

## RELIGION (DIV II)

Chair: Associate Professor JASON JOSEPHSON

Professors: D. BUELL\*, G. DREYFUS\*\*\*. Associate Professors: J. HIDALGO, J. JOSEPHSON. Assistant Professors: J. ISRAEL\*, S. YACOOB. Lecturer: K. GUTSCHOW. Croghan Bicentennial Professors: M. JOHNSON-DEBAUFRE, V. WIMBUSH. Visiting Lecturer: Z. ADHAMI.

### 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 his/her 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

- Religion 200 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion
- One 300-level seminar or tutorial
- Religion 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 co-ordinate 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.

The department will work with students in the classes of 2014-2015 to adapt these new guidelines for the major. Beginning in spring 2012, 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. You can find general study away guidelines for Religion [here](#).

### REL 102(F) The Meaning of Life

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, Søren Kierkegaard, Martin Luther King Jr, Jean-Paul Sartre, Shantideva, Peter Singer, Leo Tolstoy, Max Weber, and Slavoj Zizek.

**Class Format:** lecture

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

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** none

**Expected Class Size:** 40

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Fall 2016*

LEC Section: 01 MR 01:10 PM 02:25 PM Instructor: Jason Josephson

### **REL 103 The Way of Power: A History of Occult Knowledge and Practices**

Since antiquity, certain individuals and groups have claimed privileged access to hidden sources of knowledge, which they maintained could only be revealed to the initiated or enlightened. What is more, it was also often asserted that this knowledge conveyed various powers' from summoning good and evil spirits, transforming base metals into gold, predicting the future, achieving bodily immortality, directly witnessing the face of God or even becoming a God. How does examining these claims alter our understanding of established religions? This course will trace the historical development of these practices and beliefs-known to scholars as "esotericism"—from antiquity to the present. It will cover such topics as magic, alchemy, kabbalah, Gnosticism, hermeticism, Theosophy, tantrism, occultism, vodou, and spiritualism. Emphasizing close the reading of the primary sources, we will explore the boundaries between religion, magic and science. We will discuss esotericism as the site for the European appropriation of the "Orient," the construction of discipline of religious studies, and even the origins of modern science.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** two short writing assignments, a midterm, and a final exam

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** none

**Expected Class Size:** 40

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Denise Buell

### **REL 104 Religious Conflict and Cooperation**

Violent conflicts throughout the world are animated by religious rhetoric, driven by religious actors, and sanctioned by religious authorities. At the same time, religious and "interfaith" organizations are often prominent participants in peace advocacy and conflict resolution. What are the varieties of religious involvement in war and peace? What can we learn about "religion" from the conflicts and cooperative initiatives that are labeled "religious"? Does the modern nation-state increase the likelihood of religious conflict? Will 21st century globalization support more or less conflict and/or cooperation? We will investigate these and other questions through contemporary case studies. In some cases we will focus on conflicts over territory: the Temple Mount/Noble Sanctuary in Jerusalem, the Babri Mosque/Birthplace of Rama in Ayodhya, India, the Black Hills in South Dakota. But we will also study the rhetoric of Usama Bin Laden and the role of spirit possession in the formation of the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda. Finally, we will consider efforts to end such conflicts peacefully and delegitimize militant groups. In each case, we will see how competition for control over what counts as "Judaism," "Hinduism," "religion," "religious," and so forth is central to these conflicts and to the goals of those who seek to resolve them. Along with primary and secondary sources related to each case study, we will also read theoretical works by authors that may include Mark Juergensmeyer, Samuel Huntington, Scott Appleby, Bruce Lincoln, Saba Mahmood, Olivier Roy, Ananda Abeysekera, Talal Asad, Tomoko Masuzawa, Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, and others.

**Class Format:** lecture

**Requirements/Evaluation:** two short papers, an in-class mid-term exam, and a final paper or project

**Extra Info:** not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** first-year students and potential Religion majors

**Enrollment Limit:** none

**Expected Class Size:** 30

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Jeffrey Israel

### **REL 106 Is God Dead? Secularization in the Modern World**

In 1966, Time magazine published an edition titled "Is God Dead?", alluding to Friedrich Nietzsche's famous proclamation that "God is dead." The Time edition examined the growing number of people in the United States who proclaimed disbelief in organized religion or

in God. Today, one in five people in the United States identify as "none" when asked about their religious affiliation. This trend is one important component of what has come to be known as "secularization." At the same time, however, the idea that religion is increasingly disappearing or becoming irrelevant has been significantly challenged by the rise of the "religious right" in the United States, as well as Islamism, Hindu nationalism, and many other religious revival movements across the globe. This course will take a theoretical and global comparative perspective to understand the nature of secularization in the modern world. Has secularization taken place or not? What does it mean to say we live in a secular society? Is it the case that "Western" society is secular whereas the rest of the world is not? The course will answer such questions by beginning with broad historical narratives and theoretical accounts that propose various interpretations of secularization as a historical process (focusing primarily on Peter Berger, Steve Bruce, Jose Casanova, and Charles Taylor). The remainder of the course will then explore a variety of case studies from the Americas, the Middle East, India, and East Asia to nuance and complicate those theories and narratives. We will explore how the very idea of secularization presupposes a constructed notion of "religion" and will think about the implications of that secular-religion binary.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active participation, two short essays (4-5 pages), in-class mid-term exam, and final project

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** prospective Religion majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Zaid Adhami

### **REL 171 Music and Spirituality**

**Crosslistings:** MUS 171/REL 171

Across cultures and across millennia, music has served to enable, inspire, and express the spiritual life experiences of communities and individuals. Why is this so? In what contexts and through what means can making and hearing music acquire a spiritual dimension? This course will take a topical approach to exploring music's spiritual power, considering such areas as the function of music in ritual practices from various cultures and times, the use of music to tell sacred stories, and the role of music created in the face of death and its aftermath. Our primary focus will be on music from Christian traditions from medieval to modern times, enriched by conversations with musicians immersed in the music of other world faith traditions. We will explore connections between music and spirituality through a wide variety of composers and styles, including plainchant and Renaissance sacred choral music; classics by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Brahms; American hymnody and spirituals; Igor Stravinsky and Arvo Pärt; John Coltrane and Dave Brubeck; and selected artists from the world of contemporary popular music.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on class participation, several brief writing assignments, a midterm paper, and a final project with presentation

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** students with a demonstrated interest in music or religion

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under MUS; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 1

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Jennifer Bloxam

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

As recently as the 1960s, the most influential theorists of modernity were predicting that religion would eventually vanish, while theologians lamented what they called the "Death of God." But one has only to glance at today's headlines to see that accounts of religion's demise were premature. Indeed a basic knowledge of religion is indispensable to understanding the current global moment as well as a range of fields from political science to English literature and history. To explore the meaning of religion, this course will introduce the debates around which the discipline of religious studies has been constituted. It will familiarize students with the discipline's most significant theorists (both foundational and contemporary) and trace their multidisciplinary—philosophical, sociological, anthropological, and psychological—modes of inquiry. At stake are questions such as: How does one go about studying religion? Is "religion" even a cultural universal? Or is it merely the byproduct of the European Enlightenment? What is religion's relationship to God? 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?

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, three short (2-3 pages) writing assignments, a 5-page midterm paper, and a 10-page final paper

**Extra Info:** not available for the fifth course option

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

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Spring 2017*

SEM Section: 01 MW 11:00 AM 12:15 PM Instructor: Saadia Yacoub

**REL 201(F) The Hebrew Bible****Crosslistings:** REL 201/COMP 201/JWST 201

The Hebrew Bible is perhaps the single most influential work in the history of Western philosophy, literature, and art. But the overwhelming presence of the text in nearly every aspect of modern culture often obscures the sheer brilliance of its narrative technique as well as the complex interplay between law, history, prophecy, and poetry. This course offers a comprehensive introduction to the literary, historical, and theological aspects of the Hebrew Bible with an eye towards developing a sophisticated understanding of the text in its ancient context. Through the close reading of substantial portions of the Hebrew Scripture in translation and the application of various modern critical approaches to culture and literature, students will explore fundamental questions about the social, ritual, and philosophical history of ancient Israel, as well as the fundamental power of storytelling that has resonated across two millennia.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on class participation, short written assignments, and two to three longer papers**Prerequisites:** none**Enrollment Preferences:** Jewish Studies concentrators, Religion and Comparative Literature majors**Enrollment Limit:** 40**Expected Class Size:** 40**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or JWST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

ARAB Arabic Studies Electives

JWST Gateway Courses

*Fall 2016*

LEC Section: 01 TR 09:55 AM 11:10 AM Instructor: Edan Dekel

**REL 202 Moses: Stranger in a Strange Land****Crosslistings:** REL 202/JWST 202/COMP 214

As chieftain, priest, prophet, and lawgiver all in one, Moses occupies the central place in the history of Israelite and Jewish leaders. However, he is a somewhat unlikely candidate for such an important role. He is God's chosen leader among the enslaved Israelites, but he is raised as an Egyptian prince. He is a spokesman for his people, but he is slow of speech. He is the lawgiver and first judge of his nation, yet he is quick-tempered and impatient. The story of the most revered figure in the Jewish tradition, who nevertheless remains an outsider to the very end, has fascinated commentators and inspired countless artistic and literary interpretations. This course will engage in a close study of the figure of Moses by examining the biblical narrative of his life and career from Exodus through Deuteronomy with an eye towards understanding the complex and often contradictory portrait of this self-described "stranger in a strange land." We will also examine some of the ancient legendary and folkloric accounts about Moses, as well as philosophical and allegorical treatments in Hellenistic Jewish, early Christian, and Muslim biographies. We will then proceed to investigate key modern reconfigurations and critiques of Moses in several genres, which may include renaissance visual depictions, literary works by Sigmund Freud, George Eliot, Thomas Mann, and Zora Neale Hurston, and even musical and cinematic renditions. *All readings are in translation.*

**Class Format:** seminar**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, short written assignments, and two or three longer papers**Prerequisites:** none**Enrollment Preferences:** students who have already taken a course in biblical literature**Enrollment Limit:** 19**Expected Class Size:** 19**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or JWST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

ARAB Arabic Studies Electives

JWST Core Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Edan Dekel

**REL 203 Judaism: Before The Law (D)****Crosslistings:** REL 203/JWST 101

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 by Franz Rosenzweig, Leo Strauss and Joseph Soloveitchik, Kafka's *The Trial* with his parable "Before The Law," Woody Allen's film *Crimes and Misdemeanors*, and ethnographic accounts of contemporary Jewish observance. *All readings will be in translation.*

**Class Format:** seminar

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

**Extra Info:** not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

JLST Interdepartmental Electives

JLST Enactment/Applications in Institutions

JWST Gateway Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Jeffrey Israel

### **REL 205 Ancient Wisdom Literature**

**Crosslistings:** REL 205/CLAS 205/COMP 217/JWST 205

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.*

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

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

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or JWST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS or COMP

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

JWST Core Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Edan Dekel

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

**Crosslistings:** REL 206/COMP 206/JWST 206

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:** discussion

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

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or JWST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

JWST Core Electives

*Spring 2017*

SEM Section: 01 TR 09:55 AM 11:10 AM Instructor: Edan Dekel

**REL 207 From Adam to Noah: Literary Imagination and the Primeval History in Genesis****Crosslistings:** REL 207/COMP 250/JWST 207/CLAS 207

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 several continuations of these variant traditions in medieval and early modern literature, with particular attention to the extensive material on the figures of Cain and Noah. *All readings are in translation.*

**Class Format:** discussion**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on class participation and several writing assignments**Extra Info:** core course for COMP**Prerequisites:** none**Enrollment Preferences:** students who have already taken a course in Biblical literature**Enrollment Limit:** 19**Expected Class Size:** 19**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or JWST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP or CLAS**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

ARAB Arabic Studies Electives

JWST Core Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Edan Dekel

**REL 208 Ancient Greek Religion****Crosslistings:** CLAS 208/REL 208

This course explores the nature and evolution of ancient Greek religion from the Bronze Age (1200s BCE) to the rise of Christianity, with a focus on ritual and cultic practices in their cultural and historical context. We will draw on the rich evidence provided by literary and documentary texts, and also take into account archaeological evidence, including works of art such as sculpture and vase painting. We will pay special attention to ritual in civic and political life, and its role in expressing and forming individual and group identity. We will also examine the intersection of religion and literature by reading works that describe or depict cultic practice, or that were composed for performance in ritual contexts. Readings include Homer's *Iliad*, Hesiod's *Theogony*, Euripides' *Bacchae*, Aristophanes' *Women at the Thesmophoria*, and selections from the *Homeric Hymns* and Pindar's *Odes*.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on several short papers, a midterm, a final research paper, and class participation**Prerequisites:** none**Enrollment Preferences:** majors and potential majors in Classics and Religion**Enrollment Limit:** 25**Expected Class Size:** 15**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 1

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC

**REL 209 Jewish America****Crosslistings:** REL 209/JWST 209

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.

