

FALL 2013 RELIGION COURSES

HBR1102/RLG5204 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 2014) and 2222 (Fall 2014) 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/RLG5204 Intermediate Biblical Hebrew Dr. Levenson

A close reading of the Joseph narrative (Genesis 37, and 39-45) and brief selections from poetic and legal texts. 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. *This course is now also offered online!*

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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** **Staff**

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** **Staff**

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** **Ian Reed**

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.*

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 & American Prisons** **Brad Stoddard**

At roughly 5% of the global population, the United States incarcerates over 25% of the world's prisoners. How did this happen, and how is religion related to the carceral state? This course

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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.

REL3431

Critics of Religion

Tamara Marks

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. **Meets LS Humanities, Writing requirement**

REL3505

The Christian Tradition

Staff

This course is an introduction to Christianity. We will examine the historical narrative of the tradition from its beginnings in the first century through twentieth-century developments. We will also focus on the doctrinal side of the tradition by reading primary texts of key Christian thinkers.

REL3936

Love, Sex & Religion

Staff

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 17th 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

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The continuing influence of Japanese religions can be seen in a variety of areas—from popular culture, from movies and video games, to international affairs, such as politician's visits to the Yasukuni war shrine. This course introduces students to the religious traditions of Japan topically, and shows how these traditions can be found in traditional Japanese arts, popular media, and everyday life in modern Japan; as well as how religion has shaped and been shaped by politics and Japanese history. Questions? Contact Dr. Buhrman at Kristina.buhrman@gmail.com (a new faculty member in Religion!)

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

What is “religion”? How and why do we study “religion”? Is “religion” a manifestation of some sacred, sui generis reality that human beings can only dimly apprehend? Or is “religion” a rickety ideological superstructure built on the foundation of colonial, economic, and gendered oppression? Perhaps it’s a psychological projection, a delusion from which humanity must free itself. Or maybe “religion” is simply the creation of the scholar who studies it. This course provides a survey of classical and contemporary theories and methods that have tried to answer these questions along with many others. Through close readings of a sampling of theoretical and critical works, this course will provide students with a basic introduction to the various disciplinary frameworks that underlie the academic study of religion. We will cover a wide array of approaches for studying “religion” ranging from anthropology to psychology, from feminist theory to cognitive science. Along the way we will ask, “what is ‘religion’?” and “and how should it be studied?” We will end the course with two recent books that build on the various methods covered in the first ten weeks of the course. These works--on Scientology, a new religious movement, and popular spirituality in contemporary American culture--offer challenging reassessments of the scholarly and popular category of “religion.” Students should expect a reading- and writing-intensive course that surveys a complex and evolving field of study. Students will be asked to read carefully, offer written reflections on the material covered in class, and present material to their peers. Finally, students will write a final reflective paper assessing the status of “religious studies” in the university.

REL4190 **JustTorture? (Honor’s)** **Dr. Twiss**

Critical examination of the practices of torture--history, genealogy, social-psychological dynamics, goals, purported justifications, and critique. Of special concern will be the recent torture debate in America, as well as moral and religious perspectives on torture practices.

REL4215/RLG5612 **Jews in Graeco-Rom World** **Dr. Levenson**

A study of the direct encounter between Jewish and Greek culture in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. While the course will be devoted primarily to a close reading of the chief literary texts (such as 1,2,3, and 4 Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, Letter of Aristeas, Philo, and Josephus) in their social, religious, political and literary contexts, attention will also be given to epigraphic and papyrological evidence. A significant component of the class will be the critical evaluation of three important recent syntheses of this material and the modern scholarship devoted to it.

Because of the high level of participation expected and the requirements of an oral presentation and final paper, this course will fulfill the departmental requirement for a "seminar format course".

REL4359/RLG5354 **Chinese Religions** **Dr. Yu**

This seminar covers the history and historiographical issues in the study of Chinese Buddhism. It

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examines scholarly constructions of Buddhist Studies as a field in general and the historiography of Chinese Buddhism, with a focus on the shifts that took place in scholarly representations and paradigms. The seminar reveals the methodological shifts in the field from philology to philosophy; from sectarian concerns to doctrinal orientations, to anthropological approaches.

