Department of Religious Studies

Why study religious studies?
Religions have been and remain among the most powerful forces shaping human history. Their discourses and practices inform the way we perceive ourselves, those around us, and existence at large, even when we are not actively religious. They are central to understanding both what divides us and what unites us. The academic study of religion is a trans-disciplinary endeavor to understand from an objective perspective how religious traditions shape the lives of their adherents, without seeking to promote or disprove any specific belief system. Religious Studies acquaints students with the diversity of religious cultures and introduces them to key methods and theories employed in their examination as "religion."

Undergraduate Programs
The undergraduate degree in the Department of Religious Studies is a research, analysis, and writing intensive program that features close work with faculty in small classroom settings. It seeks to develop a foundational knowledge of the world’s diversity of religious cultures and critical awareness of the ways in which religion shapes how we see and act toward ourselves, others, and the environment around us. Through the study of specific religious traditions and settings, students come away with a background that is invaluable to understanding and working with people of other cultures, whether in international business or simply as an informed global citizen.

Graduate Programs
The department offers a graduate program leading to the M.A., as well as a Graduate Certificate program. Both programs enable students to pursue specialized advanced work that builds in tandem on the interests of the students and the specializations of the faculty. At all levels, interdepartmental and interdisciplinary cooperation is encouraged as important to a comprehensive program. Continuing research in religious studies is an indispensable and foundational element, intimately related both to teaching and to the wider exchange and advancement of knowledge.

A library of some 15,000 volumes, owned by the Friends of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Kansas, is housed with and used by the department in Irma I. Smith Hall. The Department of Religious Studies at KU is also in the unusual position of being able to provide substantial financial support for students seeking the M.A. degree.

Courses
REL 104. Introduction to Religious Studies. 3 Hours HR GE11/GE3H / H.
This course introduces students to the academic study of religions. It acquaints students with key methods and issues in religious studies, and provides an introductory survey of selected religions. Not open to students who have taken REL 105. LEC.

REL 105. Introduction to Religious Studies, Honors. 3 Hours HR GE11/GE3H / H.
This course introduces students to the academic study of religions. It acquaints students with key methods and issues in religious studies, and provides an introductory survey of selected religions. Open only to students in the University Honors Program or by permission of instructor. Not open to students who have taken REL 104. LEC.

REL 106. Asian Religions. 3 Hours HR/NW AE42/GE3H / H/W.
A basic introduction to religion in India, China, and Japan with emphasis upon religions that affect the modern period. Not open to students who have taken REL 108/EALC 108. (Same as EALC 105.) LEC.

REL 107. Jews, Christians, Muslims. 3 Hours HR AE42/GE3H / H.
A basic introduction to the major religious traditions of the Near East, Europe, and the Americas, with an emphasis on their development through the modern period and their expressions in contemporary life. Not open to students who have taken JWSH 109 or REL 109. (Same as JWSH 107.) LEC.

REL 108. Asian Religions, Honors. 3 Hours HR/NW AE42/GE3H / H.
A basic introduction to religion in India, China, and Japan, with emphasis upon religions that affect the modern period. Open only to students in the University Honors Program or by permission of instructor. Not open to students who have taken REL 106/EALC 105. (Same as EALC 108.) LEC.

REL 109. Jews, Christians, Muslims, Honors. 3 Hours HR AE42/GE3H / H.
A basic introduction to the major religious traditions in the Near East, Europe, and the Americas, with an emphasis on their development through the modern period and their expressions in contemporary life. Open only to students in the University Honors Program or by permission of instructor. Not open to students who have taken JWSH 107 or REL 107. (Same as JWSH 109.) LEC.

REL 124. Understanding the Bible. 3 Hours HR AE42/GE3H / H.
An introduction to the literature of the Bible, exploring the relationships among the various types of literature present and the function of each type in the history and religious life of the people who produced and used them. Cannot be taken concurrently with REL 311 or JWSH 321 or REL 315. Not open to students who have taken REL 125 or JWSH 125. (Same as JWSH 124.) LEC.

REL 125. Understanding the Bible, Honors. 3 Hours HR AE42/GE3H / H.
An introduction to the literature of the Bible, exploring the relationships among the various types of literature present and the function of each type in history and religious life of the people who produced and used them. Open only to students in the University Honors Program or by permission of instructor. Not open to students who have taken REL 124 or JWSH 124. (Same as JWSH 125.) LEC.

REL 130. Myth, Legend, and Folk Belief in East Asia. 3 Hours NW AE42 / H/W.
A survey of the commonly held ideas about the beginning of the world, the role of gods and spirits in daily life, and the celebrations and rituals proper to each season of the year. The purpose of the course is to present the world view of the ordinary peoples of East Asia. (Same as ANTH 293, EALC 130.) LEC.

