

Catalog 2019-2020

This is a reference document. For dates and times, please see Registrar.

Autumn 2019

Special Courses in Divinity

DVSC 30400 – Introduction to the Study of Religion

This course examines the influence of Karl Marx and Marxist thought on the study of religion. As an introduction to religion, it does not provide a comprehensive survey of concepts or methodologies in religious studies and current scholarship on religious traditions. Rather, we will focus on how one foundational thinker inaugurated a wide range of intellectual debates and moral critiques that have since shaped approaches to the study of religion. Over ten weeks, we will take up various strands of Marx's theory and method to consider key themes in religious thought and practice across disciplines, periods and geographic regions. These themes address core questions such as: "what is a human and what is a subject?"; "what is at stake in interpreting a sacred text?"; "what is a global religion?", and; "what is heteropatriarchy and what does ritual have to do with it?"

All MA and AMRS students are required to take this course. MDiv students are required to take this course or Classical Theories of Religion (HREL 32900). This class is one of the Divinity School's courses that requires a quality grade. Students must earn a B- or above to fulfill the requirement. *Angie Heo*

DVSC 51000 – Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion

This course is required for all first-year doctoral students in the Divinity School. It is meant to introduce basic issues in theory and method in the contemporary study of religion in the academy, with special focus on the range of approaches and disciplines represented in the field. *Dan Arnold and Alireza Doostdar*

Anthropology and Sociology of Religion

AASR 33000 – Problems in the Anthropology of Religion 1

A two-quarter course sequence surveying of some of the key problems in the anthropology of religion. Topics include belief, meaning and interpretation, ideology, power, embodiment, rationality, alterity, and the politics of representation. *Alireza Doostdar*

AASR 41550 - Islam, Welfare, and Neoliberalism

This course examines modern Muslim politics and its transformations in relation to dominant economic processes and paradigms. We will pay particular attention to the ways in which Islamic movements and institutions have responded to the exigencies of national welfare, economic redistribution, liberal structural adjustment, and neoliberalism. Readings will be primarily ethnographic and historical. *Elham Mireshghi*

Biblical Studies

BIBL 31000 – Introduction to the Hebrew Bible

The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) is a complex anthology of disparate texts and reflects a diversity of religious, political, and historical perspectives from ancient Israel, Judah, and Yehud. Because this collection of texts continues to play an important role in modern religions, new meanings are often imposed upon it. In this course, we will attempt to read biblical texts apart from modern preconceptions about them. We will also contextualize their ideas and goals through comparison with texts from ancient Mesopotamia, Syro-Palestine, and Egypt. Such comparisons will demonstrate that the Hebrew Bible is fully part of the cultural milieu of the Ancient Near East. To accomplish these goals, we will read a significant portion of the Hebrew Bible in English, along with representative selections from secondary literature. We will also spend some time thinking about the nature of biblical interpretation. *Jeffrey Stackert*

BIBL 31116 - Herodotus

“I, Herodotus of Halicarnassus, am here setting forth my history, that what has been done may not fade in time from the memory of man, and great and remarkable achievements, whether of Greeks or foreign (barbaroi) peoples, may not lack the honor of remembrance” (I 1.1).

“I am going to give an extended account of Egypt, because it has a greater number of remarkable things in it, and presents us with a greater number of extraordinary works, than any other country. For that reason I shall say more about it” (II 35.1).

With those two sentences Herodotus expresses the overall vision of his great History and his particular fascination with Egypt as a special case study of human civilization and man’s “great and remarkable achievements.” We will read Book II this quarter, with attention to Herodotus’ language and his unrivalled status as master of the older Ionic prose style. We will also focus on

his historical method, his relish for narrative detail and diversion, and his interpretatio Graeca of Egyptian culture, civilization, and religion. *David Martinez*

BIBL 33900 - Introductory Biblical Hebrew I

This course is the first of a two-quarter sequence designed to introduce students to the language of biblical Hebrew, with special emphasis on the fundamentals of its morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. The course follows a standard textbook supplemented by lectures, exercises, and oral drills aimed at refining the student's grasp of grammatically sound interpretation and translation. At the conclusion of the two-quarter sequence students will be prepared to take a biblical Hebrew reading course in the spring quarter. *Doren Snoek*

