

10/10/14

## SPRING 2015 RELIGION COURSES

### UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

#### **HBR1103      Beginning Hebrew II**

**Prof. Levenson**

HBR 1103 continues HBR 1102 and completes coverage of the essentials of Biblical Hebrew grammar. During the course of the semester selections from Genesis and the entire book of Jonah will be read. In addition, there will be some reading from poetic texts (including songs). After the completion of HBR 1103, the student will be prepared to read any portion of the Hebrew Bible with the aid of a dictionary and commentary.

#### **IFS 2019      Heretics, Rebels and Militants in the Islamic World**

**Prof. Gaiser**

This e-series course addresses some of these questions about the variety of Islamic religious perspectives. We will evaluate the topics of Islamic sectarianism and denominationalism by tracing the main sectarian movements among medieval and modern Muslims. Students will engage in broad, critical and creative thinking about the creation of “orthodoxy” and “heresy,” the development of religious differences, the interaction between politics, culture and religion, and the issue of religious violence. They will gain knowledge and critical thinking skills that will assist them as they navigate a range of perspectives and trajectories related to the world’s many different Muslims. *Meets LS history and multicultural Y requirements.*

#### **IFS 3050      India Through Bollywood Film**

**Prof. Erndl**

How is India “imagined” through popular cinema? India is the world’s largest democracy, one of the world’s oldest continuous civilizations, and also has the world’s largest film industry. In this course, we examine Indian identity, cultural, and religious values as expressed in film. The popular cinema produced in Bombay (now Mumbai), dubbed “Bollywood,” will predominate, spanning the period from Indian and Pakistani Independence (1947) to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Topics for discussion will include love and separation, gender roles, relationships between divine and human, sensuality and renunciation, caste and class identity, the state, diaspora, the quest for ultimate truth...and, of course, music, dance, and stardom! Films will be screened weekly in Hindi with English subtitles. No previous knowledge of Indian culture or cinema is assumed. Attendance is required at the weekly film screening (Tues. evenings) as well as the lecture/discussion class (Mon. afternoons). *Meets LS humanities and multicultural Y requirements.*

#### **IFS3055      Sci-Fi, Dystopia & Evil**

**Sonya Cronin**

This course utilizes several highly successful science fiction and dystopian novels by authors such as Orson Scott Card, Suzanne Collins, Veronica Roth, Frank Herbert, and Walter Miller to illuminate persistent questions about fate, providence, and the problem of evil. These novels enable students to think critically about the religious and philosophical aspects of the problem of evil, the role of the god(s) (in causing, delivering from, or remaining passively indifferent to evil), and the effect of fate and free will on the individual and on society. The recent surge of interest in science fiction and dystopian literature provides us with a context to discuss and interpret ancient questions from a contemporary point of view. The course draws from a range of

interdisciplinary sources such as history, social psychology, philosophy, religion, literature, and the arts. *Meets LS humanities requirement*

**IFS 3069 Honors: Just Torture?**

**Prof. Twiss**

What are the purported goals, justifications, and limits—legal, moral, and political—of torture practices, both historical and contemporary? How have the recent and on-going debates about the legitimacy of torture in America been shaped by moral and religious perspectives? In this e-series course, students will learn to think critically about a range of topics that include: history of torture; torture, pain, and “unmaking” the world; social psychological accounts of conditions making torture possible; genealogy of modern torture; democracy and recent proposals to legalize torture; comparative moral and religious perspectives on torture and its critique; and prospects for the abolition of torture. Course materials are interdisciplinary, drawing from history, social psychology, law (especially international human rights law), philosophy and religion, and the arts. *Meets the LS Ethics and Social Responsibility Requirement.*

**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. *Meets LS Humanities and Writing requirements as well as Multicultural X. This course is also offered online.*

**REL2121 Religion in the United States**

**Staff**

An examination of the scope and nature of religious movements and institutions in the United States. *Meets LS History and Writing requirements as well as Multicultural Y.*

**REL2210 Introduction to the Old Testament**

**Staff**

The history, religious thought, and social institutions of ancient Israel as reflected primarily in its literature. *Meets LS Humanities and Writing requirements as well as Multicultural Y.*

**REL2240 Introduction to the New Testament**

**Staff**

An introduction to the writings of the New Testament in the context of the historical development of early Christianity. *Meets LS Humanities and Writing requirements as well as Multicultural Y.*

**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.*

**REL3112 Religion and Fantasy** **Sonya 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.

*Meets Liberal Studies humanities and literature requirements as well as the writing requirement.*

**REL3128 Topics in Amer Rel: Psychology & Religion** **Prof. Porterfield**

This course will explore the psychological aspects of religious life in five different religious traditions in the United States. The main purpose of the course is to critically examine the cultural experiences and social structures that have shaped psychological approaches to religion in the US in the 20th and 21st centuries. The course will use historical methods for analyzing data to evaluate causal arguments, assertions, and assumptions involved in different accounts of religious feeling and mental states.

