

# FALL 2012 RELIGION COURSES

**HBR1102/REL5204                      Beginning Biblical Hebrew                      Dr. Levenson**

In HBR 1102 and 1103 you will study virtually the entire grammar and gain a good working vocabulary of Biblical Hebrew. After the completion of HBR 1103, you will be prepared to read any portion of the Hebrew Bible with the aid of a dictionary and commentary. During the course of the year, approximately six chapters from the Bible will be read and students will be introduced to the standard reference tools used in the analysis of the Hebrew text (lexica, concordances, grammars, critical texts, commentaries, etc.). Since the basic grammar and vocabulary of Modern Hebrew are substantially the same as Biblical Hebrew, the course can also serve as a basis for the study of the contemporary language. To facilitate the transition to Modern Hebrew, the pronunciation current in Israel will be adopted, there will be oral/aural drills (though no significant conversation) and the cursive form of writing will be introduced gradually.

The sequence of HBR 1102, 1103 (Spring 2013) and 2222 (Fall 2013) fulfills the College of Arts & Sciences language requirement. A three-course sequence in Modern Hebrew (HBR 1120, 1121, 2220), which also fulfills the language requirement, is offered by the Department of Modern Languages. (It is possible to take both Modern and Biblical Hebrew). There is now a Hebrew Minor for which some Biblical and some Modern Hebrew are required. For details about the minor and other information about Hebrew at FSU, see <http://www.fsu.edu/~modlang/divisions/hebrew/courses.html>

**HBR2222/REL5204                      Intermediate Biblical Hebrew                      Dr. Levenson**

A close reading of Genesis 1-12. The primary emphasis will be on vocabulary, grammar, and style, but some attention will be given to issues of textual and source criticism. There will also be exercises that will provide a review and solidify the grammar and vocabulary from Biblical Hebrew I and II. Prerequisite: Two semesters of Modern or Biblical Hebrew.

**REL1300                                      Introduction to World Religions                                      Staff**

This course is an introduction to the academic study of the major religions of the world. The course will cover the religious traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. In the process of comparing the religions of the world, it will be the responsibility of each student to think critically about the historical evolution, systems of belief, ritual practices, institutional developments and cultural expressions of each religious tradition. A range of reading materials and writing assignments have been chosen to provide a framework within which to engage a variety of religious issues and to understand the significance and relevance of religion in world history.

**REL2121** **Religion in the U.S.** **Staff**

This course is designed to introduce you to the major themes, figures, and directions of religion in American history, with an eye toward ways that social and cultural contexts have shaped the religious experience of Americans in different places and times. Since it is impossible to cover all religious traditions in one semester, this course will consist of both a general survey of religion in the U.S. and a series of case studies designed to provide a closer look into some of the religious groups and ideas that have shaped this country.

**REL2210** **Introduction to the Old Testament** **Dr. Goff**

The word “Bible” is derived from the Greek word “biblia” which means “books.” While revered as a single book, the Bible is a collection of many texts that were composed by different authors at different times for different reasons. This course is an introduction to the critical study of this assorted literature and the world in which it was produced. We will examine individual texts of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament within their historical contexts while taking into consideration other methodological approaches such as literary criticism and theology.

**REL2240** **Introduction to the New Testament** **Dr. Kelley**

An introduction to the literature of the New Testament and to the academic approaches to it. The distinctive concerns and literary features of individual texts will be studied in the contexts of the historical development of the early Christian church, ancient Judaism, and the wider Greco-Roman world. Emphasis throughout will fall on the variety of interpretations of the Christian message as Christians encountered new social circumstances and theological challenges.