BIBL 35100 - Introductory Koine Greek I

In this two-course sequence, students will learn the basic mechanics of Koine Greek and begin reading texts from the Greek New Testament and Septuagint. The autumn course and the first three-fourths or so of the winter course will introduce the vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and style of the Greek New Testament, and to a limited degree those of the Septuagint, after which point we will focus on reading and interpreting a New Testament document in Greek at length. Upon the conclusion of the sequence, students will be able to read and comprehend entire passages of Koine Greek text with the aid of a dictionary. This sequence aims to prepare students to successfully participate in a Greek exegesis course. *Nathan Hardy*

BIBL 42910 - Gender and Sexuality in Late Antiquity: Precursors and Legacies

In this course students will trace how gender was theorized and normative behavior was prescribed and enforced in the ancient world. We will begin with materials from the Greco-Roman world, Hebrew Bible, and the Second Temple Period. As the quarter progresses, we will turn our attention to early and late ancient Christian authors, focusing on the way asceticism and emergent ecclesial institutions shaped the lives of women and gender non-conforming individuals. Throughout the course students will learn to navigate the pitfalls and opportunities the study of gender affords for understanding the development of biblical interpretation, the transformation of classical Graeco-Roman culture, and the formation of Christian doctrine. How did Christianity challenge and preserve norms for female behavior? How did Rabbinic and early Christian authors approach questions of sexuality differently? Along the way we will bring 20th-century theorists of sexuality and gender into our conversations to illuminate pre-modern discourses of virginity, sexual experience, and identity. Primarily we will approach texts through a historical lens while paying attention to the theological and ethical issues involved. At the end of the course we will examine the legacy of late ancient debates, tracing how earlier teaching about gender and sexuality co-exists with, challenges, and informs modern secular worldviews. Open to both undergraduate and graduate students. PQ: No

languages are required, but there will be ample opportunity for students with skills in Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Hebrew to use them. *Erin Galgay Walsh*

BIBL 43100 – Interpreting the Gospel According to Matthew

An exegesis course on "the church's gospel," which will seek to create a constructive conversation between modern redaction-critical readings of Matthew as a document forged in heated interaction with a specific historical context (particularly defined by the inter-/intra-Jewish polemics and the emergence of the "ekklesia" as distinct from the synagogue) and the history of interpretation and effects of this gospel in the ancient church and up to the present, including film. Each student will select an interpreter or interpretation--ancient, medieval, modern, post-modern--to impersonate in class discussions. *Margaret Mitchell*

BIBL 51620 – The Priestly Religious Imagination

In this seminar, we will examine the major religious ideas of the pentateuchal Priestly source and related texts in the Hebrew Bible as a window on the ancient Israelite religious imagination. All biblical texts will be read in Hebrew. *Jeffrey Stackert*

BIBL 53500 – Early Christian Biblical Interpretation

This year the Early Christian Biblical Interpretation seminar will focus on two caches of untranslated Greek homiletic texts: the Greek homilies on the Psalms by Origen of Alexandria (discovered in 2012, published in a critical edition in 2015), and homilies by John Chrysostom on "problem passages" in the Pauline epistles. Reading Origen and Chrysostom alongside one another will allow us to test the accuracy of the traditional divide between "Alexandrine allegory" and "Antiochene literalism," while also focusing on the various ways that each employs the traditional school form of *problemata kai lyseis* ("problems and solutions") in his interpretive work and its rhetorical presentation. (NOTE: Attic and Koine Greek skills required) *Margaret Mitchell*

Philosophy of Religion

DVPR 43830 - Simone Weil: Spirituality, Metaphysics, and Politics

Simone Weil, one of the most important philosophers of the twentieth century, developed her thought as an extension of her spirituality and her political commitments. In this course, then, we will read her principal works together in order to see how these three themes hang together: spirituality, metaphysics, and politics. *Kevin Hector*

DVPR 43857 – The Animal, The Other? The Question of Animality According to Jacques Derrida and Other Jewish Thinkers

The so-called “animal” question is ever more present in our philosophical space, to the point that we could even say it is “one of the principal dimensions of the metaphysical unthought of our epoch”. In this course we will turn our attention specifically to the philosophy of Jacques Derrida, beginning with the preliminary question: “What animal? The other,” as he writes. In other words, the question of the alterity of the other or the “wholly other” – the most other – goes hand in hand with the animal question in its various declensions or formulations, and above all, if we follow Derrida, brings with it the epochal question (since it is the most urgent of our epoch) of animal suffering and death. We will reflect on the alterity of this other – the animal – which in some way disarms and challenges us, and will also draw on Derrida’s criticism of Levinas regarding the alterity of the animal and its possibility (or impossibility) of having or being a *face* – in the words and opinion of Levinas. We will therefore consider, as well, the Jewish question and its relation to alterity as it circulated between them. We will also address Derrida’s dialogue with authors of Critical Theory and touch on some Jewish writers (Levi, Grossman, etc.) dealing with the question of a “*common destiny*”. *Orietta Ombrosi*

