

Philosophy and Religion (Phil and Rels)

<http://www.arts-sciences.und.edu/philosophy-religion>

Beltz, Lawrence, Miller, Poochigian, Rozelle-Stone, Rundquist (Chair), Stone, and Weinstein

The two disciplines of Philosophy and Religion represent humankind's abiding interest in the fundamental questions of life, truth, and value. Questions about the meaning of life, the significance of truth, the access to knowledge, and the ability to live ethically have been studied by philosophers and theologians from the time of Socrates and before. But both disciplines can be quite practical, preparing students for a career in law, politics, the ministry, or any profession that puts them in contact with people of different religions or cultures.

Philosophy seeks answers which, chiefly, refer to human capacities and ideals and to the world of experience in which we live; Religion will often include postulates about divine forces and spiritual realities in the answers it frames. The two disciplines tend to be more distinct in Western culture; philosophers and theologians have often been in bitter conflict both with each other and with religious authorities. In Eastern cultures, however, philosophy and religion overlap — often appearing as complements. In both East and West these two fields of study represent the longest and most basic traditions of literature and the intellectual life. Though Philosophy and Religion both address questions of ultimate meaning, each discipline preserves its own literary history and its own scholarly tradition.

Every student can benefit from coursework in Philosophy and Religion. Most courses in the department fulfill Essential Studies Requirements in Arts and Humanities. Several major programs require or recommend specific courses to their students. A two to five course series of courses in Philosophy and Religion can be designed to complement major programs in nursing, engineering, science, business, criminal justice studies, as well as humanities disciplines. Minor programs (21 hours) in Philosophy, Religion and Ethics can also give depth and breadth to any major program. Neither Philosophy nor Religion requires a large technical vocabulary even in upper level courses.

Those students who wish to pursue a major or a second major in Philosophy and Religion must follow one of the three programs of concentration:

1. B.A. in Philosophy and Religion: Philosophy Concentration
2. B.A. in Philosophy and Religion: Pre-Law Concentration
3. B.A. in Philosophy and Religion: Religion Concentration

B.A. with Major in Philosophy and Religion: Religion Concentration (p.)

College of Arts and Sciences

B.A. with a Major in Philosophy and Religion: Philosophy Concentration

Required 125 credits (36 of which must be numbered 300 or above, and 60 of which must be from a 4-year institution) including:

I. Essential Studies Requirements (see University ES listing).

II. Philosophy Concentration requirements.

36 major hours, including:

PHIL 101	Introduction to Philosophy	3
PHIL 110	Introduction to Logic	3
Select one of the following (Applied Philosophy):		3
PHIL 120	Introduction to Ethics	
PHIL 130	Introduction to Political Philosophy	
PHIL 221	Symbolic Logic	
PHIL 250	Ethics in Engineering and Science	
PHIL 251	Ethics in Health Care	
PHIL 252	Ethics in Business and Public Administration	

PHIL 253	Environmental Ethics	
Select two of the following (History of Philosophy):		6
PHIL 300	Ancient Philosophy	
PHIL 301	Medieval Philosophy	
PHIL 302	Renaissance and Enlightenment	
PHIL 303	Kant and the Nineteenth Century	
Select two of the following (Major Topics in Philosophy):		6
PHIL 312	American Philosophy	
PHIL 321	Analytic Philosophy	
PHIL 331	Continental Philosophy	
PHIL 342	Ethical Theory	
PHIL 355	Social and Political Philosophy	
PHIL 360	Feminist Philosophy	
PHIL 383	Asian Philosophy	
Select one of the following (Philosophical Topics):		3
PHIL 400	Philosophy of Language	
PHIL 410	Metaphysics: What Is Real?	
PHIL 415	Philosophy of Mind	
PHIL 420	Epistemology: What is Knowledge?	
PHIL 425	Metaethics - Is Ethics Possible?	
PHIL 441	Existentialism	
PHIL 442	Phenomenology	
PHIL 443	Aesthetics	
PHIL 450	Philosophy, Economics, and Politics	
PHIL 451	Citizenship and Political Participation	
PHIL 460	Philosophy of Law	
PHIL 480	Public Philosophy (capstone - required)	3
Electives		9
Total Credits		36

Courses in Philosophy

Since a major in philosophy involves a rigorous study of basic questions about human life and action, knowledge, truth, and values, it is recognized as providing a sound base for those who plan to continue their education in one of the professional specialties such as law, medicine, or the ministry. More recently, liberal arts degrees in fields which "make you think" have become increasingly valued in business and government. Majoring in philosophy also prepares a student for graduate work in any of the humanities (most notably philosophy); in most cases the graduate will pursue a doctoral degree to teach at the college level.