**REL2315** **Religions of South Asia** **Staff**

Overview of religions in the South Asian cultural region, emphasizing Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Islam. The history and cultural contexts of these traditions will be explored with particular attention to sacred stories, holy people, religious leadership, and gender issues. This course also serves as an introduction to the academic study of religion. No previous background is required. Students will gain familiarity with the basic concepts of the religious traditions of South Asia, will develop interpretive skills in the academic study of religion, and will have the opportunity to develop research and writing skills by exploring a topic of special interest. *Meets Liberal Studies Humanities and Multicultural (x) requirements.*

**REL2350** **Religions of East Asia** **Staff**

This course combines thematic and historical approaches to religions of East Asia, focusing primarily on China and Japan. Specifically, it examines interactions among Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, Shinto, and popular new religious movements. Students will approach the histories of East Asian religions as processes of change, border-crossing, acculturation, and mutual-alteration. Readings have been drawn from secondary scholarship as well as a variety of primary sources in translation, including myths, canonical scriptures, polemical tracts, hagiography, and narrative tales. Assigned readings will be augmented by occasional in-class films.

**REL3054** **Critics of Religion** **Staff**

This course is an introduction to the major thinkers and texts in the critique of religion as it developed in the 19th and 20th centuries in the west. Beginning with Schleiermacher, the course moves on to consider the so-called "masters of suspicion" — Feuerbach, Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud. By means of a close examination of central texts, students explore the meaning of a critique of religion, the structure of religious consciousness, the place of religion with respect to other forms of culture, the problem of religion and alienation, and the possibility of a critical faith.

**REL3112** **Religion and Fantasy** **Dr. Cronin**

This course offers an overview of theological and anti-theological elements in twentieth and twenty-first century fantasy literature from authors Lewis, Tolkien, Rowling, and Pullman.

**REL3128** **Religion and Sports** **Staff**

Many sports fans explain their love of sport using religious language. Athletes are dedicated to physical training with religious intensity. The euphoria of watching your team hit tie-breaking a jumpshot as the buzzer sounds rivals the exuberant joy of a religious revival. People describe Saturday afternoons at the ballpark as a visit to “the church of baseball.” And even our beloved Doak Campbell is as much a cathedral as it is a stadium for some fans—complete with a stained glass window of the patron saint of FSU football. How should we understand the ways religion and sport intersect in the U.S.? Is sport a kind of religion? Is sport a rival to religion, or does sport make people more attached to religion? How have religious groups used sport to spread their message? This course is an introduction to religion and sport that explores the issue of whether sport is a kind of religion. Lectures will explore the nature of sport, the nature of religion, the historical development of specific sports in the U.S., and the history of religion in America, supplemented by films and game clips. Short assigned readings will focus on specific moments when American sports were intertwined with American religion.

**REL3128** **American Protestant Thought** **Dr. Porterfield**

This course explores classic writings in American Protestant thought, focusing on historical forces affecting the authors, and the influence of their ideas over time.

**REL3142** **Religion: Self and Society** **Dr. Day**

This course is structured around the principle that we should abandon the habit of treating some discourses or practices as being irreducibly distinct from mundane political and economic life. Rather, we must learn to recognize how the behaviors commonly identified as tokens of “religion” represent a form of politics that has been strategically represented as non-political in nature. Figures discussed will include John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, J.S. Mill and Carl Schmidt.

**REL3145** **Gender and Religion** **Staff**

This course examines the impact of gender on religious beliefs and practices and the impact of religious beliefs and practices on gender, cross-culturally. We will be looking at the intersections of religion and culture, in general. In doing so, we will look at a history of feminist thought in religious studies and the current gender issues that have arisen through women's examinations of religious thought and the study of religion. We will use a variety of texts, some film, class discussion, and writing to explore these topics a fully as possible.

**REL3170** **Religious Ethics** **Dr. Kalbian**

This introduction to the study of religious ethics meets the Gordon Rule requirement, the liberal studies area IV requirement and the multicultural x requirement. Students will examine the moral problems raised by issues such as deception, capital punishment, war, the environment, and human sexuality in the context of religious views about love, duty, good, and evil. They will undertake this examination through close readings of texts describing views of different religious traditions including Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, and Islam. They will also develop and fine-tune their writing skills by completing two 1500 word papers.

**REL3180** **Human Rights and Crimes Against Humanity: Honors Seminar** **Dr. Twiss**

This course will examine the history and dynamics—including the role of religious ideas, figures, and institutions—of genocide and crimes against humanity as an introduction to the modern human rights movement. Its premise in so doing is that the significance of human rights is best appreciated in studying cases of their most severe violation. The course will pivot around three main texts concerned with, respectively, the history of twentieth century atrocity, the domestic and international politics of being inactive bystanders to genocide, and the legal responses to massive human rights violations. These texts will be supplemented by other readings and materials drawn from various disciplines, as well as from literature and the arts. The course will be conducted as a seminar with student team presentations. A final term paper will be required.

