

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (RLGN)

RLGN 101. Religion and Culture. 3 Units.

This course introduces students to the study of religion by examining religious practices within a variety of cultural and historical contexts around the world. The course invites students to think comparatively and critically about the role of religion within broader cultural discourses (e.g., gender, politics, and the environment). Instead of surveying what were formerly called the "world's great religions," this course builds religious literacy by examining religious practices within particular geographical and thematic areas. Through comparative case studies drawn from a diverse range of "non-western" cultures, students will learn about religions and spiritualities across the globe. These cultural touchstones will build core literacy in other cultures, positioning students to engage more fully in the religious and cultural diversity that they will encounter in their own lives and careers. Alongside these geographic case studies, the course will also examine key themes in the study of religion, such as diasporic transnationalism, liberation theology, and ritual practice. We will use these themes to tease out and debate some of the core theoretical and methodological challenges in the study of religion, including postcolonial critiques of the origin and history of the field of religious studies itself. To be clear, religion is our subject, not our approach. Although students will find opportunities to reflect on their own spirituality/disbelief, the course does not presume any particular religious or non-religious perspective. Indeed, the study of religion is itself concerned not only with the world's religious traditions, but also with contemporary questions of skepticism, science, disbelief, and secularity. Evaluation will be based on class preparation and participation, regular short papers, a midterm exam, and a final take-home essay exam. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 108. The History of Yoga: The Yoga of Transformation and the Transformation of Yoga. 3 Units.

In this class we will investigate the history and context of yoga. We will first examine yoga as a transformative disciplined practice through close study of primary sources. Next we will focus on Yoga as presented in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. We will then examine the ways and extent to which yoga has been transformed in both India and outside of India. To this end we will scrutinize the development of American(ized) "Yoga." We will address the legal complexities concerning ownership and appropriation as well as those concerning the teaching of "Yoga" in public schools and the establishment clause of the First Amendment. We will also devote several classes to actual yoga experiences where the students can learn some asana (postures) and movements. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 151. Introducing Africana Religions. 3 Units.

This "topics course" offers an introduction to the academic study of Africana Religions. Whether approached through a particular theme or as a general historical introduction, each section of this course provides students with a general introduction to the academic study of religion and basic religious literacy in religions of people of African origins in sub-Saharan African, the Caribbean, Europe, and the Americas and thus will explore forms of these traditions in a diversity of cultural contexts. Section topics could include, but are not limited to: Introducing Africana Religions: The Black Church in the U.S., Introducing Africana Religions: Yoruba Ifa Traditions, Introducing Africana Religions: Orisha Traditions in Latin America and the Caribbean, Introducing Africana Religions: African American Religions, Introducing Africana Religions: U.S. African-derived Religions. Students may repeat the course for credit (up to 6 credits), provided that the two sections are different. Offered as AFST 151 and RLGN 151. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 172. Introducing Islam. 3 Units.

This course is an introduction to the beliefs, practices, sacred texts, and intellectual traditions of Islam. We will approach the many dimensions of Islam from the perspective of religious studies. Our goal is to develop a foundational understanding of the core aspects of Islam, while exploring the scholarly approaches to the study of Muslim belief, practices, and communities. Throughout the term, we will examine major developments in the history of Islam, underscoring the dynamic changes that the tradition has undergone in its 1400+ year history and in various cultural contexts in West Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and China. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 173. Introducing Judaism. 3 Units.

Judaism - like all religions - structures the way its adherents view the world and inhabit it. In this course we will explore five aspects of the human experience and interrogate the ways in which the religion provides a framework for navigating each one. TIME: How is time marked and measured? SPACE: What sort of cultural work is done to create religious and cultural home/s? THE DIVINE: How might God be described and understood? And what is the nature of the relationship between the Divine and humanity? TEXTS: What are the Jewish sacred texts? When did they appear and who authored them? How are they read, studied and understood? COMMUNITY: What are the contours of the "Jewish Community" and how are boundaries drawn between who is "in" and who is "out"? Offered as RLGN 173 and JWST 173. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 201. Interpreting Religion: Approaches and Current Issues. 3 Units.

Introduction to academic study of religion, exploring the history and development of the field, important theories and methodologies, and current issues, debates, and horizons of research. This course provides students with the opportunity to approach the global study of religion from an interdisciplinary perspective. It pays particular attention to how religious studies has approached the study of non-Western cultures and religions and provides students with the opportunity to reflect on their own assumptions about "religion" as a category. This course also engages students around comparative questions in relation to religions in Asia and Africa, in order to develop critical, yet empathetic approaches to the comparison of global religions through key terms in religious studies such as ritual, belief, myth, and authority. The course is foundational for majors and minors in religious studies but also open to other interested students who may find it valuable for their work in other fields of study. Particular readings and other assignments will be determined by the designated instructor. Students are expected to attend class regularly, complete readings and other assignments, and participate actively in class discussions and other activities. Counts as a Disciplinary Communication course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 203. Religious Studies for Future Healthcare Professionals. 3 Units.

This class will provide future healthcare professionals with the basic knowledge of religious studies and of topics pertaining to death and dying, sickness, suffering, and so on. Students will also gain a basic knowledge of related bioethical issues as they are found in the world's religions. The primary aim of the course is to offer future healthcare professionals an awareness of the diverse religious backgrounds of patients and issues that they might encounter and to provide a basic understanding of religious studies in the process. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 206. Religion and Ecology. 3 Units.

Cross-religious and cross-cultural introduction to the interdisciplinary field of religion and ecology. Ecological ideas and practices from Indigenous religions, South and East Asian religions, and monotheistic religions will be examined and compared as they relate to ecology and environmental ethics in our contemporary context. Themes include: climate crisis and climate justice in the Anthropocene, human exceptionalism, ideas of the wilderness, human-animal relations, and ecological interdependence. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 209. Introduction to Biblical Literature. 3 Units.

This course is an introduction to the academic study of biblical literature, including Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament") and the New Testament. The literature will be studied in light of both ancient and contemporary historical contexts, with a particular emphasis on the roles it plays in American culture and politics today. Class sessions will be discussion oriented and will involve close, careful analysis and interpretation of texts. No background in religion is necessary. Evaluation will be based on class preparation and participation, regular short writing assignments, two exams, and a major paper. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course.

RLGN 210. Sacred Space in Global Religious Traditions. 3 Units.