Students majoring in other fields who find themselves seriously interested in the theoretical aspects of their disciplines — e.g. ethical implications of practice, the functions of knowledge in the field, the legitimacy of methods — may want to consider a special concentration, minor, or second major in philosophy to explore that interest. The emphasis of such studies could be philosophy of science and technology, ethics in the professions (engineering, medicine), or aesthetics in literature or fine arts, to name a few examples.

Language Requirement

Reading proficiency in the philosophical literature of any foreign language is strongly recommended. Majors in philosophy should be aware that proficiency in symbolic logic is expected in most graduate schools and in some substitutes for proficiency in a foreign language.

B.A. with a Major in Philosophy and Religion: Pre-Law Concentration

Required 125 credits (36 of which must be numbered 300 or above, and 60 of which must be from a 4-year institution) including:

I. Essential Studies Requirements (see University ES listing).

II. Pre-Law Concentration requirements.

36 major hours, including:

Required Courses (18 credits):

PHIL 101	Introduction to Philosophy	3
PHIL 110	Introduction to Logic	3
PHIL 120	Introduction to Ethics	3
PHIL 221	Symbolic Logic	3
PHIL 460	Philosophy of Law	3
PHIL 480	Public Philosophy	3

Ethics Courses (3 credits from the following): 3

PHIL 251	Ethics in Health Care	
PHIL 252	Ethics in Business and Public Administration	
PHIL 253	Environmental Ethics	
PHIL 342	Ethical Theory	
PHIL 425	Metaethics - Is Ethics Possible?	

Social-Political Philosophy Courses (9 credits from the following): 9

PHIL 130	Introduction to Political Philosophy	
PHIL 312	American Philosophy	
PHIL 355	Social and Political Philosophy	
PHIL 360	Feminist Philosophy	
PHIL 450	Philosophy, Economics, and Politics	
PHIL 451	Citizenship and Political Participation	

Electives (6 credits):

Electives can be earned from classes in Philosophy (PHIL) or Religion (RELS) 6

Total Credits 36

B.A. with Major in Philosophy and Religion: Religion Concentration

Required 125 credits (36 of which must be numbered 300 or above, and 60 of which must be from a 4-year institution) including:

I. Essential Studies Requirements (see University ES listing).

II. Religion Concentration Requirements (33 credit hours):

RELS 100	Introduction to Religious Inquiry	3
RELS 480	Religion Capstone	3
Select one of the following (Western Traditions):		3
RELS 101	Religions of the West	
RELS 328	Development of Christian Doctrine	
RELS 334	Judaism	
RELS 338	Contemporary Christianities	
RELS 355	Islam	
Select one of the following (Asian Traditions):		3
RELS 102	Religions of Asia	
RELS 315	Daoism and Confucianism	
RELS 320	Hinduism	
RELS 380	Buddhism	
RELS 410	Asian Religions in the United States	
Select one of the following (Biblical Studies):		3
RELS 221	Jewish Scripture/Old Testament	
RELS 231	Christian Scripture/New Testament	
RELS 300	Jesus in Gospel and History	
RELS 301	Life and Religion of Paul	
RELS 321	Prophets and Prophecy	
Select two of the following (Contemporary Problems and Ideas):		6
RELS 120	Religion in America	
RELS 216	Women and Religion	
RELS 245	Death and Dying	
RELS 250	East and West in Religion	
RELS 305	Mysticism	
RELS 309	Atheism, Theism and Secularism	
RELS 342	Religious Ethics	
RELS 423	Psychology of Religion	

RELS 431	Religious Violence and the Apocalyptic Mind	
RELS 466	Sex, Gender and Religion	
12 hours of electives may be chosen from any of the above listed courses, as well as RELS 399 Selected Topics; RELS 491 Seminar on Religion; and RELS 494 Independent Studies in Religion.		12

Total Credits 33

Of the 33 total credits, 18 must be 300-400 level courses. Up to 6 hours of cognate courses, e.g., PHIL 301 Medieval Philosophy; IS 352 Native Philosophies and Religions, may be used to complete electives requirements. Choices must be approved by student's adviser and by the Department Chair prior to enrollment in the course.