In addition to studying distinctive expressions of mind and emotion characteristic of several different religious traditions in the US, the course will consider how Protestant and Jewish ways of thinking about mind and emotion strongly affected the development of secular psychology in the US. The course will also consider how religious traditions in the US have resisted secular psychology.

**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 as fully as possible. *Meets Liberal studies humanities, writing requirement, and Multicultural Y.*

**REL3160 Religion and Science** **Prof. Day**

This course provides an historical and philosophical analysis of major questions in the relationship between religion and science. *Meets Liberal studies humanities requirement.*

**REL3170 Religious Ethics** **Staff**

A discussion of contemporary moral problems such as deception, sexual activities and relations, and capital punishment from the standpoints of major religious traditions. *Liberal Studies Humanities, Ethics and Social Responsibility, and writing requirements as well as Multicultural X.*

**REL3171 Topics in Ethics: Religion & War** **Prof. Kelsay**

This is a course focusing on the role of religions in the cultural regulation of war. Specifically, we will deal with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim accounts of the rules that govern resort to and conduct of war. As a matter of history, each of these traditions developed such an account, which was then adapted to changing political and military activities. At present, each and all of

these historical accounts plays a role in world politics--not least in connection with the war on terror.

**REL3180 Religion and Bioethics** **Prof. Kalbian**

An introduction to theoretical and practical issues in bioethics from the perspective of several religious traditions. You will learn about the influence of religious views on the development of bioethics, the difficulties of cultural diversity in the context of medicine, and the major theories and approaches used in resolving bioethical dilemmas. In addition to readings, in-class case discussions, papers, and tests, students will work on group presentations.

**REL3194 The Holocaust** **Prof. Kavka**

This course examines the origins, the process, and the consequences of the destruction of the European Jews during World War II.

**REL3340 Buddhist Tradition** **Prof. Yu**

A historical and thematic survey of the Buddhist tradition in Asia from its beginnings through the modern period. Topics covered will 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 outside of Asia, in Europe and America. *Meets Liberal Studies, Humanities and Multicultural X requirement.*

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

Islam up to 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, and 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. *Meets the Liberal Studies and Multicultural X 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. *Meets Liberal Studies Humanities and writing requirements.*

**REL3936-01 Special Topics in Religion: Japanese Buddhism** **Prof. Buhrman**

This course introduces students to the different schools of Japanese Buddhism, and explores the role of Buddhism in traditional Japanese society and culture. The influence of Buddhism on classical Japanese arts and literature is emphasized.

**REL3936-03 Demons & Devils: East & West** **Profs. Cuevas & Goff**

This course offers a comparative introduction to demons, devils, and other troublesome spirits in various religious traditions East and West. Specifically, we will examine demonic and devilish figures in ancient Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism across Asia and the Near East. Biblical and other ancient texts that describe demons, devils, and spirits will be explored in their

social and historical contexts, so that students will have a sense of how interpretations of such entities have changed over time and across cultures. Emphasis will be on comparative understanding of the beliefs and practices surrounding demonic entities in the ancient world to derive critical insights into the significance of such religious ideas in the lives of human beings. Key topics will include mythologies of chaos and evil, Satan and the Buddhist Māra, the relationship between gods, demons, and human beings, local spirits and ghosts in the monastery, demon-caused illness, exorcism, and healing.

**REL4044 What is Religion? What is Religious Studies?**

**Prof. 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. *Prerequisite: Successful completion of at least twelve hours of coursework in the department of Religion. Meets the Oral Competency Requirement and the Scholarship-in-Practice requirement.*

**REL4190-01 SEM: Religion and Culture: "Acts of God: Apocalypse and Disaster in American Religious History"**

**Prof. McVicar**

This seminar will explore the complex relationship between natural and man-made disasters and religion in American culture. Readings in this course will consider how apocalyptic and prophetic understandings of historical events influenced popular interpretations of the causes and meanings of disasters in US history. Topics of primary emphasis will not only incorporate the study of traditional theological concerns related to theodicy and eschatology, but also consider recent interdisciplinary research in the fields of cultural studies, religious studies, and sociology related to disaster studies, risk management, and comparative histories of natural and man-made calamities. Through a survey of studies of popular apocalyptic movements and cultural histories, we will investigate the continuities and discontinuities in interpretations of disasters in US culture from the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries. Material covering the twentieth and twenty-first century will trace the connections between religious ideas, political ideologies, and the development of public policies related risk management and disaster mitigation since the end of World War II.