This course uses sacred space to explore global religious diversity. Architectural and artistic decisions about the location, internal layout, orientation, and other features of sacred spaces reflect deep presuppositions within religious traditions about the divine, the nature of community, religious authority, and the purposes of ritual. In what ways do these spaces inspire awe, demand obedience, offer comfort, or teach lessons? How have these spaces inherited features from other times and places? How do sacred spaces reflect immigration histories, economic imperatives, and racial and gendered dynamics? How do the functions and meanings of sacred spaces change over time? Students will visit a variety of Cleveland-area religious institutions, including Hindu, Christian, Muslim, and Jewish communities, in order to examine common and distinct features of sacred spaces and what they reveal about the nature of religious communities. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 212. Introduction to Christianity. 3 Units.

This course introduces students to the emergence and historical developments of Christianity from its Jewish sectarian roots to a global religion, focusing on how the central doctrinal-theological and moral-ethical themes of the Christian tradition have emerged and developed in different ecclesial traditions of transnational Christianity – Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox, Catholic and Mainline Protestant, Evangelical and Renewal. It explores how the forces of cultural diversity and pluralism, historic colonialism and imperialism, globalization and migration, as well as contemporary postcolonial and transnational consciousness shape and challenge the trajectory of the growth and spread, as well as the socio-political transformation of Christianity from its Mediterranean roots across the globe over two millennia. It discusses the broader socio-cultural, philosophical-theological, moral-ethical, and political dimensions emerging from the Christian tradition generally, as well as evaluates the themes of community building, identity formation and constructions, moral-ethical codes, and social movements within the different ecclesial traditions of Christianity, their contributions on ongoing theological conversations and moral-ethical debates, as well as their contemporary significance and long term global and transnational implications of Christianity as a global religion. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course.

RLGN 213. Jews and Judaism. 3 Units.

This course provides an introduction to Jewish religion, culture, history, and life. It does not presuppose any previous study of Judaism or experience with Judaism, and it prepares students for additional coursework in Judaic studies, Jewish history, or religious studies with an emphasis on Judaism. Required for the minor in Jewish Studies. Offered as JWST 101 and RLGN 213. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 215. Religion In America. 3 Units.

This course is an introduction to American religions, with a particular focus on religious diversity in the United States. As we examine the myriad beliefs and practices of America's religious communities, we will pay close attention to how religion and culture have shaped each other from the 1600's to today. To explore the theme of religious diversity, we will take advantage of Cleveland's rich religious history with visits to local religious institutions and historical sites, including churches, mosques, synagogues and Hindu and Buddhist temples. Along the way we will consider the role of religious spaces and institutions in shaping community, identity, and politics in Northeast Ohio and beyond. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 216. Hinduism. 3 Units.

We will survey the basic beliefs and practices of Hinduism(s) as found in India and across the world, with an emphasis on primary sources and contemporary complexities. The class will focus on the religion(s) of cultures outside the United States. It will address in a substantive way ethnic, gender, sexual, religious, or other cultural practices outside the United States, so as to provide students with fresh perspectives on their own cultural assumptions, traditions, and experiences. Our study will range from close readings of classical texts, to observing and reflecting on contemporary practices and movies, to careful study of images and artifacts on display at the Cleveland Museum of Art. We will apply a variety of methods and tools to investigate class materials, from a number of different disciplines, including sociology, history, theology, anthropology, and psychology. Students will build a very strong foundation in the primary sources in this class. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 217. Buddhism. 3 Units.

From India to Indonesia, from Tibet to the United States, the reach of Buddhism has been pervasive and persistent throughout the past millennia. What makes Buddhism so popular? Why are there so many Buddhist traditions all over the world, and what are those? What makes them different, and what sets of core tenets do they share, if any? In this course, we will explore together the basic teachings of Buddhism in its manifold emanations. Using Buddhism as an example, we will also begin to think about religion as a tool of social organization or resistance, as a cosmopolitan language to converse with other cultures, and as an integral part of human lives past and present. Offered as ASIA 217 and RLGN 217. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 218. Faith and Politics in Islam. 3 Units.

An overview of the relationship between Islam as a religion and Islam as a political system and the effect of this relationship on Islamic society from its origin to the present time. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 219. Islam in America. 3 Units.

The United States is home to one of the most diverse Muslim communities in the world. Using a variety of primary and secondary sources, this course examines the rich history of Islam in the United States, from the 18th century to the present, as it relates to key moments within American politics, religion and culture, and to transnational developments in Islamic thought and practice. We will also explore important issues within contemporary Muslim communities, including gender, shari'a, and religious pluralism. In addition to studying the experiences of Muslim immigrants, students will also investigate the vital role of African-American Muslims and converts in the development of American Muslim institutions, beliefs and rituals. This course will also introduce students to the history of Islam in Cleveland, and provide them with the opportunity to contribute to original research on Muslim communities in our city. Offered as AFST 219, HSTY 279, RLGN 219, and WGST 219. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 220. Jewish Art and Architecture. 3 Units.

Over the course of their long history, Jews have contended with diaspora, boundary-crossing, minority status and anti-Semitism. Along the way, art and architecture have given shape to Jewish reflections on their complex social positionalities, ethical convictions, and religious longings. This course explores the critical role architects and Jewish artists have played in narrating and giving expression to these experiences. Critically, we will also examine the powerful position that artists of Jewish heritage have had in influencing the the course of modern art. Finally, we will study the ways in which Jews have been represented by others, both in anti-Semitic propaganda as well as in more sympathetic portraits, shaping popular ideas and attitudes about Jews and Jewish culture. Offered as ARTH 220, JWST 220, and RLGN 220. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 221. Indian Philosophy. 3 Units.

We will survey the schools of Indian philosophy. Our concern will be the methods, presuppositions, arguments, and goals of these schools and their trajectories of thought. What were their theories on the nature of the person, the nature of reality (ontology), the nature and process of knowing (epistemology), and the right cognitive habits needed for breaking out of the cycle of birth/rebirth? What were the debates between the schools and the major points of controversy? And, most importantly, are the positions/arguments internally (in)coherent? The class will focus on intellectual cultures outside the United States. It will address in a substantive way ethnic, gender, sexual, philosophical, religious, or other cultural practices outside the United States, to provide students with new perspectives on their own cultural assumptions, traditions, and experiences. It will also address the examines the complexities of socially/humanly constructed categories. Offered as PHIL 221 and RLGN 221. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 226. Southeast Asia And The World: History, Politics, Religions. 3 Units.

