

HUM 2937-02 (Honors): Magic & The Supernatural in the Asian World (Dr. Cuevas)

This seminar offers a comparative study of the forms and functions of magic, supernatural beliefs, and associated rituals in various societies across Asia, including especially India, Tibet, China, and Japan. Emphasis will be on understanding such beliefs and practices within specific Asian social and historical contexts and broad comparisons with Western conceptions to derive critical insights into the significance of religious beliefs and practices in human life. In addition, sustained focus will be on the wide variety of academic approaches to magic as a cross-cultural category and the problematic distinction between the categories "magic" and "religion." Key questions addressed throughout the course include the following: What is magic? What does magic mean? What does magic do? Is magic distinct from religion? Is magic natural or supernatural? Why do people believe in magic? What is the role of magic in society? The course will run on a seminar format with active and in-depth discussion of readings and intensive individual writing assignments.

REL1300-01: Introduction to World Religions (Mark Canter)

“Introduction to World Religions” surveys the major religious traditions of the world, with attention to their origins, principle beliefs and practices. The course will have achieved its purpose if you complete the semester with a working knowledge of the world’s main religions, and an appreciation for the pluralistic spiritual views of humanity.

REL1300-02, 03, & 06: Introduction to World Religions (Todd Brenneman)

A survey of the major living religious traditions of the world, with attention to their origins in the ancient world and their classic beliefs and practices.

This course is an introduction to the academic study of world religions. Specifically, the course will cover the religious traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, among others. 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. Close attention will be given to the differences and similarities of religions, as well as the unique contributions that each of them have made to individual lives and societies. 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 understand the significance and relevance of religion in world history.

REL1300-07: Introduction to World Religions (Barton Price)

This course looks at the survey of the world's religions in various areas of the globe, including the United States. This class will discuss the indigenous religions of Africa and the Americas, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. We will discuss the basics of the religions (e.g. beliefs and sacred texts); their points of origins; their historic development; and their expansion across the globe. This course focuses on history and geography in order to understand world religions. Per Gordon Rule expectations, students will demonstrate skills in writing and must maintain a C- or better for their essay grades.

REL 2121-01: Religion in the U.S. (Dr. Koehlinger)

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the historical study of religion in the United States, with an eye toward ways that social and cultural contexts have shaped the religious experience of Americans in different places and times. The course is structured around 4 themes, each of which is comprised of a pairing of common analytical concepts used in the study of religion, (i.e the first theme is "pluralism and syncretism"). Readings, lectures, and class discussions will explore the relationship between the 2 concepts in specific places and times in U.S. history. Over the course of the semester we will survey religious developments, movements, groups, and individuals, stopping to linger over representative "soundings" within each historical period. The primary goal of the course is for you to become familiar with the history of American religion both by learning about central events and trends, and by learning how to think and write historically.

REL2121-07: Religion in the U.S. (Daniel Dillard)

What role has religion played in American culture and history? How have the many religions in the United States managed to get along? Is American a secular or a religious country? What is the relationship between religion, society, and the individual? These topics are explored in "Religion(s) in the U.S." This course does not pretend to offer a definitive answer to such questions. Instead, it offers you the tools to investigate them for yourself.

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. As a history class, we will focus on the development and expressions of religion in America. As a Gordon Rule course, this class will also focus on writing about religion in America.

REL2210-01: Introduction to the Old Testament (LaBron Chance and Kathryn Stotts)

The Bible is the bestselling book of all time and it continues to be a bestselling book year after year. It has been translated into more languages and offered in more “versions” than any other book in history. The Hebrew Bible is considered Scripture by two of the world’s major religions, Judaism and Christianity (Christians began to call it the Old Testament by 180 C.E.). It is also held in esteem by Islam as a sacred writing. Whether one participates in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, or none of these religions, modern western culture is informed by references to the Hebrew Bible through art, music, and movies; as well as its calendar, legal system, and so much more. While revered as a single book, the Bible is actually a collection of many texts that were composed by different authors at different times for different reasons. This course is an introduction to the historical-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.

This course meets the Liberal Studies literature and the “Gordon Rule” requirements.

REL 2240-01: Introduction to the New Testament (Dr. Kelley)

This course is designed to enable students to understand the writings of the New Testament in the context of the historical development of the early Christian church. After surveying Judaism and other religious options in the Roman world, attention will be focused on the figure of Jesus of Nazareth and the development of the traditions about Jesus. Next, an attempt will be made to understand Paul and the development and spread of the Christian movement. Emphasis throughout will fall on the variety of interpretations of the Christian message as Christians encountered new social circumstances and theological challenges. This course meets the Liberal Studies literature requirement and the “Gordon Rule” writing requirement.

