

Department of Religious Studies

Fall 2021 Undergraduate Courses

Important Dates

August 23

First day of evening classes

August 30

Last day to add, drop with no grade

September 6

Labor Day
University closed

September 22

Deadline to apply for Dec 2020 graduation

October 22

Spring 2020 schedule available on web

October 11-12

Student recess
No classes

October 25

Last day to withdraw from course; grade subject to policy

November 1

Registration for spring 2021 begins

November 24-27

Thanksgiving weekend
No classes

December 8

Last day of classes

December 9

Reading day

December 10-16

Final examinations

December 17-18

Commencement

RELS 1200 (001-008) **Introduction to World Religions**

Hybrid / Online Asynchronous Lectures / Joanne Maguire and Face-to-Face Breakouts
Mondays 10:10 / 11:15 / 1:25 / 2:30

Understanding the news, deciphering memes, working with diverse groups of people, and analyzing history, politics, and ethics all require a grasp of the diversity of religions across the world. We will learn about a wide range of practices and concepts identified as "religion" while using that knowledge in weekly virtual problem-based discussion sections.

- *Cultural or Historical Analysis*



RELS 2000-002 **Racism and Religion**

Hybrid / Face-to-Face and Online Asynchronous
Danielle Boaz
MW 10:10-11:00

(*Cross-listed with AFRS & LEGL*)

This course will explore the relationship between racism and religion through case studies from the 15th century to the present day. Possible topics include but are not limited to: Christianity and the Atlantic slave trade; the FBI and the Nation of Islam; "Voodoo" and Haitian independence; black church burnings; Black "witches" in 20th century Cuba; the Ku Klux Klan; the racialization of Islam; and Evangelical extremism against African diaspora religions.

- *Cultural Analysis*



RELS 2000-005 **The Religions of China**

TR 2:30-3:45 / Janna Shedd

An introduction to China's religious traditions from ancient oracle bone divination practices to the modern day cult of Mao and the rapid growth of Christianity.

This course will explore the cultural and historical developments of many interconnected topics, including ancestral veneration, Chinese Buddhist schools, Daoism (Taoism), folk traditions, health practices, and popular devotion to China's many gods and Immortals.

- *Cultural or Historical Analysis*



RELS 2000-003 **Fantastic Journeys: Out of This World**

TR 11:30-12:45 / John Reeves
An overview of a wide range of early visionary accounts that

feature ascents to and tours of heaven, descents to and tours of hell, and journeys to utopias and fabulous lands positioned in regions located at the ends of or on the other side of 'our' world.

- *Historical or Cultural Analysis*



RELS 2000-004 **The Challenge of the Qur'an: God and Prophets in Islam**

TR 10:00-11:15 / Will Sherman
(*Cross-listed with HIST*)

This course presents an introduction to the Qur'an. Rather than seeking to summarize "what the Qur'an says," this course prepares students to think about the various ways Muslims and non-Muslims have approached and engaged the Qur'an historically and as an ethical challenge to change the world around them. This course is organized chronologically and pays special attention to how Islam and the Qur'an emerged in dialogue and competition with Christian and Jewish communities. We begin with the emergence of the Qur'an in Late Antiquity, then how medieval interpretations of shared prophets as Abraham and Jesus reflect the history of Muslim-Christian-Jewish interaction, and then we will consider modern readings of the Qur'an as pertains to gender, sexuality, environmentalism, and violence. - *Textual or Historical Analysis*



RELS 2000-006 **Magic in Medieval Europe**

Online Asynchronous / Hugh Goforth
(*Cross lists with HIST*)

In the ancient Near East and Europe, what we now call magical practices existed as mundane, unexceptional aspects of shared culture. As

Christianity gradually took its place as a dominant cultural force, in Medieval Europe, many common--and sometime uncommon--practices increasingly fell under suspicion as "superstition", ignorance, sinful, dangerous and even conspiratorial and diabolical. This course examines the processes through which "magic" develops into an increasingly feared and persecuted category.