Courses in Religion

Religions at the University are seen as creative, living modes of experience, culture, beliefs, rituals and ethics—that enable people around the globe to make sense of their lives. By studying, and to a limited degree projecting ourselves into, various religions, we are better able to appreciate the outlooks and values of other societies and gain new insight into what gives meaning and worth to our own lives. The academic study of religion is not based upon assumptions regarding the truth or falsity of any particular religious tradition. Rather, we guide students to learn a variety of scholarly approaches in order to develop their own critical understandings of the subject.

The study of religion is an integral part of a liberal education. It is also an enrichment for courses of study in preparation for careers in business, education, health care, social and psychological services. Courses in religion are a good preparation for many areas of postgraduate studies, including law, medicine, and the ministry. Our curriculum is designed to prepare students to engage actively as responsible citizens in the global community.

Minor in Philosophy and Religion: Philosophy Concentration

Required 21 credits in Philosophy

Minor in Philosophy and Religion: Religion Concentration

Required 21 credits including:

RELS 100	Introduction to Religious Inquiry	3
Religion Electives		18
Total Credits		21

* 18 hours, including one course from three of the four areas of study listed under the major. Of the 21 total credits, 12 must be at 300-400 level.

Minor in Ethics

Ethics, the study of right action and the good life, lies at the core of the human experience. It is also essential for those who wish to engage in business, politics, relationships, and self-examination. What ought we to do? How should we live? When should we help others and how often should we help ourselves? Everyone has asked these questions but few have allowed themselves the opportunity to really study them and to examine their own beliefs. The minor in ethics provides just such an occasion.

Through the minor in ethics, students will be able to examine classic texts (of philosophy, religion, and other subjects) and apply their lessons to day-to-day life. Through debates and discussions, students and teachers will identify the assumptions and beliefs that guide people's actions and ask whether some are preferable to others or, even, whether any ethical approach is defensible at all. The classes in the minor work well with those of other disciplines—whatever your major, ethics can help you do your job better, learn more from your current classes, and prepare yourself for whatever comes your way.

PHIL 120	Introduction to Ethics	3
PHIL 342	Ethical Theory	3
Select three of the following:		9
PHIL 250	Ethics in Engineering and Science	

PHIL 251	Ethics in Health Care	
PHIL 252	Ethics in Business and Public Administration	
PHIL 253	Environmental Ethics	
PHIL 355	Social and Political Philosophy	
PHIL 360	Feminist Philosophy	
RELS 245	Death and Dying	
RELS 309	Atheism, Theism and Secularism	
RELS 342	Religious Ethics	
Select two of the following:		6
PHIL 425	Metaethics - Is Ethics Possible?	
PHIL 441	Existentialism	
PHIL 450	Philosophy, Economics, and Politics	
PHIL 451	Citizenship and Political Participation	
PHIL 480	Public Philosophy	
RELS 431	Religious Violence and the Apocalyptic Mind	
RELS 466	Sex, Gender and Religion	
Total Credits		21

For other possibilities, check with advisors in the department.

PHIL Courses

PHIL 101. Introduction to Philosophy. 3 Credits.

An introductory survey of the discipline of philosophy. Students will join the thoughtful search, in which philosophers have engaged through reading and discussion since ancient days, into the problems of reality (metaphysics), of truth and meaning (logic and philosophy of language), of moral standards (ethics), of knowledge (epistemology), of beauty (aesthetics), and other fundamental questions. F,S.

PHIL 110. Introduction to Logic. 3 Credits.

A theoretical and practical introduction to the principles of reasoning—formal and informal, deductive and inductive. Students will study language and patterns of reasoning as vehicles for and obstacles to critical thinking. The central characteristics of deduction and validity; the role of hypotheses, inductive reasoning, probability estimates in scientific and quasi-scientific investigations and other models of critical thinking and their limits will be covered. F,S.

PHIL 120. Introduction to Ethics. 3 Credits.

This course investigates the nature of the Good Life, of moral principles, and the application of moral systems to contemporary debate. These may include questions about the morality of war, capital punishment, sexual behavior, welfare, and so forth. F,S.