REL 171. Religion in American Society. 3 Hours HR AE41/GE3H / H.
A broad introduction to religion in American culture. This class emphasizes the well-established religions with large followings (viz. Judaism, Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism). Some attention is also given to other religions active in America. Other topics covered include the relationship of church and state, religion in ethnic and racial minority groups, and women and religion. Not open to students who have taken REL 172. (Same as AMS 290.) LEC.
REL 172. Religion in American Society, Honors. 3 Hours HR AE41/GE3H / H.
Honors version of REL 171. A broad introduction to religion in American culture. This class emphasizes the well-established religions with large followings (viz. Judaism, Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism). Some attention is also given to other religions active in America. Other topics covered include the relationship of church and state, religion in ethnic and racial minority groups, and women and religion. Not open to students who have taken AMS 290. Open only to students in the University Honors Program or by permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 177. First Year Seminar: _____. 3 Hours GE11 / U.
A limited-enrollment, seminar course for first-time freshmen, addressing current issues in Religious Studies. Course is designed to meet the critical thinking learning outcome of the KU Core. First-Year Seminar topics are coordinated and approved by the Office of First-Year Experience. Prerequisite: First-time freshman status. LEC.

REL 200. Study Abroad Introductions to: _____. 1-4 Hours H.
This course is designed for the study of special topics in Religious Studies. Credit for coursework must be arranged through the Office of KU Study Abroad. May be repeated for credit if content varies. LEC.

REL 311. Religion of Ancient Israel. 3 Hours H/W.
An introduction to the religion of ancient Israel through examination of biblical texts and archaeological evidence. Emphasis is placed on understanding the texts of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) in their historical and cultural contexts, including the relationship of their religious views to other religious perspectives current in ancient Israel and the Near East. Attention is given to the processes by which the biblical texts developed and came to be viewed as scripture. (Same as JWSH 321.) LEC.

REL 315. History and Literature of Early Christianity. 3 Hours H/W.
An examination of the literature produced by early Christians. In addition to New Testament texts, the course includes a broad range of diverse texts produced by early Christians, Jews, and others. Prerequisite: REL 124 or permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 320. The Bible Then and Now. 3 Hours.
An introduction and survey of the history and interpretation of the Jewish and Christian bibles from their first formation to the present day. Students will explore the way the text, interpretation and format of the Bible have adjusted over time to accommodate religious, political, social and technological changes. Class will occasionally meet in the university's rare book collection to study rare bibles. (Same as JWSH 320.) LEC.

REL 325. Introduction to Judaism. 3 Hours H.
Analyzes a selection of the core texts, teachings, and practices of Jewish religious traditions in terms of classical and contemporary understanding. (Same as JWSH 325.) LEC.

REL 326. The Talmud: Its Origins, Nature, and Evolution. 3 Hours H.
This course demystifies the Talmud, arguably the most central yet also the most mysterious text of rabbinc Judaism. Students are introduced to the scope, substance, styles, and major figures of the Talmud, and also learn how the text came into being over the course of several centuries. (Same as JWSH 326.) Prerequisite: REL 104, REL 107, or REL 124 or REL 125, or permission of the instructor. LEC.

REL 327. Religious Zionisms. 3 Hours H.
A survey of the many types of Religious Zionism, from the origins of the movement to the present, from Left to Right, and from Jewish to Christian. The class asks questions about the relationship between religion and politics in Israel using case studies as examples, and also considers the views of religious Jewish anti-Zionists. No previous knowledge of Judaism or Israeli history is required. (Same as JWSH 337.) LEC.

REL 329. Mystical Tradition in Judaism. 3 Hours H.
Mystical experiences and supernatural encounters in Jewish texts and tradition: Dibbucks and demons, angels and Elijah; from ecstatic enlightenment to succumbing to satan - Jewish texts and tradition are riddled with the arcane, the occult and the mystical. This course will mine the sources for a deep exploration of these aspects of Judaism that are most often obscured by "normative" teachings and practices, yet remain deeply embedded in the customs and beliefs of Jews around the world. (Same as JWSH 330.) LEC.

REL 330. Native American Religions. 3 Hours NW AE41 / H.
A survey of religious traditions among selected Native American peoples. Topics include religious freedom, ritual activity, cultural narrative (myth), kinship, healing practices, ecology, government relations, impact of colonization, impact of missionization, contact between cultures, and secularization. Not open to students who have completed ISP 331 or REL 331. (Same as ISP 330.) LEC.

REL 331. Native American Religions, Honors. 3 Hours NW AE41 / H.
A survey of religious traditions among selected Native American peoples. Topics include religious freedom, ritual activity, cultural narrative (myth), kinship, healing practices, ecology, government relations, impact of colonization, impact of missionization, contact between cultures, and secularization. Open only to students in the University Honors Program or by permission of instructor. Not open to students who have completed ISP 330 or REL 330. (Same as ISP 331.) LEC.

REL 339. History of Religion in America. 3 Hours H.
Survey of the development of religious institutions and ideas in America from colonial times to the present. Emphasis is given to the mainstream religious traditions (Protestant, Catholic, Jewish), but attention is also paid to other phenomena, including nonwestern and native American religions. LEC.

REL 341. Mysticism. 3 Hours H.
The nature of mystical experience and reflection as expressed in selected mystical literature of the world's religions. LEC.