This course explores the background and factors contributing to the development and shaping of contemporary Southeast Asia, as well as the intersection and synthesis of the social, cultural, geographical, religious, and political dimensions by placing ordinary lives within the context of emerging postcolonial nation states in Southeast Asia. It analyzes major trends and transformations across the whole Southeast Asia region during different historical periods -- the conquest of traditional kingdoms, colonial rule, the impact of World War II, nationalist revolutions, and the emergence of new postcolonial nations. More broadly, it also examines the intersection and synthesis of the social, cultural, geographical, religious, and political dimensions by placing the ordinary lives of Southeast Asian peoples within the context of emerging postcolonial nation states. At the end of the course, students will gain a firm foundation in acquiring a foundational knowledge in the history, religion, culture, geography, and society of Southeast Asia, as well as understanding the implications of the continuing socio-cultural, economic, and political transformation of contemporary Southeast Asia and the significance that this region has for the rest of the world. Offered as ASIA 226, ETHS 226, HSTY 226, and RLGN 226. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 227. Islam, Gender, and Sexuality. 3 Units.

Gender and sexuality are central to understanding Muslim societies, past and present. From debates about the veil to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, gendered concerns have been especially prominent in contemporary debates about Islam in the modern world. How are masculinity and femininity constructed in Muslim contexts? How have Muslim thinkers interpreted Islamic scriptures with respect to topics such as marriage, child custody, inheritance, and sexuality? In what ways do these interpretations reflect the political, economic, and social conditions in which they lived? How does gender structure authority and power in Muslim communities? How and why have Muslim women become so central to contemporary political debates? This course explores each of these questions, while inviting students to construct alternative narratives around Islam, gender, and sexuality. This course begins by examining gender and sexuality in the foundational Islamic texts, the Qur'an and Sunna (the practice of the Prophet Muhammad), and pre-modern interpretations of these texts. The course then turns to marriage and divorce in Muslim jurisprudence, in order to examine themes such as women's spiritual capacities, female leadership, sexuality, and slavery. Next, we will turn to the headscarf as a lens through which to explore modern configurations of gender and sexuality, as they intersect with conceptions of national belonging, religious identity, and individual freedom. Finally, we will study contemporary debates over polygyny, LGBTQ+ identities, and female religious authority. There are no prerequisites for this course. No prior knowledge of Islam is expected. Offered as RLGN 227 and WGST 227. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 228. Asian Americans: Histories, Cultures, Religions. 3 Units.

This course introduces students to Asian American Studies as an interdisciplinary academic discipline. It critically examines the global and transnational dimensions of U.S. history, the constructions of "modernity" in the U.S., and the shaping of U.S. culture and religion, race and racialization, identity constructions and contestations, law and law-making, colonialism and empire building, labor and migration, politics and public policy making, and social movements through a critical study of Asian Americans and their diverse histories, cultures, religions, identity negotiations and contestations, social movements, and political activism. Offered as ETHS 228, HSTY 228 and RLGN 228. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 230. Drugs, Religion, and Mystical Experiences. 3 Units.

This class examines the relationship between drugs, religion/ religious traditions, and mystical experiences. While many religious traditions prohibit the use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs, many advocate the use of substances to achieve desired cognitive states, for spiritual or even medical/ therapeutic purposes. The class will look at several case studies, scientific papers, and philosophical monographs that pertain to, or provoke, these complexities. In this way we will problematize the categories "drug," "religion," and "mystical experience." We will look at cases from Asia, South America, and Mexico. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 233. Introduction to Jewish Folklore. 3 Units.

Exploration of a variety of genres, research methods and interpretations of Jewish folklore, from antiquity to the present. Emphasis on how Jewish folk traditions and culture give us access to the spirit and mentality of the many different generations of the Jewish ethnic group, illuminating its past and informing the direction of its future development. Offered as ANTH 233, RLGN 233, and JWST 233. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 236. Religion and the Internet: Digitizing the Sacred. 3 Units.

Religion offers a path for practitioners to connect to the Divine, join with community, and identify ultimate purpose. Although these lofty aspirations operate on a spiritual plane, they are accessed via our physical world; through holiday feasts, houses of worship, ritual garb, dance and song. Given the materiality of religious practice, the rise of the internet and metaverse has raised challenges and offered new possibilities for religious practitioners and their leaders. In this course we will explore what happens when sacred spaces become virtual, when communal gatherings occur through avatars, and when holy texts are studied on-line. Driving the course are pressing questions of meaning: What is the nature of the relationship between humanity and the Transcendent; between the body and the spirit; and between our physical world and that which is virtual? As we study various facets of virtual religion in class, students will work towards a final creative research project, which focuses on ways digital technology is redefining sacred spheres. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 238. Alternative Altars: Folk Religion in America. 3 Units.

Taking a multidisciplinary approach, students will become familiar with the distinction between conventional and unconventional religions, with the history and personalities associated with new belief systems in America, and with the means, motivations and methods of generating faith communities. Students will come to understand the role of cultural anxieties, new technologies, changing roles, globalization and other social tensions in the formation and duration of alternative altars. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 241. Translating Religion. 3 Units.

We live in a multilingual world. We use different languages to communicate, to connect, and to contest. We also use different languages at home, at work, in church, or in public. This course explores the idea that translation, in an extended definition as "communication and delivery of message across languages or media," is all around us, especially in the context of religion. In encountering differences – in the form of religious experiences, ideas, narratives, traditions, texts, etc. – we make sense of these differences through acts of translation. To think with the themes of religion and translation is to recognize that the world has always been multilingual. The task of translation carries not only linguistic but also ethical significance. In this course, we ask: how does translation in this extended sense participate in the religious lives and experiences of people? How do we, as human, make sense of and connect with the other-than-human? Students are introduced to the complex mechanisms of translation as we investigate a rich, global archive of translation case studies, where people engage differences in all aspects of religion. This course also reinforces the university's commitment to a diverse student body by contributing to and celebrating multiculturalism and multilingualism. Offered as ASIA 241, ENGL 241, and RLGN 241. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course.

RLGN 242. World Christianity. 3 Units.

This course introduces students to the academic discipline of World Christianity, with a focus on diversity and plurality within the Christian tradition as a world religion. Students will explore the global perspectives of Christianity, in recognition of the fact that more than two-thirds of the world's Christian population today are from the Majority or Two Thirds World, the so-called Global South. Students will also consider the challenges posed by, as well as the possibilities offered by the increasing diversity and plurality within the Christian tradition, as they examine the wider social, cultural, ethical, economic, and political dimensions of Christianity, and themes of community-making, identity constructions, and social movements in regions beyond Europe and North America, through both historical and contemporary perspectives. Students will also investigate the impact and implications of missionary expansion, religious reception, colonialism and imperialism, globalization, transnational migration, postcolonialism, and multiple belonging on the transformation of Christianity from a Eurocentric religious tradition to a truly global world religion. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course. Prereq: Academic Inquiry Seminar (AIQS) or SAGES First Seminar.

