

Department of Religious Studies

Spring 2022 Undergraduate Courses

Important Dates

First day of classes
January 10

Martin Luther
King Jr. Day
University closed
January 17

Last day to add, drop
with no grade
January 18

Deadline to apply for
May 2022 graduation
February 11

Fall 2022 schedule
available on web
March 7

Spring recess
No classes
March 7-12

Last day to withdraw
from course;
grade subject to
Withdrawal Policy
March 21

Registration for fall &
summer 2022 begins
April 4

Spring weekend
No classes
April 15-16

Day of Remembrance
April 30

Last day of classes
May 3

Reading day
May 4

Final examinations
May 5-12

Commencement
May 13-14

RELS 1200 (001-008)

World Religions

Hybrid / Online Asynchronous Lectures / Breakouts on campus Mondays 10:10, 11:15, 12:30, 1:25, 2:30 / Will Sherman
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 1201-001

Intro to Religion

TR 10:00-11:15 / James Tabor

Introduction to the academic study of religion. Whether one holds religious beliefs or not we are all living in historical, cultural, and social worlds that are largely constructed by religious ideas and assumptions. In this course we dig deeply to ask about the kind of "world constructions" that religions represent, examining the origins of our most basic assumptions about the meaning of life, gender and sexuality, moral values, and cultural and social norms. This is an introductory course intended for students of any major or subject area. - *Cultural or Textual Analysis*



RELS 2000-001

The Biblical Dark Arts

MW 2:30-3:45 / John Reeves
A survey of a broad range of biblical characters, stories, and rituals which intersect

with some of the vocations and practices popularly known as "the dark arts"; namely, sorcery, divination, necromancy, ritual magic, astrology, and alchemy.
- *Textual or Historical Analysis*

RELS 2000-002

Building Bible: Uncovering Its Blueprints

Thursdays 2:30-5:15 / John Reeves

Who or what made the Bible? In this course, we will uncover and analyze the fingerprints left by biblical authors, compilers, and editors.
- *Textual or Historical Analysis*



RELS 2000-003

Slave Religion

Hybrid / Online asynchronous and MW on campus 12:20-1:10 / Julia Moore

(Cross-listed with AFRS 2050 and HIST 2000).
What religions did African slaves practice in America? How did slaves create their own religions in a culture where they were considered chattel property?

This course is designed to introduce students to the religious experiences of African slaves in America during the nineteenth century. Race and resistance will be points of exploration.
- *Historical or Cultural Analysis*



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RELS 2000-004

Death and the Afterlife in Asian Religions

TR 1:00-2:15 / Janna Shedd

This course is an introduction to religious concepts of death and death-related practices across Asia. Students will explore a wide range of funerary practices, beliefs regarding Otherworlds and rebirth, ghost stories and festivals, and the gods and goddesses of death. - *Textual or Cultural Analysis*



RELS 2102-001 Introduction to Asian Religions

TR 10:00-11:15/ Janna Shedd
This course is an introduction to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Daoism.

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 Textual Analysis



RELS 2104-001 Old Testament / Hebrew Scriptures

MW 4:00-5:15 / Barbara Thiede
There is a fascinating story behind the creation of ancient biblical literature. In this class, 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 2180-001 Religion in Latin America

TR 11:30-12:45 / Eric Hoenes
(Cross-listed with LTAM 2001)

This course will examine the richness and diversity of Latin American religions. We will examine how different religious traditions have shaped the human experience in Latin America both historically and today. We will pay special attention to how the intercultural encounters between Indigenous Americans, Africans, and Europeans have shaped religious identities, practices, and institutions. Students will become familiar with how religion shapes and is shaped by society, culture, politics, economics, gender, race and ethnicity.

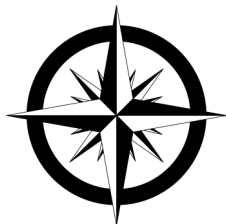
- Cultural Analysis



RELS 2600-001 Orientation to the Study of Religion

Wednesdays 2:30-5:15 / Sean McCloud
Required of all majors as early in their program as possible. Examines basic concepts, theories, and approaches that are involved in the critical, academic study of religion. Attention given to basic research materials and to standard writing practices in the discipline.

