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 geographic 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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 the nuances and complexities in Africana religions within various historical and socio-cultural contexts. Section topics might include, but are not limited to: Confucianism, Daoism, Chinese Buddhism, Gender and Sexuality in Chinese Religions. Students may repeat the course for credit once (two times total for 6 credits), provided that the two sections are different. Offered as AFST 151 and RLGN 151. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 152. Introducing Christianity. 3 Units.
This "topics" course offers an introduction to the academic study of Christianity. 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 Christianity, exploring forms of it in a diversity of cultural contexts. Section topics could include, but are not limited to: Epics and Narratives, Ritual, Contemporary Issues. Students may repeat the course for credit (up to 6 credits), provided that the two sections are different. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 153. Introducing Chinese Religions. 3 Units.
This "topics" course offers an introduction to the academic study of Chinese 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 a basic religious literacy in the nuances and complexities in Chinese religions within various historical and socio-cultural contexts. Section topics might include, but are not limited to: Confucianism, Daoism, Chinese Buddhism, Gender and Sexuality in Chinese Religions. Students may repeat the course for credit once (two times total for 6 credits), provided that the two sections are different. Offered as RLGN 153, ETHS 153 and CHIN 253. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 154. Introducing Hinduism. 3 Units.
This "topics" course offers an introduction to the academic study of Hinduism. 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 Hinduism, exploring forms of it in a diversity of cultural contexts. Section topics could include, but are not limited to: The Epics, Ritual, Contemporary Practices. Students may repeat the course for credit (up to 6 credits), provided that the two sections are different. Offered as RLGN 154 and WLIT 154. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 155. Introducing Jainism. 3 Units.
This "topics" course offers an introduction to the academic study of Jainism. 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 Jainism exploring forms of it in a diversity of cultural contexts. Section topics could include, but are not limited to: Epics and Narratives, Ritual, Contemporary Issues. Students may repeat the course for credit (up to 6 credits), provided that the two sections are different. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 156. Introducing Islam. 3 Units.
This "topics" course offers an introduction to the academic study of Islam. 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 Islamic tradition, including investigations into how Muslim institutions developed in relation to diverse socioeconomic and cultural conditions, including Africa, the Americas, the Middle East, and Europe. Section topics could include, but are not limited to: Women and Gender, Faith, Politics, and Modernity, Pilgrimages, Prophecy, and Sacred Places. Students may repeat the course for credit (up to 6 credits), provided that the two sections are different. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (RLGN)
RLGN 173. Introducing Judaism. 3 Units.
This “topics” course offers an introduction to the academic study of Judaism. 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 Jewish religious tradition, exploring forms of it in a diversity of cultural contexts around the world. Section topics could include, but are not limited to: Festivals and Holy Days, Women and Gender, Jewish Ethics. Students may repeat the course for credit (up to 6 credits), provided that the two sections are different. Offered as RLGN 173 and JDST 173. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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. 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.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 206. Religion and Ecology. 3 Units.
Historical and cross-cultural introduction to religious perspectives on nature and ecology, including Jewish, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, and Native American texts and ritual practices. Themes include: ecology of chaos and complexity, urban ecology, wilderness, and ecological crises. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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.

