

Department of Religion

Spring 2023 Course Offerings

CAS RN100

Introduction to Religion

Yair Lior

TR 11:00AM-12:15PM

Religion matters. It makes meaning and provides structure to life, addressing fundamental questions about body, spirit, community, and time. But what is it? How does it work in our world? This course explores religion in ritual, philosophical, experiential, and ethical dimensions.

Hub Units: Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Creativity/Innovation.

CAS RN103

Religions of Asia

David Eckel

MWF 10:10AM-11:00AM

Study of Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, and Shinto. Focus on the world view of each tradition and the historical development of that world view. *Hub Units: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Historical Consciousness, Teamwork/Collaboration.*

CAS RN104/CAS JS121

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Jonathan Klawans

TR 2:00PM-3:15 PM

Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in historical and cultural context, origins to the present. Examines diversity of practices, belief systems, and social structures within these religions. Also addresses debates within and between communities as well as contemporary controversies and concerns. *Hub Units: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Aesthetic Exploration, Creativity/Innovation.*

CAS RN105

Introduction to the World's Religions

Teena Purohit

MWF 11:15AM-12:05PM

Explores the symbols, beliefs, stories, and practices of the world's religions with attention to both ancient history and contemporary practices, including spiritual autobiographies and online communities. Possible traditions include: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and African/African diaspora religions. *Hub Units: Digital/Multimedia Expression, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Creativity/Innovation.*

CAS RN106

Death and Immortality

Stephen Prothero

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM

Laura Harrington

MWF 9:05AM-9:55AM

Examines death as religious traditions have attempted to accept, defeat, deny, or transcend it. Do we have souls? Do they reincarnate? What to do with a corpse? Other topics include mourning, burial, cremation, martyrdom, resurrection, near-death experiences. *Hub Units: Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Creativity/Innovation.*

CAS RN203/CAS CI268/CAS XL270

Religion and Film

Laura Harrington

MWF 1:25PM-2:15PM

Religions and films are world-building engines. They create – and re-create – a visioning of society as a world of justice, of lived myth, of fantasy, of ideology: a world we may long to live in or a world we wish to avoid at all costs. This course explores such worlds by examining the ways in which religious beliefs, practices and people are portrayed in popular film from the 1960s to the present. *Hub Units: Aesthetic Exploration, Social Inquiry I, Teamwork/Collaboration.*

CAS RN206

Scriptures in World Religions

Diana Lobel

MWF 1:25PM-2:15PM

Introduction to scriptures in world religions, investigating the ways sacred books express, interpret, and make possible religious experience and ethical reflection. *Hub Units: Writing-Intensive Course, Ethical Reasoning, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy.*

CAS RN209

Religion, Health, and Medicine

Kira Ganga Kieffer

TR 9:30AM-10:45AM

How religious and moral narratives inform approaches to biomedicine from the nineteenth century to the present, including understandings of disease, illness, health, sexuality, and the body. Topics include medicine and prayer, alternative medicine, and boundaries between medicine and religion. *Hub Units: Social Inquiry I, Ethical Reasoning, Critical Thinking.*

CAS RN210

Buddhism

David Eckel

MWF 12:20PM-1:10 PM

A historical and critical introduction to the major themes of Buddhist thought and practice in India and Southeast Asia, with special attention to the transmission of Buddhism to Tibet and the modern West. *Hub Units: Historical Consciousness, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Critical Thinking.*

CAS RN220/CAS JS250

Holy City: Jerusalem in Time, Space, and Imagination

Michael Zank

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM

Transformation of an ordinary ancient city into the holy city of Jews, Christians, and Muslims; and development of modern Jerusalem, as shaped by British rule, Zionism, and Palestinian nationalism. Jerusalem's past, present, and meanings considered through analyses of religious and secular rhetoric. *Hub Units: Aesthetic Exploration, The Individual in Community, Critical Thinking.*

CAS RN239

Religion and Science

Yair Lior

TR 2:00PM-3:15PM

Examines the complex relationship between science and religion, focusing on historical episodes (e.g., the "Galileo Affair") and current controversies (e.g., "Intelligent Design" movement's influence on school curricula, "Spirituality and Health" research, and "Ecology and Religion"). *Pending Hub Units for Spring 2023: Digital and Multimedia Expression, Ethical Reasoning, Teamwork/Collaboration.*