REL3145-02: Gender and Religion (Shannon Dunn)

This course looks at concepts of sex and gender in textual and cultural traditions within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. At the beginning of the course we will examine briefly different approaches to the study of religion and gender, looking in particular at what is at stake for persons who might undertake such a study: feminists, scholars of religious studies, human rights advocates, and so on.

Then we move to a more detailed examination of each tradition. Using a range of theological and non-theological material, we will look at the interplay between religious law, and/or ethics and politics as they affect men’s and women’s identity and socio-religious status (in particular the focus will be on women). We will also examine how some women engage in the reform of their

traditions and/or cultures through feminist critique, and on the other hand, how traditional norms of gender and strictly defined gender roles are coming back en vogue.

REL3170-01: Religious Ethics and Moral Problems (Dr. Kalbian)

An introduction to the study of religious ethics. We will examine the moral issues raised by capital punishment, war, the environment, and human sexuality in the context of religious views about love, duty, good, and evil. We will read material describing views of different religious traditions including Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, and Islam.

REL3170-04: Religious Ethics and Moral Problems (Jeff Gottlieb)

This class is an introduction to the study of religious ethics. We will examine contemporary moral issues such as deception, war, human sexuality, and human rights in the context of religious views about love, duty, good, and evil. We will read material describing views of different religious traditions including Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam.

REL3171-01: Religion and Bioethics (Dr. Kalbian)

This undergraduate honors course is an introduction to theoretical and practical issues in bioethics from the perspective of a variety of religious positions. By the end of the course students will know and understand how religious views have influenced the development of bioethics, as well as how to interpret moral and religious arguments as they relate to specific case studies. We will also examine the difficulties of cultural diversity in the context of medicine.

REL3180-03: Religious Ethics and Food (Dr. Reid)

Religious Ethics of Food is a course exploring and examining our religious and cultural attitudes about food as well as ethical aspects of food production, dissemination, and use. In this course, we will be looking at the role of food in defining ourselves and our own cultures. We will also study the ways in which both agriculture and livestock, the substance of our food, interrelate with our political and economic systems, as well as the environment.

It is the intention of this course to make you aware of the importance of food to our emotional, religious, and cultural lives, as well as the ethical dilemmas presented by our current system of

food production. As such, we will be looking at the religious significance of food choices, often a primary factor in religious life, and the reasoning behind the mores that have arisen regarding food. We will also be examining religious systems of ethical thought and how food and its production fit into these, sometimes as a moral good and sometimes as a moral problem.

We will also explore the paradigm shifts of thought and ethics regarding food over the course of the past century, how it has moved from “sustenance” on many levels to “nutrition” on one.

REL3293-01: Book of Genesis (Dr. Goff)

This class consists of a close and critical reading of the book of Genesis. We will address issues such as the composition of the book, the history of its interpretation, its ancient Near Eastern context, the book’s narrative artistry and its relevance for ethics and theology.

REL3335-01: Hindu Texts and Contexts: Ramayana (Dr. Erndl)

This course is an introduction to the Hindu tradition through the *Ramayana*, one of its most popular and celebrated sacred texts. The *Ramayana*, also known as the *Rama-katha* (story of Rama), narrates the exile of Prince Rama, who is accompanied into the forest by his wife Sita and brother Laksmana. After Sita's abduction by the demon Ravana, Rama, aided by his monkey-ally Hanuman, must go to battle to rescue her. But this skeletal summary cannot begin to do justice to the many tellings of *Rama-katha* that have been composed, recited, sung, written, performed, danced, portrayed in art, and have influenced political events throughout India, Asia, and beyond. In this course, we focus on the most well known literary version, composed in the Sanskrit language by the ancient poet Valmiki, and on the 1980s televised Hindi language serial version directed by Ramanand Sagar, as well as other versions. Focus on the *Ramayana* leads to a consideration of broader religious, philosophical, aesthetic, and political themes in the Hindu tradition. No background is presumed.

REL3340-01: 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.

REL 3358-01: Tibetan & Himalayan Religions (Dr. Cuevas)

A historical and thematic survey of the religions of Tibet and the Himalayas, including Buddhism, Bon, and popular indigenous traditions. In this course we will examine significant facets of the rich cultural heritage of the Tibetan and Himalayan region, religion, literature, society, and politics, in order to investigate the ways in which Tibetan-speaking peoples from a variety of historical periods, local traditions, and social backgrounds have attempted to make sense of their world and their place within it. Topics will include the ritual cosmos, shamans and saintly madmen, the evolution of monastic power, demons, death and afterlife, and the Dalai Lamas.

REL3363-01: The Islamic Tradition (James Broucek)

REL 3363 Islamic Tradition 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*), and the development of the Muslim community and its principle institutions (schools of theology, law, political institutions, and mystical traditions).

REL4304-01/5305-01: Pure Land Buddhism (Dr. Yu)

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. Special consideration will be given to how the discourses on deathbed rituals and salvation were constructed and the symbolics of religious alterity, especially as they apply to the negotiation of sectarian differences.