**REL4190-02 SEM: Religion and Culture: From Dante to Racine Prof. Dupuigrenet**  
“Biblical culture in France and Italy” an original exercise in comparative cultural history that will help students understand the distant origin of many cultural divisions that are still opposed today France and Italy. This class is open to students of all levels as it requires no prior knowledge of French or Italian. All texts studied exist in English translation although students who know or study these languages will of course be welcome to read them in their original versions.

**REL4190-03 SEM: Religion & Culture: Religion & Capitalism in the U.S. Prof. Day**

**REL4304-01 SEM: HIS of Religions: Suffering & Death: Ancient World Prof. Kelley**

**REL4304-02 SEM: HIS of Religions: Buddhist Monasticism Prof. Yu**  
East Asian Buddhist patristics, soteriology, and doctrine have long been a favorite of scholars of East Asia and the West. By comparison, far less attention has been given to the mechanism—institutional and otherwise—by which such constructs are locally engendered, sanctioned, and disseminated as traditional Buddhist culture. Looking at Chinese Buddhism by way of social and cultural practice, this seminar will examine aspects of institution and ritual that functioned as key sites for the construction—or, as the case may be, contestation—of Buddhist values, roles, and identities within the larger field of Chinese religious life. Along with more mainstream venues of monastic and lay practice, special consideration will be given to the symbolics of religious alterity, especially as they apply to the negotiation of Buddhist and non-Buddhist distinctions. Post-Song China (tenth-century and after) will be our primary points of departure.

**REL4359 Special Topics in Asian Religions: Tibet Buddhist Historiography Prof. Cuevas**  
An advanced introduction to Tibetan Buddhist history and historiography, exploring in detail the development of the culture, religion, and politics of Tibet from the ancient empire to present relations with China. The course will examine the varied academic approaches that scholars have taken in their attempts to understand and interpret Tibetan religious history. With this particular goal in mind we will focus thoroughly and critically on four recent scholarly works in the field of Tibetan Studies and several indigenous Tibetan histories in translation. The course will run on a seminar format with active and in-depth discussion of readings and intensive individual writing projects. *Prerequisite: REL 3358 or permission of instructor. Contact Dr. Cuevas at [bcuevas@fsu.edu](mailto:bcuevas@fsu.edu).*

**REL4491-01 Seminar on Religious Thought: Qur’anic Studies Prof. Gaiser**  
This seminar examines scholarship on the Qur’an, the sacred scripture of the Muslims. It combines readings in primary sources in conjunction with source critical secondary literature to explore contemporary scholarly debates surrounding traditional and revisionist approaches to Qur’anic studies, as well as Qur’anic interpretation, recitation and education.

**REL 4491-02 UG Religious Thought SEM: The Soul and the Self Prof. Dupuigrenet**  
Students will be introduced to twelve major Christian writers, from late antiquity to the Enlightenment, who addressed the identity of the human person using motifs from Greco-Roman philosophers of pagan Antiquity reinterpreted through Revelation to define a religious conscience of the self.

## **GRADUATE COURSES**

### **RLG5195-01 SEM: Religion and Culture: "Acts of God: Apocalypse and Disaster in American Religious History" Prof. McVicar**

This seminar will explore the complex relationship between natural and man-made disasters and religion in American culture. Readings in this course will consider how apocalyptic and prophetic understandings of historical events influenced popular interpretations of the causes and meanings of disasters in US history. Topics of primary emphasis will not only incorporate the study of traditional theological concerns related to theodicy and eschatology, but also consider recent interdisciplinary research in the fields of cultural studies, religious studies, and sociology related to disaster studies, risk management, and comparative histories of natural and man-made calamities. Through a survey of studies of popular apocalyptic movements and cultural histories, we will investigate the continuities and discontinuities in interpretations of disasters in US culture from the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries. Material covering the twentieth and twenty-first century will trace the connections between religious ideas, political ideologies, and the development of public policies related risk management and disaster mitigation since the end of World War II.