RLGN 243. Bollywood, Social Justice, Gender and Sexuality: Contemporary Bollywood Movies with a Social Message. 3 Units.

India, where over-the-top, melodramatic films dominate, produces more than 1,000 films a year. With lavish action sequences punctuated by periodic songs in picturesque locales, these films, popularly referred to as Bollywood, traditionally have been known for depicting imaginary worlds, very far from reality. Among these are movies that are deeply immersed in issues of religion, religious conflict, caste, and social injustice and that connect with gender and sexuality, and sexual orientation. This class will be looking at a number of Bollywood films with focal points of matters pertaining to social justice. Students will learn about the foundations of these inequalities and intolerances so that they can more completely understand the themes addressed in the movies. The class will thus focus on the religion(s) of cultures outside the United States. It will address in a substantive way ethnic, gender, sexual, religious, or other cultural practices outside the United States, so as to provide students with fresh perspectives on their own cultural assumptions, traditions, and experiences. Offered as ETHS 243 and RLGN 243 and WGST 243. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 246. Food, Culture, Ethics, and Religion. 3 Units.

This interdisciplinary seminar explores the complex intersecting relationships between food, culture and ethnicity, ethics and religion, as well as society and globalization. It introduces students to the symbolic, socio-cultural, political and economic, as well as moral-ethical roles that food plays in shaping how peoples in different cultures and societies across history and geography have defined themselves through their foodways. It critically analyzes the multiple intersecting relationships between food, ethnicity and culture, ethics and morality, as well as the transnational forces of globalization in shaping contemporary food systems, food production and consumption in an increasingly diverse and pluralistic contemporary US society shaped by forces of ongoing transnational migration. It explores how food choices and preferences both influence, as well as influenced by intersecting socio-cultural, as well as moral-ethical forces arising from constructions of ethnicity, gender, class, nationality and national origin, as well as religion and human spiritualities. It will use historical and contemporary food practices as a lens through which we can understand the ongoing processes of globalization, intersecting dynamics of power, socio-economic class, ethnic identity, as well as the implications of colonialism, industrialization, and globalization on food in human cultures and societies. Offered as ETHS 246 and RLGN 246. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course. Prereq: Academic Inquiry Seminar (AIQS).

RLGN 250. Responsible AI: Cultivating a Just and Sustainable Socio-technical Future through Data Citizenship. 3 Units.

An introduction to the key issues that inform ethically responsible design, deployment, and use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, with particular focus on the impact of data practices. From generative language models to video surveillance and identity detection to facial recognition, AI is becoming more and more embedded in our everyday lives. These AI technologies are increasingly built on our data, whether we are aware of it or not. In this praxis-oriented course, we will explore how data is fundamental to the development of AI technologies and develop practices for increased awareness of and participation in this data ecosystem. As we interrogate AI systems in everyday life through hands-on engagement with AI tools and their data pipelines, we will begin to construct a data citizenship model that can help us reclaim the power of collective responsibility in order to build a more just and sustainable socio-technical future. Students will focus their individual and group projects on questions and issues directly related to the subject area of the offering they are enrolled in. Offered as COGS 250, ENGL 250, HUMN 250, MUGN 250, PHIL 250 and RLGN 250. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course.

RLGN 251. Perspectives in Ethnicity, Race, Religion and Gender. 3 Units.

This course is designed to introduce students to the study of ethnicity. Basic concepts such as race, gender, class, and identity construction will be examined. Students are encouraged to use the tools and perspectives of several disciplines to address the experiences of ethnic groups in the United States. Offered as ETHS 251 and RLGN 251. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 252. Soul Murder: Religion and Sexual Abuse. 3 Units.

"Soul murder" is a term that psychologists and survivors use to describe the way that clergy sexual abuse destroys a child's network of relationships. In addition to sexual, developmental, and psychological harm, victims of religious abuse also experience intense theological, moral, and familial suffering. This course analyzes these topics through religious, legal, medical, and anthropological case studies. What are the cultural, racial, and gendered dynamics of religious abuse? How is it different than sexual assault in non-religious contexts? How has abuse shaped Christian and Hindu sexual ethics? These are some of the questions that you will be able to answer by the end of this seminar. Offered as RLGN 252 and WGST 252. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course.

RLGN 253. Religion and Philosophy in China. 3 Units.

This course critically examines the three principal religious and philosophical traditions of China: the Confucian, Daoist, and Chinese Buddhist traditions. Through a combination of assigned print and online readings, video clips and documentaries, class discussions, and written assignments, students explore the origins and historical developments, principal thinkers, central religious and doctrinal themes, ethics, spirituality, popular devotions, social movements, and contemporary developments of these three major religious and philosophical traditions of China. Students will consider the wider social, cultural, ethical, economic, and political dimensions of Chinese religions and philosophies generally, and themes of community and society, identity constructions, personal experiences, movements, as well as their socio-cultural reproductions in contemporary China, and where appropriate, the Chinese Diaspora in North America. Offered as CHIN 253C, ETHS 253C, PHIL 253 and RLGN 253. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 254. The Holocaust. 3 Units.

This class seeks to answer fundamental questions about the Holocaust, the German-led organized mass murder of nearly six million Jews and millions of other ethnic and religious minorities. It will investigate the origins and development of racism in modern European society, the manifestations of that racism, and responses to persecution. An additional focus of the course will be comparisons between different groups, different countries, and different phases during the Nazi era. The class concludes with an examination of the memory of the Holocaust. Offered as ETHS 254, HSTY 254, JWST 254 and RLGN 254. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 255. Global Judaism: Diversity Across the Jewish World. 3 Units.

Scattered across the globe over the course of millennia, Jews' diverse histories and environments have given rise to a great range of religious, cultural and social forms. Using ethnographies as our primary texts, we will think critically and comparatively about Judaism and Jewishness in the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia. Along our journey, we examine how Jews have navigated their experiences as minorities in their many diaspora homelands, and how they have adapted their cultural and religious practices to the various environments in which they have found themselves. In addition to exploring their Jewishness vis-à-vis others, we also examine questions of exclusion and belonging that Jews have faced as they have encountered each another in recent decades through tourism, mass migration, globalization, and the internet. How do the world's varied Jewish groups - who are of different skin colors, who speak different languages, and who carry different historical memories - navigate ethnic divides, race relations, and religious diversity? Should we speak of a single Jewish religion and Jewish people at all? Offered as ANTH 255, ETHS 255, JWST 255 and RLGN 255. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 268. Women in the Bible: Ethnographic Approaches to Rite and Ritual, Story, Song, and Art. 3 Units.

