

# Religious Studies (RELS)

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## **RELS 100. Religion in Human Experience. 3 hours.**

Introduction to basic questions about religion, focusing on the theological and philosophical ways in which humans have sought to understand faith, transcendence, and the nature of god(s). *Individual and Society course.*

## **RELS 101. Introduction to World Religions. 3 hours.**

A historical survey of the origins and development of several of the world's largest religions, including but not limited to Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. *World Cultures course.*

## **RELS 106. What Is Religion? 3 hours.**

Examination of issues concerning religion, including varying views of the purposes that religions serve, differences between religions, and arguments for the existence of God. Course Information: Same as PHIL 106. Class Schedule Information: To be properly registered, students must enroll in one Lecture and one Discussion. *Individual and Society course.*

## **RELS 117. Understanding the Holocaust. 3 hours.**

Examines the Holocaust of European Jewry as the result of antisemitic ideology and the development of modern German political forces; implementation of the Final Solution. Course Information: Same as HIST 117 and JST 117. *Individual and Society course, and Past course.*

## **RELS 120. Catholic Thought: An Introduction. 3 hours.**

Introduction to the main topics, interests, and methods of Catholic thought. Course Information: Same as CST 120. *Past course.*

## **RELS 121. Introduction to Judaism. 3 hours.**

Introduction to the Jewish religion as it has developed from its roots in the Hebrew Bible until today, emphasizing its central texts and concepts. Same as JST 101. *Individual and Society course.*

## **RELS 122. Minority Perspectives in the Germanic Context. 3 hours.**

Investigation of the challenges and/or opportunities of multicultural societies by examining in a socio-historical context texts created by members of Europe's ethnic, religious, and national minorities. Course Information: Same as GER 122 and JST 122. No credit toward a major or minor program offered by the Department of Germanic Studies. Lectures, discussion, and readings in English. *Creative Arts course, and World Cultures course.*

## **RELS 123. Introduction to Yiddish Culture and Literature. 3 hours.**

Yiddish culture in Europe and the U.S. in socio-historical context. Focus on the role of Yiddish in conceptions of secular, cultural, religious, national Jewish identities. Course Information: Same as GER 123 and JST 123. No credit toward a major or minor program offered by the Department of Germanic Studies. Lectures, discussion, and readings in English. *Creative Arts course, and World Cultures course.*

## **RELS 124. Introduction to the Hebrew Bible. 3 hours.**

A study of the Five Books of Moses (a.k.a. Torah or Pentateuch) within the contexts of the ancient Near East and biblical literature. Course Information: Same as CL 124 and JST 124. Taught in English. *Past course.*

## **RELS 125. Black Religious Traditions. 3 hours.**

Introduction to the religious history of black people in the United States and the diaspora. Examination of religious institutions, the role of religion in black social and political movements, mass rebellions, and revolts. Course Information: Same as BLST 125. *Past course, and US Society course.*

## **RELS 126. Introduction to Jewish History. 3 hours.**

Overview of Jewish history from Biblical times until the present. Topics will range from second Temple Judea and the beginning of the diaspora through 21st-century Jewish life in America and Israel. Course Information: Same as JST 102. *Individual and Society course, and Past course.*

## **RELS 127. Diaspora, Exile, Genocide: Aspects of the European Jewish Experience in Literature and Film. 3 hours.**

Literature and films on European Jewish responses to anti-Semitism and persecution in a historical context to reveal the condition of post-Enlightenment German-speaking Jewish and Yiddish-speaking societies. Course Information: Same as GER 125 and JST 125. No credit toward a major or minor program offered by the Department of Germanic Studies. Taught in English. *Past course, and World Cultures course.*

## **RELS 128. The Jesus Movement and the New Testament. 3 hours.**

Investigates the Jesus movement from its beginnings as a small Jewish reform sect through its development into the religion known as Christianity. Uses New Testament writings as primary sources for reconstructing the past. Course Information: Same as CL 128 and CST 128. *Past course.*

## **RELS 130. Introduction to Islam. 3 hours.**

Introductory study of the religion, culture, and present variety of Islam in Islamic countries and in the West. *World Cultures course.*

## **RELS 150. Catholicism in U.S. History. 3 hours.**

The Catholic experience in the United States from its colonial origins to the present. Course Information: Same as CST 150 and HIST 150. *US Society course.*