REL 342. Religion and Literature. 3 Hours H.
An examination of contemporary writings to explore the authors' presuppositions concerning the nature of God, the nature of human beings, the meaning of good and evil, the significance of human existence, and the means of attaining fulfillment or salvation. LEC.

REL 345. Christianity. 3 Hours H.
An introductory examination of the history, doctrines, and practices of Christianity. Selected readings from the creeds, papal decrees, and major Christian theologians. LEC.

REL 350. Islam. 3 Hours NW AE42/GE3H / H/W.
Islam's Origins, the prophet Muhammed, the Holy Koran, religious symbols and moral mandates, and historical developments. (Same as AAAS 349.) LEC.

REL 355. Muslim Societies. 3 Hours H.
In this class we study Muslim societies throughout the world. We examine variation between regions by looking at Muslim history and culture in different countries, such as Pakistan, Indonesia, Mali, Bosnia, Egypt, Yemen, and others. LEC.

REL 357. Women and Gender in Islam. 3 Hours H.
Focusing on issues of gender, this course follows major religious developments in the Islamic tradition. Also examines how Muslim women have impacted those developments. (Not open to students who have taken REL 657.) LEC.
REL 360. The Buddhist Tradition in Asia. 3 Hours NW AE42/GE3H / H. A historical and geographical survey of the Buddhist tradition from its origins in India to modern day developments in the three major regional Buddhist cultures of Southeast Asia, Tibet, and East Asia (China, Korea, and Japan). Prerequisite: Prior coursework in Asian studies or permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 365. Hinduism. 3 Hours H. An introduction to the diversity and richness of Hinduism from the Vedic period to the present; explores Hindu practices, beliefs, and communities using primary texts and extensive audio-visual resources. LEC.

REL 371. Religion and Society in Tension. 3 Hours H. Specific issues of conflict between the values of certain religious groups and those of the larger society. Includes problems of church and state, birth control and abortion, civil disobedience and dissent, education, war and peace, and “civil religion.” LEC.

REL 373. The Supreme Court and Religious Issues in the United States. 3 Hours H. Historical study of the interpretation of the religion clauses of the First Amendment with special reference to the questions of establishment, the free exercise of religion, freedom of religious belief, worship, and action, and religion and the public schools. Not open to freshmen. (Same as HIST 373.) LEC.

REL 374. Religious Perspectives on Selfhood and Sexuality. 3 Hours H. The nature of the self in its individual and social dimensions. Self experienced and expressed in sexuality. Survey of viewpoints in religious literature. (Same as WGSS 374.) LEC.

REL 375. The Supreme Court and Religious Issues in the United States, Honors. 3 Hours H. Historical study of the interpretation of the religion clauses of the First Amendment with special reference to the questions of establishment, the free exercise of religion, freedom of religious belief, worship, and action, and religion and the public schools. Open only to students in the University Honors Program or by permission of the instructor. (Same as HIST 375.) LEC.

REL 376. American Judaism: Life and Thought. 3 Hours H. A study of the conflicts between secularists and religiousists, between Zionists and synagogue representatives, and of the patterns of compromise in American Jewish life. Questions of Americanism and Jewish survival, support for the State of Israel, and the bureaucratic structure of rabbinical training and philanthropy in America will be raised. LEC.

REL 377. Religious Ethics and Moral Decisions. 3 Hours AE51 / H. When faced with ethical dilemmas how do we decide what is the right course of action? In what ways are our decisions affected by religious ideas about morality? In this class we examine the ethical problems we encounter every day in light of the solutions offered from various religious traditions. Cases to be examined include issues of life and death, war and peace, sexual morals, torture, the treatment of animals and the environment. LEC.

REL 378. Religion and Moral Decisions. Honors. 3 Hours H. Honors version of REL 377. Introduction to religious viewpoints on individual and social ethics. Influence of religious thought on the making of moral decisions, and on value development. Examined in relation to specific moral issues. Open only to students who have been admitted to the University Honors Program or by permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 380. Philosophical Issues in Religion. 3 Hours GE3H / H. This course will consider, from a philosophical perspective, some of the problems in religion which arise in the development of “Natural Theology” broadly conceived. (Same as PHIL 350.) LEC.

REL 382. Jerusalem Through the Ages. 3 Hours H. As a prominent site in the religious and cultural histories of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, Jerusalem is uniquely situated as one of the world’s most sacred cities. For more than 3,000 years, this city has been a focal point of religious and political activity. Through the critical reading of historical and religious texts, and archaeological data, this course will explore the historical development of Jerusalem as a sacred place in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. (Same as CLSX 382, HIST 382 and JWSH 382.) LEC.

REL 387. Enemies of Ancient Israel. 3 Hours H. An exploration of the social world of the Bible through its antagonists and their cultures. We will examine the so-called “Bad Guys of the Bible” using the lenses of history, archaeology, geography, and religion to better understand their cultures and how they are portrayed in the biblical text. (Same as HIST 381 and JWSH 387.) LEC.

REL 400. Study Abroad Special Topics: ____. 1-4 Hours H. This course is designed for the study of special topics in Religious Studies equivalent to courses at the 300 to 600 level at KU. Coursework must be arranged through the Office of KU Study Abroad. May be repeated for credit if content varies. LEC.