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 Judaic Studies. Offered as JDST 101 and RLGN 213. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 217. Buddhism. 3 Units.
Buddhism is an important world religion that originated in India around 500 BCE. Subsequently, Buddhism spread to Central and East Asia. More recently, Buddhist traditions have been established in Europe and North America. Like Christianity and Islam, Buddhism is considered a “missionary” religion because its message has been actively propagated in cultural contexts outside its place of origin. Buddhist ideas and concepts have not only inspired religious practice, but have often provided the foundation for political, social, ethical, literary, artistic and other modes of cultural expression. It is, therefore, difficult to understand those Asian cultures in which Buddhism is or has been important without understanding this religious tradition itself. This course examines Buddhist thought and practice, with a focus on the Theravada and Mahayana Buddhist traditions that developed in India, and the spread and transformations of these traditions in south, southeast, and east Asia. We also consider Buddhist ethical perspectives. Course readings include translations of important Buddhist texts and contemporary scholarly interpretations of Buddhist ideas and practices. Visual and other media augment our study. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.
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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 220. Jewish Art and Architecture. 3 Units.
Tradition and transformation in Jewish artistic expression over time and across space. Course will begin with biblical period and continue down to the present day in Israel and America. Examination of how concepts such as "Jewish" and "art" undergo change within the Jewish community over this period. Offered as ARTH 220, JDST 220, and RLGN 220. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 221. Indian Philosophy. 3 Units.
We will survey the origins of Indian philosophical thought, with an emphasis on early Buddhist, Hindu and Jain literature. Our concern will be the methods, presuppositions, arguments, and goals of these schools and trajectories of thought. What were their theories on the nature of the person, the nature of reality, and the nature and process of knowing? What were the debates between the schools and the major points of controversy? And, most importantly, are the positions/arguments internally incoherent? Offered as PHIL 221 and RLGN 221. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 222. Women, Gender, and Islam. 3 Units.
Women and gender 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 the status of Islam in the modern world. How have Muslim thinkers interpreted Islamic scriptures with respect to topics such as marriage, child custody, inheritance, and sexuality? How is masculinity and femininity constructed? In what ways do their 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 important in contemporary debates over religious and national identity around the world? This course begins by examining the position of women and gender in the foundational Islamic texts, the Qur’an and Sunna (the practice of the Prophet Muhammad), and pre-modern interpretations of them. Then we will explore 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, homosexuality, 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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 229. Asian Christianity: Historical Perspectives. 3 Units.
The history of Christianity in Asia is as old as the history of Christianity itself. But while much has been told about Christianity as it grew from an obscure Jewish sect to mighty Western Christendom, not enough attention has been given to the Christianity which spread eastwards to Asia in the first millennium of the Christian era. This course seeks to correct the imbalance by introducing students to a historical exploration of the eastward movement of Christianity from Jerusalem to different parts of Asia. Topics include the Assyrian Church of the East in Persia, India and China, European Catholic and Protestant colonial missions in the age of European imperialism, and the Jesuit missions to Japan and China. By the end of the semester, students should have a good grasp of the historical encounter of Christianity with the political, social, cultural and religious realities of Asia. Its dialogue and confrontation with these realities and the forces that led to its growth and decline. Offered as HSTY 229 and RLGN 229. Counts as SAGES Departmental Seminar. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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," "mystical experience."

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 JDST 233. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 234. The Ramayana: The Great Indian Epic. 3 Units.
The Ramayana, a 2000 year old Indian epic, is an intricate story of battling kings and demons, family loyalty and betrayal, romance, religion, and politics. These stories create, store, and transmit cultural and religious values and icons for millions of people in India and other Asian and Southeast Asian nations. Our study will range from close readings of the Ramayana, to observing and reflecting on contemporary practices, 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. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.
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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 243. Bollywood and Social Justice: 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. These issues range from ones concerning purity and the class system and Hindu-Muslim conflict, to women’s rights and human trafficking. 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. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 252. Soul Murder: Religion and Sexual Abuse. 3 Units.
This seminar traces anthropological questions about religious-trauma, -memory, and -suffering through the lens of clergy sexual abuse. How is religious sexual abuse different than non-religious contexts? What can survivors teach us about the resilience of the human spirit? What are the racial dynamics of the recent Roman Catholic crisis? What flaws has it exposed in our criminal justice system? To answer questions like these, we will (i) begin the semester with anthropological studies of religion and trauma. Then we will (ii) examine grand jury investigations in the United States. Prepared by these theoretical and historical texts, we will (iii) evaluate case studies from the Roman Catholic context, including sexual abuse by nuns. We will use these examples to evaluate (iv) representations of the crisis in film and news media. Finally, we will (v) compare the Catholic crisis to recent sexual abuse scandals in American Jewish, Muslim, and Protestant communities. The comparative literature will include readings by Veena Das (cultural anthropology), Levinas (philosophy), Kathryn Lofton (religious studies), Timothy Lytton (law), Fortune (theology), and Frawley-O’Dea (psychology). Primary sources will include excerpts from special prosecutors and grand juries in Pennsylvania, Louisiana, and Massachusetts. Films will include "Doubt" and "Spotlight." By the end of the course, students will: - Know how to research and critique the legal, spiritual, and theoretical consequences of religious sexual abuse. - Be able to debate multiple theories of religion and trauma. - Be able to analyze data that is emotionally difficult and legally complex. Our seminars will include discussions, short writing assignments, collaborative work, and presentations. Offered as RLGN 252 and WGST 252. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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. Offered as HSTY 254, RLGN 254, ETHS 254, and JDST 254. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.
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 other 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, JDST 255 and RLGN 255. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 260. Introduction to the Qur’an. 3 Units.
This course is an introduction to the Qur’an. For Muslims, the Qur’an is the inimitable word of God, and its influence has been both far-reaching and profound in various historical contexts. It introduces students to the text of the Qur’an, in English translation, providing a window into both Muslim interpretations of their scripture (from the early days of Islam to the present) and academic studies of the text. Students will approach the Qur’an as a living document, as text that is continually re-visited and re-interpreted by Muslims, and used in various ritual contexts and in daily life. This course will explore theological and legal dimensions of the Qur’an, touching on issues of God’s nature, Islamic ethics, the foundations of Islamic law, and gender roles. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 JDST 268.