CAS RN248**Food and Religion****Deeana Klepper**

MWF 11:15AM-12:05PM

Explores the intersection of religion and food, using food to learn about religion and religion to study the role of food in human societies. Topics include feasting; fasting; feeding God(s), spirits, ancestors; eating/not eating animals; ingesting alcohol and psychoactive plants. *Hub Units: The Individual in Community, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Teamwork/Collaboration.*

CAS RN249/CAS JS379**Islamophobia and Antisemitism****Adam Seligman**

MWF 11:15AM-12:05PM

Explores historical and contemporary manifestations of Islamophobia and antisemitism. Students are exposed to wide range of relevant written and visual texts as well as theoretical approaches. Includes active learning component and collaborative presentations by students. *Hub Units: Ethical Reasoning, The Individual in Community, Teamwork/Collaboration.*

CAS RN296/CAS AA296**Religion and Hip Hop****Margarita Guillory**

TR 9:30AM-10:45AM

Uses digital media studies to explore diverse religious expressions in hip hop culture. Through critical reading, community field trips, and hands-on technology usage, students consider an often overlooked element in the study of hip hop culture: religion. *Hub Units: Digital/Multimedia Expression, Aesthetic Exploration, Creativity/Innovation.*

CAS RN301/GRS RN601/STH TH817**Varieties of Early Christianity****David Frankfurter**

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM

Surveys the many different and often competing forms of Christianity that arose and flourished in the second to the seventh century. Topics covered include martyrs, apocalypticism, Hell, Gnostics, prophecy, magical texts, angels and demons, and the various meanings of Christ. *Hub Units: Historical Consciousness, Social Inquiry I, Critical Thinking.*

CAS RN322/CAS JS252/GRS RN622/STH TX822**History of Judaism****Steven Katz**

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM

This class surveys Jewish history from the classical period to modern times. It covers: the destruction of the 1st Temple; the encounter with Hellenism; the Roman period; the destruction of the 2nd Temple; the rise and influence of rabbinic Judaism; the medieval era under Muslim and Christian rule; medieval antisemitism; Jewish mysticism (Kabbalah); and philosophy (Maimonides). For the modern era we will discuss: the Renaissance; the Reformation; the complex issue of Emancipation; coming to America; the growth of American Judaism; religious reform; modern antisemitism; and Zionism. *Hub Units: Historical Consciousness, Critical Thinking.*

CAS RN350**Comparative Religious Ethics****Catherine Klancer**

TR 2:00PM-3:15PM

This course invites students to consider what organized religion has to offer those seeking to live a good life by looking at the ethical teachings of two Western (Judaism and Christianity) and two Eastern (Confucianism and Buddhism) traditions. *Hub Units: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Ethical Reasoning, Writing-Intensive Course.*

CAS RN356/CAS AA356/GRS RN656/GRS AA656

Religion in the Digital Age

Margarita Guillory

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM

How has technology impacted religion? This hands-on course explores how digital technologies like the Internet, social media, gaming, and artificial intelligence have changed the way that people think about religion. *Hub Units: Digital/Multimedia Expression, Writing-Intensive Course, Creativity/Innovation.*

CAS RN375/CAS AN375/GRS RN675/GRS AN775/STH TX875

Culture, Society, and Religion in South Asia

Frank Korom

TR 2:00PM-3:15PM

Ethnographic and historical introduction to the Indian subcontinent with a focus on the impact of religion on cultural practices and social institutions. *Hub Units: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Aesthetic Exploration.*

CAS RN387/CAS AN384/GRS RN687/GRS AN784/STH TX887

Anthropology of Religion

Frank Korom

TR 11:00AM-12:15PM

Myth, ritual, and religious experience across cultures. Special attention to the problem of religious symbolism and meaning, religious conversion and revitalization, contrasts between traditional and world religions, and the relation of religious knowledge to science, magic, and ideology. *Hub Units: Historical Consciousness, Social Inquiry I.*