- *Textual or Historical Analysis*



RELS 2102-001 Introduction to Asian Religions

TR 11:30-12:45 / Janna Shedd

This course is an introduction to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Shinto. We will cover many of the major fundamental concerns, myths, gods, and practices of these religions both in their classical formulations and in their contemporary forms. - *Cultural or Historical Analysis*



RELS 2105-001 Introduction to the New Testament

James Tabor / TR 10:00-11:15

An academic survey of the New Testament writings with a focus on their authorship, dating, and place in our understanding of the emergence of the new religion we know as Christianity. The emphasis will be on understanding Jesus and his first followers in the light of their wider historical, cultural, and archaeological contexts—both Jewish and Roman.

- *Textual or Historical Analysis*

RELS 2104-001 Hebrew Scriptures

Online Asynchronous / Barbara Thiede

There is no such thing as "The Bible." But there is a fascinating story behind the creation of ancient biblical literature. We will look at the linguistic, historical, and archeological evidence that helps scholars understand who wrote biblical literature and why. We explore the writers' sense of humor and political agendas and discover how later readers reinvented biblical texts.

- *Textual or Historical Analysis*



RELS 2157-001 Buddhism in South & Southeast Asia

TR 2:30-3:45/Alex Kaloyanides

This course examines Buddhist traditions of South and Southeast Asia. We will cover material from ancient India through contemporary Southeast Asia with special attention to reading classical Buddhist texts and studying the development of the Theravada tradition and its religious, political, artistic, and economic contexts.

-*Historical or Textual Analysis*



RELS 2600-001 Orientation to the Study of Religion

Wednesday 2:30-5:15 / Sean McCloud

This course examines the animating theoretical and methodological questions in the academic study of religion. We will consider the emergence and history of the field as well as prominent themes such as myth, experience, and culture. This course pays close attention to the particular research, reading, and writing practices that shape the field.

RELS 3000-002

The Bible and Its Monsters

TR 2:30-3:45 / John Reeves

A wide-ranging survey of the various freaks, monsters, and fiends which haunt the pages of western Bibles and the hyperactive imaginations of many of its ancient, medieval, and early modern interpreters. - *Textual or Historical Analysis*



RELS 3000-001 Women and Gender in the New Testament World

Asynchronous Lectures / David Clausen

Online Synchronous Fridays 12:20-1:10

Why is the role of women in the early Jesus movement so underappreciated? Much has to do with the limitations of our source material, the willingness to recognize the patriarchal nature of ancient Roman society, and our lack of familiarity with gender roles as defined by ancient pagans, Jews, and Christians. Join us as we work to draw out the often obscure evidence about what it meant to be a woman in the Greco-Roman and Jewish worlds. We'll look through the eyes of the women who populate the New Testament world, teasing out the often overlooked information about them. And we will assess the vital contributions that women made to the growth of this new religious movement. - *Textual or Historical Analysis*



RELS 3000-006 Portrayal of Islam in Film Across the Globe

Online Synchronous / Aman Agah

Tuesdays 2:30-5:15

(Cross-lists with INTL and FILM)

Students will view films from across the globe, with the goal of analyzing how Muslims and Islam are portrayed in cinema from Muslim and non-Muslim-majority countries, as well as how Muslim writers, directors, and actors tell their own stories. We will study films critically, the history of representations of Muslims and Islam in cinema, as well as how these portrayals have influenced perceptions of Muslims and Islam in various contexts. The course will include analysis of representation in directing, writing, production, and casting, as well as how Muslim creators have taken ownership of their stories within the framework of cinema. - *Cultural or Textual Analysis*



RELS 3113-001 Jesus

TR 1:00-2:15 / James Tabor

What do we know historically about Jesus and how do we know it? An examination of all our early sources, both textual, cultural, and archaeological, to uncover Jesus in the light of his Jewish background. The emphasis will be on recovering his original teachings and his understanding of himself and his mission based on the latest scholarship and new discoveries. -*Textual or Historical Analysis*

RELS 3000-004

Legacy of the Holocaust

Tuesdays 1:00-3:45 / Judy LaPietra
(Cross-listed with HGHR & INTL)

The historical meaning and significance of the Holocaust will be explored, with particular emphasis on oral testimony. We will analyze and discuss the behavior and perspectives of victims, bystanders, and perpetrators—and also our own perspectives, as students of the Holocaust. After reading historians' accounts of the Nazi genocide, student teams will research the USC Shoah Foundation Institute's collection of survivor testimonies.