## **RELS 175. Understanding the Bible as Literature. 3 hours.**

A broad overview of various literary genres in the Bible such as origin narrative, historical narrative, poetry, wisdom literature, prophetic/apocalyptic literature, parable, and epistle. Course Information: Same as ENGL 175. Class Schedule Information: To be properly registered, students must enroll in one Lecture and one Discussion. *Creative Arts course.*

## **RELS 177. Middle Eastern Civilization. 3 hours.**

Introduction to the culture and society of the Middle East, with special attention to the development of Islam and the consequences of westernization. Course Information: Same as HIST 177. Course is offered in both face-to-face and hybrid/online formats. Check the class schedule for details. When taught online or hybrid, students will be required to have reliable internet access and a means for accessing it (computer preferable). Class Schedule Information: To be properly registered, students must enroll in one Discussion and one Lecture. *Past course, and World Cultures course.*

## **RELS 208. Classical Mythology. 3 hours.**

Intensive study of the gods and heroic sagas of the cultures of the ancient Mediterranean world, through original sources in translation. Course Information: Same as CL 208. All readings are in English. *Individual and Society course, and Past course.*

## **RELS 215. Anthropology of Religion. 3 hours.**

Exploration of varieties of religious experience, including magic and witchcraft, with emphasis on non-Western religions and the role of religious institutions in social integration. Course Information: Same as ANTH 215. Prerequisite(s): ENGL 161. *Individual and Society course, and World Cultures course.*

**RELS 220. Buddhist Art and Architecture. 3 hours.**

A chronologically and thematically organized survey of Buddhist art and architecture in Asia and beyond. Course Information: Same as AH 220 and GLAS 220. *Creative Arts course, and World Cultures course.*

**RELS 222. Phil in the Islamic World. 3 hours.**

Survey of philosophy in the Islamic world from 8th century until today. Topics include: logic and psychology to metaphysics, theology, and politics. Special emphasis on cultural interactions between philosophers of different faiths and cultures. Course Information: Same as ARAB 222 and PHIL 222. Prerequisite(s): One non-javascript::logic course in philosophy or consent of the instructor.

**RELS 225. Topics in Muslim-Jewish Relations. 3 hours.**

Muslim-Jewish interactions from the rise of Islam until contemporary times, the relationship between Biblical and Quranic materials, the Jewish and Islamic interpretive tradition and the legal systems of the two religious traditions. Course Information: Same as CL 225 and JST 225.

**RELS 230. Topics in Islam. 3 hours.**

Topics, issues, and methodologies in Islamic studies. Course Information: May be repeated if topics vary. Recommended background: ENGL 160. *World Cultures course.*

**RELS 231. Topics in Jewish Thought. 3 hours.**

Survey of major topics in Jewish theology, philosophy, ethics and political thought. Course Information: Same as JST 230. May be repeated if topics vary. Recommended Background: JST 101 or the equivalent.

**RELS 232. The Religious World of the Earliest Christians. 3 hours.**

Explores the religious world of the earliest Christians, focusing on the ways in which early Christian ideas and practices arose out of the cultures, religions, and philosophies of the ancient Mediterranean basin. Course Information: Same as CL 232 and HIST 232. *Past course.*

**RELS 233. Topics in Religious Studies. 3 hours.**

Study of a specific topic in religious studies. Course Information: May be repeated if topics vary.

**RELS 240. Philosophy and Revelation: Jewish and Christian Perspectives. 3 hours.**

Introduction to philosophical ways of addressing the claim that a book (the Bible, the Quran) comes from God. Texts by Immanuel Kant, Moses Mendelssohn, and Soren Kierkegaard, among others. Course Information: Previously listed as RELS 141. Same as PHIL 240 and JST 240. Prerequisite(s): One non-logic course in philosophy or consent of the instructor. Class Schedule Information: To be properly registered, students must enroll in one Discussion/Recitation and one Lecture. *Individual and Society course, and World Cultures course.*

**RELS 241. Philosophy of Religion. 3 hours.**

Philosophical inquiry into the grounds of faith and belief, the nature of religious and mystical experience, and the existence and nature of God. Course Information: Same as PHIL 241. Prerequisite(s): One non-logic course in philosophy or consent of the instructor. Class Schedule Information: To be properly registered, students must enroll in one Discussion and one Lecture.