CAS RN396/CAS PH446/GRS RN696/GRS PH646/STH TX850

Philosophy of Religion

Michael Zank

W 6:30PM-9:15PM

Critical investigation of the limits of human knowledge and the theoretical and practical demands for meaning attached to notions of God, providence, immortality, and other metaphysical conditions of human thriving, from Plato to modern philosophies of religion. *Hub Units: Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings, Social Inquiry I, Critical Thinking.*

CAS RN410/CAS HI410/CAS JS455/GRS RN710

Religion, Community, and Culture in Medieval Spain

Deeanna Klepper

M 2:30PM-5:15PM

Interactions between Muslims, Christians, and Jews in medieval Europe's most religiously diverse region – from the establishment of an Islamic al-Andalus in 711 CE to the final Christian “reconquest” of the peninsula and expulsion of the Jews in 1492 CE. To enrich exploration of interrelated themes and learning outcomes, student registrants of RN/HI 410/RN710 will meet with student registrants of LS410 during scheduled class time on 2/21, 3/13, 3/27, 4/24, and 5/1 during the term. *Hub Units: Writing-Intensive Course, Historical Consciousness, Research and Information Literacy.*

CAS RN427

Topics in American Religion

Stephen Prothero

R 3:30PM-6:15PM

Special topic: Spiritual Autobiography. An exploration of the art of inventing the self in light of the divine throughout U.S. history and (especially) in contemporary American life. Possible authors include: Malcolm X, Dorothy Day, Swami Yogananda, Henry David Thoreau, Ann Lamott, Richard Rodriguez, Jarena Lee, Barack Obama. *Hub Units: The Individual in Community, Writing-Intensive Course, Research and Information Literacy.*

CAS RN450/GRS RN750

Topics in Religion, Science, and Medicine

Anthony Petro

T 3:30PM-6:15PM

May be repeated for credit as topics vary. Topic for Spring 2023: HIV/AIDS, Art, and Religion in America. Examines the history of the AIDS crisis in the U.S., including religious, racial, and moral constructions amid the infamous “culture wars”. Special attention to feminist/queer activists and artists who fostered alternative moral and political visions of disease, sexuality, and health. *This course can be repeated for credit as long as the topic is different. *Hub Units: Historical Consciousness, Oral and/or Signed Communication, Critical Thinking.*

CAS RN452/CAS PH 485/CAS PH496/GRS RN752/STH TT838

Topics in Religious Thought

Diana Lobel

TR 2:00PM-3:15PM

What is happiness? How can we achieve a balanced, healthy, fulfilling life? Classical thinkers such as Aristotle, Plato, Chuang Tzu; Stoic, Epicurean, Confucian, Buddhist paths; comparison with contemporary studies on happiness and mindfulness. *Hub Units: Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Writing-Intensive.*

CAS RN453/CAS WS453

Topics in Religion and Sexuality

Najwa Mayer

M 2:30PM-5:15PM

Exploration of key topics and themes in the study of religion and sexuality, especially as they intersect with gender, race, and politics. Topic for Spring 2023: Race, Religion, Sexuality, and the US State. Examines the entwined relationships between race, religion, and sexuality in the histories, laws, and cultures of the US state through the lens of feminist and queer studies. Topics include settler colonialism, imperialism, civil rights, secularism, borders, labor, and reproduction. *Hub Units: Ethical Reasoning, Historical Consciousness, Creativity/Innovation.*

CAS RN460/CAS JS460/GRS RN760/STH TX805

Seminar on the Holocaust

Steven Katz

TR 9:30AM-10:45AM

This course will examine historical, ethical, and religious issues arising from the Holocaust. We will discuss antisemitism and ideology; what communities were considered “other”; human motivation regarding collaborators, perpetrators, and bystanders; the role of individuals, organizations, and governments; the treatment of women; the ethics of resistance; the behavior of the Jewish Councils; and attitudes to the existence of God during and after the Holocaust. We will also compare the Holocaust to contemporary crises now occurring around the world. *Hub Units: Oral and/or Signed Communication, Ethical Reasoning, Historical Consciousness.*