RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Courses in religious studies are a vital part of a liberal arts education. The field involves the objective study of religious belief, literature and practice around the world. Opportunity is given for serious and objective study of these aspects in relation to major religions of past and present cultures. Special attention is given to the historical bases of world religions as well as to their effect upon present-day societies, in both the East and West. Courses are offered in several world religions, biblical studies, religious thought, and religion and culture.

Courses are open to all students without regard to personal views or affiliations. No attempt is made to promote a particular view. Emphasis is placed on the academic study of religion rather than the practice of a particular form of religion. Many of the undergraduate courses enable students to satisfy humanities requirements and also provide an excellent background for many types of graduate and professional programs.

Courses

REL 1103 Introduction to World Religions (HI)
Description: Major world religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam with a view to understanding the general nature of religion and its various dimensions.
Credit hours: 3
Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3
Levels: Undergraduate
Schedule types: Lecture
Department/School: Philosophy
General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities, International Dimension

REL 2013 Hebrew Scriptures (H)
Description: A study of the Hebrew Scriptures with emphasis upon content, historical background, the history of its study and the critical analysis and theological interpretation of selected passages. Previously offered as REL 3013.
Credit hours: 3
Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3
Levels: Undergraduate
Schedule types: Lecture
Department/School: Philosophy
General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 2023 The New Testament and Its Study (H)
Credit hours: 3
Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3
Levels: Undergraduate
Schedule types: Lecture
Department/School: Philosophy
General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 3223 The Teachings of Jesus in Historical Context (H)
Prerequisites: REL 2023.
Description: The teachings of Jesus in light of modern historical research. Emphasis on interpreting selected passages from the Gospels.
Credit hours: 3
Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3
Levels: Undergraduate
Schedule types: Lecture
Department/School: Philosophy
General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 3243 Paul and the Early Church (H)
Prerequisites: REL 2023.
Description: The letters of Paul in their historical context with special emphasis on his theology and ethics.
Credit hours: 3
Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3
Levels: Undergraduate
Schedule types: Lecture
Department/School: Philosophy
General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 3573 The Religions of Native Americans (DH)
Prerequisites: REL 1103.
Description: Selected tribal worldviews, belief systems and religious ceremonies as depicted in oral traditions, songs, and literature. Emphasis on Northern and Southern Plains Indians.
Credit hours: 3
Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3
Levels: Undergraduate
Schedule types: Lecture
Department/School: Philosophy
General Education and other Course Attributes: Diversity, Humanities

REL 3713 Religion, Culture and Society
Prerequisites: REL 1103, ANTH 2353, SOC 1113.
Description: An introduction to the scientific study of religion. Religious activity in both tribal and technological societies studied in the light of contemporary interpretations of culture and of social behavior. Same course as SOC 3713.
Credit hours: 3
Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3
Levels: Undergraduate
Schedule types: Lecture
Department/School: Philosophy
General Education and other Course Attributes: Diversity, Humanities

REL 4033 American Christianity through the Colonial Period (H)
Description: A study of the planting, development and spread of Christianity in America, beginning with the European roots and continuing through the colonial period up to c.1800.
Credit hours: 3
Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3
Levels: Undergraduate
Schedule types: Lecture
Department/School: Philosophy
General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities
REL 4050 Studies in Religion  
**Description:** Independent studies, seminars and courses on selected topics in religion. Offered for variable credit, 1-6 credit hours, maximum of 9 credit hours.  
**Credit hours:** 1-6  
**Contact hours:** Contact: 1-6 Other: 1-6  
**Levels:** Undergraduate  
**Schedule types:** Independent Study  
**Department/School:** Philosophy

REL 4113 The World of Islam: Cultural Perspectives (HI)  
**Description:** The cultural heritage of the world of Islam explored through its expression in the art, architecture, and literature of the Muslim peoples.  
**Credit hours:** 3  
**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3  
**Levels:** Undergraduate  
**Schedule types:** Lecture  
**Department/School:** Philosophy  
**General Education and other Course Attributes:** Humanities, International Dimension

REL 4213 Understanding Global Islam (HI)  
**Description:** A study of the history of Islam starting from Prophet Muhammad to the spread of the Islamic Empire. How Islam moved from Arabia to the world. Introduction to the Islamic divisions, where they are now, why they are similar and different in terms of laws, schools, countries, literature, sciences, Arabic script, the Shia, the Sunna, and different Islamic countries’ practices. Also, debatable issues on Muslim women in American and other countries and why those are different from others.  
**Credit hours:** 3  
**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3  
**Levels:** Undergraduate  
**Schedule types:** Lecture  
**Department/School:** Philosophy  
**General Education and other Course Attributes:** Humanities, International Dimension

REL 4223 Religions and Sects in the Middle East (HI)  
**Description:** A study of the religions of the Middle East and their diverse sects, focusing on how culture and religion shape the Middle East.  
**Credit hours:** 3  
**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3  
**Levels:** Undergraduate  
**Schedule types:** Lecture  
**Department/School:** Philosophy  
**General Education and other Course Attributes:** Humanities, International Dimension

REL 4330 Seminar in Biblical Studies  
**Prerequisites:** Two courses in Biblical studies.  
**Description:** Selected topics in the academic study of the Bible. Offered for fixed credit, 3 credit hours, maximum of 9 credit hours.  
**Credit hours:** 3  
**Contact hours:** Contact: 3 Other: 3  
**Levels:** Undergraduate  
**Schedule types:** Independent Study  
**Department/School:** Philosophy

REL 4413 Classic Christian Writings  
**Description:** A study of the primary source material from representative Christian authors scattered throughout two thousand years of church history, focusing on understanding the backgrounds from which the writings emerged, and grasping the writers’ key ideas.  
**Credit hours:** 3  
**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3  
**Levels:** Undergraduate  
**Schedule types:** Lecture  
**Department/School:** Philosophy

**Faculty**

Laura Belmonte, PhD, and Scott Gelfand, PhD—Co-Directors