**RELS 242. The History of Jewish Biblical Interpretation. 3 hours.**

Jewish interpretation of the Hebrew bible. A survey of the span of Jewish history and the wide range of cultural contexts that have impacted the understanding of the Torah. Course Information: Same as CL 242 and JST 242. *Past course.*

**RELS 243. The Archaeology of Buddhism. 3 hours.**

The development, spread, integration, and decline of Buddhism in many parts of Asia. The study of material culture as a way of reconstructing and understanding the religious past. Course Information: Same as ANTH 243. Prerequisite(s): ENGL 161.

**RELS 246. Sociology of Religion. 3 hours.**

Analysis of the structures and functions of religious institutions in modern society. Special attention to the interplay between religion and other social phenomena, such as economics, politics, and secular culture. Course Information: Same as SOC 246. Occasional field trips. Prerequisite(s): One social sciences Course Distribution Credit (CDC) course and sophomore standing. Class Schedule Information: To be properly registered, students must enroll in one Lecture-Discussion and one Practice. *Individual and Society course, and US Society course.*

**RELS 250. Eastern and Western Philosophies of Religion. 3 hours.**

Eastern and Western philosophies of religion: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Christianity. Course Information: Same as INST 250. *World Cultures course.*

**RELS 255. Religious Diversity: Conceptual and Practical Issues. 3 hours.**

The facts of religious diversity and the questions raised by them. Special attention to Catholic Christian perspectives, treating them from secular and other religious perspectives.

**RELS 256. Religion in American History. 3 hours.**

A survey of the varieties of religious experience in American history from the sixteenth to the twentieth-first centuries, with emphasis on group formation and the social and cultural consequences of American religious diversity. Course Information: Same as HIST 256. Prerequisite(s): ENGL 161. Class Schedule Information: To be properly registered, students must enroll in one Lecture and one Discussion/Recitation. *Past course, and US Society course.*

**RELS 257. Religious Diversity in the Healthcare Fields. 3 hours.**

Explores the intersection of religion and healthcare with the goal of preparing future healthcare providers to engage with diverse religious perspectives and behaviors in healthcare settings.

**RELS 279. The Qur'an: A Historical and Cultural Approach. 3 hours.**

Introduction to the text, history of interpretation, and the cultural significance of the Qur'an. Course Information: Previously listed as RELS 330. Taught in English. Recommended background: RELS 130.

**RELS 292. Major Religious Thinkers. 3 hours.**

An examination of one or more major/classical thinkers and their writings. Course Information: May be repeated if topics vary. Previously listed as RELS 320. Prerequisite(s): RELS 100, 101, 115, 215, or 241.

**RELS 293. Dante's Divine Comedy. 3 hours.**

An in-depth study of the Divine Comedy, read in English, against the historical, religious, philosophical and cultural background of the Middle Ages. Course Information: Same as CST 293 and ITAL 293. Previously listed as RELS 193. *Creative Arts course, and Past course.*

**RELS 294. Topics in Catholic History. 3 hours.**

An investigation of the impact of human migration and cultural pluralism on Catholicism and an analysis of the role of the Catholic Church in group relations. Topics will vary. Course Information: Same as CST 294 and HIST 294. May be repeated if topics vary.

**RELS 295. Topics in Catholic Thought. 3 hours.**

Critical investigation of a topic or topics central to the development of Catholic thought, carried on by study of its proponents and opponents. Topics will vary. Course Information: Same as CST 295. May be repeated if topics vary.

**RELS 296. Topics in Jewish Studies. 3 hours.**

How Jews became a modern ethnic group, how their experiences compare with other ethnic groups, and how their experiences in modern times vary from nation to nation. Course Information: Same as JST 296. May be repeated to a maximum of 6 hours.

**RELS 311. Gender and Sexuality in Early Christianity and Judaism. 3 hours.**

Examination of the root of contemporary perspectives on gender and sexuality in the early traditions of Judaism and Christianity including the Bible, the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Church Fathers, the Talmud, and legends of the saints. Course Information: Same as GWS 311 and JST 311.

**RELS 376. Literature and Religion. 3 hours.**

Studies in the relation of literature to doctrines, imagery, practices, experiences, or history of one or more religious traditions. Course Information: Same as ENGL 376. Previously listed as RELS 343. Recommended background: Any of ENGL 101, 105, 175, or 207-209.

**RELS 392. Major Problems in Religious Studies. 3 hours.**

In-depth examination of a major topic or problem in religious thought. Topics will vary. Course Information: May be repeated if topics vary. Prerequisite(s): At least one course in religious studies.