**REL3209** **The Dead Sea Scrolls** **Dr. Goff**

In this class we will analyze key manuscripts of the Qumran corpus. We will focus on issues such as the history, beliefs and praxis of the Jewish sectarian movement that is associated with the scrolls, the archaeology of the Qumran site and the significance of the scrolls for understanding Second Temple Judaism.

**REL3340****The Buddhist Tradition****Dr. Yu**

This course is a historical and thematic survey of Buddhism from its beginnings through the modern period. Topics covered include origins and history, doctrine, ethical beliefs, meditation, ritual, and monastic and popular traditions. Some attention will also be given to contemporary forms of Buddhism in America. Part I of this course begins with some foundational concepts in Buddhism. Part II explores the Buddhist schools, theories, and practices in different regions of the world and over a span of 2,500 years.

**REL3363****Islamic Traditions (Honors)****Dr. Gaiser**

REL 3363 Islamic Traditions is a historical and topical survey of Islam as a religion and civilization that focuses on the formative and classical periods of Islamic history. The course is primarily concerned with: the life and career of Muhammad the Prophet of Islam, the scriptural sources of Islam (i.e. the Qur'an and the *Sunna*), the development of the Muslim community and its principle institutions (schools of thought, law, theology, cultural life and mystical traditions). The course will acquaint you with significant aspects of Islam as a religion, and to help you think through some of the basic questions of human religious experience in light of the responses given to those questions by the great sages and saints of the Islamic tradition. **This course is restricted to Honors students only.**

**REL3367****Islam in the Modern World****Staff**

REL 3367, Islam in the Modern World examines Islam and its adherents from 1300 CE to the present, concentrating on the last two centuries of Islamic history: the period of reform, renewal and revolution in the wake of Western political and cultural domination. The course will investigate a basic question: What happened to different Muslim communities and intellectuals (specifically those in the Arab world, Iran, Turkey, West Africa) as they responded to the challenges posed by "Westernization" and "modernization?" Moreover, it will explore the relatively new phenomenon of Islam in America. The class concludes with an investigation of various contemporary debates in the Islamic world, including Sufism, and American/Western responses to Islam and Muslims.

**REL3493****Religion and Science****Dr. Day**

Rather than addressing *science* in general, this course focuses on the tradition of theorizing about economic activity—what Thomas Carlyle once famously called "the dismal science." The goal will be to determine whether historical and philosophical insights into the nature of production, consumption, exchange, debt, money, and profit might also allow us to make sense of various collective activities often assembled under the category of "religion" (e.g., sacrifice, ritual, ideology). Figures discussed will include Karl Marx, Max Weber, Marcel Mauss, and Georg Simmel.



**REL3936****Introduction to Medieval Christianity****Dr. Dupuigrenet**

The Christian millennium, from the time of the first Christian emperors and the Church fathers, from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> century, to the breaking of Christianity brought by the Reformation, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, is often for our contemporaries, particularly in the US, a source of fascination and disbelief. Countless novels, films, or videogames, from Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* to Ridley Scott's *Robin Hood* have acquainted them with a world of monks and knights, magicians and saints, of which they actually have very little knowledge – apart from the existence of papacy and the Inquisition. The dominant view is that medieval Christianity was wiped out by the great Reformers and somehow survived in Catholicism.

In this course, which does not require any prior knowledge of the period, I will introduce students to the history of ten centuries during which European society became Christian, a travailed process of which I will highlight the contradictions and difficulties, very far from the majestic “all Christian world” that we spontaneously imagine medieval Europe to have been. The first part of the course will be dedicated to the progressive delimitation of Christendom, a “Christian Commonwealth” (*Respublica Christiana*) governed by the Roman pope and defined in opposition to Islam and Orthodoxy, its adversaries from the outside, and paganism and heresies, its opponents from the inside. The second part will exemplify the ways in which Christian society represented itself, with its “tri-functional” division between those who pray (the secular and the regular Church), those who fight (kings and knights) and those who work (peasants, artisans and merchants). The last part of the course will examine the changing meanings of the essential moments of Christian life: baptism, marriage and death, with a particular emphasis on the medieval conception of human love.