REL 404. Undergraduate Seminar in Religion: ____. 1-3 Hours H. Topic, instructor, prerequisite and hours of credit to be announced in Schedule of Classes. Particular subject matter any given semester responding to student interest and taking advantage of special faculty competence. Class discussion, readings, and individual projects. LEC.

REL 405. Directed Study in Religion. 1-4 Hours AE61 / H. Investigation of a special topic or project selected by the student with advice, approval, and supervision of an instructor. Such study may take the form of directed reading or special research. Individual reports and conferences. May be repeated, with maximum cumulative credit of four hours. Course taken for one hour of credit may not be used to fulfill College distribution requirement. Prerequisite: One previous course in religious studies at the University of Kansas and permission of instructor. IND.

REL 406. Reading Asian Religious Classics. 3 Hours H. A close reading of classic texts of Asian religions in English translation, with emphasis on their construction and reception as sacred “scripture” in both their indigenous Asian contexts and in the post-colonial West. No prior knowledge of Asia is required, although some background is desirable. LEC.

REL 425. Religion and Film. 3 Hours H. An examination of the treatment of religious themes through the medium of film and an examination of the attitudes of religious organizations toward films and film production. Selected films will be viewed and analyzed from the perspectives taken within religious studies. LEC.

REL 447. Islamic Law in the Digital Age. 3 Hours H. In this class we trace how Islamic law has changed in the modern era, beginning with an overview of shari’a and its traditional function in Muslim society, and then examine how the practice of Islamic law was altered by colonialism and the rise of the nation state. We mark these transformations by studying how Islamic law is used in the online environment today. LEC.
REL 450. Popular Culture in the Muslim World. 3 Hours NW / H.
A study of pop songs, television, comics, and other idioms of popular culture from different parts of the Muslim world, with attention to Muslims’ sense of humor, tragedy, aesthetics, and pertinent issues of the day. (Same as AAAS 450.) LEC.

REL 464. Visions in Art and Literature. 3 Hours H.
A study of the phenomenon of visions, their expression in various media, and theories of visionary experience from the humanities and social sciences, with a particular emphasis on critically evaluating the relationship between the visionary experience and its expression. (Same as HUM 464). LEC.

REL 468. Illness in Art and Literature. 3 Hours H.
An examination of how illness and health have been conceptualized, expressed, and explored in Western literature and art, as well as a consideration of issues of illness and health from the perspectives of philosophy and religious studies. (Same as HUM 468). LEC.

REL 475. Loving Relationships. 3 Hours H.
Theories and elements of love in a variety of types of relationships, with attention to religious ethical traditions and social and behavioral sciences. Includes small group discussions and application to personal experience. Prerequisite: Junior standing or above. LEC.

REL 477. Gender and Religion. 3 Hours H.
Examination of the symbols, images, scriptures, rites and teachings that define gender in various religious traditions. (Same as HUM 477 and WGSS 477.) Prerequisite: An introductory course in Humanities, Religious Studies or Women, Gender Sexuality Studies. LEC.

REL 478. Women and Religion, Honors. 3 Hours.
Examination of symbols, images, scriptures, rites, and teachings defining women's roles in various religious traditions. Prerequisite: Open only to students in the University Honors Program, or by permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 490. Senior Seminar in Theories and Methods. 3 Hours AE61 / H.
A capstone course for religious studies majors to survey methods and theories in religious studies. Prerequisite: Religious Studies major or permission of the instructor. LEC.

REL 494. Research Internship. 3 Hours S.
Practical research experience in Religious Studies gained by assisting a faculty member on a faculty research, editorial, pedagogical, or outreach project. Credit hours are graded by faculty on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. May be used as a component of the Research Experience Program (REP). Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor. LEC.

REL 499. Undergraduate Honors Research. 1-3 Hours AE61 / H.
Required for Departmental Honors. May be taken more than once; total credit not to exceed 6 hours. Prerequisite: Open only to candidates for degree with departmental honors and with consent of the student's research supervisor. IND.

REL 500. Readings in Non-English Religious Texts. 1-4 Hours.
This course provides directed readings for students in either primary or secondary texts related to religious studies utilizing material in languages other than English. IND.

REL 502. Special Topics in Religion: _____ 3 Hours H.
Topic and instructor to be announced in Schedule of Classes. May be offered by different instructors under different subtitles, and may be taken more than once if subject matter varies sufficiently. Prerequisite: One previous course in Religious Studies or instructor permission. LEC.

REL 507. Religion in India. 3 Hours NW AE42/GE3H / H/W.
Survey of religious thought and practice in India from the Vedic period to the present. LEC.

REL 508. Religion in China. 3 Hours NW AE42/GE3H / H/W.
Survey of religious thought and practice in China from the Shang to the People's Republic. (Same as EALC 508.) LEC.

REL 509. Religion in Japan. 3 Hours NW AE42/GE3H / H/W.
Survey of religious thought and practice in Japan from the Jomon period to the present. (Same as EALC 509.) LEC.