**Class Format:** seminar

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Jeffrey Israel

### **REL 210 The New Testament: Purpose, History and Method (W)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 210/CLAS 210/COMP 213

The New Testament is the most important collection of documents in the Christian religion. This course offers overviews and discussions of the origin and purpose of the writings, their influence throughout history, and the development of methods of readings of the texts. We start with the origin of the writings before they became collected into the New Testament, and ask: what forms of writings (genres) in Greco-Roman culture were available to the authors of the new scriptures, and how they were used for the purpose of shaping faith in Jesus Christ and creating communities? Why just these scriptures were included, and not others, for instance, the Gospel of Thomas, is another much discussed question. The impact of the New Testament writings upon society is a problematic history; for instance, they have been used to support negative attitudes to Jews, women and homosexuals. This raises the issue of how to read the New Testament. There are many different ways of reading the New Testament; perhaps the most common way to read it is as Scripture, important for one's religious faith. In this course, however, we will focus on scholarly and academic readings of the New Testament. But they, too, have gone through many changes, influenced by contemporary methods, e.g. historical-critical ones in the 19th and into 20th century, more recently, by literary, feminist and post-colonial readings. Through extensive readings of New Testament writings in their cultural and historical context, documentations of their use in history, and recent theories of interpretation, the aim is to gain an independent position on the New Testament as a historical and religious document.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** one class presentation; three 3-page papers, one 5- to 7-page paper, and a final paper (15 pages)

**Prerequisites:** none; open to all

**Enrollment Preferences:** sophomores

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS or COMP

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Halvor Moxnes

### **REL 211(F) Earliest Christianities**

This history course explores the diversity and development of early Christianity primarily through the writings of early Christians beyond the New Testament canon. Attention is given to diverse interpretations of Jesus and Judaism, the emergence of church structures and rituals, and the construction of the categories "orthodoxy" and "heresy" in the context of the struggle for authority and identity in the Roman Empire as well as at the intersections between historiography and contemporary religious and political debates.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active preparation and participation, 1 text analysis paper (5 pages), midterm, and take home final

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** none

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Fall 2016*

### **REL 212 The Development of Christianity: 30-600 C.E. (W)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 212/HIST 324

This class will introduce you to the history, writings, practices, and structures of early Christians between 30-600 CE. Who were "Christians" and how did they understand and define themselves in this time period? What historical and cultural factors influenced the ways in which Christians were perceived, could imagine themselves, and lived? While this class addresses the basic flow of events and major figures in early Christian history, it will also require you to develop a critical framework for the study of history in general. In addition, you will gain significant experience in the critical analysis of primary source materials. Special attention will be paid to the incredible diversity of early Christian thought and practice.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion; in-class group work

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active and informed participation, one reflection paper (1 page), two textual analysis papers (3-4 pages)—at least one to be revised (option to revise both)

(see "Extra Info" for additional requirements)

**Extra Info:** additional requirements: one historiographical analysis (5-7 pages), and a take-home final exam

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** sophomores considering a major in Religion or History, then senior and junior majors in these departments

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

JWST Elective Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Denise Buell

### **REL 214 Religion and the State**

**Crosslistings:** REL 214/PSCI 271

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution begins: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." What does "religion" mean in this formulation? Should "religion" be singled-out for exclusion from government? Are "religious" reasons ever legitimate reasons for laws, policies or popular political action? Should "religious" organizations be exempt from otherwise generally applicable laws? Is "religion" good or necessary for democratic societies? In this course we will respond to these and related questions through an investigation of "religion" as a concept in political theory. Particular attention will be given to the modern liberal tradition and its critics. Coverage will range from modern classics to innovative contemporary arguments. Classics may include John Locke's *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, selections from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract*, James Madison's *Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments*, Immanuel Kant's *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, John Stewart Mill's *Three Essays On Religion*, and John Dewey's *A Common Faith*. More recent arguments may come from John Rawls, Alasdair MacIntyre, Nicholas Wolterstorff, Martha Nussbaum, Jeffrey Stout, Winnifred Sullivan, Brian Leiter and Andrew Koppelman.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, two short papers, a midterm take-home exam, and a final take-home exam

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors, those interested in being Religion majors, and Political Science majors concentrating on Political Theory

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

JLST Interdepartmental Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Jeffrey Israel

### **REL 216(S) Greek Art and the Gods**

**Crosslistings:** ARTH 238/CLAS 248/REL 216

In the Iliad, when the god Apollo is visualized, it is as a man, angry in his heart, coming down from the peaks of Olympos, bow and quiver on his shoulders, the arrows clanging as the god moves, "like the coming of night," to bring dogs, horses, and men to their deaths. By the end of the Classical period, one statue of the archer god depicted him as a boy teasing a lizard. In this course, we will examine the development of the images the Greek gods and goddesses, from their superhuman engagement in the heroic world of epic, to their sometimes sublime artistic presence, complex religious function, and transformation into metaphors in aesthetic and philosophical thought. The course will cover the basic stylistic, iconographical, narrative, and ritual aspects of the gods and goddesses in ancient Greek culture. The course will address in detail influential artistic monuments, literary forms, and social phenomena, including the sculptures of Olympia and the Parthenon; divine corporeality in poetry; the theology of mortal-immortal relations; the cultural functions of visual representations of gods, and the continued interest in the gods long after the end of antiquity. Readings

assignments will include selections from Homer, Hesiod, Sappho, Aischylos, Euripides, Plato, Walter Burkert, Jean-Pierre Vernant, Nikolaus Himmelmann, Erika Simon, and Friedrich Nietzsche.

**Class Format:** lecture and discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** short writing assignments, midterm exam, final exam, final paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** preference will be given to pre-registered Art-History majors needing to fulfill the pre-1400 requirement; otherwise, the course is open to any interested student

**Enrollment Limit:** 40

**Expected Class Size:** 30

**Dept. Notes:** satisfies the pre-1400 requirement; satisfies the pre-1600 elective requirement in the art-history major.

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARTH and CLAS; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 1

**Other Attributes:**

ARTH pre-1600 Courses

*Spring 2017*

LEC Section: 01 TF 02:35 PM 03:50 PM Instructor: Guy Hedreen

### **REL 217 Medieval England**

**Crosslistings:** HIST 231/REL 217

Across the entire world of the Middle Ages, no region has captured the modern pop-culture imagination as much as medieval England. From the Battle of Hastings to Magna Carta, from Braveheart to King Arthur, medieval English history and popular knowledge of the medieval past are closely linked. This course will survey the history of England from the Roman period through the reign of Richard II (AD 43—1399). We will find a great deal to detain us in these thirteen centuries, including the Anglo-Saxon settlement of England and subsequent conversion to Christianity, the Viking raids of the ninth and tenth centuries, the Norman Conquest, the growth of English common law, the murder of Thomas Beckett, Edward I's campaigns in Wales and Scotland, the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, and the beginning of the Hundred Years War. We will focus particularly on power and politics, but primary readings will add important social, cultural and religious context. Our meetings will emphasize lectures and discussion equally. No prior knowledge is expected.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** several short papers, a midterm and a final

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** History majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 40

**Expected Class Size:** 35

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

HIST Group C Electives - Europe and Russia

HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Eric Knibbs

### **REL 218 Gnosis, Gnostics, Gnosticism (W)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 218/COMP 218/CLAS 218

What is gnosis and Gnosticism? Who were the Gnostics? 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 as well as to the debates over and claims made about Gnosticism in modern times. We shall explore neoplatonic, Jewish, and Christian thought, as well as modern spiritualism and esotericism. We shall also ask about how ancient Gnostics relate to later religious groups such as the Knights Templar and modern Theosophists. Readings include: Nag Hammadi writings in English, Irenaeus, *Against All Heresies*; David Brakke, *The Gnostics*; Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*; Karen King, *What is Gnosticism?* and *The Secret Revelation of John*.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** periodic reflection papers, 2 textual analysis papers, 2 historiographical analysis papers, and a final paper that entails a revision and expansion of an earlier paper

**Prerequisites:** none

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS or COMP

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: David Brakke

### **REL 223 Revolt and Revelation in 20th-Century Americas (D)**

**Crosslistings:** LATS 328/AFR 328/AMST 329/REL 223

Writing in 1971, Dominican priest and Peruvian theologian Gustavo Gutierrez asked "Is the Church fulfilling a purely religious role when by its silence or friendly relationships it lends legitimacy to dictatorial and oppressive government?" Such a question encapsulates the sometimes agonistic and other times deeply intertwined relationships between religious institutions, religious thought, and movements for political transformation in the 20th century Americas. This course examines those forms of "God-talk" broadly termed "liberation theologies" that critiqued and challenged social relationships of class, colonization, race, culture, gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, and ecology. These theologies were borne out of and in turn deeply shaped struggles against oppressive regimes and structures in the Americas, and as such we will focus on some specific theological writings—such as those of Gutierrez—and their relationship to distinct social movements and struggles over land, economy, and political power, especially in Brazil, El Salvador, México, Perú, and the United States of America between 1960-2000. This EDI course examines issues of social and institutional power relations that influence particular religious formations as well as the way religious formations respond to and structure social and institutional power relations

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** this course will be mostly discussion, with grading based upon participation, short writing exercises, a 5- to 8-page take-home midterm essay, and a 8- to 12-page final essay

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** majors and concentrators

**Enrollment Limit:** none

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

LATS Core Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Jacqueline Hidalgo

### **REL 224 U.S. Latina @ Religions (D)**

**Crosslistings:** LATS 224/AMST 224/REL 224

In this course, we will engage aspects of Latin@ religious experiences, practices, and expressions in the United States of America. We examine moments where religious expressions intersect with politics, popular culture, and daily life in the U.S.A. Given the plurality of Latin@ communities and religious lives in the U.S.A., we will engage certain selected religious traditions and practices—such as popular Catholic devotions to Guadalupe, crypto-Judaism, curanderismo, Latin@ Muslims, and Santería—by focusing on particular moments of religious expression as elucidated in specific historiographies, ethnographies, art, literature, and film. We will also consider, though more briefly, historical contexts in Iberia and Latin America, as well as questions of how one studies Latin@ religions. Rooting ourselves in the social, political, cultural, and historical contexts in which particular Latin@ religious formations developed, this EDI course examines issues of social and institutional power relations that influence particular religious formations.

**Class Format:** discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** based upon class participation, short writing exercises, a 5- to 8-page take-home midterm essay, and a 10- to 15-page final review essay

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** none

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

LATS Core Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Jacqueline Hidalgo

### **REL 227 Utopias and Americas**

**Crosslistings:** REL 227/LATS 227/AMST 227/ENVI 227

Where does the term "new world" come from? What do we mean by "utopia," "utopian," and "utopianism?" What relationships exist between the people who imagine utopias and the lands they inhabit? This course considers the relationship between utopian imaginations and the imaginations of the lands and peoples in the Western hemisphere. We will spend some time studying utopian theory, ancient proto-utopias, and utopias in Latin America, though our main focus will be on particular examples of utopianism in the U.S.A. We will attend to particular instances of utopian social dreaming that re-imagine time, space, environment, gender, family, education, and power. While the U.S.A. is the main focus of the class, students are encouraged to pursue and bring to class utopian perspectives from other parts of the Americas. Students are also strongly encouraged to take questions from class and engage utopian images not listed on this syllabus but pertinent to our classroom learning.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on class participation, short weekly writing assignments, a 5-page midterm paper, and a 10- to 15-page final research paper examining an American utopia

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19  
**Expected Class Size:** 12  
**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

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

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Jacqueline Hidalgo

**REL 229(S) Reel Jesus: Reading the Christian Bible and Film in the U.S.A. (W)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 229/AMST 229

In this course we examine some of the ways that Christian biblical narratives have appeared in late twentieth-century and early twenty-first century Hollywood movies, looking in particular at films such as *The Matrix* (1999), *The Passion of the Christ* (2004), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1973), *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994), *The Omen* (1976), *Children of Men* (2006), and *The Book of Eli* (2010). What are the overt and subtle ways that these films seek to interpret and employ biblical texts? Why do they draw upon the texts they do and read them as they read them? What can cinematic interpretations of biblical texts reveal to us about how these texts are used in broader U.S. culture, especially to crystallize and reflect certain political, economic, ethnic, racial, sexual, and social parameters of U.S. cultures? How does an awareness of this scriptural dimension in a work of "popular culture" affect our interpretation of both the film and the scriptural text's meanings? How do varying interpretations of biblical texts help us to understand cinematic meaning? By assuming that we can read both biblical texts and films in multiple and contradictory ways, this class can use film as the occasion for interpreting, analyzing, and debating the meanings, cultural functions, and affective responses generated by biblical narratives in film. Finally, this course asks us to analyze the implications of ways in which we read texts and films. For this interdisciplinary course we will read selected biblical and extra-canonical texts, including selections from canonical and non-canonical gospels, the letters of Paul, and the book of Revelation, but our focus will be on the way that movies (and the people who make them and watch them) make meaning out of these biblical texts.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation based on participation, short writing exercises (1-pg response papers), one 3-pg analytical essay that will also be revised, a 6-pg synthetic midterm essay, and a final 10-pg review essay