**REL3936 Love, Sex and Religion in the early modern West (Honors) Dr. Dupuigrenet**

What do we talk about when we talk about love in a Christian society? Are sacred and profane love contradictory or complementary? If chastity is the desired state that Christians should pursue what is the value of married life? Can priests be married men? How should sexuality be viewed in and out of wedlock, between members of opposite sexes and of the same sex? To these questions that haunted Christian thinkers since the time of the Fathers the Gregorian reform of the medieval Church had brought seemingly definitive answers that imposed patterns of behavior at all levels of Western society, from kings to serfs: matrimony became a sacrament based on the freedom of the spouses, priests could not marry or have concubines anymore, canonical penalties against adulterers and sodomites were harshened.

“Love sex and religion in the early modern West” will introduce students to the gradual undoing of medieval conceptions and to the emergence of a patriarchal order of personal behavior in sexual matters, fostered by the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation alike, that represented a major and durable change in European attitudes and sensitivities. Between the time of the Trecento Italian humanists Petrarch and Boccaccio – authors of the *Canzoniere* and the *Decamerone*, two well-known classics of the literature of love, as well as theological and spiritual texts - and that of Milton in 17<sup>th</sup> century England – the poet of *Paradise lost* was also the author of a famous tract on divorce -, theologians, jurists writers and artists redefined patterns and motifs of human sexuality in the light of reformed models of Christian life. Taking into account the considerable body of work produced by demographer historians of early modern Europe during the last fifty years (Peter Laslett, Pierre Chaunu etc.) on familial structures and sexual practices, we will thus draw on a great variety of documents from religious and legal texts (treatises on Christian behavior, confessor's manuals, sermons, Roman Church canon law, Geneva ordinances etc.) to major works of art (Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Titian's *Sacred and Profane Love* for example) and to accounts of radical episodes of transgression of the new sexual order: the free love of German and Dutch Anabaptist of the 16<sup>th</sup> century or the community of women advocated by the English Ranters of the following century.

**REL3936****Death & Afterlife****Staff**

All living beings die. At one moment a person is alive and the next moment what remains to survivor's senses is a corpse. Naturally, perhaps, people have always wondered—where did the person go? Since all cultures have struggled with questions about the meaning of death and the nature of the afterlife, issues about death and the afterlife continue to bind themselves to questions about what it means to be human. Questions of personal meaning, purpose, and identity are all given scope by the fact that in our universe to live is ultimately to die. But is that all there is to the story? Is there life after death? Is there a transcendent reality that establishes a continuity of existence from this life into the next? One may perhaps hope for these things, but can one *know* them? Philosophical and religious traditions have provided a wealth of material on these matters and it will be our purpose in this course to examine these issues within the context of selections from those traditions. The course will introduce students to a selection of ancient, classical, and contemporary philosophical texts on death and the afterlife. This course also introduces students to materials on death and afterlife in the religious traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Topics to be considered include death, heaven and hell, bardo, samsara, sadu, karma, nirvana, pureland, the immortals, immortality rituals, eschatology and apocalypticism, persecution and martyrdom, the final judgment, the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body. The course also takes into consideration cultural contexts of the ideas about death and the afterlife and explores how understanding death and the afterlife evolve in dynamic interaction with socio-historical circumstances.

**REL4044****What is Religion?****Dr. Kelsay**

This course is a survey of how theorists in the modern era have answered questions about the origin, essence, and function of religion, as well as an examination of the methods by which religion is studied in a scholarly environment.