REL 510. Religion in Korea. 3 Hours NW AE42/GE3H / H.
Survey of religious thought and practice in Korea from the Three Kingdoms period to the present. Prerequisite: REL 106/EALC 105; EALC 104; or permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 511. Buddhist Art of Korea. 3 Hours H.
Introduction to the history of Buddhist architecture, painting, sculpture and illuminated scriptures in Korea from the 4th through the 19th centuries, with particular emphasis on their stylistic, geographical, social, devotional and literary contexts. Not open to students who have taken HA 361 or HA 561. Work requirements will be greater for graduate students. (Same as HA 561.) Prerequisite: A college level introduction to Asian art history, or consent of instructor. LEC.

REL 515. Studies in Early Christian Literature and History. 3 Hours H.
Contemporary research in the history and literature of earliest Christianity including most of the following: (1) the use of critical method, (2) philosophical and theological contexts, (3) sociological analyses, (4) interpretation of archaeological data (5) papyrology and the medieval manuscript tradition, (6) relations between Christians and the Roman government, (7) relations between Christians and Jews, (8) development of diverse literary genres, and (9) the origins of gnosticism and Christian gnosticism. Prerequisite: REL 124 or permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 523. The Dead Sea Scrolls. 3 Hours H.
A study of the archeological evidence and texts from the Dead Sea area that provide primary evidence for Jewish religious belief and practice in the Greek and Roman periods (ca. 250 B.C.E. - 135 C.E.). (Same as JWSH 523.) Prerequisite: REL 124 or JWSH 124 or consent of instructor LEC.

REL 524. Ancient Egyptian Culture and Religion. 3 Hours H.
A study of the basic features of Egyptian history, culture, and religion from the beginning of the Pharaonic period (ca. 3500 B.C.E.) to the rise of Greek rule in Egypt (ca. 350 B.C.E.). Prerequisite: An introductory course in Religious Studies or consent of instructor. LEC.

REL 525. Jews and Christians. 3 Hours H/W.
This course examines the ways Jews and Christians have interacted with and characterized one another at various points in their histories. Special emphasis is placed on the gradual separation of the two religious traditions in the 1st-4th centuries. (Same as JWSH 525.) Prerequisite: A previous course in Religious Studies or Jewish Studies; or consent of instructor. LEC.

REL 526. Jewish History and Literature in the Greek and Roman Periods. 3 Hours H/W.
The history and literature of the Jewish people from the hellenistic period (late fourth century B.C.E. to the codification of the Mishnah 210 C.E.). Select texts from the Hebrew Bible, the so-called apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, the Qumran scrolls, Philo, Josephus, related early Christian texts, and Rabbinic texts will be studied. (Same as CLSX 506 and JWSH 526.) Prerequisite: REL 124 or JWSH 124 or permission of instructor. LEC.
REL 527. Ancient Mesopotamian Culture and Religion. 3 Hours H.
A study of the basic features of Mesopotamian history, culture and religion from the origins of writing (ca. 3500 B.C.E.) to the rise of Greek rule in the region (ca. 350 B.C.E.). Prerequisite: A principal course in religious studies or consent of instructor. LEC.

REL 528. The Apostle Paul and Early Christian Paulinism. 3 Hours H.
Biographical issues related to the Apostle Paul, his teachings in relation to Greek and Jewish thought as exemplified in his letters, and his reception by later diverse Paulinists. Prerequisite: REL124/125, or REL 315. LEC.

REL 530. Christian Origins: from the Beginnings to Augustine. 3 Hours H/W.
This course covers the major political, literary, and theological developments in Christianity from the first century through Augustine in the early fifth century, including: (1) the development and significance of the New Testament canon, (2) relations between Christians, Jews, and the Roman government, (3) the nature of orthodoxy and heresy, and the rise of the major gnostic systems, (4) the growth of the orthodox network, (5) theological debates and councils, and (6) the biography and theology of Augustine and his influence on the medieval church. Prerequisite: Junior standing or above. LEC.

REL 531. Studies in Christianity. 3 Hours H.
Study of religious thought, practice, and institutions of Christianity with an emphasis on the examination of primary documents. LEC.

REL 532. Studies in Islam. 3 Hours H.
Study of religious thought, practice, and institutions of Islam with an emphasis on the examination of primary documents. (Same as AAAS 532.) LEC.

REL 534. Studies in Ritual: ____. 3 Hours H.
A study of ritual theory and a comparative study of ritual activity among selected religious traditions. May be taken more than once if content differs sufficiently. LEC.

REL 535. The History of Islam in Africa. 3 Hours H/W.
A study of the history and institutions of Islam in Africa. Emphasis will be placed on the impact of Islam on African traditional religions and African civilization in general; the historiographical traditions of Islam in Africa. (Same as AAAS 542.) LEC.

REL 541. Gods and Goddesses of South Asia. 3 Hours H.
This course explores the dynamic diversity of gods and goddesses in South Asian religious life through examination of their basic iconography, religious narratives and devotional poetry, temple images and architecture, ritual practices, performance traditions, and film. Prerequisite: An introductory course in religious studies or consent of instructor. LEC.