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

AMST Arts in Context Electives  
AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora  
FMST Core Courses

*Spring 2017*

LEC Section: 01 MR 02:35 PM 03:50 PM Instructor: Jacqueline Hidalgo

**REL 230(F) Who was Muhammad? (D)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 230/ARAB 230/GBST 230

Considered the Messenger of God, Muhammad is a central character of the Islamic tradition and has been the object of love and devotion for centuries. Recent outbursts sparked by controversial cartoons depicting Muhammad have made clear that he remains a revered and controversial figure even today. This course takes a critical historical perspective to the biographies of Muhammad, the founder of Islam. Rather than focus on the "facts" of his life, we will think about the ways in which historical context, political interests, and shifting conceptions of religion have influenced the way in which Muhammad has been imagined and remembered. We will also consider the ways in which Muslim and non-Muslims biographies of Muhammad are intertwined and interdependent, often developing in tandem with one another. By exploring Muslim and non-Muslim, pre-modern and modern accounts of Muhammad's life, we will think about the many ways in which Muhammad's life has been told and re-told over the centuries. In this course we will consider some of the following depictions of Muhammad: Muhammad as the object of ritual devotion; Muhammad as statesman and military leader; Muhammad's polygynous marriages and his young wife, Aisha; Muhammad as social reformer and revolutionary. Course readings will include pre-modern biographies (in translation) as well as contemporary Muslim and non-Muslim biographies.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** reading responses, 3 short essays (3-4 pages double-spaced), and final exam

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors

**Enrollment Limit:** none

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Fall 2016

SEM Section: 01 W 01:10 PM 03:50 PM Instructor: Saadia Yacoob

**REL 231 The Origins of Islam: God, Empire and Apocalypse**

**Crosslistings:** REL 231/HIST 209

Both Muslim and non-Muslim historians usually see the rise of Islam in the seventh century C.E. as a total break with the past. This course will challenge that assumption by placing the rise of Islam in the context of the history of late antiquity (c. 250-700 C.E.). The first portion of the course will examine the impact of Judeo-Christian monotheism in the ancient world, the rise of confessional empires, articulation of new ideas about holiness and its relation to sexuality and the transformations undergone by Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism. We shall examine the conversation of these traditions with classical paganism and philosophy, the internal struggle within traditions to define rules of interpretation, the impact of ascetic, iconoclastic and apocalyptic ideas and, finally, polemics among the traditions. We will then examine the career of Muhammad (PBUH) in the context of Arabia, the spread of the Islamic empire into Christian and Iranian worlds, the impact of apocalyptic expectations, the fixation of religious decision making within the tradition, the process of conversion, the encounter with the Late Antique heritage and religious diversity within the commonwealth of Islam. The course will end with the end of the Abbasid Caliphate in 1258.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** one 5-page paper, self-scheduled final, and a final research project

**Prerequisites:** none; open to all

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

ARAB Arabic Studies Electives

GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives

HIST Group E Electives - Middle East

HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC

**REL 234(F) Religion and Migration (D)**

**Crosslistings:** LATS 234/REL 234/AMST 234

This course is concerned with the ways in which migrants groups have altered the religious landscape of the U.S. and how they innovatively reproduce practices from their places of origin. Crossing into the U.S. from the eastern seaboard, the Pacific Rim, and the southern border with Mexico, migrants bring their new ways of creating sacred space and negotiated religious life.

We will seek to understand the multifaceted relationships between religion and migration. How have migrants negotiated the role of religion in their private and public lives? What have been the social consequences pertaining to gender, praxis, respectability? The course take into account earlier iterations of migration from the nineteenth century but case studies in this course will draw heavily from the third wave of American immigration, characterized by twentieth-century "internal migrations" of African Americans, Latinas/os, Native Americans, and rural dwellers into the urban environment. We will conclude by examining the ways in which forces of modern globalization have changed the nature of religious diversity in the U.S. In this EDI course, we will extensively compare migrant cultures as we interrogate power and privilege pertaining to race and religion. The cultural production of these migrant groups that we will examine will offer students an empathetic understanding of diverse cultures and their form of belonging.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** student participation, weekly reflection papers (up to half page), midterm primary source write up (up to 5 pages), and a final project on "Representing Religious Migrations"

**Extra Info:** (includes 8-10 page paper based on primary and secondary sources and interactive component: video, map, photographs, material cultures exhibit plan, etc). Course may require a field trip may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

LATS Comparative Race + Ethnic Studies Electives

Fall 2016

SEM Section: 01 TF 01:10 PM 02:25 PM Instructor: Lloyd Barba

**REL 235(F) The Qur'an and Literature**

**Crosslistings:** COMP 235/ARAB 235/REL 235

This course explores the rich and multifaceted relationship between the Qur'an and literature from several different perspectives. The first part of the course will examine Qur'anic stylistics through primary readings in translation and scholarship on the question of whether the Qur'an is literature. Readings will consider how the Qur'an sheds light on the category of literature through attention to such

features as sound, figurative language, and genre. Students will also discover what the Qur'an has to say about poets and stories. We will then turn to the classical discourse on Qur'anic inimitability (*i'jaz al-Qur'an*), with an emphasis on stylistic/rhetorical inimitability and its relationship to Arabic literary theory. We will make use of recent translations of *i'jaz* treatises, manuals of literary criticism, and historical readings on the status of the Qur'an in early Islamic history. Finally, we will read a selection of later literature that takes up Qur'anic themes and language in Islamic history, in order to explore questions of intertextuality, rewriting, and the guises that commentary can take.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** 2 papers (5-7 pp., 8-10 pp.), short response papers, class participation

**Enrollment Preferences:** Comparative Literature majors, Arabic Studies majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 40

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP or ARAB; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 1

Fall 2016

SEM Section: 01 TF 01:10 PM 02:25 PM Instructor: Rachel Friedman

### **REL 237 Islam in the United States: From Black Muslims to the War on Terror (D)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 237/AMST 237/AFR 237

Malcolm X is likely the most prominent and influential Muslim figure in the history of the United States. His story represents two fundamental themes in the history of Islam in America: conflict between Muslims over what is "authentic" or "orthodox" Islam; and the ways that American history, politics, and culture determine the contours of "American Islam". This course will explore these two themes through an array of topics in the history of American Islam. In so doing, we will examine the complex relation between religion, politics, and culture in the United States.

Beginning with the story of Malcolm X, the Nation of Islam, and other African-American Muslim movements, we will try to understand: What made Islam so appealing to millions of African-Americans throughout the 20th century? And were these genuinely "religious" and "Islamic" movements, or just racial/political "black nationalist" movements in the guise of religion? What counts as legitimately "Islamic", and who gets to decide? We will then move into the latter half of the 20th century and the post-9/11 debates over authentic Islam. What happened to American Muslim communities and organizations after the waves of post-1965 immigration from Muslim countries? How have debates about Muslim identity shifted over time, from being configured in terms of black separatism, to transnational/diasporic identity, to the attempts at articulating an indigenous "American-Muslim" identity? How have national narratives around 9/11 and the "War on Terror" impacted these debates over identity and "true Islam"? And how have these debates intersected with gender, racial, and ethnic politics?

Throughout the course, we will be studying historical and anthropological material, autobiographies, novels, documentaries, films, and social media. 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 race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, gender, language, and age.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** in-class participation and presentations; 3 short essays; final project

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** none

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

Not Offered Academic Year 2017

SEM Instructor: Zaid Adhami

### **REL 238(S) Faith and Rationality in Islam: Skepticism and the Quest for Certainty**

Religious faith is generally perceived as being diametrically opposed to reason and rationality. Islam in particular is often assumed to be even more dogmatic in its demand for blind unquestioning faith. This course will explore the lively debates among Muslim theologians regarding the complex relationship between faith, rationality, and skepticism. Is faith compatible with reason and rationality? Can the foundations of Islamic belief be proven to be true? Are there limits to what can be known rationally? Are people justified in holding religious beliefs? Does faith require absolute certainty? What room is there for doubt and skepticism in Islam? We will explore these questions through an array of primary and secondary readings in Islamic theology, philosophy, and mysticism from the medieval period.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** essays and exams

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Expected Class Size:** 5-10

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Spring 2017

**REL 239(F) The Modern Middle East (D)**

**Crosslistings:** HIST 207/JWST 217/REL 239/ARAB 207/GBST 101/L

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. This course is part of the Exploring Diversity Initiative because it compares the differences and similarities between different cultures and societies in the Middle East and the various ways they have responded to one another in the past.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on participation, 2 short papers, quizzes, midterm and final exam

**Prerequisites:** none; open to all

**Enrollment Preferences:** completion of course admission survey if overenrolled

**Enrollment Limit:** 40

**Expected Class Size:** 30-40

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

ARAB Arabic Studies Electives

GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives

HIST Group E Electives - Middle East

JWST Elective Courses

*Fall 2016*

LEC Section: 01 MR 01:10 PM 02:25 PM Instructor: Magnus Bernhardsson

**REL 240(S) The Challenge of ISIS**

**Crosslistings:** ANTH 210/HIST 210/ARAB 210/REL 240/GBST 210

What is ISIS and what does it want? Using historical and anthropological sources and perspectives, the course considers the origins, ideology and organization of the Islamic State. Beginning with an examination of early radical movements, including the Muslim Brotherhood, the Afghan mujahidin and Taliban, and al-Qaeda, the course will go on to investigate how ISIS derives important aspects of its ideology and organization from these earlier movements and how it deviates from them. We will look at unique aspects of the movement, such as its use of social media, its extensive destruction of ancient historical sites, its staging of spectacles of violence, and its recruitment of Muslims from Europe and North America. We will also examine the ideological constitution of the movement, including its attitude toward and treatment of non-Muslims, its conceptualization of itself as a modern incarnation of the original Islamic caliphate, the ways in which it justifies its use of violence, and its apocalyptic vision of the present-day as End Time. Finally, we will evaluate current responses to ISIS, in the West and among Muslims in the Middle East and elsewhere, in terms of their effectiveness and strategic coherence.

**Class Format:** lecture

**Requirements/Evaluation:** blogs (4 main blog posts, responses to at least 3-4 other blogs each week) (30%); analytic paper or class history paper (35%); 2 midterms (35%)

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 40

**Expected Class Size:** 40

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives

HIST Group E Electives - Middle East

*Spring 2017*

LEC Section: 01 TF 01:10 PM 02:25 PM Instructors: David Edwards, Magnus Bernhardsson

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

**Crosslistings:** REL 242/ARAB 242/WGSS 242

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.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active class participation (including a presentation on the reading materials), short weekly reflections, and one final research paper (10-15 pages)

**Prerequisites:** none

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Spring 2017*

SEM Section: 01 M 07:00 PM 09:40 PM Instructor: Saadia Yacoub

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

**Crosslistings:** REL 243/ARAB 243/HIST 302/WGSS 243

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.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly responses, four 2- to 3-page essays

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

HIST Group B Electives - Asia

HIST Group E Electives - Middle East

HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

JLST Interdepartmental Electives

*Fall 2016*

SEM Section: 01 TR 11:20 AM 12:35 PM Instructor: Saadia Yacoub

### **REL 244 Mind and Persons in Indian Thought**

**Crosslistings:** REL 244/ASST 244

In this course, we follow the conversation among Indian philosophers concerning the self and the nature of consciousness. 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 philosophy, 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 ideas that have challenged philosophers in both traditions.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

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

**Prerequisites:** prior exposure to Buddhism or philosophy, or permission of instructor

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Georges Dreyfus

### **REL 245 Tibetan Civilization (D)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 245/ASST 247

Often depicted as Shangrila, a mythical and ideal country, Tibet has had the dubious privilege of being a focus of Western fantasies. One cannot but wonder about the motives and sources of this mythology. Although this course examines these representations, its main focus is an immersion in the cultural and historical aspects of Tibetan civilization, which give students the tools with which to understand Tibetan culture from the inside. As such this course is part of the Exploring Diversity Initiative. We first consider the early history of Tibet, the introduction of Buddhism, the relations between Buddhism and the indigenous religion, and some of the stages in the development of Tibetan Buddhism. We also examine the historical developments that led to the development of the institutions (such as the Dalai-Lama) unique to Tibet and some of the aspects of the culture that these institutions helped to create (such as gender roles, family structure and social stratification). Finally, we consider the more recent tragic events and examine the profound transformations that they have brought. Throughout the course, we consider the central role of the complex interaction between Buddhism and politics in Tibetan history, both in the pre-modern period and in more recent times, when the Tibetan people have faced the challenge of how to use their institutions and culture to resist oppression. In this way, we get a footing in the Tibetan world, and the indispensable assessment of Western representations of Tibet becomes not just an exercise in self-reflection but also a gate to a better understanding of a remarkable but tragically threatened civilization. This course, which explores in depth Tibetan cultural and the tragic cross-cultural misunderstandings that threaten its integrity, is part of the Exploring Diversity Initiative.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** full attendance and participation, three 6-page essays

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Expected Class Size:** 30

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

GBST South + Southeast Asia Studies Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Georges Dreyfus

### **REL 246T(F) India's Identities: Reproducing the Nation, Community and Individual (D) (W)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 246/ANTH 246/WGSS 246/ASST 246

This course considers India's contradictory legacy as a booming Asian democracy and fragile society built upon deep and enduring divisions. Why is India's growing population so often described in terms of multiple identities or fragmenting oppositions — Hindu/Muslim, rich/poor, high caste/outcaste, male/female? What are the historic roots and ongoing causes that produce structural violence around these axes of difference? We pay particular attention to key moments (Partition, communal riots in Gujarat in 2003, Hyderabad in 1990, Delhi in 1984), and places (Punjab, Bengal, Jammu & Kashmir) for our analysis of how religion, gender, and caste intersect to produce a landscape of communal violence, social hierarchy, and fragmented subjectivity in India today. We are as interested in discourses and practices that shore up these binaries as well as the third terms that attempt to transcend or diffuse them. For instance, we look at how Buddhism is and is not a middle path between Hindu/Muslim conflict in Indian Kashmir. Our course readings include ethnographic, sociological, and historical analyses, as well as oral histories and popular media. This course fulfills the Exploring Diversity Initiative by theorizing the ways that difference has been used to effect profound historical & social changes in India.