**REL4190/6596****The Ethnography of Ritual, Culture, and Performance****Dr. Hellweg**

This seminar will introduce graduate and advanced undergraduate students to ethnographies written by scholars of religion, cultural anthropologists, and scholars of performance. "Ethnography" means "writing about people." It is the literary genre that describes people's lived social lives. Some of the best ethnographies have focused on questions of ritual practice, cultural identity, and aesthetic performance, themes as central to the "ethnographic turn" in religious studies as they are to concerns in the allied disciplines of anthropology, ethnomusicology, history, or international affairs. We will focus throughout the course on the methodological and theoretical approaches that ethnographers adopt in their work. Readings will outline ethnographic arguments and the vocabularies of kinship, ritual analysis, and performance that frame them. The course is ideal for students planning to do ethnographic research in preparing their doctoral, master's, or honors in the major theses. The course will also prepare students to take the Religion Department's "Ethnographic Field Methods" course, scheduled for spring 2013, which will involve doing fieldwork in Tallahassee.

**REL4304/5305****Muhammad and the Qur'an****Dr. Gaiser**

REL 4304/5305, Muhammad and the Qur'an, examines the early biography (*sira*) of the founder of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad, as well as the Qur'an, the sacred scripture of the Muslims. The course uses primary sources in conjunction with source critical secondary literature to explore contemporary scholarly debates surrounding the historical Muhammad and the field of Qur'anic studies.

**REL4359/5354 Hindu Ethics, Human Rights, and Social Justice in India Dr. Erndl**

This seminar explores continuities and discontinuities between traditional texts and practices in the Hindu tradition and contemporary social justice and human rights issues in India. To what extent is the category of Dharma compatible with contemporary understandings of human rights? How are everyday moral decisions of Hindus related to traditional religious authority? Readings include such ancient scriptures as the *Laws of Manu*, early 20<sup>th</sup> century writings by reformers such as M.K. Gandhi and B.R. Ambedkar, and contemporary writings by activists such as Amartya Sen, Narendra Jadhav, and Madhu Kishwar, as well as ethnographic and historical studies. Issues to be considered include the caste, women's rights, religious communalism, ecology, identity politics, and globalization. Students discuss common readings and present research on topics of their own choice.

**REL4359/5346****Seminar: Pure Land Buddhism****Dr. Yu**

Over the centuries, "Pure Land Buddhism" has evolved into a tradition that was at once diffused into all other schools of Chinese Buddhism and yet had the propensity to be singled out from the rest of this matrix of Mahāyana Buddhist practice as a comprehensive path, discrete onto itself. This seminar will examine the doctrine and cultural practices related to "Pure Land Buddhism" as a site for the construction—or, as the case may be, contestation—of Buddhist values, roles, and identities within the larger field of Chinese religious life.

**REL5035****Introduction to the Study of Religion****Dr. Hellweg**

This seminar will review the theoretical and methodological foundations of the academic study of religion. It will focus on authors viewed as the founders and subsequent exponents and critics of the discipline. We will interrogate the arguments and evidence on which they ground the operating assumption that religion exists as an object of study and that, as a result, religious studies exists as an academic discipline. Our approach will be a critical one. We will examine religion as a heuristic category and religious studies as a form of interdisciplinary research in which authors have made arguments as relevant to ritual and symbolic concerns as to those one could also label economic, political, or sociological. We will read and discuss germinal writings by Feuerbach, Marx, Durkheim, Freud, James, and Weber as well as works by their successors, such as Eliade and his students, major anthropologists of the British and French schools, as well as Bourdieu, Foucault, Asad, McCutcheon, Mahmood, Evans, and Vásquez. The course aims to provide students a context in which to hone their own formative questions about and develop their own theories of religion and religious studies.

**REL5305/ENG5801      History of Text Technology Gateway Course      Dr. Dupuigrenet**

This course, cross-listed between the Religion and English departments in the History of Text Technologies PhD track, provides an introduction to the interactions between text culture and the media technologies that shaped the way we produce, transmit, transform, receive and interpret creative representations of human experience. This year, because it will be taught by a historian of the religious book it will mostly address representations of religious, mostly Christian, experience, from catacomb art to televangelism.

For graduate students it is a unique opportunity to be confronted with the material production and transformation of texts that they have thus far only known in the “two dimensional”, abstract space of modern editions and reproductions – be them illuminated medieval manuscripts of the lives of the saints, John Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*, Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment* or Milton’s *Paradise Lost*.