REL 543. Hindu Epics, Past and Present. 3 Hours H.
This interdisciplinary course considers the roles that the two great Indian epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, have played in the history of religion, literature, art, and politics in South Asia (and beyond). Prerequisite: An introductory course in religious studies or consent of instructor. LEC.

REL 545. Yoga in Theory, Practice, and History. 3 Hours H.
Historical and thematic investigation into Yoga, including classical formulations, esoteric practices, and contemporary developments and debates. LEC.

REL 551. Shari'a, Democracy, and Society. 3 Hours H.
In this class we examine the question of whether or not democracy and shari'a can coexist. Is there a necessary opposition between democratic visions of society and the institutionalization of Islamic law? As a case study we look at changes in the modern Egyptian political system and the role religious ideals have played in these changes, especially the push for democracy. Prerequisite: An introductory course in religious studies or consent of instructor. LEC.

REL 552. Classical Islamic Literature. 3 Hours NW / H.
An examination of major developments in classical Islamic literature in the Middle East and beyond, with attention to the poetic and prose works (in translation) that emerged from them. (Same as AAAS 552.) LEC.

REL 555. Buddhists and Buddhism in China. 3 Hours NW AE42 / H.
A reading and media-rich survey of institutional, ritual, literary, educational, and exegetical practices that have shaped the lives of Buddhists in China, past and present. Attention within the Buddhist tradition, and interactions with other religious options, are considered. (Same as EALC 555.) LEC.

REL 557. Modern Islamic Reform Movements. 3 Hours H.
This course examines movements of renewal and reform in the Islamic world today. Also studies the conditions that gave rise to calls for reform throughout the Muslim majority world, as well as the impact reform movements have had on the practices and beliefs of Muslims today. LEC.

REL 558. Religion in Britain Since the Reformation: A Survey. 3 Hours H.
This course deals analytically and synoptically with religion in Britain from the Reformation to the present with special reference to the Church of England, and focuses on the themes of ecclesiology, ecclesiastical polity, and political theology. It is essentially an examination of religious history from a perspective of history of ideas. (Same as HIST 558.) LEC.

REL 559. Religion in Britain Since the Reformation: A Survey, Honors. 3 Hours H.
This course deals analytically and synoptically with religion in Britain from the Reformation to the present with special reference to the Church of England, and focuses on the themes of ecclesiology, ecclesiastical polity, and political theology. It is essentially an examination of religious history from a perspective of the history of ideas. Open only to students in the University Honors Program or by permission of instructor. (Same as HIST 559.) LEC.

REL 560. Modern Jewish Thought. 3 Hours H.
This course examines how a number of prominent Jewish thinkers from the seventeenth century through the present have encountered and engaged the special challenges posed by modernity to religious traditions, including the challenge of science to the validity of miracles, the challenge of the secular state to religious authorities, and the challenge of historical studies to the integrity of scripture. Thinkers covered may include Spinoza, Mendelssohn, Frankel, Hirsch, Geiger, Hermann Cohen, Buber, Rosenzweig, Arendt, Scholem, Leo Strauss, Levinas, and Derrida. Prerequisite: A previous course in Religious Studies or Jewish Studies; or consent of instructor. (Same as JWSH 560.) LEC.

REL 570. Studies in Judaism. 3 Hours H.
A study of the major intellectual sources of the Jewish tradition from the Mishna, Talmud, Midrash, prayerbook, philosophers, the Zohar, and the Shulchan Aruch. (Same as JWSH 570.) Prerequisite: A course in Religious Studies or Jewish Studies numbered 300 or above. LEC.

REL 571. Religion in Kansas. 3 Hours H.
A survey of religions active in Kansas in the past or present. The course has a strong fieldwork component in which students, after receiving training in fieldwork methods, conduct interviews and gather information to contribute to a public archive of religion in Kansas. FLD.

REL 572. Judaism and Political Theology. 3 Hours H.
A consideration of the relationship between religion and politics in Judaism, and of the relevance of Judaism to broader discussions about
REL 573. Judaism and Sexuality. 3 Hours H.
An examination of the complex interactions of Judaism, Jewishness, and sexuality. The course serves as a basic introduction to traditional Jewish understandings of gender and power, love, sex, and the body and embodiment. It also introduces the changes undergone by this tradition under the impact of contemporary feminism and queer theory. (Same as JWSH 563, WGSS 573.) Prerequisite: At least one course in Jewish Studies or Religious Studies, or permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 580. Religious Perspectives on Illness, Health, and Healing. 3 Hours H.
An examination of the perspectives of selected religious traditions on the meaning of illness and health, methods of diagnosis and treatment, and the place of these themes and experiences within each tradition. LEC.

REL 581. Psychology of Religion. 3 Hours S.
Consideration of the psychological antecedents of religious experience, the nature of religious experience, and the behavioral consequences of religion. Focus will be on psychological theory and research relevant to religious thought, feeling, belief, and behavior. (Same as PSYC 581.) Prerequisite: PSYC 104. LEC.

REL 585. New Religious Movements (Western). 3 Hours H.
A survey of the beliefs, practices, and social impact of religious minorities in the United States, both contemporary and historical, rooted primarily in Christianity and Judaism. LEC.