RLGN 270. Introduction to Gender Studies. 3 Units.
This course introduces women and men students to the methods and concepts of gender studies, women’s 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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement. Prereq: ENGL 150 or passing letter grade in a 100 level first year seminar in FSCC, FSNA, FSSQ, FSSY, FSTS, or FSCS.

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 278. Religion and Popular Culture. 3 Units.
How does religion function when it shows up in popular culture? How does popular culture influence and help shape religion? This "topics" course explores the interactions between religion and popular culture in contemporary society. Each section will focus on visual, kinetic, aural, haptic or literary "texts" that may include musical production, dance, film and television, social media, sports, video, visual and textile arts, traditional fiction or graphic novels. The course examines how religious traditions, symbols or concepts are evoked in popular cultural texts and how these texts create meaning and help shape individual and communal identity. Each section will examine themes and issues that may include: gender, race, and sexuality; protest and activism, consumerism; power and identity; ethics and morality; experience and embodiment; and constructions of evil, salvation, and transcendence. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.
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 primarily 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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 America 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 and RLGN 303 and SPAN 301. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 308. Daoism: Visual Culture, History and Practice. 3 Units.
This course explores developments in the visual culture, history and practices of Daoist religious traditions in China from the third to twentieth centuries. Our historically and conceptually structured examination draws upon a balance of visual, textual, and material sources, while considering the various approaches scholars have employed to understand the history and development of Daoist traditions. Topics include: sacred scriptures and liturgies, biographies and visual narratives, iconography and functions of the pantheon of gods and immortals, views of the self and the body, practices of inner alchemy and self-cultivation, thunder deities and exorcism, dietetics and medicine and modes of meditation and ritual. Offered as ARTH 308, ARTH 408, and RLGN 308. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 314. Mythologies of the Afterlife. 3 Units.
This course provides a multidisciplinary approach to the idea of an afterlife, and its manifestation in diverse cultures. We will examine the way varying views of the afterlife influence religion, popular culture and palliative care, and how human creativity has shaped the heavens, hells, hauntings and holidays of diverse populations over time and across space. Students will come to see the afterlife as an integral part of human history and experience, not only because it helps people die with better hope, but because it helps them to live more richly. Offered as RLGN 314 and JDST 314.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.
RLGN 316. Christianity in China. 3 Units.
This course critically evaluates Christianity's long history in China, beginning with the "Luminous Religion" (Jingjiao) that was propagated by Assyrian Christian missionaries in Tang China (7th century CE), the missionary endeavors of Catholic and Protestant foreign missionaries and mission societies, the rise of indigenous Chinese Christianities that sought independence from foreign missionaries, the impact of communist rule and the Cultural Revolution, and current developments involving both the official government-approved churches (i.e., the Three Self Patriotic Movement and the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association) on the one hand, and the house church movement (jiating jiaohui) on the other hand. Students will critically discuss and analyze the historical dimensions of Christianity's presence in China and engagement with various social, cultural, political, philosophical, and religious aspects of Chinese society, past and present, and consider the implications of emergent forms of contemporary indigenous Chinese Christian movements for the future of Chinese Christianity. Offered as RLGN 316, RLGN 416, HSTY 322, CHIN 316 and ETHS 326. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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.

