

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

IMPORTANT: The department is not accepting applications for the 2022-2023 academic year.

The department offers a graduate program leading to the Master's of Arts, as well as a Graduate Certificate program. Both programs enable students to pursue specialized advanced work that builds on the interests of the students in tandem with 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 indispensable and 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 Smith Hall's Moore Reading Room. The Department of Religious Studies at KU is also generally able to provide substantial financial support for students seeking the M.A. degree in the department. Non-degree seeking students who have completed an undergraduate degree may apply to take graduate-level courses in Religious Studies.

Courses

REL 100. Introduction to Religious Ethics. 3 Credits. H

In this class we will learn how religious values are used to make ethical judgments, but we will also ask if and how those judgments influence practices or the behavior of people in their everyday lives. What causes a disjunction between norms and behavior? What is the tension between different values when deciding how to act? What about differences of opinion between and even within different religious traditions? What

happens when societal expectations conflict with religious values or vice versa? Or when ethical reasoning leads to two different conclusions about how to act? Using specific cases, such as human rights, environmental and sexual ethics, race and violence students will learn how ethical reasoning unfolds in different religious traditions, what values support that reasoning and what happens in society when those values compete.

REL 102. Violence and Religious Ethics. 3 Credits. H

This course will examine the connection between violence and religion from an ethical perspective. It will focus primarily on Jewish, Christian and Muslim ethical theories, which will be compared and applied to specific cases. We will also consider the ethical justifications for inter-religious conflict and the impact violence has had on targeted religious communities. The course will begin with an interrogation of the meaning of religion, ethics and religious violence-exploring questions like: Are religions inherently violent? Are theories derived from religious ethics used to justify violence? How are acts of violence morally justified? We will then consider these questions in more depth by comparing ethical theories within Judaism, Christianity and Islam, such as just war theory and jihad theory, to see whether religions encourage or seek to curb violence. In addition, each moral theory will be studied in light of specific historical or present cases. Case studies include the Crusades, Medieval Spain, ISIS, white nationalism in America, and recent killings in places of worship. The course will end on a positive note, by examining ethical theories within religions that promote peace, and comparing theories that justify peace with theories that justify war.

REL 104. Introduction to Religious Studies. 3 Credits. HR 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.

REL 105. Introduction to Religious Studies, Honors. 3 Credits. HR 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.

REL 106. Asian Religions. 3 Credits. HR/NW H/W

A basic introduction to religion in India, China, and Japan with emphasis upon religions that affect the modern period. (Same as EALC 105.)

REL 107. Jews, Christians, Muslims. 3 Credits. HR 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. (Same as JWSH 107.)

REL 124. Understanding the Bible. 3 Credits. HR 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 315. Not open to students who have taken REL 125 or JWSH 125. (Same as JWSH 124.)

REL 125. Understanding the Bible, Honors. 3 Credits. HR 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.)

REL 130. Myth, Legend, and Folk Belief in East Asia. 3 Credits. NW 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.)

REL 137. Religious Ethics and Moral Decisions. 3 Credits. 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.

REL 138. Religion and Moral Decisions, Honors. 3 Credits. H

Honors version of REL 137. Introduction to religious viewpoints on individual and social ethics. This course examines the influence of religious thought on the making of moral decisions, and on value development in relation to specific moral issues. Open only to students who have been admitted to the University Honors Program or by permission of instructor.

REL 171. Religion in American Society. 3 Credits. HR 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. (Same as AMS 290.)

REL 177. First Year Seminar: _____. 3 Credits. 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.

REL 200. Study Abroad Introductions to: _____. 1-4 Credits. 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.

REL 306. God, Buddhism, and the Good Life. 3 Credits. HR

This course introduces students to rigorous philosophic debates about some gripping existential questions surrounding the value of religion with God, a religion without God (focusing on Buddhism), and atheism. We will explore arguments for opposing answers regarding topics such as: whether atheism threatens the value of life; differences in how the self is viewed in Western and Eastern religions; and differences in how morality is grounded in these different traditions. We will examine the compatibility of atheism with Buddhism, and of Buddhism with belief in God. (Same as PHIL 306.) Prerequisite: A 100-level Philosophy course or permission of instructor.

REL 315. Miracles, Martyrs, and Heretics. 3 Credits. H/W

A study of ancient Christian culture and religion employing the popular categories of miracles, martyrs and heretics as entry points into the basic features of religious thought and practice. Prerequisite: An undergraduate course in the humanities.