Examination of women in Jewish and Christian Biblical texts, along with their Jewish, Christian (and occasionally Muslim) interpretations. Discussion of how these traditions have shaped images of, and attitudes toward, women in western civilization. Offered as RLGN 268, WGST 268, and JWST 268.

RLGN 270. Introduction to Gender Studies. 3 Units.

This course introduces women and men students to the methods and concepts of gender studies and feminist theory. An interdisciplinary course, it covers approaches used in literary criticism, history, philosophy, political science, sociology, anthropology, psychology, film studies, cultural studies, art history, and religion. It is the required introductory course for students taking the women's and gender studies major. Offered as ENGL 270, HSTY 270, PHIL 270, RLGN 270, SOCI 201, and WGST 201. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course.

RLGN 272. Morality and Mind. 3 Units.

Recent research in cognitive science challenges ethical perspectives founded on the assumption that rationality is key to moral knowledge or that morality is the product of divine revelation. Bedrock moral concepts like free will, rights, and moral agency also have been questioned. In light of such critiques, how can we best understand moral philosophy and religious ethics? Is ethics primarily informed by nature or by culture? Or is ethics informed by both? This course examines 1) ways in which cognitive science—and related fields such as evolutionary biology—impact traditional moral perspectives, and 2) how the study of moral philosophy and comparative ethics forces reconsideration of broad cognitive science theories about the nature of ethics. The course examines the concept of free will as a case study in applying these interpretive viewpoints. Interdisciplinary readings include literature from moral philosophy, religious ethics, cognitive science, and evolutionary biology. Offered as COGS 272 and RLGN 272.

RLGN 275. Religion in the City: Skyscrapers, Hip-Hop, and Urban Spirituality. 3 Units.

"Religion in the City" examines how immigration, globalization, and diaspora have reshaped the social and spiritual landscape of American cities, with an emphasis on African, Asian, and Latin American religions. Through case studies, we will examine the complex and sometimes-contested interplay of multiple religious influences within the urban boundaries of historic neighborhoods in Boston, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, and Cleveland. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 283. Muhammad: The Man and the Prophet. 3 Units.

The life of the Prophet Muhammad (c.470-632 CE) which was as crucial to the unfolding Islamic ideal as it is today. An examination of how he attempted to bring peace to war-torn Arabia by evolving an entirely new perspective of the human situation, guidance for human lives, and humans' relationship with God. The course will include Western perceptions of Islam, especially in light of September 11, 2001. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 284. Jesus Through Islamic Lens. 3 Units.

Christians are often surprised when they hear Muslims say, "We believe in Jesus too, and we hold him in great esteem." But what do they really mean? Are the Muslim Jesus and the Christian Jesus the same person? The primary aim of this course is to introduce an image of Jesus little known outside the Arabic Islamic culture. It is an image that might be of interest to those who wish to understand how Jesus was perceived by a religious tradition which greatly revered him but rejected his divinity. Hence, the Jesus presented in this course will be similar in some ways to the Jesus in the Christian Gospels, in others not. Why and how this Muslim tradition of Jesus arose will be also discussed in this course. Jesus Through Islamic Lens will draw from various Islamic texts to provide a comprehensive selection of excerpts pertaining to the life and moral teachings of Jesus. Approaching Christ from an Islamic perspective, this course will offer the students a rare opportunity to understand the significance of Jesus in Islam and to gain a better understanding of the faith, not only as it contrasts with Christianity but also as it compares. In this course we will try to respond to these questions: What role does Jesus have in Islam? What does the Quran say about Him? What does it not say? Why are Muslims repulsed by the idea that Jesus is the Son of God, fully God and fully man? What do Muslims have in mind when they acknowledge Jesus as virgin-born? This course also requires reading literature that pertains to the history of Islam, its theology and its culture, and because of its emphasis on an area of the world historically distinct from the West (or European culture), the course will fulfill the Global and Cultural Diversity requirement. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 285. Embodied Politics: Contemplative Practices and Social Justice. 3 Units.

The incorporation of contemplative practices (e.g. yoga, sitting and walking meditation, mindfulness, ceremony, pilgrimage, etc.) in civil and social justice movements is a growing trend. Scholars and activists, especially those interested in racial and gender equity, over the past two decades have raised interest in a broad set of contemplative practices that can address suffering and social justice issues in teaching, research and activism. What role does contemplative practices and spiritual activism play in efforts for social justice and social change? What might practices of social transformation look like when rooted in love and compassion? This course explores these questions among others, and examines the role of contemplative practices and spirituality for individuals and collectivities engaged in transformative social justice work. We explore the increasing incorporation of contemplative practices and 'self-recovery' approaches into current social justice movements including Black Lives Matter, indigenous land claims, feminism, LGBTQ rights, etc. In turn, we also examine how activists bring new insights and questions to traditional practices and use practices rooted in decolonizing efforts. In particular, we focus on the work of contemporary feminist, womanist and women of color scholars and activists. We also explore the writings and practices of contemplative practices from a range of traditions. Offered as AFST 285, RLGN 285, and WGST 285. Counts as a Full-Semester Wellness/Non-movement course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course.

RLGN 286. Jews in the Modern World. 3 Units.

This course examines the social, economic, political, and cultural development of the Jews in the modern world from the middle of the eighteenth century to the present. While particular emphasis will be on the Jews of Europe, we will examine the Jewish communities of the Middle East, pre-1948 Palestine, Israel, and the United States. Central themes of the course are the challenges to the traditional religious and social structures of pre-modern Jewry, migration, cultural innovation, and politicization. Offered as ETHS 286, HSTY 286, JWST 286, and RLGN 286. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 302. The Lemonade Class: Religion, Race, Sex and Black Music. 3 Units.