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 Mar'y’sh, (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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.
RLGN 348. Buddhism and Cognitive Science. 3 Units.
In 1987, the Dalai Lama initiated a yearly event—Mind and Life Dialogues—to address "critical issues of modern life at the intersection of scientific and contemplative understanding". Dialogue topics included issues related to Buddhist thought and practice, and cognitive science. Others with an interest in the intersection of Buddhism and cognitive science, such as Robert Wright in Why Buddhism is True: The Science and Philosophy of Meditation and Enlightenment (2017), argue that non-supernatural aspects of Buddhism, such as the benefits of mindfulness meditation and the nature of the (non-)self, are affirmed by cognitive science and evolutionary psychology. The notion that at least some aspects of Buddhism are "true" in relation to contemporary cognitive scientific views of mind and brain has attracted considerable attention from both Buddhist practitioners and cognitive scientists. This seminar explores Buddhist and cognitive science perspectives on issues such as embodied cognition, consciousness, mind, self and personal identity, theory of mind, morality, representation, and language. We start with a general overview of Buddhist philosophy, and then turn to specific readings on Buddhist concepts in relation to similar concepts found in the cognitive science literature. For instance, we will explore the Buddhist concept of no permanent self or soul (an-tman). This idea resonates with Daniel Dennett’s notion of the "narrative self" and the cognitive neuroscience view that there is no neurological center of self or experience. Although the specific concepts covered will vary in each iteration of this course, readings will always be drawn from both Buddhist primary and secondary readings, and from the cognitive science literature. Offered as COGS 348, COGS 448, RLGN 348 and RLGN 448. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement. Prereq: Completion of one COGS or RLGN course or Requisites Not Met permission.

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, intercourse, and other topics of controversy. Offered as ETHS 353, RLGN 353, RLGN 453, and WGST 355. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

RLGN 416. Christianity in China. 3 Units.
This course critically evaluates Christianity’s long history in China, beginning with the “Luminous Religion” (Jingjiao) that was propagated by Assyrian Christian missionaries in Tang China (7th century CE), the missionary endeavors of Catholic and Protestant foreign missionaries and mission societies, the rise of indigenous Chinese Christianities that sought independence from foreign missionaries, the impact of communist rule and the Cultural Revolution, and current developments involving both the official government-approved churches (i.e., the Three Self Patriotic Movement and the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association) on the one hand, and the house church movement (jiating jiaohui) on the other hand. Students will critically discuss and analyze the historical dimensions of Christianity’s presence in China and engagement with various social, cultural, political, philosophical, and religious aspects of Chinese society, past and present, and consider the implications of emergent forms of contemporary indigenous Chinese Christian movements for the future of Chinese Christianity. Offered as RLGN 316, RLGN 416, HSTY 322, CHIN 316 and ETHS 326. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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 333, and RLGN 433.

RLGN 448. Buddhism and Cognitive Science. 3 Units.
In 1987, the Dalai Lama initiated a yearly event--Mind and Life Dialogues--to address "critical issues of modern life at the intersection of scientific and contemplative understanding". Dialogue topics included issues related to Buddhist thought and practice, and cognitive science. Others with an interest in the intersection of Buddhism and cognitive science, such as Robert Wright in Why Buddhism is True: The Science and Philosophy of Meditation and Enlightenment (2017), argue that non-spiritual aspects of Buddhism, such as the benefits of mindfulness meditation and the nature of the (non-)self, are affirmed by cognitive science and evolutionary psychology. The notion that at least some aspects of Buddhism are “true” in relation to contemporary cognitive scientific views of mind and brain has attracted considerable attention from both Buddhist practitioners and cognitive scientists. This seminar explores Buddhist and cognitive science perspectives on issues such as embodied cognition, consciousness, mind, self and personal identity, theory of mind, morality, representation, and language. We start with a general overview of Buddhist philosophy, and then turn to specific readings on Buddhist concepts in relation to similar concepts found in the cognitive science literature. For instance, we will explore the Buddhist concept of no permanent self or soul (an-tman). This idea resonates with Daniel Dennett’s notion of the "narrative self" and the cognitive neuroscience view that there is no neurological center of self or experience. Although the specific concepts covered will vary in each iteration of this course, readings will always be drawn from both Buddhist primary and secondary readings, and from the cognitive science literature. Offered as COGS 348, COGS 448, RLGN 348 and RLGN 448. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement. Prereq: Completion of one COGS or RLGN course or Requisites Not Met permission.
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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

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.