REL4359-01/5354-01: Hindu Ethics, Social Justice, and Human Rights in India (Dr. Erndl)

This seminar focuses on the 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? Readings include such ancient scriptures as the *Laws of Manu*, early 20th 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 analytical studies by Western and Indian scholars. In addition to common readings, students prepare and present individual research projects. Examples of issues to be considered include the caste system and discrimination against Dalits (formerly called Untouchables), women's rights, religious communalism, ecology, and globalization. **Prerequisite:** A previous course on Hinduism (REL 3335, REL 3337, etc.). Graduate students are exempt from this prerequisite.

REL4510-01/5297-02: Christianity after the New Testament (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.

REL 4912-01/5915-01: Readings in Sanskrit Texts (Dr. Erndl)

For continuing Sanskrit students only. Permission of Prof. Erndl is required.

REL5319-01: Tutorial in Classical Chinese Religious Texts (Dr. Yu)

This course is designed to reinforce and extend the student's command of classical Chinese religious texts. Students will read texts from Chinese Buddhism, Daoism, and develop competence in using references and the necessary skills in primary language research, close text-critical reading, and independent problem-solving.

REL 5937-01: Religion in 20th Century U.S. History (Dr. Koehlinger)

This course is a general survey of events, themes, and issues in the study of 20th century U.S. religious history. We will read a range of historical monographs on topics ranging across immigration and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, political and social reform, material culture and consumerism, utopian and dystopian views of the nation, religious intolerance, the cultural effect of war, urbanism and suburbanization, religious thought and religious practice, and new religious movements. We also will maintain a secondary focus on how scholarship on religious life in the U.S. complements and occasionally complicates standard narratives about U.S. history in the 20th century.

REL6176-01/LAW7930-22: International Criminal Tribunals (Dr. Twiss and Dr. D'Alemberte)

History and analysis of the development of international criminal tribunals especially related to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, from World War II to the present. Particular attention will be focused on the following cases and tribunals pertinent to international criminal law: the Nuremberg SS-Einsatzgruppen Trial (with some reference also to the International Military Tribunal for Nazi leaders and the subsequent judges' trial); the Augusto Pinochet case and the question of sovereign immunity; the development of international law in connection with the ad hoc tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda; the Rome Statute and the International Criminal Court, including the question of complementarity between international and domestic jurisdictions; and the on-going debate about criminal liability, as well as its alternatives, for alleged torture and rendition in connection with the so-called "war on terror." In addition to trial transcripts and legal judgments, rulings, and opinions (available on line), course materials will include: Geoffrey Robertson, *Crimes Against Humanity: The Struggle for Global Justice*, 3rd Edition (Penguin, 2006); Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* (HarperCollins, 2002); Hilary Earl, *The Nuremberg SS-Einsatzgruppen Trial, 1945-1958: Atrocity, Law, and History* (Cambridge, 2009); and Human Rights Watch, *Genocide, War Crimes, and Crimes Against Humanity: Topical Digests of the Case Law of the International Criminal Tribunals of the ICTR and the ICTY* (Human Rights Watch, 2004). Graduate seminar with the following requirements: (1) at least two seminar presentations (in student teams) [20%]; (2) active and informed seminar discussion contributions throughout the semester [20%]; and (3) a final term paper directly related to the course subject-matter and approved by both course instructors [60%].

Instructors:

Prof. T. D'Alemberte (Law and Human Rights Center)

Prof. S. B. Twiss (Religion and Human Rights Center)

REL6298-01: Ben Sira and the Jewish Wisdom Tradition (Dr. Goff)

In this class we will analyze key texts of the Jewish wisdom tradition. Part of the class will focus broadly on a range of texts. Part of the class will focus on the exegesis of passages from wisdom texts, in particular the book of Ben Sira. A reading knowledge of Greek and Hebrew is required.

REL6498-01: Feminism and Religious Ethics (Dr. Kalbian)

This graduate seminar will explore recent literature in feminist moral philosophy and religious ethics (Christian, Muslim and Jewish). We will read work by Margaret Urban Walker, Eva Fedder Kittay, Marilyn Friedman, Lisa Tessman, Serene Jones, Traci West, Marie Griffith, Rachel Adler, Saba Mahmood, Kecia Ali and Emilie Townes.

REL6596-01: Religion and Region (Dr. Corrigan)

In this course we will explore the geographically distinct religious cultures of the United States. While there is much evidence of mass religious culture in the United States, and cross-regional similarities, there are also specific kinds of religious life associated with various regions of the country. We will consider the Northeast, mid-Atlantic, South, Appalachia, Midwest, Pacific, Pacific Northwest, borderlands, and urban settings. Our focus will include material cultures, religious ideas, ethnographic factors, the public role of religion, religious practice, and spatial topology.