PHIL 130. Introduction to Political Philosophy. 3 Credits.

An exploration of the central themes in political theory. Students will study topics such as justification of the state, liberty, justice, equality, rights, democratic participation. The course will include readings from classic and contemporary philosophers, emphasizing the connection between the theoretical issues addressed and contemporary political debates. On demand.

PHIL 221. Symbolic Logic. 3 Credits.

The modern deductive logic of propositions and functions (including relations); logistic systems. Students majoring in mathematics or computer science will be especially welcome in this course. Offered Fall every 3 years.

PHIL 250. Ethics in Engineering and Science. 3 Credits.

This course centers on the ethical issues of particular concern to both citizens and professionals involved in engineering and related technical/scientific fields. We review ethical history and ethical theory in all class discussions. The major focus of the course, however, is on ethical dilemmas, case studies, and codes relevant to contemporary engineering and scientific practice. Issues surveyed include: ethical responsibility of theorists and of applied scientists, risk and negligence in technological enterprises, the limits of knowledge/safety/quality, an update of the two cultures debate. F,S.

PHIL 251. Ethics in Health Care. 3 Credits.

Some ethical problems and ethical guidelines are of particular concern to citizens and to professionals interested in health care fields. Examples are informed consent, abortion, euthanasia, organ transplant policies, professional standards versus patient rights, assisted suicide, ethics of testing/screening, health care policy and reform. Class members will explore such issues through case studies in a context of relevant ethical history and theory. Junior/senior standing encouraged. S.

PHIL 252. Ethics in Business and Public Administration. 3 Credits.

Ethical issues occurring in business and public administration. Basic values promoted or inhibited by people and institutions in these areas will be investigated. Case studies will also be used within a context of ethical theory and history, to explore more defined problems such as unsafe products, employee rights, the relation between business life and personal life, and many more. F, even years.

PHIL 253. Environmental Ethics. 3 Credits.

The course centers on the way that ethics helps us to understand environmental issues. We examine a broad cross-section of environmental issues from a variety of traditional and contemporary ethical frameworks. Issues include sustainability, animal rights, energy consumption, habitat loss, biodiversity, land conservation, and pollution. Class members will explore such issues through case studies in a context of relevant ethical history and theory. Offered Fall every 3 years.

PHIL 300. Ancient Philosophy. 3 Credits.

The ancient Greeks and Romans laid the foundations for even the most contemporary philosophy, and their ideas have had a continuing influence on all Western thought from their time to our own. This course attempts to examine those ideas and the reasons for their persistent relevance. F, even years.

PHIL 301. Medieval Philosophy. 3 Credits.

Philosophy in Western Europe from the end of the Roman Empire to the early 15th Century as reflected in the writings of such thinkers as Boethius, Augustine, Abelard, Aquinas and Ockham. S, odd years.

PHIL 302. Renaissance and Enlightenment. 3 Credits.

Philosophy from the time of Petrarch (c. 1350) to that of the American Revolution as seen in the writings of such philosophers as Bruno, Bacon, Descartes, Spinoza and Hume. This is the period that sees the origins of modern thought. The implications of the work of the philosophers had an important role in shaping contemporary society, including the arts, literature, science, politics, and economics. F, odd years.

PHIL 303. Kant and the Nineteenth Century. 3 Credits.

Philosophy from the "Age of Reason" through the Industrial Revolution as reflected in the writings of Kant and other philosophers such as Hegel, Mill, Marx, and Nietzsche. S, even years.

PHIL 312. American Philosophy. 3 Credits.

A survey of major figures and movements in American philosophy. Offered Fall every 3 years.

PHIL 321. Analytic Philosophy. 3 Credits.

Contemporary developments in Philosophy since the beginning of the 20th century. Offered Spring every 3 years.

PHIL 331. Continental Philosophy. 3 Credits.

This course will investigate philosophical trends in Continental Philosophy, such as: Phenomenology, Existentialism, Critical Theory, Feminism, Hermeneutics, Structuralism, Post-structuralism, Postmodernism, Deconstructionism, Postcolonialism, and Psychoanalysis. Students will study primary works of philosophy by such thinkers as: Adorno, Agamben, Arendt, Baudrillard, Butler, Deleuze, Derrida, Foucault, Gadamer, Habermas, Kristeva, Levinas, Marion, Nancy, Ricoeur, and Zizek. Offered Fall every 3 years.