REL 316. Ancient Magic and Witches. 3 Credits. H

This course provides a survey of magic and witchcraft in ancient Greece and Rome and interprets these practices through anthropological theories of magic and witchcraft. Emphasized topics may include magicians,

witches, ghosts, spirits, demons, divination, and spells. This course considers issues such as how magic works, how people engage with the divine, the marginalization of magical practitioners, and the difference between magic, witchcraft and religion. All readings will be in English; no knowledge of any ancient languages is required. (Same as CLSX 316.)

REL 320. The Bible Then and Now. 3 Credits.

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.)

REL 323. The Jewish World of Jesus. 3 Credits. H

An introduction to the figure of Jesus in his ancient Jewish context. What was Jewish life like in Jesus's time? What did the early Jesus movement share with other forms of Judaism, and how did it differ? Evidence from the New Testament, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and other textual and archaeological sources will be used to explore the first-century Jewish society of which both Jesus and the first Christians were a part. (Same as JWSH 323.)

REL 325. Introduction to Judaism. 3 Credits. 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.)

REL 326. The Talmud: Its Origins, Nature, and Evolution. 3 Credits. H

This course demystifies the Talmud, arguably the most central yet also the most mysterious text of rabbinic 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.

REL 327. Religious Zionisms. 3 Credits. 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.

REL 329. Mystical Tradition in Judaism. 3 Credits. H

Mystical experiences and supernatural encounters in Jewish texts and tradition: Dybbuks 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.)

REL 330. Native American Religions. 3 Credits. NW 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 REL 331.

REL 331. Native American Religions, Honors. 3 Credits. NW 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 REL 330.

REL 333. Magic, Mysteries, Mummies in Ancient Egypt. 3 Credits. H

A study of ancient Egyptian culture and religion employing the popular categories of magic, mysteries and mummies as entry points into the basic features of religious belief and practice. Prerequisite: Any course in the Humanities or Social Sciences.

REL 334. Studies in Ritual: _____. 3 Credits. H

A study of ritual theory and a comparative study of ritual activity among selected religious traditions. May be repeated if topic varies.

REL 339. History of Religion in America. 3 Credits. 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.

REL 341. Mysticism. 3 Credits. H

The nature of mystical experience and reflection as expressed in selected mystical literature of the world's religions.

REL 345. Christianity. 3 Credits. H

An introductory examination of the history, doctrines, and practices of Christianity. Selected readings from the creeds, papal decrees, and major Christian theologians.

REL 350. Islam. 3 Credits. NW H/W

Islam's Origins, the prophet Muhammed, the Holy Koran, religious symbols and moral mandates, and historical developments. (Same as AAAS 349.)

REL 355. Muslim Societies. 3 Credits. 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.

REL 357. Women and Gender in Islam. 3 Credits. 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.)

REL 360. The Buddhist Tradition in Asia. 3 Credits. W

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.

REL 373. The Supreme Court and Religious Issues in the United States. 3 Credits. 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.)

REL 374. Religious Perspectives on Selfhood and Sexuality. 3 Credits. 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.)

REL 376. American Judaism: Life and Thought. 3 Credits. H

A study of the conflicts between secularists and religionists, between Zionists and synagogue representatives, and 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.

REL 379. Prophets and Profits. 3 Credits. H

The course will examine what religious traditions have had to say about controversies in economic ethics, focusing on how religious thinkers develop arguments on the basis of methods particular to their traditions. At the same time, it presents these traditions alongside secular approaches to economic ethics. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism will be considered, as will liberalism, Marxism, feminism, and natural law theory. Topics include economic inequality, wealth accumulation, licit and illicit commerce, slavery, and profit. Attention will also be paid to the methodological challenges of the study of the topic, which necessarily brings together political economy, ethics, economic history, and hermeneutics. Students will work with a diverse array of primary sources, from ancient scriptures to modern thinkers. The ultimate goal will be to understand how it is possible for thinkers within the same religious tradition to take differing stances on economic ethics, while considering themselves wholly grounded in tradition, depending on their relationships to the modern secular approaches we discuss.

REL 380. Philosophical Issues in Religion. 3 Credits. 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.)

REL 382. Jerusalem Through the Ages. 3 Credits. 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.)

REL 387. Enemies of Ancient Israel. 3 Credits. 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.)

REL 400. Study Abroad Special Topics: _____. 1-4 Credits. 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.

REL 404. Undergraduate Seminar in Religion: _____. 1-3 Credits. 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.

REL 405. Directed Study in Religion. 1-4 Credits. 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.

REL 425. Religion and Film. 3 Credits. 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.

REL 450. Popular Culture in the Muslim World. 3 Credits. 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.)