Charles Long suggests that black musical forms are creative responses to the particular circumstances of black peoples' presence in the U.S and black notions of the sacred. In April of 2016, Beyoncé released her visual album *Lemonade* two days after the death of Prince. This course is organized around the album's title cuts and links these two artists together in an examination of religion and musical performance as creative response to the racial and gendered conditions of black life. The course investigates how both artists have used music as a platform to explore issues of race, gender, commerce, sexuality, power and divinity. The course also looks at examples from the works of earlier artists who address similar themes such as Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, Muddy Waters, Billie Holiday, Nina Simone, Little Richard, James Brown, Marvin Gaye, and Aretha Franklin. Offered as AFST 302, ETHS 302, MUHI 316, RLGN 302, RLGN 402, and WGST 302. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 303. Multicultural Spain: Christian, Jewish and Muslim Coexistence. 3 Units.

Why is Medieval Iberia so often depicted as an example of tolerant multiculturalism? What constituted tolerance in the Middle Ages? In what sense can we speak of medieval multiculturalism? Is Americo Castro's optimistic model of *convivencia* (coexistence) valid, or is Brian Catlos' idea of *conveniencia* (convenience) more accurate? In this course we will study cultural theory, medieval and modern historiography, and literature from medieval Castile to the present to approach an understanding of Medieval Iberian 'multiculturalism.' This class will allow students to get in contact with the history of Spain through the study of the presence and influence of the Roman Empire, the Jewish and Muslim cultures and religions in the Peninsula. Through literature, cinema and art students will learn how the Spanish civilization and culture developed through the years. The class will be offered during a regular semester, with a study abroad component at the end of it. Students will receive a handout about how to prepare for the class abroad. Offered as ARAB 303, ETHS 303, JWST 303, HBRW 303, RLGN 303, and SPAN 301. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Local & Global Engagement course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 309. Cults and New Religious Movements. 3 Units.

This course is an analysis of cults and new religious movements as a category. How and why are people persuaded or coerced to join? What rights and freedom do such "cults" and their members have? Moreover, how do such groups earn the name "Cult"? What can be said about their charismatic leaders and the ways that they construct their identities? In this class, students will learn about cults in America, Asia, and South America, with the goal of understanding their appeal, development, and influence. The class will focus on intellectual cultures outside the United States. It will address in a substantive way ethnic, gender, sexual, philosophical, religious, or other cultural practices outside the United States, to provide students with new perspectives on their own cultural assumptions, traditions, and experiences. It will also address and examine the complexities of socially/humanly constructed categories. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 312. The Mythical Trickster. 3 Units.

Few literary figures have as wide a distribution, and as long a history, as the mythical Trickster. He is at once sacred and profane, creator and destroyer; an incorrigible duper who is always duped. Free of social and moral restraints he is ruled instead by passions and appetites, yet it is through his unprincipled behavior that morals and values come into being. How are we to interpret this amazing creature? Using folkloristic theories and ethnographic methods, we will come to understand the social functions and symbolic meanings of the cross-cultural Trickster, over time and across space. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 315. Heresy and Dissidence in the Middle Ages. 3 Units.

Survey of heretical individuals and groups in Western Europe from 500 - 1500 A.D., focusing on popular rather than academic heresies. The development of intolerance in medieval society and the problems of doing history from hostile sources will also be explored. Offered as HSTY 315 and RLGN 315. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 319. The Crusades. 3 Units.

This course is a survey of the history of the idea of "crusade," the expeditions of Western Europeans to the East known as crusades, the Muslim and Eastern Christian cultures against which these movements were directed, as well as the culture of the Latin East and other consequences of these crusades. Offered as HSTY 319 and RLGN 319. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 320. Gods and Demons in the Ancient Near East and Egypt. 3 Units.

The roots of many modern religious, literary, social, and political notions reach deep into the fertile soil of Ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian cultures, which developed as early as the fourth millennium BCE and flourished until the Hellenistic period. In this course we will examine various components of the religious, divinatory and magical systems of these cultures, and reflect upon their relationship with the stories that are found in the Hebrew Bible. We will learn (through a critical analysis of a selection of ancient texts) about ancient Mesopotamian and Egyptian deities, demons, myths, and magical rituals. We will also explore notions of creation, cosmic order, the human condition, death, afterlife, divine favor, and a wide variety of beliefs that, while often contradictory to modern ways of thinking, combined into unified religious systems. Offered as ANEE 320, RLGN 320 and RLGN 420.

RLGN 326. Religion, Global Health, and Human Rights. 3 Units.

Global Health is an interdisciplinary field concerned with improving health and achieving equity in health for all people, worldwide, focusing on transnational health issues, identifying determinants, and proposing solutions. This course examines issues in global health and human rights and considers the contributions religious ethics may make in analyzing and evaluating such issues. In the first half of the course, we will familiarize ourselves with theoretical issues including what a human right is, whether there's a human right to health, what socially determines health, and how religion relates to global health. In the second half the course, we will turn to practical issues in global health: women, maternal, and reproductive health; neonatal and pediatric health; access to medication and the right to health; emergency relief and humanitarian aid; and access to freshwater. We will conclude by considering the future of global health. Over the course of the semester, we will also become familiar with religious ethics and the relationship among religious ethics, global health, and human rights. In doing so, students will learn about the foundations for religion, global health, and human rights as they intersect with care for individuals and communities in our interconnected and globalized world. Offered as RLGN 326, RLGN 426, PHIL 326 and PHIL 426. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 333. Philosophy of Religion. 3 Units.

Topics include: classical and contemporary arguments for God's existence; divine foreknowledge and human freedom; the problem of evil and theodicy; nature and significance of religious experience; mysticism; varieties of religious metaphysics; knowledge, belief and faith; nature of religious discourse. Readings from traditional and contemporary sources. Recommended preparation for PHIL 433 and RLGN 433: PHIL 101 or RLGN 102. Offered as PHIL 333, RLGN 333, PHIL 433, and RLGN 433. Prereq: PHIL 101 or RLGN 102.

RLGN 341. Power of Words: Ritual Uses of Premodern Japanese Literature. 3 Units.

In premodern Japan, it was not only death and mourning ritual and practice that could pacify the spirit of the deceased, but also language. Authors consciously crafted the words of their works to simultaneously express the grief associated with longing and pacify the spirits of the dead. These words are called kotodama (power of words). From as far back as the eighth-century Kojiki (Records of Ancient Matters) and Nihon Shoki (The Chronicles of Japan) textual representations of mourning were linked with special uses of language and spirit pacification. At the death of Ame-no-wakahiko (a mythological god), his parents constructed a mourning hut and performed songs to secure his spirit in the afterworld. As several authors have demonstrated, from kotodama in the mid-eighth-century poetic anthology Man'yōshū, (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves) to linked verse (renga) in medieval Japan, carefully constructed literary language also had a place in ritual pacification of the spirits of the dead. Words were not simple expressions of grief; they held power. All material is in English translation. The course is conducted in English. All material will be provided via PDF. Offered as JAPN 341 and WLIT 341 and RLGN 341. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course. Prereq: Academic Inquiry Seminar (AIQS) or SAGES First Seminar.