REL4359/RLG5354

India: Myth, Map, Image

Dr. Erndl

This course explores multiple ways in which India has been "imagined", for example, as a sacred landscape, as a goddess (Bharat Mata/Mother India), and as a modern nation, through the practices of mythmaking, pilgrimage, mapping, boundary-making, migration (of people and images), and politics. Readings include studies in the religions (especially Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam), histories, geographies, cultures, arts, and literatures of South Asia, focusing on the question "What (or who) is India?" Film is an integral part of the course; there will be several feature length films screened on Tuesday nights throughout the semester. In keeping with seminar format, students take turns leading discussion on weekly readings and present individual research projects orally and in writing.

Prerequisite: For undergraduates, previous coursework on religions or history of India. For graduates, no prerequisite.

REL4491/RLG5497

Sem Religious Thought: Muslim Theology

Dr. Kelsay

Readings and discussion of major authors, themes, and developments in classical and modern Muslim (especially Sunni) religious thought. A particular interest will be the relationship between interpretations of doctrine and judgments about politics.

REL4510/RLG5297

Christianity after NT

Dr. Kelley

This survey course covers major developments in the history and theology of Christianity in the first three centuries of the common era. Particular attention will be paid to the interaction between Christians and non-Christians, the articulation of ideas about orthodoxy and heresy, and the development of Christian rituals, ethics, and church offices. Assigned readings focus primarily on ancient Christian texts in English translation. The course format will be part lecture and part group discussion.

RLG5035

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.

RLG5305/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.

This course 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. It focuses on representations of religious experience, mostly Christian, from Biblical times to the present. Beginning with the two opposed categories of the ephemeral and the monumental in Antiquity, 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, visual texts, film, recorded sound, broadcast and digital media. Each of these categories will be explored through a combination of lectures, case studies presented by specialists, and hands-on workshops in the Special Collections department of the Strozier Library.

Requirements: This is the required gateway course for the History of Text Technologies concentration. It also fulfills the general literature requirement for one course pre-1660 or for one course pre-1800, and it fulfills a requirement for the Certificate in Editing and Publishing.

RLG5318 Trans. Classical Chinese Texts (by permission) 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.**

RLG5937 Human Nature Dr. Day

Rather than addressing human nature *per se*, this graduate seminar examines a handful of particularly influential representations of “human nature.” Attention will be paid to the political implications of any and all attempts to anchor normative claims about how we should live in ontological portraits of what we are. Figures to be discussed include, but are not limited to: Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Rousseau, Hegel, Darwin, and Marx.

RLG5937 REP Colloquium Dr. Twiss

RLG5937 ARH Colloquium Dr. Corrigan

RLG6176 Aquinas & Interpreters Dr. Kalbian

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A graduate seminar that looks at the significance and role of Aquinas's moral theology to contemporary debates in ethics. The first half of the seminar will involve careful and close readings of key Thomistic texts on the moral life. In the second half of the seminar we will read work by contemporary interpreters including but not limited to Keenan, Porter, Fritz-Cates, Jordan, and Bowlin.

RLG6498-01 **20th Century American Religious Thought** **Dr. McVicar**

This course investigates the relationship between right-wing politics, culture, and religion during the twentieth century. We will explore the growth of several movements, including the development of the modern conservatism since 1945, libertarianism, the emergence of the so-called "Religious Right, and "fringe" organizations such as the John Birch Society, racist groups, and domestic terrorist groups with connections to the right-wing. Along the way we will reconsider the historiography of the "right" using a host of secondary scholarly research and primary sources (including films, pamphlets, books, and transcripts) to trace the complex relationship between the cultural, theological, and philosophical traditions that shaped the American right from the beginning of the twentieth century to the age of Obama.

RLG6498-02 **Religion in the Americas** **Dr. Corrigan**

SRK5236 **Intermediate 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 languages of modern India such as Hindi, Marathi, and Bengali. This is the third semester of Sanskrit. Building on skills learned in the first year, students will increase their speed and confidence in reading Sanskrit texts of increasing difficulty. Writing, grammar, oral recitation, and pronunciation are also emphasized. For continuing students only; permission of Prof. Erndl is required.