**Class Format:** tutorial

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly writing assignments and tutorial attendance every week

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** majors in Anthropology and Sociology, Religion, Asian Studies, or Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

GBST South + Southeast Asia Studies Electives

PHLH Bioethics + Interpretations of Health

WGSS Racial Sexual + Cultural Diversity Courses

*Fall 2016*

TUT Section: T1 TBA Instructor: Kim Gutschow

### **REL 247(S) Race and Religion in the American West (D)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 247/LATS 247/AMST 247/ENVI 247

From the "Land of Enchantment" of New Mexico in the far reaches of the desert to the sacred temples on the West Coast that overlook Pacific Ocean, this course examines the peoples and the "sacrosapes" of the American West. Historian Patricia Limerick regards this region as an extraordinary site of convergence and one of "the greatest meeting places on the planet." The region is a site of cultural complexity where Penitentes maintained a sacred order, Pentecostals attracted a global audience, Native Americans forged legal/protected definitions of "religion," and Asian immigrants built the first Buddhist and Sikh temples. Until recently, standard surveys of religious history in North America have devoted minimal attention to the distinctive role of religion in the American West. They have focused on religious history in the flow of events westward from the Plymouth Rock landing and Puritan establishment while generally overlooking the Pueblo Revolt in modern-day New Mexico which occurred in that same century and marked the temporary suspension

of Spanish encroachment. How do scholars of religion and history account for these renditions between the past and present? Most mainstream religious histories treat religious experience and identity in the U.S. West as additive rather than complementary to or constitutive of its mainstream narratives. Contemporary historians of religion note the need for new "sights," "cites," and "sites" in order to deconstruct and reconstruct this incomplete meta-narrative, taking into account such factors as migration, gender, region, and the environment. In this EDI course we will use tools of critical theory and historicism to examine this region, compare religious cultures, and interrogate ways in which religious practices (de)construct notions of race.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** student participation, weekly reflection papers (up to half page), midterm primary source paper (up to 5 pages), and a final research paper on Religion and the Environment (8-10 page paper with a media/visual component)

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

course is part of the 2016-17 Climate Change Initiative

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Dept. Notes:** religion: Elective Course

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives

LATS Comparative Race + Ethnic Studies Electives

*Spring 2017*

LEC Section: 01 MR 01:10 PM 02:25 PM Instructor: Lloyd Barba

### **REL 248 Body Politics in South Asia: Gender, Sex, Religion, and Nation (D) (W)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 248/ASST 248/ANTH 248/WGSS 249/GBST 248

This course examines the relationship between body, gender, sex, and society in South Asia, using three countries and religions—India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh, and Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam—as its foil. The course uses the body as a lens by which to unpack South Asian discourses that link body and sexuality with nation, community, and population. In particular, it explores a South Asian sociology that links individual and social bodies in ways that occasion solidarity as well as social suffering, violence as well as communal cohesion. How do bodies come to signify the purity or prosperity of the nation or community and with what social or discursive effects? We begin by unpacking foundational theories of the body as proposed by Mauss, Foucault, Douglas, and Bourdieu in order to better understand how local discourses of the body help produce gender and other social hierarchies in South Asia. By considering how the human body can serve as a map for society and vice versa, we examine both classical discourses and modern institutional practices of the body including the temple, the monastery, the mosque, and the mendicant, as well as bodily practices such as yoga, celibacy, sex work, and new reproductive technologies. We also analyze how the body has served as a symbol of nation, community, and social health. Throughout, we are interested in the cross-cutting effects of gender and sex in perpetuating structural hierarchies and social suffering around the body in South Asia.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** the course has weekly writing, more than 20 pages total, and there is student-faculty feedback every week including a week dedicated to a one-one writing feedback session between student and instructor

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** majors in Religion, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Asian Studies and Anthropology/Sociology

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

GBST South + Southeast Asia Studies Electives

PHLH Bioethics + Interpretations of Health

PHLH Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health

WGSS Racial Sexual + Cultural Diversity Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Kim Gutschow

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

**Crosslistings:** REL 250/ASST 250

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. This course fulfills the Exploring Diversity Initiative by providing students with tools for cross-cultural analysis of ethics and moral paragons, as part of how societies manage difference and articulate hierarchies of privilege and power.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

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

**Prerequisites:** none

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

GBST East Asian Studies Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Jason Josephson

### **REL 251 Zen Buddhism: History and Historiography**

**Crosslistings:** REL 251/ASST 251

Because mystifying references to Zen are strewn throughout American popular culture—from episodes of the Simpsons to names of perfumes and snack foods—most Americans have an image of Zen Buddhism that is disconnected from anything actually practiced in East Asia. This course offers a corrective to this image by familiarizing students with both the history of Zen and the historiographical roots of these popular perceptions. This course will examine the origins of Zen (Ch'an) in China, trace its transmission to Japan, and cover its development in both cultural contexts. It will conclude with an examination of Zen's unique role in American popular culture. The course will enrich the conventional image of Zen by addressing its involvement with power and governance, gods and demons, mummies and sacred sites, sex and violence, nationalism and scholarship. Texts will include selections from primary works in translation (*The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, *The Gateless Barrier*, *The Lancel of Seated Meditation*) as well as selections from secondary literature including Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, Victoria, *Zen at War*, and Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** participation in class discussion, short response papers (2-3 pages), a mid term exam, and a take-home final exam

**Prerequisites:** none

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Expected Class Size:** 30

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

GBST East Asian Studies Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Jason Josephson

### **REL 252(F) Zen Buddhist Visual Culture: The Path to Nirvana (W)**

**Crosslistings:** ARTH 376/ASST 376/REL 252

This course is about the ways in which images are produced, viewed, and used in the Zen Buddhist tradition. It explores the various ways in which visual culture is a key part of Zen Buddhist teaching in China and Japan. In this class we will look at both high art and popular expressions of Zen Buddhist visual culture. Topics of interest include: 1) Buddhist image making and icon worship; 2) Gardens; 3) tearooms, tea ceremony and tea bowls; 4) The Zen temples Ryoan-ji, Daisen-in, and Daitoku-ji; 5) The political function of Zen and its art in Japan's samurai culture; 6) The popular Zen Buddhist cult of Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara and his gender transformation; and 7) Daruma (Bodhidharma) imagery in popular culture. This course is a CRAAS (critical reasoning and analytical skills) course. The class format also offers students opportunities to practice public speaking and writing skills.

**Class Format:** lecture/class discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class discussions and participation; oral presentations, short papers; and a research paper

**Enrollment Preferences:** sophomores, juniors and seniors

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Expected Class Size:** 8

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARTH; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ASST or REL

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 1

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

ARTH pre-1600 Courses

*Fall 2016*

**REL 253 Spiritual Crossroads: Religious Life in Southeast Asia (D)**

**Crosslistings:** ANTH 233/ASST 233/REL 253

No region of the world presents a richer tapestry of religious beliefs, practices, and institutions than Southeast Asia. Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam are all to be found and all of them interpenetrate and contend with each other and with a deep undergirding of animism, shamanism, and mystical folk belief systems. This course will survey these religious traditions through time and space, looking in particular at the growing tension between religion and the state as fundamentalism and religious militancy have spread into the region in recent times. All of Southeast Asia will be covered, but particular attention will be devoted to Indonesia, where religious blending and the growth of new fundamentalism are both especially marked.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** midterm, short essays, term paper

**Prerequisites:** none; open to non-majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

GBST South + Southeast Asia Studies Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Peter Just

**REL 255 Buddhism: Ideas and Practices**

**Crosslistings:** REL 255/ASST 255/ANTH 255

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:** lecture/discussion

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

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Georges Dreyfus

**REL 256 Engendering Buddhism: How Women and Men Shape and Are Shaped by Buddhism (D) (W)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 256/WGSS 256/ANTH 256/ASST 256

This course looks at how gender has shaped Buddhism as well as how Buddhism has shaped gender. Most generally, it considers the myriad ways that Buddhist soteriology and practice produce the very gender differences they purport to overcome. How have the Buddha and his far-flung disciples institutionalized gender differences in spite of their putative goal of transcending duality? We examine the varying experiences of women and men in Buddhist societies and literatures as a lens by which to analyze the pervasive operation of social and gender hierarchies. Last but not least, we discuss how well feminist and American revisions of Buddhism have transformed gender and other forms of difference. Our analysis revolves around several interdependent themes. (1) How do female and male bodies become the subject of a specific set of Buddhist gazes? What does Buddhist discourse say about the possibility of gaining enlightenment in the female body? (2) How do gender divisions reflect deeper social divisions such as class and race in Buddhist discourse? (3) How have feminist deconstructions of Buddhism transformed gender and social hierarchies in the contemporary world? This course fulfills the Exploring Diversity Initiative by seeking to theorize the ways that Buddhism has produced and reinscribed gender differences and social hierarchies.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** two midterm papers, weekly GLOW participation, final research papers, and class participation

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** majors in Religion, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Asian Studies and Anthropology/Sociology

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

GBST East Asian Studies Electives

WGSS Racial Sexual + Cultural Diversity Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Kim Gutschow

**REL 257(F) Tibetan Buddhism: Embodying Wisdom and Compassion**

We begin by considering the basic ideas and practices of Tibetan Buddhist traditions and the ways in which the ideals of wisdom and compassion have shaped Tibetan culture. We then proceed to examine particular aspects of the tradition such as the role of the teacher or lama and his or her various manifestations, from the exotic figure of the tantric guru to that of the Dalai Lama, a charismatic world teacher engaged in both religious and political affairs. We also examine a wide range of lay and monastic practices, from the life of large monasteries and their unique culture to the practices of nuns and lay people. Throughout this course, we consider not just the variety of exoteric practice forms but also the esoteric tantric tradition that pervades Tibetan life. We examine the various meditative practices that revolve around this profound and often misunderstood tradition. In doing so, we do not consider tantra as just a set of strange practices sometimes revolving around sex and violence. Rather we examine how it manifests a philosophy of embodiment that has profound implications for thinking about who we are as human beings.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** full attendance and participation, two essays

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Fall 2016*

LEC Section: 01 MWF 08:30 AM 09:20 AM Instructor: Georges Dreyfus

**REL 258 The Rhetoric(s) of Black Religious Traditions**

**Crosslistings:** AFR 258/REL 258

This course will introduce students to the rich religious expressions of Black Americans through their rhetorical traditions. We will begin with a survey of rhetorical productions like sermons, music, and other forms of public address in the historical literatures on Black religions. Our review will yield some of the primary themes of Black religious experiences—the injustices of modern racism, the significance of liberation, and continued meaning of Africa as a homeland. We will then investigate how secular processes like commodification alter rhetorical practices.