REL 586. New Religious Movements (Nonwestern). 3 Hours H/W.
A survey of the beliefs, practices, and social impact of religious minorities in the United States, both contemporary and historical, which have developed primarily from sources other than Christianity and Judaism. No prerequisite for graduate students. LEC.

REL 601. Approaches to the Study of Religion. 3 Hours H.
An introduction to the various methods by which social scientists, historians, philosophers, and theologians study the meaning, influence, and significance of religion as an integral part of society and its cultural heritage. Prerequisite: REL 104 required for undergraduate students. No prerequisite for graduate students. LEC.

REL 604. Religion and Political Theory. 3 Hours S.
An examination of the relationship between religious faith and politics in Western political thought and theory. The approach will be both historical and philosophical, beginning with Moses on the one hand, and the Greeks on the other. Texts will include biblical, Greek philosophical, Jewish and Christian philosophical and theological writings. (Same as POLS 604.) Prerequisite: POLS 201, or for non-POLS majors completion of Western Civilization requirements, or consent of instructor. LEC.

REL 650. Sufism. 3 Hours NW / H.
A survey of developments in Sufi (Islamic Mystical) thought, poetry, and ritual throughout Muslim history and across the Muslim world. (Same as AAAS 650.) Prerequisite: AAAS 349/REL 350 or permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 657. Women and Gender in Islam. 3 Hours NW / H.
Focusing on issues of gender, this course follows major religious developments in the Islamic tradition. Also examines how Muslim women have impacted those developments. (Not open to students who have taken REL 357.) (Same as AAAS 657.) Prerequisite: AAAS 349/REL 350, graduate standing, or permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 665. Religious Ethics. 3 Hours H.
Main themes and traditions in ethical thought. Religious thought as basis of systems of ethics. Contemporary approaches to methods of value organization and moral choices. Prerequisite: A basic course in religious studies. LEC.

REL 667. Religious Perspectives on War and Peace. 3 Hours H.
Views of war and peace in various faith traditions throughout the world. Examination of teachings and action of religious groups and selected individuals, including use of war rhetoric and differing theological and social understandings of peace. Lecture, seminar discussion, and research assignment require preparation and participation by students. Prerequisite: Junior standing or above. LEC.

REL 669. Human Conflict and Peace. 3 Hours H.
Study of religious, cultural, and social traditions toward understanding the nature and purposes of human conflict. Analysis of various meanings of peace, with emphasis on study of nonviolent approaches to management of conflict. Class discussion, readings, and individual research projects. (Same as COMS 669.) Prerequisite: Junior standing or above. LEC.

REL 671. American Communes. 3 Hours H.
An examination of the perspectives of selected religious traditions on the meaning of illness and health, methods of diagnosis and treatment, and the place of these themes and experiences within each tradition. LEC.

REL 675. Jewish Women's Studies. 3 Hours H.
Examination of teachings and action of religious groups and selected individuals, including use of war rhetoric and differing theological and social understandings of peace. Lecture, seminar discussion, and research assignment require preparation and participation by students. Prerequisite: Junior standing or above. LEC.

REL 685. Religious Perspectives on War and Peace. 3 Hours H.
Views of war and peace in various faith traditions throughout the world. Examination of teachings and action of religious groups and selected individuals, including use of war rhetoric and differing theological and social understandings of peace. Lecture, seminar discussion, and research assignment require preparation and participation by students. Prerequisite: Junior standing or above. LEC.

REL 699. Seminar in Religion, Text and Textuality. 3 Hours.
This seminar explores issues surrounding the production and use of authoritative religious texts (sacred texts) in religious traditions, including such topics as scripturality and canon, scriptural hermeneutics, and material and ritual dimensions of scriptural practice. Specific case studies and content to be selected by the instructor. SEM.

REL 704. Russian Orthodoxy in Historical Perspective. 3 Hours.
This course examines Russian Orthodoxy as a religious system and the institution of the Russian Orthodox Church from its first appearance in Russia to the present. It focuses on beliefs and practices of the clergy and the laity; institutional structures; the relationships between Church and State; interaction with non-Orthodox religious communities; responses to Soviet atheist policies; Orthodox influences on political theory, philosophy, literature, and the fine arts. (Same as REES 704.) LEC.

REL 727. Seminar in Religion, Text and Textuality. 3 Hours.
This course examines Russian Orthodoxy as a religious system and the institution of the Russian Orthodox Church from its first appearance in Russia to the present. It focuses on beliefs and practices of the clergy and the laity; institutional structures; the relationships between Church and State; interaction with non-Orthodox religious communities; responses to Soviet atheist policies; Orthodox influences on political theory, philosophy, literature, and the fine arts. (Same as REES 704.) LEC.

REL 732. Seminar in Western Religious Texts: ______. 3 Hours.
An analysis of a selected religious text or texts from Judaism, Islam, or Christianity in translation. May be taken more than once if subject matter varies sufficiently. Prerequisite: REL 512, REL 515, REL 526, REL 530, REL 532, REL 539, or REL 570 or permission of the instructor. LEC.