PHIL 342. Ethical Theory. 3 Credits.

This course examines the theoretical foundation of a variety of ethical systems. It expands the core traditional ethical theories by considering contemporary elaborations on Virtue Ethics, Deontological Ethics (Kantianism), utilitarianism and other dominant theories. Students are strongly advised to have taken PHIL 120 before enrolling in this course. S.

PHIL 355. Social and Political Philosophy. 3 Credits.

This course examines core issues in society and governance: the nature of justice, the limits of freedom, the role of religion, family and pluralism in the modern community, are a few examples of possible topics. Students in the course may examine both classical and contemporary theories of political society. Offered Fall every 3 years (2008).

PHIL 360. Feminist Philosophy. 3 Credits.

This course will investigate theories and major ideas of feminist philosophers, past and present. The course may be approached as an historical examination of the different "waves" of feminism, or it may be approached topically, as for example: women and the body, the feminine and the spirit, feminist art, feminist responses to violence, etc. Central figures in feminist philosophy who may be studied include: Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Mary Wollstonecraft, Simone de Beauvoir, Susan Bordo, Catharine MacKinnon, Luce Irigaray, bell hooks, and Chandra Talpade Mohanty. Offered Fall every 3 years.

PHIL 383. Asian Philosophy. 3 Credits.

Study of major philosophical systems of India, China and/or Japan. On demand.

PHIL 399. Philosophic Themes. 1-3 Credits.

This course provides an opportunity for detailed examination of important philosophic themes. Topics will vary depending on faculty and student interests. Investigations into philosophy of religion, foundations of logic, African American philosophic schools, political correctness, and many others are possible. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. Repeatable to 6 credits. On demand.

PHIL 400. Philosophy of Language. 3 Credits.

An examination of the nature of language concerning issues of meaning, reference, language use, linguistic structure, and difference from other symbol systems. Offered Spring every 3 years.

PHIL 410. Metaphysics: What Is Real?. 3 Credits.

A study of the basic categories by which things are understood. Topics include such issues as appearance and reality, substance, particular and general, space and time, and personal identity. Offered Spring every 3 years.

PHIL 415. Philosophy of Mind. 3 Credits.

A consideration of philosophical problems arising from the methodology of the behavioral sciences. Of special relevance to students majoring in Psychology, Political Science, Economics, Anthropology or Sociology. Offered Fall every 3 years.

PHIL 420. Epistemology: What is Knowledge?. 3 Credits.

Inquiry into the nature and limits of knowledge as distinguished from belief; types of knowledge; the role of reason and sense experience in empirical knowledge. Offered Fall every 3 years.

PHIL 425. Metaethics - Is Ethics Possible?. 3 Credits.

A study of traditional problems in ethical theory including the foundations of ethical philosophy, the nature of the good, ethical relativity, free will versus determinism. Although case studies and contemporary examples will appear in discussions, the central focus of the course will be historical and theoretical. Offered Fall every 3 years.

PHIL 430. Philosophy of Science and Technology. 3 Credits.

A study of the philosophic aspects of science and technology. Problems include, what makes a theory scientific?, is there a scientific "method?", can one believe in science and religion at the same time?, how can we tell whether a technological enterprise is a reasonable risk or a negligent gamble?, how should a technological advance be controlled? Offered Spring every 3 years.

PHIL 441. Existentialism. 3 Credits.

An examination of the nature of human existence and its relationship to freedom. This course investigates the consequences of one's choices and their effects on identity, ethics, and on other people. By examining the works of such philosophers as Kierkegaard, Sartre, Camus, de Beauvoir, and others, students will investigate the ways in which human beings construct their own identities and develop their own ethical and political standards. Offered Spring every 3 years (2010).

PHIL 442. Phenomenology. 3 Credits.

This course will introduce students to the theory and practice of phenomenology. Founded by the 20th century thinker, Edmund Husserl, phenomenology is a method that attempts to describe lived human experiences. Students will therefore do phenomenology as part of their study of the subject by undertaking exercises in the method of phenomenological description. Central figures in phenomenology who may be studied include: Franz Brentano, Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Emmanuel Levinas, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Paul Ricoeur. The course may also take a topical approach, investigating the experiences of gratitude, forgiveness, fear, desire, or hospitality, for example. Offered Fall every 3 years.