RLGN 347. Buddhism, Gender, and Sexuality. 3 Units.

Historian Joan Wallach Scott once warned that scholars could not simply insert gender into their research as though adding a new room on a house already built; they would have to begin again from the bottom. Considering gender as a cultured way of being in, understanding, and interacting with the world within which we are situated, this seminar queries the conceptualization of gender and sexuality in Buddhism and Buddhist communities across space and time, with particular emphasis on those located in Asia. What does it mean to be a woman, a man, someone of the third sex, or none of the above? What are the Buddhist idea(s) about femininity, masculinity, and personhood? How do these idea(s) change with translation and transmission? We will explore together the theories and practices of gender and sexuality expressed by Buddhist communities from its beginnings to the present day. Buddhism's major conversation partners throughout history – Hinduism, Confucianism, and Daoism – will also be brought into discussion. Previous knowledge of Buddhism is preferred but not required. Offered as RLGN 347, RLGN 447, and WGST 347. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 353. Hindu and Jain Bioethics: Special Focus on Women's and Gender Studies. 3 Units.

This course will provide both an introduction to basic Hinduism and Jainism and an introduction to Hindu and Jain bioethics. We will focus primarily on bioethical issues that pertain to women and that are gender related. These issues include abortion, menstruation, surrogacy, intersex, and other topics of controversy. Offered as ETHS 353, RLGN 353, RLGN 453, and WGST 355. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 357. Christian Bioethics. 3 Units.

Bioethics is concerned with both clinical and population level healthcare issues. Christian Bioethics aims to integrate the discipline of theology with the field of bioethics to critically evaluate the goals of healthcare and the practices associated with these goals. This course examines the theological sources used to evaluate contemporary clinical and population level healthcare issues. We will examine issues including abortion, end-of-life care, genetic enhancement, the concept of disability, health inequalities and justice, and personal and social responsibility for health, especially as these relate to political and social justice. We will also become familiar with religious moral reasoning and the relationship between religious ethics and nonreligious moral and political philosophy. In doing so, students will learn about the foundations for religion, medicine, and ethics as they intersect with care for individuals and communities. Offered as BETH 357, BETH 457, PHIL 357, PHIL 457, RLGN 357 and RLGN 457.

RLGN 365F. Afrofuturism and the Black Imaginary: Legacies and Futures. 3 Units.

This course explores the theoretical, literary and cultural expressions of Afrofuturism. The term Afrofuturism was developed in 1993 by scholar Mark Dery and is an all-encompassing term used to describe creative work - literature (especially science fiction), music, art - that focuses on Afro-diasporic ways of being and knowing. The course explores the multiple meanings and expressions of Afrofuturism and how it expands various literary traditions. Traditional speculative fiction canons have often distorted and/or erased the existence of people of color in the future. This course recenters these experiences. Readings will delve into the legacies of slavery, colonialism, entrenched inequalities to understand their impact on real and imagined technological futures. Students will spend time exploring how Afrofuturist writers and cultural workers imagine new possibilities that expand our sense of liberation and justice. Recommended preparation: Academic Inquiry Seminar (AIQS) or SAGES First Seminar. Offered as AFST 365F, ENGL 365F, ETHS 365F, RLGN 365F, WGST 365F and WLIT 365F. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course.

RLGN 371. Jews Under Christianity and Islam. 3 Units.

This course examines the social and political status of Jews under Muslim and Christian rule since the Middle Ages. Themes include interfaith relations, Islamic and Christian beliefs regarding the Jews, Muslim and Christian regulation of Jewry, and the Jewish response. Offered as HSTY 371, JWST 371 and RLGN 371. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a SAGES Departmental Seminar course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 372. Anthropological Approaches to Religion. 3 Units.

The development of, and current approaches to, comparative religion from an anthropological perspective. Topics include witchcraft, ritual, myth, healing, religious language and symbolism, religion and gender, religious experience, the nature of the sacred, religion and social change, altered states of consciousness, and evil. Using material from a wide range of world cultures, critical assessment is made of conventional distinctions such as those between rational/irrational, natural/supernatural, magic/religion, and primitive/civilized. Recommended preparation: ANTH 102. Offered as ANTH 372, RLGN 372 and ANTH 472.

RLGN 373. History of Early Christianities: First-Fourth Centuries CE. 3 Units.

Through primary source readings in translation, secondary source readings, written assignments, lectures, and in-class discussion, students will explore the development of diverse traditions of Christianity from the first through the fourth centuries CE. Emphasis is placed on the variety of early Christian views of salvation, religious authority, cosmology and morality, as well as the changing relationship between Roman society and government and Christian individuals and traditions. Offered as HSTY 303 and RLGN 373. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 388. Topics in Religion. 3 Units.

Critical assessment of selected topics of historical or current interest. Project must be accepted by a member of the department faculty prior to registration. Offered as RLGN 388 and RLGN 488.

RLGN 389. History of Zionism. 3 Units.

This course seeks to elucidate the major strands of Zionism, their origins, how they have interacted, and their impact on contemporary Israeli society. These may include political Zionism, cultural Zionism, socialist (labor) Zionism, Revisionist Zionism, and religious Zionism. This course will also examine the differences in the appeal of Zionism to Jews in different places, such as Western Europe, Eastern Europe and the United States. Offered as HSTY 389, JWST 389, and RLGN 389. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a SAGES Departmental Seminar course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 392. Independent Study. 1 - 3 Units.

Up to three semester hours of independent study may be taken in a single semester. Must have prior approval of faculty member directing the project.

RLGN 394. Honors Research I. 3 Units.

Intensive study of a topic or problem leading to the writing of an honors thesis. Requires RLGN 201 plus 9 RLGN credits and department approval. Prereq: RLGN 201 plus 9 RLGN credits.

RLGN 395. Honors Research II. 3 Units.

Intensive study of a topic or problem leading to the writing of an honors thesis. By department approval only. Prereq: RLGN 394 and by departmental approval.

RLGN 399. Majors Seminar. 3 Units.