### **RLG5195-02 SEM: Religion and Culture: From Dante to Racine Prof. Dupuigrenet**

“Biblical culture in France and Italy” an original exercise in comparative cultural history that will help students understand the distant origin of many cultural divisions that are still opposed today France and Italy. This class is open to students of all levels as it requires no prior knowledge of French or Italian. All texts studied exist in English translation although students who know or study these languages will of course be welcome to read them in their original versions.

### **RLG5195-03 SEM: Religion & Culture: Religion & Capitalism in US Prof. Day**

### **RLG5297-01 Biblical Studies SEM: Knowledge, Revelation, Torah Prof. Goff**

This course explores conceptualizations of knowledge in ancient Judaism (primarily the late Second Temple period). We will examine strategies of legitimating knowledge, such as claiming that it derives from a heavenly source or stems from an authoritative figure rooted in the venerable past. We will also examine ways in which the Torah is utilized in this period.

### **RLG5297-02 Biblical Studies SEM: Josephus Prof. Levenson**

### **RLG5305-01 SEM:HIS of Religions: Suffering & Death: Ancient World Prof. Kelley**

### **RLG5305-02 SEM:HIS of Religions: Buddhist Monasticism Prof. Yu**

### **RLG5354-01 Special Topics in Asian Religions: Japanese Buddhism Prof. Buhrman**

This course introduces students to the different schools of Japanese Buddhism, and explores the role of Buddhism in traditional Japanese society and culture. The influence of Buddhism on classical Japanese arts and literature is emphasized.

### **RLG5354-02 Special Topics in Asian REL: Tibet Buddhist Historiography Prof. Cuevas**

An advanced introduction to Tibetan Buddhist history and historiography, exploring in detail the development of the culture, religion, and politics of Tibet from the ancient empire to present relations with China. The course will examine the varied academic approaches that scholars have taken in their attempts to understand and interpret Tibetan religious history. With this particular goal in mind we will focus thoroughly and critically on four recent scholarly works in the field of Tibetan Studies and several indigenous Tibetan histories in translation. The course will run on a seminar format with active and in-depth discussion of readings and intensive individual writing projects. *Instructor permission. Contact Dr. Cuevas at [bcuevas@fsu.edu](mailto:bcuevas@fsu.edu).*

**RLG5497-01 SEM: Religious Thought: Qur'anic Studies** **Prof. Gaiser**

This seminar examines scholarship on the Qur'an, the sacred scripture of the Muslims. It combines readings in primary sources in conjunction with source critical secondary literature to explore contemporary scholarly debates surrounding traditional and revisionist approaches to Qur'anic studies, as well as Qur'anic interpretation, recitation and education.

**RLG5497-02 SEM: Religious Thought: The Soul and the Self** **Prof. Dupuigrenet**

Students will be introduced to twelve major Christian writers, from late antiquity to the Enlightenment, who addressed the identity of the human person using motifs from Greco-Roman philosophers of pagan Antiquity reinterpreted through Revelation to define a religious conscience of the self.

**RLG 5915 Sanskrit Texts** **Prof. 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. Building on skills learned previously, students will increase their speed and confidence in reading Sanskrit texts of increasing difficulty. Writing, grammar, oral recitation, and pronunciation are also emphasized. May be repeated for up to 12 hours of credit. For continuing students only; permission of instructor is required.

**RLG 5937-01 Special Topics in Religion: Religion & War** **Prof. Kelsay**

This is a course focusing on the role of religions in the cultural regulation of war. Specifically, we will deal with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim accounts of the rules that govern resort to and conduct of war. As a matter of history, each of these traditions developed such an account, which was then adapted to changing political and military activities. At present, each and all of these historical accounts plays a role in world politics--not least in connection with the war on terror.

**RLG5937-02 Special Topics in REL: ARH Colloquium** **Prof. Porterfield**

**RLG5937-03 Special Topics in REL: REP Colloquium** **Prof. Twiss**

**RLG6298-01 SEM: Scriptures/Inte: New Testament Proseminar** **Prof. Kelley**

**RLG6298-02 SEM: Scriptures/Inte: Mahabharata** **Prof. Erndl**

This seminar explores the great Indian epic, the Mahabharata, its textual variants, interpretations, performance traditions, and influence on Indian culture. Permission of instructor is required.



**RLG6498 SEM: REL Thought: ARH Historiography**

**Prof. Porterfield**