**Class Format:** lecture

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation in this course will be based upon class participation, response papers, one 8-page paper, and a formal group presentation

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: VaNatta Ford

**REL 259 Ethics of Jewish American Fiction (W)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 259/ENGL 259/JWST 259

After the Second World War, Jewish American writers who wrote about Jewish characters and Jewish themes were increasingly celebrated as central figures in American fiction. Isaac Bashevis Singer, Bernard Malamud, Saul Bellow, Cynthia Ozick and Philip Roth are among those who gained prominence in this period. These writers were literary innovators and often addressed broad humanistic themes. But they also struggled with profound questions that arose in the postwar period about Jewishness, the legacy of the Holocaust, and what it means to be an American. In this course we will read the above authors and others. We will focus, in particular, on the distinctive ethical and political ideas, emotions, and aspirations that animate their work. The course will begin with a study of theoretical approaches that will provide the basis for our ethical criticism: we will read, for instance, Lionel Trilling, Wayne Booth, Martha Nussbaum, and Noël Carroll. Then we will delve into the fiction, following a trail that begins in the postwar period and continues in fictions by Erica Jong, Rebecca Goldstein, Michael Chabon, Gary Shteyngart, and others. Can we find a distinctive Jewish American ethics in Jewish American fiction?

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, one take-home exam on theoretical approaches to ethical criticism; four short essays

**Extra Info:** not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors, Jewish Studies concentrators, and English majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or JWST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ENGL

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

JWST Core Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Jeffrey Israel

**REL 260 History of the Book****Crosslistings:** CLAS 200/ASST 200/HIST 392/REL 260/COMP 280

From ancient clay tablets, bamboo strips, and papyrus rolls to modern hardbacks, paperbacks, and e-readers, no object has so broadly and deeply represented the capacity for humans to create, preserve, and transmit knowledge, information, and ideas as the book.

Books have been worshiped and condemned, circulated and censored, collected and destroyed. From works of art to ephemeral trash, they have been public and private, sacred and profane, magical and commonplace. Likewise, notions of the book have influenced every subsequent form of communication and transmission, whether we are browsing film and song "libraries" or "scrolling" down "pages" on the web. This course will explore aspects of the material, social, cultural, and intellectual history of the book, from the invention of the earliest writing systems through the modern development of digital media. Our inquiry will span the globe and the millennia, but we will pay special attention to the ancient and medieval Chinese, Greek, and Latin traditions and their enduring influence in the modern world. Topics will include orality and literacy, manuscript production, the invention and spread of printing, typography, reading culture, notions of authorship, libraries and collections, censorship, and the digital book. Through a variety of readings, hands-on exercises, and interactions with our abundant library resources, we will investigate how the changing form and function of the book interact across its long and diverse history. *All readings are in translation.*

**Class Format:** seminar**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, short written assignments, and a final project**Prerequisites:** none**Enrollment Preferences:** none**Enrollment Limit:** 25**Expected Class Size:** 25**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS or COMP ; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ASST, HIST or REL**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 1

**Other Attributes:**

HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Edan Dekel

**REL 261 Rastafari: Dread, Politics, Agency****Crosslistings:** AFR 299/PSCI 233/REL 261

The emergence of Rastafari in the twentieth century marked a distinct phase in the theory and practice of political agency. From its heretical roots in Jamaica, Garveyism, Ethiopianism, and Pan-Africanism, Rastafari has evolved from a Caribbean theological movement to an international political actor. This course investigates the political theory of Rastafari in order to develop intellectual resources for theorizing the concept of agency in contemporary Africana thought and political theory. We will analyze texts and audio-visual works on the political economy of late colonial Jamaica, core Rastafari thinking, political theology, the role of reggae music, the notion of agency, and the influence of Rastafari on global politics.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion**Requirements/Evaluation:** attendance and participation, weekly reading e-response papers, two short essays, and a group lyrics and politics final project**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis**Prerequisites:** none; open to all**Enrollment Preferences:** Africana Studies concentrators and majors in Political Science and Religion**Enrollment Limit:** 25**Expected Class Size:** 25**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

AFR Core Electives

AMST Arts in Context Electives

AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC

**REL 262T Time and Blackness (W)****Crosslistings:** AFR 208/AMST 208/REL 262

The concept of time is one of the most examined, yet least theorized, concepts in Africana Studies. While the field is saturated with historical studies and literary analyses that take up issues of cultural memory, both of which involve thinking about time, time itself is 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 African American experience cannot be understood outside of the meaning of race, which itself is far from tangible. In this tutorial, "Time and Blackness," we will explore how African American writers across a number of genres understand time. We will read select texts of fiction as well as spiritual autobiographies, historical narratives, and sociological studies to understand how writers draw from—and create—paradigms of time to organize their work. The following questions will structure our investigation: What are the constituent elements of time in African American writing? How does race shape the ways a writer conceives of the experience of time? In examining writings across genres, is there something that we can call an identifiable African-American "timescape"?

**Class Format:** tutorial

**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

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

AFR Core Electives

AMST Arts in Context Electives

AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

TUT Instructor: James Manigault-Bryant

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

**Crosslistings:** AFR 221/REL 263

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.

**Class Format:** seminar

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

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

AFR Core Electives

AMST Arts in Context Electives

*Spring 2017*

SEM Section: 01 W 01:10 PM 03:50 PM Instructor: VaNatta Ford

### **REL 265 Sacred Cinema: Black Religion and the Movies**

**Crosslistings:** AFR 316/REL 265/AMST 316

Although they represent different genres, what popular films *Madea's Family Reunion* (2006), *First Sunday* (2008), *The Princess and the Frog* (2009) have in common is that they each offer complex and at times contradictory images of black religious expression in North America. These films, which present varied perspectives of African American experience, implicitly and explicitly engage themes inherent to the study of religion, such as the role of faith in decision-making processes and the use of religious tradition as a means of reinforcing or contesting socio-cultural norms. This course is as much about the use of film to study black religious expression as it is about the use of paradigms of religious thought to study the intersections of gender, race, and religion in film. We will study films of different genres to facilitate discussion about the various dimensions of black religious expression. Conversely, we will use images, metaphors, and teachings found in Religious Studies to discuss what appears on screen. Through interdisciplinary, critical approaches in Film Studies and Popular Culture Studies, this course will examine how black religious expression pervades modern cinema, and will offer constructive strategies for engaging in dialogue with this phenomenon.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation and film viewings, film analyses, a Comic Life midterm project, and the completion of an original multimedia narrative

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** Africana Studies concentrators, Religion majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 13

**Expected Class Size:** 13

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

AFR Core Electives

AMST Arts in Context Electives

AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

FMST Core Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Rhon Manigault-Bryant

### **REL 267(F) The Art of Friendship**

**Crosslistings:** CLAS 212/COMP 267/REL 267

The idea of friendship has captivated poets, philosophers, and their audiences for over three millennia. The subtle dynamics of this fundamental relationship between humans have been a source of inspiration, consolation, and consternation for countless writers and readers. What are the different types of friendship? How does one make a friend, and what makes a good friend? How does a friend differ from an acquaintance, an ally, an accomplice, an enemy? Can the beloved also be a friend? Ancient Greek and Latin writers took up these and other questions about friendship in philosophical dialogues and treatises, epic and lyric poems, tragic and comic plays, oratory, and correspondence. This course will explore ancient theories and representations of friendship through readings from many of the most important texts and authors of antiquity, including Gilgamesh, the Hebrew Bible, Homer, Sappho, Euripides, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Virgil, Seneca, and the Epistles of Paul. We will also consider the wide-ranging responses to these meditations and depictions in later traditions from the Middle Ages to modernity, in such writers as Heloise and Abelard, Aelred of Rievaulx, Aquinas, Montaigne, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Emily Dickinson, Elizabeth Bishop, Jack Kerouac, and Susan Sontag. *All readings are in translation.*

**Class Format:** seminar

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

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS or COMP; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 1

*Fall 2016*

SEM Section: 01 TF 01:10 PM 02:25 PM Instructors: Amanda Wilcox, Edan Dekel

### **REL 271(F) Erotic, Grotesque, Sublime: Ghosts and Monsters in East Asian Religion and Popular Culture**

**Crosslistings:** REL 271/ASST 271/COMP 279/WGSS 279

"Ghosts and monsters" (Chinese yaoguai, Japanese yokai, Korean yogoe) have long figured prominently in East Asian cultural history. In medieval East Asian chronicles, wrathful demons attacked the imperial palace, ghosts haunted abandoned temples, and shape-shifting foxes infiltrated the bedrooms of royal concubines. These creatures persisted into the modern era when nineteenth century tabloids reported the existence of demon-foxes, giant serpents, and vengeful spirits. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, monsters began crossing over into the realm of fiction, and Japanese, Chinese, and Korean popular novels and films continue to crawl with images of traditional dark beasts. The opening contention of this course is that ghosts and monsters signify deviancies from "the normal" as it is constructed in a given culture and time period—they often come to represent transgressions of nature, gender, sexuality, race, morality, or to subvert distinctions such as those between human and animal, man and woman, animate and inanimate, present and past, or living and dead. This course will analyze East Asian ghosts and monsters in their historical cultural context, thinking about how they come to embody particular cultural fears and desires. We will use a range of East Asian materials in translation—including folktales, medieval bestiaries, short stories, and films, alongside a heavy dose of theory including works by feminist scholars Julia Kristeva, Ilka Quindeau, Susan Sontag and various others who attempt to understand the monstrous and the uncanny. Students will undertake an extended research project on a ghost or monster of their choice and locate it in its broader cultural context. Doing so should put us in a position to explore central themes, such as the connection between the grotesque and the erotic, the cultural performance of gender, the social construction of illness, the trauma of memory, the commodification of the supernatural, and the boundaries of the human.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** attendance and participation, weekly responses, final 15- to 18-page research paper

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** REL, ASST, WGSS, and COMP majors will be given preference

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL, ASST or WGSS; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

## FMST Related Courses

Fall 2016

SEM Section: 01 M 07:00 PM 09:40 PM Instructor: Jason Josephson

### **REL 273 Heroes, Saints and Celebrity (W)**

**Crosslistings:** ANTH 222/REL 273

This course examines the ways in which cultures select, ritually celebrate, institutionally harness, and ultimately devour people designated as 'extraordinary'. We will begin by considering cultural archetypes and theories of the hero and how heroism has been understood in different eras and cultural contexts. Using Weber's theory of charisma as a foundation, we will look at a number of specific case studies to evaluate the relationship between individual creativity and action and the demands of social conformity and control. Finally, we will examine how charisma is commoditized in the form of the celebrity in contemporary American culture.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, two short response papers, research paper, final exam

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** Anthropology and Sociology majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: David Edwards

### **REL 274 The Body in Power**

**Crosslistings:** ANTH 299/REL 274

The thesis of this course is that ritual plays a crucial role not only in legitimizing and mobilizing political power, but also in determining whether people decide to act in defense of or dissent against the status quo. In the first part of the semester, we focus on the ways in which different cultures construct categories of inclusion and exclusion, safe and dangerous, while also creating rituals for ensuring the preservation of the dominant social order against all that is transgressive and undermining to those in power. Of particular importance to our discussion will be consideration of how the body is ritually mobilized as an instrument of persuasion and control. On this foundation, we move to an examination of how political rituals are used to undermine established orthodoxies, mobilize popular dissent, and bring down those on top. Among the topics to be discussed are the role of martyrdom and beheadings in the rise of the Islamic State, the use of symbols and ritual interventions in framing both sides of the abortion debate, and the expanding importance of social media in protests movements around the world. The final unit of the course will consider a current controversy (e.g., police violence against African-American men) in light of the concepts discussed during the semester.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, three short response papers, and one 10- to 12-page research paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** open to first years

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: David Edwards

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

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.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** full attendance and participation, two essays

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

SCST Related Courses

Fall 2016

SEM Section: 01 M 07:00 PM 09:40 PM Instructor: Georges Dreyfus

### **REL 282 Religion and Capitalism (W)**

**Crosslistings:** PSCI 140/SOC 283/REL 282

Up through the 1960s it was popular to claim that the world was becoming increasingly and inevitably secular, with the development of modern capitalist social relations as a signature cause. Today the 'secularization thesis' is largely defunct. Instead one sees the vibrant return of religion to social, economic, and political prominence in most parts of the world—at the very same time we are experiencing through globalization and the information revolution the most dramatic economic advances in a century.