This capstone seminar is required for all Religious Studies majors and is typically taken in the junior or senior year. Students will explore a research question in religious studies, build their theoretical and methodological expertise in the field, engage in critical reflection on the writing process, and conduct peer review. The course culminates in the final capstone project and an oral presentation. Counts as a Capstone Project course. Counts as a SAGES Senior Capstone course. Prereq: RLGN 201.

RLGN 400. Foundational Readings in Religious Studies. 3 Units.

Structured as an Independent Study, this course is meant to familiarize the student with the major classical works and thinkers that have shaped the modern field of Religious Studies. Students will meet on a regular basis with the Instructor to discuss the theories and methods described in the literature.

RLGN 402. The Lemonade Class: Religion, Race, Sex and Black Music. 3 Units.

Charles Long suggests that black musical forms are creative responses to the particular circumstances of black peoples' presence in the U.S and black notions of the sacred. In April of 2016, Beyoncé released her visual album *Lemonade* two days after the death of Prince. This course is organized around the album's title cuts and links these two artists together in an examination of religion and musical performance as creative response to the racial and gendered conditions of black life. The course investigates how both artists have used music as a platform to explore issues of race, gender, commerce, sexuality, power and divinity. The course also looks at examples from the works of earlier artists who address similar themes such as Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, Muddy Waters, Billie Holiday, Nina Simone, Little Richard, James Brown, Marvin Gaye, and Aretha Franklin. Offered as AFST 302, ETHS 302, MUHI 316, RLGN 302, RLGN 402, and WGST 302. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 420. Gods and Demons in the Ancient Near East and Egypt. 3 Units.

The roots of many modern religious, literary, social, and political notions reach deep into the fertile soil of Ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian cultures, which developed as early as the fourth millennium BCE and flourished until the Hellenistic period. In this course we will examine various components of the religious, divinatory and magical systems of these cultures, and reflect upon their relationship with the stories that are found in the Hebrew Bible. We will learn (through a critical analysis of a selection of ancient texts) about ancient Mesopotamian and Egyptian deities, demons, myths, and magical rituals. We will also explore notions of creation, cosmic order, the human condition, death, afterlife, divine favor, and a wide variety of beliefs that, while often contradictory to modern ways of thinking, combined into unified religious systems. Offered as ANEE 320, RLGN 320 and RLGN 420.

RLGN 426. Religion, Global Health, and Human Rights. 3 Units.

Global Health is an interdisciplinary field concerned with improving health and achieving equity in health for all people, worldwide, focusing on transnational health issues, identifying determinants, and proposing solutions. This course examines issues in global health and human rights and considers the contributions religious ethics may make in analyzing and evaluating such issues. In the first half of the course, we will familiarize ourselves with theoretical issues including what a human right is, whether there's a human right to health, what socially determines health, and how religion relates to global health. In the second half the course, we will turn to practical issues in global health: women, maternal, and reproductive health; neonatal and pediatric health; access to medication and the right to health; emergency relief and humanitarian aid; and access to freshwater. We will conclude by considering the future of global health. Over the course of the semester, we will also become familiar with religious ethics and the relationship among religious ethics, global health, and human rights. In doing so, students will learn about the foundations for religion, global health, and human rights as they intersect with care for individuals and communities in our interconnected and globalized world. Offered as RLGN 326, RLGN 426, PHIL 326 and PHIL 426. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 433. Philosophy of Religion. 3 Units.

Topics include: classical and contemporary arguments for God's existence; divine foreknowledge and human freedom; the problem of evil and theodicy; nature and significance of religious experience; mysticism; varieties of religious metaphysics; knowledge, belief and faith; nature of religious discourse. Readings from traditional and contemporary sources. Recommended preparation for PHIL 433 and RLGN 433: PHIL 101 or RLGN 102. Offered as PHIL 333, RLGN 333, PHIL 433, and RLGN 433.

RLGN 447. Buddhism, Gender, and Sexuality. 3 Units.

Historian Joan Wallach Scott once warned that scholars could not simply insert gender into their research as though adding a new room on a house already built; they would have to begin again from the bottom. Considering gender as a cultured way of being in, understanding, and interacting with the world within which we are situated, this seminar queries the conceptualization of gender and sexuality in Buddhism and Buddhist communities across space and time, with particular emphasis on those located in Asia. What does it mean to be a woman, a man, someone of the third sex, or none of the above? What are the Buddhist idea(l)s about femininity, masculinity, and personhood? How do these idea(l)s change with translation and transmission? We will explore together the theories and practices of gender and sexuality expressed by Buddhist communities from its beginnings to the present day. Buddhism's major conversation partners throughout history – Hinduism, Confucianism, and Daoism – will also be brought into discussion. Previous knowledge of Buddhism is preferred but not required. Offered as RLGN 347, RLGN 447, and WGST 347. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Human Diversity & Commonality course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

RLGN 453. Hindu and Jain Bioethics: Special Focus on Women's and Gender Studies. 3 Units.

This course will provide both an introduction to basic Hinduism and Jainism and an introduction to Hindu and Jain bioethics. We will focus primarily on bioethical issues that pertain to women and that are gender related. These issues include abortion, menstruation, surrogacy, intersex, and other topics of controversy. Offered as ETHS 353, RLGN 353, RLGN 453, and WGST 355. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

RLGN 457. Christian Bioethics. 3 Units.

Bioethics is concerned with both clinical and population level healthcare issues. Christian Bioethics aims to integrate the discipline of theology with the field of bioethics to critically evaluate the goals of healthcare and the practices associated with these goals. This course examines the theological sources used to evaluate contemporary clinical and population level healthcare issues. We will examine issues including abortion, end-of-life care, genetic enhancement, the concept of disability, health inequalities and justice, and personal and social responsibility for health, especially as these relate to political and social justice. We will also become familiar with religious moral reasoning and the relationship between religious ethics and nonreligious moral and political philosophy. In doing so, students will learn about the foundations for religion, medicine, and ethics as they intersect with care for individuals and communities. Offered as BETH 357, BETH 457, PHIL 357, PHIL 457, RLGN 357 and RLGN 457.

RLGN 488. Topics in Religion. 3 Units.

Critical assessment of selected topics of historical or current interest. Project must be accepted by a member of the department faculty prior to registration. Offered as RLGN 388 and RLGN 488.

RLGN 601. Special Research. 1 - 6 Units.

Project must be accepted by a member of the department faculty prior to registration. Prereq: Graduate standing.

RLGN 651. Thesis M.A.. 1 - 9 Units.

Project must be accepted by a member of the department faculty prior to registration.