PHIL 443. Aesthetics. 3 Credits.

This course will investigate the philosophical foundations of art (understood in its widest sense, including, for example, music and writing). It will ask whether definitions of art or beauty are possible, what the relationship between form and substance is in art, whether or not art should be valued as a product or process, as well as other such questions. The course will rely upon classical and modern texts, as well as a variety of examples from the history of the arts. Offered Spring every 3 years.

PHIL 450. Philosophy, Economics, and Politics. 3 Credits.

This course provides an introduction to the discipline sometimes called "political economy" and illustrates its connection to political philosophy in general. It focuses on the relationship between political and economic structures, with a special emphasis on the nature and problems of liberal capitalist democracies. Students will read classic and contemporary thinkers, and primary and secondary sources. Offered Spring every 3 years.

PHIL 451. Citizenship and Political Participation. 3 Credits.

This course provides an in-depth study of the nature of citizenship, with special emphasis on how citizens deliberate collectively and individually. It focuses on questions of rationality, political activism, political education, and cosmopolitanism. Students will read classic and contemporary thinkers, and primary and secondary sources. Offered Spring every 3 years.

PHIL 460. Philosophy of Law. 3 Credits.

An investigation of the nature of both law and legal reasoning. Study of the nature of law focuses on theories of natural law, legal positivism, and legal realism. Legal reasoning concerns justified interpretation of precedent and statute within the common law tradition. Additional topics dealt with as time allows, encompass such issues as the justification of punishment and enforcement of morality. F.

PHIL 480. Public Philosophy. 3 Credits.

Public philosophy is the process of engaging in philosophical reflection with non-philosophers. This course provides the opportunity for students to take existing work in academic philosophy and "translate" it into more accessible media. Students will write magazine articles, blog entries, opinion pieces suitable for newspapers, and engage in other activities that help philosophy expand past its home at the university. Prerequisite: 75 total credit hours. F.

PHIL 491. Seminar in Philosophy. 3-6 Credits.

A consideration of selected philosophical problems or classic texts of mutual interest to departmental faculty and more advanced students. Previous work in philosophy or related disciplines is recommended. Prerequisites: Junior or senior standing and consent of instructor. On demand.

PHIL 494. Independent Study in Philosophy. 1-3 Credits.

Supervised tutorial on an individual basis. Typically, a student will work independently to a considerable extent. In other cases, the course may take the form of regularly scheduled meetings. May be repeated to 8 credits. Prerequisite: Instructor consent. Repeatable to 24 credits. F,S.

PHIL 497. Projects in Philosophy. 1-3 Credits.

Projects in Philosophy is a course that allows students to engage in non-traditional, non-classroom based projects in philosophy. Projects may include internships, practicums, research or teaching assistantships, community engagement activities, or other projects that may differ from semester to semester. Students may enroll in this course with permission of instructor, but some projects (e.g. , internships) may be selective and subject to an application process. Repeatable up to 12 credits. Prerequisite: Instructor consent. Repeatable to 12 credits. On demand.

RELS Courses

RELS 100. Introduction to Religious Studies. 3 Credits.

This course is designed as an introduction to the academic study of religion. Topics discussed include problems with defining "religion," approaches to the subject in the humanities and social sciences, and the roles played by religion in the contemporary world. F,S.

RELS 101. Religions of the West. 3 Credits.

This course is an introduction to the comparative study of the many cultural manifestations of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. S, odd years.

RELS 102. Religions of Asia. 3 Credits.

This course is an introduction to the characteristic beliefs and practices of selected religions that developed in Asia: Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism and Shinto. We will devote special attention to scriptures and other classic literature of the traditions. Students will gain an appreciation of the vitality and enduring significance of each of the religions as a way of life for large numbers of people. F, odd years.

RELS 201. Introduction to the Bible. 3 Credits.

This course is designed to introduce the student to the academic study of the Bible and to the relevant comparative material drawn from the surrounding cultures. F.

RELS 216. Sex, Gender, and Religion. 3 Credits.

This course presents issues generated by the interrelationship of sex, sexual orientation and gender with religion. Included in our investigation are examination of the various interpretations of sacred texts which produce discourses of sexual control, establish moral authority and seek to define sexual identity. Other discourses are those created from other religious experiences and therefore resist those of the dominant society. On demand.

RELS 220. Religion in America. 3 Credits.

