA students, then advanced undergraduates

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE) (WS)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

REL 420(D2) ARTH 521(D1)

**Writing Skills Notes:** Weekly writing assignments consisting of 300-500 words. Final papers 15-20 pages for graduate students. 12-15 pages for undergraduate students. 1-page abstract for the final paper due by mid-November. A 4-5 page project outline due right after Thanksgiving break. After receiving feedback and comments from the instructor, the final paper will be due in the last week of classes.

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** Highlights a global art history that is underrepresented. The class focuses on pluralistic engagements with non-Western cultures and epistemologies.

**Attributes:** ARTH pre-1800

Fall 2023

SEM Section: 01 M 10:00 am - 12:50 pm Murad K. Mumtaz

**REL 421 (S) Picturing God in the Middle Ages**

**Cross-listings:** ARTH 421

**Secondary Cross-listing**

How did medieval Europeans imagine their God and how did they give what they imagined pictorial form? How were these pictures used, both in public and in private life, and why? Paying particular attention to the function and experience of medieval works of art, this seminar will examine the evolution of images of God, in both the Eastern and Western halves of Europe, and the problems these images often generated. Through readings and class discussion, the course will investigate, among other specific topics: the varied attitudes toward the representability of God in Judaism, Islam, and Christianity; the impact of the Roman cult of the emperor and of images of the dead on the earliest portraits of Christ; the cult of the icon, concerns over idolatry, and the destruction of images; ideas about spiritual versus physical vision and their influence on the making and viewing of pictures; the relationship of sacred images to relics, the Eucharist, and other aspects of Christian ritual; and the pictorial exploration of both the torture and sexuality of Christ. Students will also pursue an individual research project, in which they will examine in greater depth a specific depiction of divinity of their choosing, in light of what we have considered together in the seminar.

**Class Format:** Class will meet online at first but may shift to in-person if circumstances allow

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, oral presentation, one short paper (2-3 pages), final research paper (15-20 pages)

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** Preference given to Art majors and seniors.

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ARTH 421(D1) REL 421(D2)

**Attributes:** ARTH pre-1800

Not offered current academic year

### **REL 425 (S) Fragments and Healing: Disability Studies and Late Antique Art**

**Cross-listings:** ARTH 584 / ARTH 425

#### **Secondary Cross-listing**

This seminar will investigate some of the ways that contemporary Disability Studies can help us see and think about the complexities of differently abled bodies in Late Antiquity (broadly, from ca. 200 until ca. 750), the formative period for Christian art (and consequently for much of Western art). Disability Studies is an extremely active and rich body of literature and art that has not often been brought into conversation with historical periods of art, and so this seminar seeks to open up discussion of the insights possible from that conversation, not only how Late Antique art can be re-interpreted, but also how that period of art can reveal under-explored areas in the field of Disability Studies. The seminar will undertake a mutual interrogation of accepted notions in both fields and, in this way, to explore some new understandings of Disability Studies' capacities for allowing us to think *with* our art, culture, and bodies. The means at our disposal for this seminar are art of Late Antiquity and of the contemporary world, and that idea of mutual interrogation also operates in our study and display of that art. The seminar will look at art of healing and recuperation, art produced by and directed at diversely-abled bodies, and at fragments and restoration, and think about art as documents, reflections, and determinants of those bodies, now and in the past. It will, for this reason, work around the collection of WCMA, with exhibition and collection research, and the historical archives of the Library holdings, so that the widest possible study of bodies and difference is opened for our thinking and dialogue.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** participation in discussion; three 1-2-page reading reports; one 3-5-page exhibition response; one 15-20-page final essay

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 12

**Enrollment Preferences:** senior art-history majors and graduate students; other students will need instructor consent

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Unit Notes:** In this seminar, students will develop skills of crafting clear and persuasive arguments through an iterative writing process. Further, to help them achieve these goals, they will receive timely comments on their written work.

**Distributions:** (D2)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ARTH 584(D1) REL 425(D2) ARTH 425(D1)

**Attributes:** ARTH pre-1800

Spring 2024

SEM Section: 01 F 1:10 pm - 3:50 pm Glenn A. Peers

### **REL 493 (F) Senior Thesis: Religion**

Religion senior thesis; this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494).

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Fall 2023

HON Section: 01 TBA Jeffrey I. Israel

**REL 494 (S) Senior Thesis: Religion**

Religion senior thesis; this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494).

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Spring 2024

HON Section: 01 TBA Jeffrey I. Israel

**REL 497 (F) Independent Study: Religion**

Religion independent study.

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Fall 2023

IND Section: 01 TBA Jeffrey I. Israel

**REL 498 (S) Independent Study: Religion**

Religion independent study.

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D2)

Spring 2024

IND Section: 01 TBA Jeffrey I. Israel

**Winter Study -----**

**REL 30 (W) Senior Project: Religion**

An advanced course for senior Religion majors (who are not writing theses) to further develop their senior seminar paper into a polished 25 page research paper (which will also be the focus of a brown-bag presentation during the spring semester). The course will help the students with general research methods, workshopping, paper writing, and presentation practice.

**Class Format:** senior project

**Requirements/Evaluation:** participation in research and writing workshops, completion of research project.

**Prerequisites:** REL 401

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** For senior religion majors

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** pass/fail only

Winter 2024

IND Section: 01 TBA Denise K. Buell

**REL 31 (W) Senior Thesis: Religion**

Religion senior thesis.

**Class Format:** thesis

**Grading:** pass/fail only

Winter 2024

HON Section: 01 TBA Jeffrey I. Israel

**REL 99 (W) Independent Study: Religion**

Open to upperclass students. Students interested in doing an independent project (99) during Winter Study must make prior arrangements with a faculty sponsor. The student and professor then complete the independent study proposal form available online. The deadline is typically in late September. Proposals are reviewed by the pertinent department and the Winter Study Committee. Students will be notified if their proposal is approved prior to the Winter Study registration period.

**Class Format:** independent study

**Grading:** pass/fail only

Winter 2024

IND Section: 01 TBA Jeffrey I. Israel