This course investigates the historical and contemporary relationship between culture and economics, religion and capitalism, in their most encompassing forms. In investigating this theme, our cornerstone will be Max Weber's famous argument from *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Along the way we will discuss both the origins of capitalist society as well as its more recent transformations through the rise of the welfare state, consumerism, and globalization. We will also discuss changes in religion under the influence of capitalism including romanticism, Pentecostalism, moralistic therapeutic Deism, and the 'God gap' between largely theist Africa, South and West Asia, and the Americas on the one hand and largely atheist Europe and East Asia on the other. The focus of the course is on Christianity in Western countries both historically and in the present, but we will spend time discussing religion (particularly Pentecostalism) and capitalism in the contemporary Global South as well.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** regular discussion questions, three 5- to 6-page papers, in-class paper workshops, 20- to 24-page final term paper incorporating earlier papers

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** open to first-years and sophomores only

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

**Expected Class Size:** 14

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

PSCI Comparative Politics Courses

PSCI Political Theory Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Darel Paul

### **REL 285T Haunted: Ghosts in the Study of Religion (W)**

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

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

TUT Instructor: Denise Buell

### **REL 287 The Dynamics of Globalization: Society, Religion and the Environment (D)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 287/ENVI 287

This course offers a theoretical reflection on the social, cultural and environmental dynamics of globalization and their consequences for the nature and place of religion. Rather than argue for or against globalization, we first examine the nature of this new configuration and its relation to (post)modernity, asking questions such as: What are the cultural and social dynamics of globalization? What are the effects on the nature of the state and the political practices that take place in the global world? What are its environmental consequences? We then shift to examining the role of religion, arguing that its renewed relevance is a function of the socio-cultural transformations that globalization brings about, particularly the loss of community and the increasing atomization of individuals. We

conclude by examining some of the perspectives created by the new religious expressions that attempt to respond to this situation, from personal spiritual quests as manifested in interest in Buddhism, ecology or mountain climbing, to various forms of fundamentalism, such as Evangelicalism, the fastest growing religious movement in the Americas, and the most radical forms of Islamicism. Reading list: Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*; Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*; Bauman, *Globalization*; Kivisto, *Multiculturalism in a Global Society*; Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*; Ortnor, *Life and Death on Mt. Everest*; Matthews, *Global Cultural/Individual Identity*; Shuck, *Mark of the Beast*; Roy, *Globalized Islam*.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** a class presentation and a research paper (15 pages)

**Prerequisites:** none

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 22

**Expected Class Size:** 22

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives

ENVP SC-B Group Electives

GBST Economic Development Studies Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Georges Dreyfus

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

**Crosslistings:** REL 288/PHIL 288

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.

**Class Format:** seminar

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

**Prerequisites:** some background in either PSYC, COGS, PHIL or permission of instructor

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion and Philosophy majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

COGS Interdepartmental Electives

PHIL Contemp Metaphysics & Epistemology Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Georges Dreyfus

### **REL 290T Explorations of the Afterlife (W)**

From Heaven to Hell, Valhalla to Hades, the Fields of Aaru to the Land of Yellow Springs, all cultures have generated images of other worlds that lie beyond death. By considering examples from a range of different cultures, this tutorial will guide students on an exploration of the topographies of these shadow-lands. In an effort to map the continuities and discontinuities between these visions of the hereafter, we will consider them as reflections of existing social hierarchies, examining their underlying assumptions about punishment and redemption, family, and ethics. Along the way, we will discuss culturally specific notions of death and mourning, attitudes towards the bodies of the dead, and controversies about the nature of the soul. Texts will include selections from primary works in translation, such as Virgil's *Aeneid*, Dante's *Inferno*, and *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, as well as selections from secondary literature, including Teiser's *The Scripture on the Ten Kings*, Gauchet's *The Disenchantment of the World*, and Bremmer's *The Rise and Fall of the Afterlife*.

**Class Format:** tutorial

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** none

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Expected Class Size:** 10  
**Distributional Requirements:**  
Division 2  
Writing Intensive

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*  
TUT Instructor: Jason Josephson

### **REL 291 Religion and the American Environmental Imagination (W)**

**Crosslistings:** ENVI 291/REL 291/SOC 291

This course examines the relationship between religious and environmental thought in modern America. Exploring a broad range of practices and beliefs, we will examine the religious (and anti-religious) roots of contemporary environmental discourse. Drawing widely on both religious studies and the environmental humanities, we will examine the works of famous environmental thinkers such as Henry David Thoreau and Wendell Berry, as well as a number of lesser-known writers from non-Christian backgrounds. We will read these writers alongside recent scholarship on religion and ecology to understand how they were influenced by social and environmental trends such as urbanization, industrialization, immigration, and globalization. We will also ask how religion has intersected with gender, race, class, and ethnicity to shape environmental politics in the twenty-first century, with particular emphasis on agrarianism, wilderness preservation, and climate justice.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** a 15- to 18-page research paper and several shorter writing assignments

**Prerequisites:** ENVI 101 or permission of instructor

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

AMST Space and Place Electives

ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives

ENVP SC-B Group Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Nicolas Howe

### **REL 293 Religion, Play, and Politics**

Is there a distinctive "play" element in human culture? If so, what should count as play? Some likely candidates may be: joking, games, festivals, fantasy, and leisure. What about the activities that we usually describe as "religious"? In this course we will investigate the relationship between religion and play. We will read from theorists in a wide variety of disciplines who have written about play: philosophers, sociologists, animal psychologists, anthropologists, and others. But we will pay particular attention to overlap in the study of play and the study of religion. We will ask, for instance: what is the play element in ritual, myth, and the devotional interpretation of texts? Is there something necessarily playful about the academic study of religion itself? Once we have investigated the relationship between religion and play, we will then consider the significance of this relationship for political thinking about religion. Perhaps we should respect religious diversity out of respect for the variety of ways that people want to play? How might a deeper understanding of play help us to address ongoing religious conflicts? We will read from Johan Huizinga, Brian Sutton-Smith, Gordon Burghardt, Victor Turner, Donald Winnicott, Bernard Suits, Sam Gill, Robert Bellah, Wendy Doniger, Friedrich Schiller, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Mikhail Bakhtin, Jacques Derrida, and others.

**Class Format:** lecture

**Requirements/Evaluation:** three short papers (3-5pages) and one final research paper or project

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Expected Class Size:** 30

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC

### **REL 296(F) The History of the Holocaust**

**Crosslistings:** HIST 338/JWST 338/REL 296

In twenty-first century United States, the murder of approximately six million European Jews by Nazi Germany remains a central event in our political, moral, and cultural universe. Nevertheless, the Holocaust still confounds historians' efforts to understand both the motivations of the perpetrators and the suffering of the victims. In this course, we will study the origins and unfolding of Nazi Germany's genocidal policies, taking into consideration the perspectives of those who carried out mass murder as well as the experiences and responses of Jews and other victim groups to persecution. We will also examine the Holocaust within the larger context of the history of World War II in Europe and historians' debates about Germany's exterminatory war aims. Course materials will include diaries, speeches, bureaucratic documents, memoirs, films, and historical scholarship.

**Class Format:** mostly discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on class participation, a map quiz, four papers (4 pages) based on class readings, and a final research paper (6-8 pages)

**Prerequisites:** none; open to first-year students with instructors permission

**Enrollment Preferences:** History majors and Jewish Studies concentrators

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Expected Class Size:** 20-25

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

HIST Group C Electives - Europe and Russia

JWST Core Electives

*Fall 2016*

LEC Section: 01 MWF 08:30 AM 09:45 AM Instructor: Alexandra Garbarini

### **REL 300 Dialectics and the Archaeology of Knowledge**

How might one perform a philosophical study of history? How do ideas (including philosophical, artistic and religious movements) advance over time? What makes something "thinkable" in one era, but inconceivable in another? What contemporary intellectual foundations rest on false universals?

This course will address these questions and provide students with methods for exploring the historical dimension of religion. It will focus on two approaches to the philosophy of history inspired by Kant. One school (Hegel, Marx) has focused on tracing dialectical formations as the background against which all history unfolds. Another school (Foucault, Agamben) performs "philosophical archeology," which Foucault described as "the history of that which renders necessary a certain form of thought." This course will introduce students to these intertwined bodies of theory, which promise to do nothing less than expose bare the very foundations of knowledge and transform the study of history from the stringing together of events into a philosophical enterprise. Thinkers to be considered may include: Kant, Hegel, Marx, Engels, Nietzsche, Foucault, Agamben, and Jameson.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** regular participation and attendance, short writing assignments, class presentations, 10- to 15-page final paper

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion, Philosophy and Comparative Literature majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Jason Josephson

### **REL 301 Measuring Truth**

**Crosslistings:** MATH 300/HSCI 300/REL 301/SOC 300

We will examine specific case studies of measuring truth—the emergence of science and technology in American colleges and universities; the prevalence of scientific methods in social science and humanities; the ways alternative methodologies in the humanities critique and historicize scientific approaches to reaching truth; and the possible tension between scientific modes of thinking and the aims of the liberal arts.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** five 2-page papers and a final 15-page paper

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** any 200-level course

**Enrollment Preferences:** at the discretion of the instructors

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 3 requirement if registration under MATH; meets division 2 if registration under AFR, HSCI/REL or SOC

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 3

**Other Attributes:**

SCST Related Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

### **REL 302T Philosophy of Religion (W)**

**Crosslistings:** PHIL 281/REL 302

Our goal in this course will be to try to determine how far reason can justify belief in God. We will spend at least half of the semester examining the best-known philosophical arguments for and against the existence of God (including the ontological argument, the cosmological argument, the teleological argument, the argument from religious experience, the argument from evil, and the argument from religious disagreement). For each one, we will first look at historically important formulations of the argument and then turn to contemporary reformulations. Our aim will be to identify and then evaluate the strongest version of each argument. After working through these arguments, we will reflect more generally on the proper roles of reason and faith in justifying religious belief. In the final

section of the course, we will examine the relationship between god and morality. Authors will include Plato, Anselm, Aquinas, Pascal, Paley, Hume, Kant, Kierkegaard, Freud, Marx, and several contemporary philosophers.

**Class Format:** tutorial; students meet with instructor in pairs for an hour each week; emphasis will be placed on developing skills in reading, interpretation and oral argument as well as critical reasoning and writing

**Requirements/Evaluation:** each student will write a 5- to 6-page paper every other week and comment on his or her tutorial partner's paper in alternate weeks

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** one PHIL course or permission of instructor

**Enrollment Preferences:** current and prospective Philosophy majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

PHIL History Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

TUT Instructor: Melissa Barry

### **REL 303(F) A History of Islam in Africa (D)**

**Crosslistings:** HIST 303/REL 303/AFR 303/ARAB 303/GBST 303

This course examines the history of Islam in Africa from the seventh century to the present. We will start off by looking at the spread of Islam in different parts of Africa. We will then analyze the social, political, economic, and cultural impact of Islam on African societies, the interaction between Islam and indigenous African institutions, the Islamic revolutions in the nineteenth century, the impact of European colonial rule on Muslim societies, and the development of Islam in the post-independence period. We will also examine how African Muslims reconstructed and asserted their religious identities by localizing Islamic intellectual traditions, healing practices, music, arts, cultural norms, and formal and informal religious festivals. By the end of the semester students should be able to appreciate Islam's common framework as well as its diversity and dynamics within that larger framework and over time. This EDI course explores the experiences and expressions of the culturally diverse peoples of African descent in the New World (and the Old), as well as the myriad ways in which they confront, negotiate, and at times challenge dominant U.S. and/or European hierarchies of race, culture, gender and class.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** two 7-page papers and one 12- to 15-page paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** lottery

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

GBST African Studies Electives

HIST Group A Electives - Africa

*Fall 2016*

SEM Section: 01 TF 01:10 PM 02:25 PM Instructor: Kenda Mutongi

### **REL 304 From Hermeneutics to Post-Coloniality and Beyond (D)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 304/COMP 344

This course explores and critiques some of the resources offered by "Theory" for making sense of our contemporary situation, focusing on the nature of interpretation and its role in the construction of the self in a global world. We start with Gadamer's hermeneutics, which offers a classical formulation of the philosophy of liberal arts education, stressing the importance of questioning one's prejudices.

Although this approach offers important resources for understanding ourselves in a world of cultural differences, it also has limitations, which we explore through the works of Derrida, Foucault and Said. In this way, we question some of the notions central to understanding ourselves such as identity and difference, suggesting some of the difficulties in the ever more important yet problematic project of knowing oneself. We also suggest that representation is not innocent but always implicated in the world of power and its complexities, particularly within the colonial and postcolonial contexts explored by Said. We conclude with a critique of the constructivist paradigm central to this course done from the point of view of cognitive sciences and suggest that the future of "Theory" may well be in a dialogue with the emerging mind sciences. This course, which theorizes the possibilities of cross-cultural understanding, is part of the Exploring Diversity Initiative.