-Oral and Writing Intensive



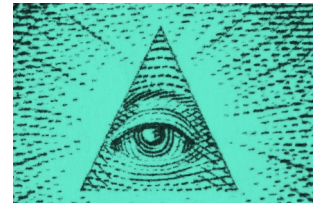
RELS 3000-001 Ghosts, Demons, Fear, and Conspiracy in American Culture

Online Asynchronous / Sean McCloud
(Cross-listed with AMST 3050)

Recent polls show an increasing number of Americans believe in ghosts and demons, have heightened senses of fear, and at least 75% believe in one or more false conspiracy theories.

This asynchronous online class analyzes these subjects and various scholarly explanations as to why so many contemporary Americans would embrace clearly false conspiracies and what kinds of work belief in ghosts and demons do in individual lives and the larger culture.

-Cultural or Historical Analysis



RELS 3000-002 Legacy of the Holocaust

Tuesdays 1:00-3:45 / Judy LaPietra
(Cross-listed with HGHR 3050 & INTL 3002)

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 3000-005 Material Culture of Ancient Israel, Palestine and Jordan

MWF 11:15-12:05 / Shimon Gibson
(Cross-listed with HIST 3002 & ANTH 3050)

An overview of human development in the southern Levant (Israel, Palestine and Jordan) from prehistoric times to late Antiquity. Topics will include archaeological sites, landscapes, building materials, ceramic finds, and other artifacts. We will examine nineteenth century research and modern archaeological excavation techniques, as well as an appreciation of the development of urbanism, the phenomenon of tells, and other aspects of material culture. Pertinent historical textual sources and the results of up-to-date archaeological excavations will also be addressed.

- Cultural or Historical Analysis



RELS 3115-001

Early Christianity

Hybrid/ Online Asynchronous
and Online Synchronous on Fridays 11:15-12:05 /
David Clausen

The Christian church has been the most powerful religious, political, social, cultural, economic, and intellectual institution in the history of Western civilization. Yet the Christian movement did not start out as a culturally significant phenomenon; it began in a remote part of the Roman Empire as a small, lower-class group of followers of a Jewish apocalyptic preacher, crucified as an enemy of the state. How did Christianity become the preferred religion of a Roman emperor and grow to embrace an empire? Join us and trace the early centuries of Christianity from Christ to Constantine. -*Textual or Cultural Analysis*



RELS 3230-001

Race, Religion, and Murder

Hybrid / Online Asynchronous and
MW on campus 1:25-2:15 /
Julia Moore
(Cross-listed with AFRS 3050)

An introduction to the intersection of race, religion, and violence in American culture. Addresses how Jewish, Christian, Islamic, and Asian traditions have been used to justify and even condone acts of violence against women, children, and peoples of color.
- *Cultural or Textual Analysis*

RELS 3260 -001

Buddhism in the Modern World

TR 11:30-12:45 / Alex Kaloyanides
Is Buddhism a philosophy? A mind science? An ancient mystical path? A modern construct? This seminar will explore how Buddhism has been understood in the modern era. Our primary source materials will range from Orientalist poetry to Zen essays to Insight Meditation manuals to 21st-century films to contemporary academic critiques as we discuss one of today's most popular religions.
- *Cultural or Textual 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@uncc.edu.

RELS 4000-002

Dead Sea Scrolls

TR 1:00-2:15 / James Tabor
(Cross-listed with RELS 5000,
ANTH 4020/5020, HIST 5002)

An examination of the influence of the Dead Sea Scrolls on our understanding of various forms of late 2nd Temple Judaism with a focus on what we know and don't know about these texts after 70 years of scholarship.
- *Textual or Historical Analysis*



RELS 4000-091

Religion and Literature

Thursdays 5:30-8:15 / Will Sherman
(Cross-listed with RELS 5000, ENGL 4072/5072)