- Textual or Historical Analysis



RELS 3137-001

Religion in the African American Experience

TR 11:30-12:45 / Julia Moore
(Cross-listed with HIST)

Designed to introduce students to the multiplicity of African American religious traditions, this course explores the religions of Voodoo, Santeria, Christianity, the Nation of Islam and African American Judaism. Issues of class, gender, and racial violence will be points of discussion.

-Historical or Cultural Analysis

RELS 3150-001

The African American Church and Civil Rights

TR 2:30-3:45 / Julia Moore
(Cross-listed with AFRS & HIST)

Designed to introduce students to the historical beginnings of the local African American Church within the Baptist and A.M.E denominations, this course investigates how African American forms of Christianity shaped Black political protest in the twentieth century. The activism of local Black churches during the Modern Civil Rights Movement will be central points of investigation. African American Christian social constructions of sacrifice and ideas of the sacred will also constitute key foci throughout the progression of this class.

-Cultural or Historical Analysis



RELS 3400-001

Applied Research / Fieldwork

By approval / Celia Sinclair

Internships in business or community-based organizations. Specific content based on contract between student, supervising professor and cooperating organization. Fulfills the [C], [H], or [T] requirement. Approximately 120 contact hours for the semester. Contact Celia Sinclair at cbsincla@unccl.edu.

RELS 4000-001

Churches and Temples as Inner/Outer Theaters

Online Synchronous
TR 4:00-5:15 / Mark Pizzato
(Cross-listed with THEA, AAHP, HONR)

This course explores how the architecture, artworks, and performances in religious spaces involve the inner theatre of the visitor's brain, through Western and Eastern traditions.

- Textual or Historical Analysis



RELS 4320-001

Religion and Language

TR 4:00-5:15 / Eric Hoenes
(Cross-listed with ENGL, ANTH, RELS 5000)

Introduces methods for analyzing language and communication in religion. Examines how different communities' uses of spoken and written language influence their religious experiences, identities, and practices.

- Cultural Analysis



RELS 4600-001

Senior Seminar

Wednesdays 2:30-5:15 / Eric Hoenes

This capstone course for majors develops students' written and spoken communication skills and their ability to critically evaluate the content and form of scholarship broadly centered upon religion. Students learn to apply and synthesize scholarly approaches to new subjects and situations.

-Oral and Writing Intensive



RELS 4310-090

Religious Experience

Mondays 5:30-8:15 / Will Sherman
(Cross-listed with PHIL & RELS 5000)

How are we to understand accounts of extraordinary dreams, visions of angels, out of body sensations, and other religious experiences that may seem bizarre and impossible? This course will introduce us to a number of approaches to religious experience: William James's pragmatism, phenomenology from Merleau-Ponty to Sara Ahmed, literary approaches, neuro-scientific explanations, and historical critiques of the very notion of experience. We will encounter a wide array of narratives of religious experiences, from medieval mystical visions to contemporary sightings of UFOs.

-Textual or Cultural Analysis

Liberal Studies Courses

Religious Studies faculty teach the following courses for the General Education Program

Western Historical and Cultural Awareness



LBST 2101-335 & LBST 2101-341

Magic and Religion / Barbara Thiede

Online Synchronous / 1st and 2nd term / TR 10:00-11:15



LBST 2101-336

What is Identity? / Sean McCloud

Online Asynchronous

LBST 2101Q - (337-340)

Ordering the World / Joanne Maguire

Hybrid / Online Asynchronous Lectures

Face-to-Face Breakouts Tuesdays 10:00 / 11:30 / 1:00 / 2:30

Global and Intercultural Connections



LBST 2102-335 & LBST 2102-336

Asian Religions and Culture in Global Media / Janna Shedd

Online Asynchronous



Literature & Culture

LBST 2212Q - (335-338)

Sexing Shakespeare / Kent Brintnall

Lectures TR / 1:00-1:50

Friday Breakouts 9:05 / 10:10 / 11:15 / 1:25

Critical Thinking and Communication

LBST 2301 (335, 336, 338, R91)

Ecological Civic and Religious Identity / Tina Katsanos

Online Synchronous Wednesdays 9:05 / 10:10 / 4:00 / 5:30



LBST 2301 (339, 340, 341)

A Good Life. What Is It? / Celia Sinclair

Online Asynchronous



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