Reading list: H.G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*. F. Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*. J. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*. P. Rabinow, *Foucault Reader*. E. Said, *Orientalism*. Agamben, *Homo Sacer*.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

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

**Prerequisites:** some familiarity with philosophy and/or theory is recommended

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

**Other Attributes:**

AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives

ENGL Criticism Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Georges Dreyfus

**REL 305(S) The Black Atlantic as Scriptural Formation**

**Crosslistings:** REL 305/AFR 355

"...I don't read such small stuff as letters, I read men and nations..." The unpacking of this provocative and unsettling statement ascribed to Sojourner Truth can be taken as a springboard for this seminar that explores the politics of the scriptural (or writing) as analytical window onto the complex formation of the circum-Black Atlantic (and its complex relationships to colonial and post-colonial Atlantic worlds). The isolation of selected Black Atlantic "readings" as cultural sites, rituals, performances, institutions, as different and conflicting types of politics and social orientation—from first contacts through slavery to the contemporary irruptions of protest and fundamentalist movements--will structure the seminar.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** consistent seminar participation (informed by engagement of selected readings); and submission of mid-term prospectus (1-2pp) and end-of-term research paper (15-20pp)

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** religion; African American (and other American ethnic groups); cultural studies; history; literature; social sciences

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Spring 2017*

SEM Section: 01 W 01:10 PM 03:50 PM Instructor: Vincent Wimbush

**REL 306 Feminist Approaches to Religion (D) (W)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 306/WGSS 307

What does feminist theory have to offer the study of religion? How have participants in various religious traditions helped to produce and enact feminisms? Feminisms and religion have a long though often troubled history of interconnection. In this course, we shall explore a range of feminist theoretical analyses that have either emerged out of particular religious contexts or have been applied to the study of religious traditions and practices. We shall consider how conflicts within feminism—especially those pertaining to issues of sexuality, race, class, nationality, ethnicity, and religious affiliation—make a difference for the ways that religion is interpreted and practiced.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** one "position paper" for class discussion (3 pages), one analytical essay (4 pages), participation in writing workshop on drafts of final papers, one 15-page final paper

**Prerequisites:** none; open to all

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

WGSS Theory Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Denise Buell

**REL 307 Thinking Gods: Cognitive Theories of Religion**

Although it is still in its infancy, the so-called "cognitive turn" has already become one of the most exciting contemporary developments in the study of religion. During the past twenty years, scholars influenced by cognitive science have begun to formulate new models and challenge old assumptions about human religiosity and its relationship to the mind. In so doing, they have articulated theories about the evolutionary origins of religious concepts, reassessed the role of memory and of counterintuitive explanations in the perpetuation of religious ideas, and developed new concepts such as "theological incorrectness" and "systematic anthropomorphism." By examining the cutting-edge work produced by members of this movement on both sides of the Atlantic, this seminar for advanced students will trace the historical roots of the cognitive turn and introduce some of its most important recent products. Authors to be considered include Sigmund Freud, Ludwig Feuerbach, Jean-Pierre Dupuy, D. Jason Slone, Pascal Boyer, Veikko Anttonen, Scott Atran, Richard Dawkins, Dan Sperber, and Ilkka Pyysiäinen.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active participation, class presentations, short writing assignments, and a take-home final exam

**Prerequisites:** REL 101 or permission of instructor

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors and Cognitive Science concentrators

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM

### **REL 309 Scriptures and Race**

**Crosslistings:** REL 309/AFR 309/LATS 309

This course focuses on the relationships between constructions of race in the post-1492 American world and "Christian scriptures." The big questions of the course examine the ways that contestations of power are intertwined with the making of, interpretation, and transformation of sacred texts. Both scriptures and race are conceptual constellations of human social imagination, and yet their conceptualization has often been embroiled in the hopes and traumas of everyday life in the Americas. How and why did these two terms come to have any relationship to each other? How and why do peoples engage "scriptures"? In what ways have "scriptures" informed how peoples imagine themselves, their communities, and their relationship to religious and racial "others"? How did "scriptures" and "race" inform each other in modern colonialisms and imperialisms? In this course, we will examine the ways that scriptures have been employed in order to understand and develop notions of race, and we will examine how ideas about and lived experiences of race have informed the concept of scriptures as well as practices of scriptural interpretation.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation based upon participation, short writing exercises, a 5- to 8-page take-home midterm essay, and a 10- to 15-page final essay

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

LATS Core Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Jacqueline Hidalgo

### **REL 310 Womanist/Black Feminist Thought**

**Crosslistings:** AFR 310/REL 310/WGSS 310/AMST 309

This course explores the genealogy and development of black feminist and womanist thought. We will investigate the expansion of womanist thought from a theologically dominated discourse to a broader category of critical reflection associated more commonly with black feminism, analyze the relationship between womanism and black feminism, and review the historical interventions of black feminism. As critical reflections upon western norms of patriarchy, heterosexism, and racism, womanism and black feminism begin with the assumption that the experiences of women of color—particularly black women—are significant standpoints in modern western society. Through the examination of interdisciplinary and methodological diversity within these fields, students will be introduced to key figures including Alice Walker, Zora Neale Hurston, and Katie Cannon, and will engage materials that draw from multiple fields, including, but not limited to, literature, history, anthropology, and religious studies. Fulfilling the EDI requirement, this course will explore how womanism/black feminism can be a bridge for empathetic understanding of diverse experiences, and will examine the varied social, political, and historical contexts that led to the formulation of womanism/black feminism as a tool to critique power and privilege.

**Class Format:** lecture/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on class participation, three short response papers, and the completion of an original research paper or project

**Prerequisites:** none

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

AFR Core Electives

AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives

WGSS Racial Sexual + Cultural Diversity Courses

WGSS Theory Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

LEC Instructor: Rhon Manigault-Bryant

### **REL 311 Black Ministerial Imaginations: Griots, Athletes, and Maestros**

**Crosslistings:** AFR 311/REL 311

In one of the most memorable lines from the classic *Souls of Black Folk*, W. E. B. Du Bois described the Black minister as "the most unique personality developed on U. S. soil." This course will draw from Du Bois's social-psychological portrait of the minister to explore how the ministerial personality appears across a number of social arenas beyond the religious sphere, including politics, sports, and music. We will investigate the complex social dynamics of race and gender surrounding Black ministerial expressions, such as Barack Obama's campaign for the U.S. presidency; Mike Singletary's career as a Hall of Fame linebacker for the Chicago Bears, motivational speaker, and Head Coach for the San Francisco 49ers; and John Coltrane's "A Love Supreme."

**Class Format:** discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based upon class participation, a few short papers, and a final research paper

**Prerequisites:** none; open to all

**Enrollment Preferences:** Africana Studies concentrators

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Dept. Notes:** this course DOES NOT fulfill the body of theory seminar requirement for Religion majors; this course will count as an elective towards the major in Religion

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

AFR Core Electives

AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: James Manigault-Bryant

**REL 314 Racial and Religious Mixture (D) (W)**

**Crosslistings:** LATS 427/REL 314/AMST 327/AFR 427

The very term "mixture" implies that two or more distinct substances have been brought together. Distinctions of race and religion are social fictions; yet, the lived ramifications of these social fictions involve tense struggles over the boundaries of racial and religious communities. These boundaries are not just ideas but also practices. In the history of the Americas, mixed racial and religious identities and experiences have more often been the result of violent clashes than romantic encounters. Still, the romanticization of the New World as a geography that makes such mixtures possible reaches back to the earliest days of Spanish conquest in the Americas. This course critically reconsiders varying ways that racial and religious mixtures have been imagined, defined, challenged, negotiated, and survived under imaginative and legal rubrics of *mestizaje*, creolization, transculturation, passing, syncretism, religious hybridity, and mixed race studies. Focusing on how different peoples have critically theorized and made meaning about and out of racial and religious differences and interconnections, this EDI course investigates the ways that knowledge about mixture and difference have been critically constructed and transformed.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation based on participation, presentations, annotated bibliography, short writing assignments, writing workshop participation, and a 20- to 25-page research paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** seniors, concentrators, majors, those with prior relevant coursework

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Jacqueline Hidalgo

**REL 315 The Sociology of Black Religious Experience**

**Crosslistings:** AFR 305/REL 315/SOC 305/AMST 305

The United House of Prayer For All People. The Nation of Islam. New Birth Missionary Baptist Church. The African-American Buddhist Retreat at Spirit Rock Meditation Center. While each of these groups reflects a different spiritual tradition, all are examples of the rich religious expressions of Black Americans. This course will introduce students to the landscape of Black religious practices in the United States. We will begin with a historical survey of the literature on Black religions. Our review will yield some of the primary themes of the Black religious experience—the injustices of modern racism, the significance of liberation, and continued meaning of Africa as a homeland. We will then investigate how secular processes like industrialization, commodification, and the modern media, alter understandings of the sacred in Black experience.

**Class Format:** seminar/discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based upon class participation, 2-3 short papers, and a final research paper

**Prerequisites:** none; open to all

**Enrollment Preferences:** Africana Studies concentrators and Anthropology/Sociology majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Dept. Notes:** this course DOES NOT fulfill the body of theory seminar requirement for Religion majors; this course will count as an elective towards the major in Religion

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

AFR Core Electives

AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: James Manigault-Bryant

**REL 317 Disenchantment, Modernity, and the Death of God**

A great many theorists have argued that the defining feature of modernity is the departure of the supernatural. They often argue that magic, religion, and some sense of cosmic significance have been replaced by technology, calculation, and bureaucratic protocol. This course will be driven by one question: Are they right? Put differently: Do cities and computers generate their own type of magic? Is God in fact dead? Religion clearly has not vanished, but has it become less authentic? Does the dissolution of Christian ethics produce nihilism or the positive revaluation of values? Does capitalism turn everything into a commodity or does it commercialize wonder? Does modernity mean alienation from nature, a withering of social community, the end of art, and a rejection of history, or is it humankind's liberation from the dogmas of the past? Will science and reason ultimately sweep away belief in ghosts, angels, and demons, or will we always be haunted?

Students will read the major theorists of secularization, modernization, and disenchantment and will conduct independent research projects on various modern attempts to revive magic and re-enchant the world. Students will be instructed in the use physical and digital archives for original primary text research. Possible topics for student exploration are vast and include: occult sciences and new religious movements such as the Golden Dawn, Spiritualism, Theosophy, Voodoo, Neo-paganism, Wicca; and various artistic movements including Symbolism and Surrealism—all of which promised to supply antidotes to the meaninglessness of the modern age. Authors to be read may include: Nietzsche, Novalis, Comte, Max Weber, Tonnies, Walter Benjamin, Bernard Stiegler.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** regular attendance and participation, short weekly reflection papers, and a 15- to 20-page research paper

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** not open to first year students

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Jason Josephson

**REL 318(F) California: Myths, Peoples, Places (W)**

**Crosslistings:** LATS 318/AMST 318/REL 318/COMP 328/ENVI 318

Crosslisting Between Paradise and Hell, between environmental disaster and agricultural wonderland, between Reagan and Berkeley, between a land of all nations and a land of multiracial enmity, a diversity of myths have been inscribed onto and pursued within the space we call California. How did certain narratives of California come to be, who has imagined California in certain ways, and why? What is the relationship between certain myths, the peoples who have imagined them, and the other peoples who have shared California dreams? In this course, we will examine some of the myths that surround California by looking at a few specific moments of interaction between the peoples who have come to make California home and the specific places in which they have interacted with each other. Of special interest will be imaginations of the Spanish missions, the Gold Rush, agricultural California, wilderness California, California as "sprawling multicultural dystopia," and California as "west of the west."

**Class Format:** seminar

**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 Preferences:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under LATS, AMST, ENVI or REL

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora

AMST Space and Place Electives

ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives

ENVP SC-B Group Electives

LATS Core Electives

Fall 2016

SEM Section: 01 TR 09:55 AM 11:10 AM Instructor: Jacqueline Hidalgo

**REL 319(S) Icons**

**Crosslistings:** ARTH 428/ARTH 528/REL 319

This seminar will explore the appearance and use of icons, the sacred images of the early Christian church, between the first century and the eighth century. Materials include panel paintings, ivories and mosaics. The aim of the inquiry is to examine the surviving corpus of icons, consider how they functioned and the ways in which the artists who created them manipulated such formal elements as line, color and composition to create an image of the sacred.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** preparation of readings, class participation, research paper (c. 20 pages), seminar report (c. 30 minutes)

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** priority will be given to Art History majors, advanced students of Religion and graduate students in Art History

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 1

Spring 2017

SEM Section: 01 W 01:10 PM 03:50 PM Instructor: Sarah Bassett

**REL 326T(S) Queer Temporalities (W)**

**Crosslistings:** REL 326/LATS 426/WGSS 326/COMP 326

Birth, childhood, adolescence, college, adulthood, career, marriage, family, mid-life, old age, death, afterlife. How are all these facets of being human imagined as stages in time, as axes on certain progressive lines that delineate human social relations? How do we experience and represent time, and what factors might account for both our experiences and our representations? What are some of the ways that people experience and mark the passing of time? What are some of the different ways that people have made sense of time and themselves in time? How have our conceptions of time and our demarcations of lifecycles shifted historically? How do people whose experiences do not align with dominant cultural social stages negotiate ideas of lifecycle and timing? Especially for individuals and peoples who have been denied self-representation and narratives of place, how do competing notions of time, history, space, and location get negotiated? In this course, drawing from within the broad corpus of queer theory (including theorists such as Gloria Anzaldúa, Elizabeth Freeman, J. Halberstam, and José Esteban Muñoz) we will examine some non-linear, non-normative, and interruptive approaches to making sense of time, space-time, and self within time.

**Class Format:** tutorial

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on class attendance, analytical essays, responses, and revised essays

**Extra Info:** Pairs will meet with the instructor for one hour each week. Almost every week, one student from the pair will write a 5-page analysis of the week's reading. The other student will respond orally with a 2-page response to their partner's paper.