What connections can be made between the lives of our imaginations and religious ways of knowing and thinking? What can we find if we walk along the frontier between "fiction" and belief/non-belief? This course does not seek to provide a comprehensive map of the interconnections between literature and religion. Rather, we will explore the simple argument that we think better about religion and we think better about literature when we think about them together. We will turn to Sufi mystics, Romantic poets, Zen masters, Toni Morrison, X-Men, and others to pursue these questions.
- *Textual & Cultural Analysis*



RELS 4040-090

Queer Theory

Tuesdays 5:30-8:15 / Kent Brintnall
(Cross-listed with RELS 5101, WGST
4170/5170, PHIL 4990/5050, ENGL 4050/5050)

Introduction to key issues in queer theory, a field of studies that questions and redefines the identity politics of early lesbian and gay studies by investigating the socially constructed nature of identity and sexuality and critiquing normalizing ways of knowing and being.
-*Textual or Cultural Analysis*



RELS 4600-001

Senior Seminar

Tuesdays 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*

Liberal Studies Courses

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

Western Historical and Cultural Awareness

LBST 2101-337 & LBST 2101-338

*Back to the Garden: Music Culture and Faith /
MWF 11:15-12:05 & 12:20-1:10 / Janet McDaniel*

This course will introduce you to the interrelatedness between music and religion from a local and global perspective. We'll explore how music has been a powerful and essential part of religious, cultural, and social experiences. We will also examine how music has been, and is a means to teach, express, reinforce, and sometimes change religious doctrine, cultural belief systems, and identities.



LBST 2101-335 & LBST 2101-336 (1st & 2nd terms)

*Magic and Religion / Online Synchronous /
MW 10:00-11:15 / Barbara Thiede*

Ancient incantations and adjurations, spells and amulets, magic words, prophecy, divination — in what ways can and do religious practices, ideas, and ritual intersect with magic? We'll explore what “religion” and “magic” mean for scholars and how magic and religion overlap in both ancient and modern societies.

Critical Thinking and Communication

LBST 2301 (335, 337, 338)

*A Good Life. What Is It? /
Online Asynchronous / Celia Sinclair*

A Good Life: What is it? How does one live it? This particular section of LBST 2301 will deal with the ways in which “a good life” has been understood in Western thought. What is a good life? How does one go about living it? How is happiness defined and understood? What are the problems we humans must address?

LBST 2301 (339, 340, 341, 342)

*Sustainability & Identity / Online Asynchronous / TR 10:00-11:00
& 11:30-12:45 / Tina Katsanos*

This course is a study of sustainability as part of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. It includes an examination of the ethical dimensions of citizenship and sustainability in political, social, and religious contexts. We will also examine the ways in which citizenship and various religious identities have evolved to include environmental responsibilities.

Department Chair

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Global and Intercultural Connections

LBST 2102-335

*Buddhism Across Borders
TR 2:30-3:45 / Alex Kaloyanides*



How did Buddhism go from being a local movement in ancient India to one of the world's most popular religions today? This course will look at the way Buddhist traditions have been preserved and transformed as Buddhism moved into new communities. This course's sweeping study of Buddhism will give students a new understanding of this religion's distinct way of engaging new cultures and retaining revered traditions.

LBST 2102-336 & LBST 2102-337

*Asian Religions and Culture in Global Media /
Online Asynchronous / Janna Shedd*



This course explores a variety of Asian religions and cultures and examines how they are portrayed in global media, such as films, documentaries, music videos, and graphic novels. Students will learn about these religions through visuals, stories, and the voices of the people of the cultures themselves —and compare those voices to those of outsiders doing the describing.

LBST 2102-338

*Ethnicity and Gender in Global Hinduism
Online Asynchronous, and
Online Synchronous Tuesdays 2:30-3:45/
Yasmine Singh*



This course examines how Hinduism, a non-missionizing tradition, has spread across the world to become a global religion under the British Empire and more recent immigration. It uses the lens of ethnicity and gender to understand the complexity of Hinduism in its diverse cultural manifestations both in India and the diaspora. How has Hinduism transformed —and been transformed by—its new terrains? This class meets online on Tuesdays from 2:30-3:45. The remainder of the work is online asynchronous.



For more information visit religiousstudies.charlotte.edu