**RELS 394. Topics in Catholic History and Culture. 3 hours.**

Exploration of various topics in Catholic history and culture. Course Information: Same as CST 394 and HIST 394. Prerequisite(s): One course in history or Catholic studies; or consent of the instructor.

**RELS 395. Topics in Jewish Studies. 3 hours.**

Selected topics in Jewish culture and history. Course Information: Same as JST 394. May be repeated to a maximum of 9 hours. Students may register in more than one section per term. Prerequisite(s): Consent of the instructor.

**RELS 399. Independent Study. 1-3 hours.**

Selected topics for individual study. Course Information: May be repeated to a maximum of 6 hours. Students may register in more than one section per term. Prerequisite(s): Sophomore standing or above; and consent of the instructor. Recommended Background: Two courses in religious studies.

**RELS 420. Advanced Studies in Jewish Religion. 3 or 4 hours.**

In-depth study of a period or mode of Jewish religious development or textual production, or an examination of a religious tenet or practice across various historical periods. Topics will vary. Course Information: Same as JST 420. 3 undergraduate hours. 4 graduate hours. May be repeated up to 1 time(s) if topics vary. Prerequisite(s): JST 101; and JST 230 or JST 242 or JST 254.

**RELS 422. Studies in Medieval Philosophy. 0-4 hours.**

Study of selected philosophers such as Boethius, Avicenna, Aquinas, William Ockham, and selected issues such as the relationship between faith and reason, the nature of reason, the nature of human cognition, the nature of morality. Course Information: Same as PHIL 422. 3 undergraduate hours. 4 graduate hours. May be repeated if topics or figures vary. Approval to repeat course granted by the department. Prerequisite(s): One non-logic 200-level philosophy course; or consent of the instructor. Class Schedule Information: To be properly registered, students must enroll in one Discussion/Recitation and one Lecture.

**RELS 430. Advanced Studies in Jewish Thought. 3 or 4 hours.**

Advanced topics in Jewish theology, philosophy, ethics or political thought. Course Information: Same as JST 430. 3 undergraduate hours. 4 graduate hours. May be repeated if topics vary. Prerequisite(s): One 100-level and one 200-level course in Jewish Studies.

**RELS 441. Topics in Philosophy of Religion. 3 or 4 hours.**

Intensive study of one or more selected topics concerning the philosophical aspects of basic religious beliefs and concepts. Course Information: Same as PHIL 441. 3 undergraduate hours. 4 graduate hours. May be repeated if topics vary. Approval to repeat course granted by the department. Prerequisite(s): One non-logic 200-level course in philosophy; or consent of the instructor.

**RELS 446. Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in American Religion. 3 or 4 hours.**

Religious institutions in the U.S. as a crucible for racial, ethnic, and gender identities, group formation, and intergroup relations; major world religions represented in the U.S. Course Information: Same as SOC 446. 3 undergraduate hours. 4 graduate hours. Prerequisite(s): SOC 100 and junior standing or above; or consent of instructor.

**RELS 475. The Bible as Literature: Hebrew Bible. 3 or 4 hours.**

Literary analysis of genres and themes of the Hebrew Bible and close reading of the biblical texts. Sources of the Bible and their historical context. Course Information: Same as ENGL 475 and JST 475. 3 undergraduate hours. 4 graduate hours. Previously listed as RELS 478. Taught in English. Recommended background: Any of ENGL 175 or ENGL 207-209.

**RELS 476. The Bible as Literature: New Testament. 3 or 4 hours.**

Literary analysis of the New Testament and its historical and religious contexts, focusing on the gospels and Pauline letters. Course Information: Same as ENGL 476. 3 undergraduate hours. 4 graduate hours. Previously listed as RELS 479. Recommended background: Any of ENGL 175, 207-209, 475.

**RELS 494. Topics in Jewish Studies. 3 or 4 hours.**

Selected topics in Jewish studies. Course Information: Same as JST 494. 3 undergraduate hours. 4 graduate hours. May be repeated to a maximum of 6 hours if topics vary. Prerequisite(s): JST 101 or JST 102 or consent of the instructor.

**RELS 495. Topics in Religious History. 3 or 4 hours.**

Specific topics are announced each term. Course Information: Same as HIST 495. 3 undergraduate hours. 4 graduate hours. May be repeated. Students may register in more than one section per term. Prerequisite(s): 3 hours of history or consent of the instructor.