REL 477. Gender and Religion. 3 Credits. 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.

REL 490. Senior Seminar in Theories and Methods. 3 Credits. 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.

REL 494. Research Internship. 1-3 Credits. 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.

REL 499. Undergraduate Honors Research. 1-3 Credits. 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.

REL 500. Readings in Non-English Religious Texts. 1-4 Credits.

This course provides directed readings for students in either primary or secondary texts related to religious studies utilizing material in languages other than English.

REL 502. Special Topics in Religion: _____. 3 Credits. 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.

REL 507. Religion in India. 3 Credits. NW H/W

Survey of religious thought and practice in India from the Vedic period to the present.

REL 509. Religion in Japan. 3 Credits. NW H/W

Survey of religious thought and practice in Japan from the Jomon period to the present. (Same as EALC 509.)

REL 510. Religion in Korea. 3 Credits. W

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.

REL 511. Buddhist Art of Korea. 3 Credits. 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.

REL 523. The Dead Sea Scrolls. 3 Credits. 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.). Prerequisite: REL 124 or JWSS 124 or consent of instructor.

REL 525. Jews and Christians. 3 Credits. 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 JWSS 525.) Prerequisite: A previous course in Religious Studies or Jewish Studies; or consent of instructor.

REL 557. Modern Islamic Reform Movements. 3 Credits. 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.

REL 560. Modern Jewish Thought. 3 Credits. 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.

REL 570. Studies in Judaism. 3 Credits. 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. Prerequisite: A course in Religious Studies or Jewish Studies numbered 300 or above.

REL 572. Judaism and Political Theology. 3 Credits. H

A consideration of the relationship between religion and politics in Judaism, and of the relevance of Judaism to broader discussions about religion and politics. Topics will include sovereignty, secularization, pluralism, democracy, and revolution. (Same as JWSS 562.) Prerequisite: At least one course in Jewish Studies or Religious Studies, or permission of instructor.

REL 573. Judaism and Sexuality. 3 Credits. H

An exploration 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 and sex, and the body and embodiment. It also introduces the changes undergone by this tradition under the impact of contemporary feminism and queer theory. Prerequisite: At least one course in Jewish Studies or Religious Studies, or permission of instructor.

REL 585. New Religious Movements (Western). 3 Credits. 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.

REL 586. New Religious Movements (Nonwestern). 3 Credits. 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.

REL 650. Sufism. 3 Credits. NW H

A survey of developments in Sufi (Islamic Mystical) thought, poetry, and ritual throughout Muslim history and across the Muslim world. Prerequisite: AAAS 349/REL 350 or permission of instructor.

REL 657. Women and Gender in Islam. 3 Credits. W

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.

REL 671. American Communes. 3 Credits. H

An examination of utopian communities in North America from the seventeenth century to the present. The course will survey the history, literature, and social dynamics of representative communal societies and movements including the Shakers, the Hutterites, the Oneida Community, Catholic religious communities, egalitarian communities, and other religious and secular communities.

REL 701. Approaches to the Study of Religion. 3 Credits.

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: Graduate student or permission of instructor.

REL 704. Russian Orthodoxy in Historical Perspective. 3 Credits.

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 laity; institutional structures; the relationships between Church and State; interactions 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.)

REL 724. Magic and Myth in Ancient Egypt. 3 Credits.

A study of the basic features of ancient Egyptian culture and religion, with an emphasis on magic, myth and archaeology. Prerequisite: An introductory course in Religious Studies or consent of instructor.

REL 731. Studies in Christianity. 3 Credits.

Study of religious thought, practice, and institutions of Christianity with an emphasis on the examination of primary documents.

REL 734. Studies in Ritual: _____. 3 Credits.

A study of ritual theory and a comparative study of ritual activity among selected religious traditions. May be taken more than once if topic varies.

REL 761. Seminar in Western Religious Thought: _____. 3 Credits.

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 539, or REL 570 or permission of the instructor.

REL 800. Readings. 1-4 Credits.

REL 827. Seminar in Religion, Text and Textuality. 3 Credits.

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.

REL 837. Seminar in Religion, Media and Performance. 3 Credits.

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.

REL 847. Seminar in Religion, Society and Social Change. 3 Credits.

This seminar explores issues regarding the social dimensions of religiosity/lived religion, ranging from aspects of religious institutionalization, authority, and normativity to alternative religiosities and alterity. Specific case studies and content to be selected by the instructor.

REL 857. Seminar in Religious Subjectivity, Experience, and Narrative. 3 Credits.

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.

REL 899. Thesis. 1-3 Credits.