This course examines the role that religion has played in the political, social, cultural, and intellectual history of America. S, even years.

RELS 227. Mysticism and Spirituality in Religion. 3 Credits.

A study of mystics and their writings from the Eastern and Western traditions and the application of methods of religious inquiry into the presence of mystical phenomena. S, even years.

RELS 245. Death and Dying. 3 Credits.

An examination of various perspectives on death and dying in our own and other cultures with a view to coping with the problems of mortality and immortality. Medical, psychological, philosophical, and religious aspects contributing to an understanding of the meaning of death will be offered by resource people whose experience will lend assistance to the student's confronting the reality of death and dying. Lecture and discussion. F.

RELS 309. Atheism and Secularism. 3 Credits.

A systematic and critical examination of the fundamental concepts, ideas, and history of atheism and secularism. S, odd years.

RELS 315. Daoism and Confucianism. 3 Credits.

An introduction to two major religious and philosophical traditions indigenous to China and important throughout East Asia. Attention will also be directed to the relations of Daoist and Confucian traditions to the social and political order, from ancient times through the contemporary period. S, odd years.

RELS 320. Hinduism. 3 Credits.

The Indian subcontinent is one of the great historic centers of world civilization, and it has extended its cultural influence throughout Asia and the world; like China, it now also comprises about one-fifth to one-sixth of the earth's population. This class will introduce students to the region's preponderant religious and philosophical tradition of Hinduism, treating topics such as understandings of God or gods, teachings of a universal Self, reincarnation, views for and against the caste system, and Hinduism and globalization. We will treat examples of Hinduism from the ancient to contemporary periods, devoting special attention to selections of classic texts. S, even years.

RELS 325. Religious Violence. 3 Credits.

A critical examination of the theories used to explain and the history associated with violent acts attributed to "religious" actors and/or motivations. F, odd years.

RELS 334. Judaism. 3 Credits.

Comparative Jewish thought in cultural context and as manifest in Jewish literature. Topics to be studied include the sacred, the human community, the role of Israel, ethics, the Holocaust. On demand.

RELS 338. Christianity. 3 Credits.

A systematic and comparative investigation of the many varieties of Christianity that have occurred in the past and that exist in the contemporary world. S, even years.

RELS 355. Islam. 3 Credits.

Beginning with pre-Islamic Arabian culture, this course provides an academic survey of the genesis of Islam, including the life of the prophet Muhammad and formative events in the early Islamic community, Qurʾan and Hadith, common beliefs, rituals, and practices, the development of schools of Islamic jurisprudence and theology, Sufism, and Islamic art and literature. F, even years.

RELS 380. Buddhism. 3 Credits.

A historical and critical survey of different Buddhist schools in India, China, Tibet, and Japan. F, even years.

RELS 399. Selected Topics. 1-3 Credits.

A selected topic in the area of religious studies such as Atheism, Religion and Public Life, Lessons of the Holocaust, Religion and the Environment, Greco-Roman Religion, African American Religious History, Women Religious Writers. Repeatable to 12 credits with different topics. Repeatable to 12 credits. On demand.

RELS 480. Seminar in Theory and Method. 3 Credits.

This course is required of all Religious Studies students and will fulfill the Essential Studies capstone requirement. Although the specific focus of the course may change each time it is offered, in every case it will focus critical attention on a variety of interdisciplinary approaches to the academic study of religion. Prerequisite: Junior or Senior standing. On demand.

RELS 491. Seminar in Religious Studies. 3 Credits.

A consideration of selected topics or religious classics of mutual interest to departmental staff and advanced students in Religion. Prerequisites: Junior or senior standing and some upper level work in Religion or consent of instructor. On demand.

RELS 494. Independent Studies in Religion. 1-3 Credits.

Supervised reading and study on an individual basis. Repeatable to 8 credits. Prerequisite: Instructor consent. Repeatable to 8 credits. F,S.

RELS 497. Projects in Religious Studies. 1-3 Credits.

Projects in Religion is a course that allows students to engage in non-traditional, non-classroom based projects in religious studies. Projects may include internships, practicums, research or teaching assistantships, community engagement activities, or other projects that may differ from semester to semester. Students may enroll in this course with permission of instructor, but some projects (e.g., internships) may be selective and subject to an application process. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. Repeatable to 12 credits. F,S.