Beginning with the two opposed categories of the ephemeral and the monumental (early Christian graffiti and Papal marble inscriptions in Antique Rome for example), the course will then embark on a generally chronological tour of technologies and their forms: the diversity of manuscript, the evolution of print from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, the history and theory of reading (including the ways in which new technologies transform their users), visual texts, film, recorded sound, broadcast and digital media.

Each of these categories will be explored through a combination of case studies and hands-on encounters in the Special Collections department of the Strozier Library, accompanied by historical and theoretical readings by major authors. Students will be allowed and even encouraged to focus their own written and oral assignments on the period, media, or genre that interests them most.

**REL5319                      Classical Chinese Texts and Historiography, 1000-1900                      Dr. Yu**

This is a seminar in the reading of selected primary sources in classical Chinese for the study of Chinese history and religions. The course focuses on introducing students to a variety of tools and methods for the study of Chinese history and religion, including standard lexical and bibliographic references, digital resources, canonical literature, ritual manuals, poetry, and hagiographies, local gazetteers and secondary scholarship in modern languages. The course is made up of weekly group exercises. **Special permission from the professor is required to register.**

**REL5915                                      Sanskrit Texts                                      Dr. Erndl**

Readings in Sanskrit religious literature. For continuing students only. **Permission of instructor required.**

**REL6298****Seminar on Gospel of Matthew****Dr. Levenson**

A close reading of selections from the Greek text of Matthew and of pre-modern and modern scholarship on the passages discussed. Text-critical, literary, linguistic, historical, social-scientific, and comparative religions approaches will all be addressed (though obviously not in equal measure for each passage). Some attention will also be given to the history of the interpretation of the book through the fifth century.

**REL6498****Pragmatism and Religion****Dr. Kavka**

Similar to the types of postmodern or antifoundationalist thought that have crossed the Atlantic since the second half of the twentieth century (deconstruction, vitalism, existentialism), American pragmatism is a protest against metaphysical systems that seek to determine ideas; it claims that there is no way in which humans' acts of reflection can grasp the foundational principles of reality. For the pragmatists, truth has no meaning apart from its practical consequences; truth happens to an idea in life.

Over the last thirty years—primarily thanks to the writings of Richard Rorty—pragmatism in one variant or another has once again become a major current in American philosophy. More recently, this has happened in theology as well, as contemporary scholars, chastened by philosophical attacks on the status of truth-claims about the supernatural, have looked to early twentieth-century European theologians who also offer challenges to traditional notions of religious truth, and interpreted them as pragmatists. This is, on the surface, odd. After all, religiously orthodox people do not go around citing William James's or John Dewey's anti-supernaturalist arguments for religious pluralism.

The broad aim of this class is to decide whether such an interpretation of theology in the three monotheistic traditions along pragmatist lines is sustainable or not. More narrowly, the course is a survey of some major figures in the American pragmatist tradition (Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, John Dewey, Richard Rorty, Robert Brandom), and an introduction to twentieth-century monotheistic theologies that focus on "practice" (over against "theory"). We will be specifically looking at Martin Buber, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Sayyid Qutb, and inquiring as to whether they are really arguing that religious communities make truth through their ritual and ethical acts (as pragmatism would dictate that they must).

**REL6498****Historiography of US Religion****Dr. Porterfield**

This course examines the history of scholarly writing about American religious history, including historiographies of particular religious groups, movements, and trends. Individual reports on additional books will supplement common readings. The course provides a basic bibliography for the first comprehensive exam in American religious history.

**SKR4102/REL5937**

**Elementary Sanskrit I**

**Dr. Erndl**

Sanskrit, known as the "language of the gods", is a classical language of India and scriptural language for Hinduism and Buddhism. As a member of the Indo-European linguistic family, it is related to Greek, Latin, and English, as well as to the spoken languages of modern India such as Hindi, Marathi, and Bengali. Sanskrit is for those interested in the cultures and religions of South Asia, for those interested in ancient languages, and for those wanting to experience a language that is exquisitely beautiful and logical at the same time. This is the first semester of a two-semester course and presumes no previous background. The course introduces the Sanskrit language through the Devanāgarī script, emphasizing reading, writing, grammar, and oral recitation.