Pairs will also prepare a midterm synthesis, students will revise two of their 5-page analytical papers: one from the first half of the semester, one from the second half due at the end of the semester.

may not be taken pass/fail or fifth course

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** majors and concentrators in Religion, Latina/o Studies, Comparative Literature, and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies or students who have previous coursework in those programs

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL, LATS or WGSS; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

AMST Space and Place Electives

LATS Core Electives

Spring 2017

TUT Section: T1 TBA Instructor: Jacqueline Hidalgo

**REL 327 Theory after Postmodernism: New Materialisms and Realism**

**Crosslistings:** REL 327/COMP 327

Since the 1970s much of the academy has labored under a particular form of linguistic skepticism (often called postmodernism or poststructuralism) that is directed at the destruction of stable conceptions of subjectivity and meaning. It is often said that everything is a text and that all knowledge is power. But just as the typewriter has given way to the computer and disco to dubstep, as we exit postmodernity new philosophies are appearing on the conceptual horizon.

This course will layout this challenge to postmodernism by exploring the work of cutting edge theorists in French and American movements known as new materialism, speculative realism, and actor-network theory. Often drawing on work in ecology, feminism, science studies, neuroscience and complexity theory, these thinkers aim to reclaim knowledge of the real world, to suture the separation between the sciences and the humanities, and to overturn what they see as the dualism between matter (as dead or inert)

and mind (as the locus of life and agency). By so doing, they claim to empower the object-world and dethrone humanity from the center of philosophy. Thinkers to be considered may include: Karen Barad, Jane Bennett, Bruno Latour, Catherine Malabou, Quentin Meillassoux and Bernard Stiegler.

While the relevance of these movements to the study of religion will be discussed, this course is intended for students of any major who wish to study critical, political, or philosophical theory.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** regular participation and attendance, regular short writing assignments, 10- to 15-page final paper

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** none, although prior coursework in critical theory, political theory, or continental philosophy is strongly recommended

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion, Philosophy and Comparative Literature majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Jason Josephson

### **REL 328 Witchcraft**

**Crosslistings:** HIST 328/REL 328

A wide variety of human cultures have accepted the existence of the supernatural, the reality of magic, and the possibility of magical transgression. Among the most common supernatural crimes is witchcraft, which societies can invoke to explain natural disasters and disease, and to blame these occurrences on specific individuals, often social outcasts. Witchcraft became a particular focus of fear and fascination in Early Modern Europe, when inquisitors, theologians and many ordinary people came to believe that Western Christendom was threatened by a vast, covert conspiracy of witches in league with the devil. Countless "witches"—most of them women—were accordingly tried, tortured and sometimes even executed. Our course will examine these bizarre events and consider what religious, cultural and intellectual factors might help explain them. We will begin by investigating the medieval legal and theological developments that enabled and encouraged the persecution of witches, and go on to study some of the most important and sensational witch trials of the later medieval and early modern periods. Throughout, we will encounter many strange and intriguing documents produced by the inquisitors who persecuted witches, the scholars who imagined their activities, and the laws that defined their crimes. No prior experience with European history is required for this seminar, which will emphasize thoughtful writing and discussion.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly 500-word essays and one class presentation

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** History and Religion majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

HIST Group C Electives - Europe and Russia

HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Eric Knibbs

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

**Crosslistings:** REL 330/PSCI 375/JWST 492

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.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** six short (1-2 pages) response papers; two 6- to 8-page papers, each analyzing a different view in depth;

**Extra Info:** 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

may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion majors, Jewish Studies concentrators, and Political Science students on the "Theory" track  
**Enrollment Limit:** 19  
**Expected Class Size:** 18  
**Distributional Requirements:**  
Division 2  
Writing Intensive  
**Other Attributes:**  
JWST Core Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*  
SEM Instructor: Jeffrey Israel

### **REL 332 Islamic Feminism**

**Crosslistings:** REL 332/WGSS 334/ARAB 332

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.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly responses, four 2- to 3-page essays

**Prerequisites:** none

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*  
SEM Instructor: Saadia Yacoob

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

**Crosslistings:** ANTH 334/COMP 334/JWST 334/REL 334

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.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** 3- to 5-page weekly response papers; 15-page final paper; class participation

**Prerequisites:** none

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 12

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ANTH, JWST, or REL; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

JWST Core Electives

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*  
SEM Instructor: Peter Just

### **REL 337 Zen and Philosophy: The Kyoto School and its Legacy in Japanese Thought**

**Crosslistings:** REL 337/ASST 337/COMP 337

Popularly regarded as the most important philosophical movement in modern Japanese history, the Kyoto School creatively marshaled the resources of Buddhism to address the impasses of Western philosophy to startling effect. Although the members of the Kyoto

School were not all of one mind, their shared aims were ambitious: to bridge the dualism between subject and object, to overcome nihilism, to explore the implications of absolute nothingness, and to surmount what they saw as the chasm between Japanese and European thought. After providing some brief background in Japanese Buddhism, we will read the writings of the core thinkers of the Kyoto School: Nishida Kitaro, Tanabe Hajime, Nishitani Keiji, and some of their later protégés. Thematically, we will explore issues in ethics, epistemology, phenomenology, metaphysics, and the philosophy of religion; and demonstrate the continued relevance of their insights in these areas. Finally, we will reflect on the group's engagement with Japanese nationalism. *All readings will be in translation.*

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** regular participation and attendance, regular short writing assignments, 10- to 15-page final paper

**Prerequisites:** none, but previous coursework in Religion, Comparative Literature, Political theory, and/or Philosophy is strongly recommended

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion, Asian Studies, and Comparative Literature majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or ASST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Jason Josephson

### **REL 340(S) African Diaspora Religions in the Americas and the Caribbean**

**Crosslistings:** AFR 340/GBST 340/REL 340

Over the last century, historians, social scientists, and religionists have labored to discover the meaning of African dispersal beyond the African continent and its accompanying spiritual lineages. What did it mean to move from the African continent (as opposed to the Australian continent, for example)? What theories of encounter sufficiently adjudicate the synthetic religious cultures of African descended persons in North America, South America, and the Caribbean? What are the cross-disciplinary methodologies that scholars utilize to understand African religious cultures in the Western hemisphere? Firstly, this course will consider a brief historiography of Africana Religious Studies. This background will inform the second and primary objective of the course: privileging knowledge, place, and performance as central lenses for thematizing and exploring West and Central African religious traditions housed in the Americas. We will cover diverse African diasporic religious traditions including Conjure, Dagara, Kumina, New Orleans Voodoo, Spiritual Baptist, Winti, and Yoruba (Candomblé, Ifa, Lucumí, and "Orisha-Vodu"). We will also explore other African diasporic religious sensibilities that transgress regional and institutional boundaries.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on class participation, discussion leadership, two scholarly journal entries, and a final seminar paper of 18-20 pages (which will require working in stages on a proposal, an 8-page draft, and a 15-page draft)

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** Africana Studies concentrators

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Spring 2017*

SEM Section: 01 W 07:00 PM 09:40 PM Instructor: Meredith Coleman-Tobias

### **REL 346 Islam and Anthropology**

**Crosslistings:** ANTH 346/REL 346/ARAB 280/ASST 346

If anthropology has helped to define Islam in global thought, Islam has returned the favor, holding a critical mirror to the anthropological endeavor perhaps more than any other traditional "object" of study. This course examines anthropological studies of Islamic societies for what they teach us both about Islam and about anthropology. We begin with foundational social theorists whose studies of religious phenomena helped give rise to the field of anthropology of religion. We then survey influential efforts to construct "ideal-type" models of Muslim society based on anthropological and historical knowledge, alongside efforts to critique, historicize, and redirect the model-building project (notably by Talal Asad and Edward Said). The second half of the course is devoted to ethnographies that explore, from a variety of perspectives and in several regions (Morocco, India, Egypt, Syria), questions of human agency, hierarchy and resistance, and Islam as discursive resource, ethical project, and embodied community.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly postings, one 5-page paper, one 10-page paper, discussion leading

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** juniors and seniors, Anthropology, Sociology or Religion majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Joel Lee

**REL 350(S) Max Weber & Critical Theory or Rationalization & Its Discontents****Crosslistings:** REL 350/SOC 350/COMP 349

We live in an age characterized by unprecedented technological and scientific progress—we have unraveled the building blocks of life, witnessed the birth of stars at the edge of the galaxy, and harnessed the power of the atom—and yet modern life often appears fundamentally meaningless and lacking in ultimate value—we work, we eat, we excrete, we die, perhaps in the interim shuffling paperwork, sucking up to our boss, and asking ourselves, "What kind of dining set defines me as a person?" Few thinkers have explored the roots of this modern ennui as thoroughly as Max Weber, a German sociologist often regarded as the single most important social theorist of the twentieth century. Weber wanted to know why it was European civilization in particular that gave birth to the grand trifecta of rationality, science, and capitalism and how we have become enslaved by the very things that were supposed to have set us free. Weber's key innovation was to trace the grand trajectory of Western "rationalization"—the historical attempt to produce a world in which "one can, in principle, master all things by calculation." Further, he demonstrated how this rationalization produced not just mastery over nature, but also "the disenchantment of the world" - value fragmentation, hyper-specialization, bureaucracy, and ultimately the "iron cage" of modernity. The first part of this course will follow in Weber's footsteps by studying his theory of rationalization and by exploring it in different social spheres, such as the economy, the law, the professions, and the secularization of religion. The second half of the course will look at Weber's legacy in Critical Theory. It will show how thinkers such as Theodor Adorno, Georges Bataille, Jürgen Habermas, Max Horkheimer, Michael Löwy, and Alasdair MacIntyre suggested various lines of flight from the iron cage of modernity.

**Class Format:** seminar**Requirements/Evaluation:** attendance and participation, weekly critical reflections, 5- to 6-page midterm paper, 10- to 15-page final essay**Prerequisites:** none**Enrollment Preferences:** preference will be given to REL, ANSO and COMP majors**Enrollment Limit:** 15**Expected Class Size:** 15**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or SOC; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

**Other Attributes:**

AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives

REL Body of Theory Courses

*Spring 2017*

SEM Section: 01 W 01:10 PM 03:50 PM Instructor: Jason Josephson

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

Religion independent study.

**Class Format:** independent study**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Fall 2016*

IND Section: 01 Cancelled

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

Religion independent study.

**Class Format:** independent study**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Spring 2017*

IND Section: 01 Cancelled

**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.

**Class Format:** seminar**Requirements/Evaluation:** class reports, papers, and substantial research projects**Prerequisites:** senior Religion major or permission of instructor**Enrollment Limit:** 15**Expected Class Size:** 15**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Fall 2016*

SEM Section: 01 W 01:10 PM 03:50 PM Instructor: Jacqueline Hidalgo

**REL 405 Kings, Heroes, Gods, & Monsters: Historical Texts and Modern Identities in the Middle East (D) (W)**

**Crosslistings:** HIST 410/ARAB 410/JWST 410/REL 405

What role does ancient history play in modern societies? What is the role of myths and fables in the creation of national identities? This course will address the use and abuse of ancient history and archaeology in the modern Middle East. The first part will focus on some of the primary ancient texts, with special focus on Ferdowsi's epic *Shahnameh (Book of Kings)*; we will compare its themes and world view with those of the Icelandic sagas that share many similarities with the Iranian canon. In the second part of the course we will explore how ancient history, archaeology, and epic texts helped forge national identities in the modern Middle East. Our primary attention will be Iran and its relationship with the *Shahnameh*. But we will also consider the relationship of Biblical history to the establishment of modern Israel and Israeli nationalism, how contemporary Egypt relates to its Pharaonic past, the obsession with pre-Islamic history in modern Turkey, and the relationship between archaeological artifacts and ancient Mesopotamian history and 20th century Iraqi politics. Because of its comparative focus, this course is part of the Exploring Diversity Initiative.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** a final, 25-page research paper on the relationship between ancient history and a modern Middle Eastern country, shorter papers, and group work

**Prerequisites:** previous upper division work in HIST or courses on the Middle East

**Enrollment Preferences:** History majors, Jewish Studies concentrators, Arabic Studies majors, and other students with a strong background in Middle East studies

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

Exploring Diversity

Writing Intensive

**Other Attributes:**

HIST Group E Electives - Middle East

HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

JWST Elective Courses

*Not Offered Academic Year 2017*

SEM Instructor: Magnus Bernhardsson

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

Religion senior thesis.

**Class Format:** independent study

**Extra Info:** this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494)

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Fall 2016*

HON Section: 01 Cancelled

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

Religion senior thesis.

**Class Format:** independent study

**Extra Info:** this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494)

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Spring 2017*

HON Section: 01 Cancelled

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

**Class Format:** independent study

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Fall 2016*

IND Section: 01 Cancelled

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

**Class Format:** independent study

**Distributional Requirements:**

Division 2

*Spring 2017*

IND Section: 01 Cancelled