REL 733. Seminar in Eastern Religious Texts: ______. 3 Hours.
An analysis of selected religious text or texts from India, China, or Japan, in translation. May be taken more than once if subject matter varies sufficiently. (Same as EALC 733.) Prerequisite: REL 507, REL 508, REL 509, or permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 737. Seminar in Religion, Media and Performance. 3 Hours.
This seminar explores aspects of performance and the media of performance in lived religion, which might include such topics as ritual,
the body, mass media and the internet, and visual and material culture. Specific case studies and content to be selected by the instructor. SEM.

REL 747. Seminar in Religion, Society and Social Change. 3 Hours. This seminar explores issues regarding the social dimensions of religiosity/lived religion, ranging from aspects of religious institutionalization, authority, and normativity to alternative religiousities and alterity. Specific case studies and content to be selected by the instructor. SEM.

REL 757. Seminar in Religious Subjectivity, Experience, and Narrative. 3 Hours. This seminar explores issues regarding the subjective and experiential dimension of lived religiosity, including such things as religious experience and mysticism, modes of personal religious expression and embodiment, and dynamics of personal and collective religious narrative and identity. Specific case studies and content to be selected by the instructor. SEM.

REL 761. Seminar in Western Religious Thought: ____. 3 Hours. An analysis of the thought of selected thinkers of the Christian, Jewish, and/or Islamic traditions. May be taken more than once if subject matter varies sufficiently. Prerequisite: REL 512, REL 515, REL 526, REL 530, REL 532, REL 539, or REL 570 or permission of the instructor. LEC.

REL 762. Seminar in Eastern Religious Thought: ____. 3 Hours. Analysis of the religious thought of selected thinkers of India, China, and/or Japan, traditional and modern. May be taken more than once if subject matter varies sufficiently. (Same as EALC 732.) Prerequisite: REL 507, REL 508, REL 509, or permission of the instructor. LEC.

REL 767. Seminar in Theory, Method, and History in Religious Studies. 3 Hours. This seminar explores theoretical, methodological, and historical issues that are instrumental to our notions of religion as an analytic category and foundational to the study of religion as a field of academic enquiry. Specific case studies and content to be selected by the instructor. SEM.

REL 771. Seminar in Religious Movements and Social Change: ____. 3 Hours. Relationship of religious groups to movements for social change: influence of religious groups on social change, and the impact of efforts toward social change in religious groups. Prerequisite: REL 171, REL 371, REL 377, or equivalent. LEC.

REL 772. Seminar in Religion and Modern Social Criticism: ____. 3 Hours. Seminar focusing on religious issues in some important texts of modern social criticism from the French Revolution to the present day. Prerequisite: An introductory course in religion. LEC.

REL 773. Seminar in Religion and National Identity: ____. 3 Hours. Analysis of selected issues wherein religion and the formation and definition of a selected nation or nations intersect. LEC.

REL 775. Seminar in Religion and Society in the West: ____. 3 Hours. Analysis of selected Western religions and their relationships to selected Western societies. May be taken more than once if subject matter varies sufficiently. Prerequisite: REL 512, REL 515, REL 526, REL 530, REL 532, REL 539, or REL 570 or permission of the instructor. LEC.

REL 776. Seminar in Religion and Society in Asia: ____. 3 Hours. Analysis of selected Asian religions and their relationship to selected Asian societies. May be taken more than once if subject matter varies sufficiently. (Same as EALC 776.) Prerequisite: REL 507, REL 508, REL 509, or permission of the instructor. LEC.

REL 777. Seminar in Religion and Gender. 3 Hours. Examination of symbols, images, scriptures, rites, teachings and scholarship regarding gender definitions and performance in various religious traditions. LEC.

REL 787. Seminar in Ethical Issues in Health Care: ____. 3 Hours. Interdisciplinary seminar, drawing on the literature of social, medical, and professional ethics, with special attention to religious perspectives on meanings of health and the delivery of health care. Of particular interest to health-related professions. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 800. Readings. 1-4 Hours. RSH.

REL 839. Topics in the History and Literature of Religion: ____. 3 Hours. Selected studies, as announced in Schedule of Classes, in the history and religious literature of Judaism, Christianity, religion in America, Islam, and Asian religions. Course may be taken more than once if the subject matter varies sufficiently. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 864. Topics in Religious Thought and Symbol: ____. 3 Hours. Selected studies, as announced in Schedule of Classes, in Asian, Middle Eastern, and Western religious thought, mysticism, and religious ethics. Course may be taken more than once if subject matter varies sufficiently. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 875. Topics in Religion and Society: ____. 3 Hours. Special topics to be announced in Schedule of Classes, according to research interests of faculty and students. A particular aspect of the study of religion and culture will be emphasized. Course may be taken more than once if the subject matter varies. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 877. Topics in Women and Religion: ____. 3 Hours. Selected studies, as announced in Schedule of Classes, in the history and analysis of symbols, images, scriptures, rites, and teachings defining women's roles in various religious traditions. Course may be taken more than once if the subject matter varies sufficiently. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. LEC.

REL 899. Thesis. 1-3 Hours. THE.