DVPR 52009 – Death, Time, Perception: Against Being Here Now

Workshopping a manuscript in the Philosophy of Religions, this course is focused on a cross-cultural examination of the philosophies of temporality, finitude, perception and death. Authors and traditions addressed in the core text include Epicurus, Spinoza, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, William James, Borges, Heidegger, Levinas, Zhuangzi, Dogen and Tiantai Buddhism. *Brook Ziporyn*

DVPR 52010 – The Philosophies of the Yijing (Book of Changes)

A reading of the Yijing, its commentaries, and the uses to which it is put in Confucianist, Daoist and Buddhist traditions. *Brook Ziporyn*

DVPR 55110 - Reading Religion From a Philosophical Point of View

We will examine the question of what it means to read religious texts and practices from a philosophical point of view. PQ: Enrollment requires the consent of the instructor and the course is only open to advanced graduate students who are writing a thesis or preparing comprehensive exams. For more information contact the instructor. *Arnold Davidson*

History of Christianity

HCHR 30100 - History of Christian Thought I

This first course in the History of Christian Thought sequence deals with the post New Testament period until Augustine, stretching roughly from 150 through 450CE. The aim of the course is to follow the development of Christian thought by relating its structural features to the

historical context in which they arose without adhering to schematic models such as East vs. West, orthodoxy vs. heresy, Alexandrian vs. Antiochene exegesis. The following authors and themes will be analysed and discussed: 1. Martyrdom and the Authority of Christian Witness: Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Martyr 2. Platonism and Exegesis: Philo and Origen 3. Incarnation and Asceticism: Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa 4. Ecclesial Unity and Episcopal Authority: Cyprian, Ambrose and Chrysostom 5. Projecting Historical Authority: Eusebius and Jerome 6. Normative Belief and Gnostic Dissent: All About the Creeds 7. Ancient Thought Baptized: Augustine of Hippo. *Willemien Otten*

HCHR 35200 - Medieval Latin

The Practice of Carolingian Saints' Tales. Spoken "Lingua Romana rustica" departed from canonical Ancient Latin long before the late eighth century. But at this time the renewed study of the Classics and grammar soon prompted scholars and poets to update the stories of their favorite saints and to inscribe some for the first time. We shall examine examples of ninth-century Carolingian "réécriture" and of tandem new hagiography in both prose and verse by authors such as Lupus of Ferrières, Marcward of Prüm, Wandalbert of Prüm, Hildegard of Meaux, and Heiric of Auxerre. All source readings in Classical Latin adapted to new Carolingian purposes, which we shall also explore historically in their own right. *Michael Allen*

HCHR 36916 - Reading Greek Literature in the Papyri

The earliest--and often the only--witnesses for Greek literary works are the papyri. This makes their testimony of great importance for literary history and interpretation, but that testimony does not come without problems. In this course we will cover some of the concepts and techniques needed to recover the literary treasure contained in this highly complex material: from the history of book forms, the textual tradition of literary works, and the creation of the canons to more philological aspects such as editorial practice, Textkritik, and paleography. Our literary corpus will include biblical texts, paraliterary (school and magical) texts, and translations of Egyptian texts into Greek. We will work with photographs of the papyri, and every part of the course will be based on practice. As appropriate we will also work with the University of Chicago's collections of papyri. *Sofia Torallas-Tovar*

History of Judaism

HIJD 35020 - Culture and Zionism

This seminar will examine the intersection of culture and Zionism. We will begin by considering the historical formation referred to as "cultural Zionism" and examining its ideological underpinnings. Other topics include: Hebrew revival, the role of culture in the Zionist revolution,

Israeli culture as Zionist culture. Readings include: Ahad Haam, Haim Nahman Bialik, S.Y. Agnon, Orly Kastel-Blum, Edward Said, Benjamin Harshav. *Na'ama Rokem*

History of Religions

HREL 31110 – The Foundation of Buddhist Thoughts

The foundation of Buddhist thought is the Buddha's teachings preserved in the extant Buddhist scriptures such as Pali Nikāya and Chinese Āgama. As Buddhism spread across the vast and culturally-diverse regions of Southeast, Central, and East Asia, Buddhist thought evolved and expanded in order to meet the needs of these varied societies. Each Buddhist tradition highlights its own distinctive aspects of Buddhist thought accordingly. This course aims to give students a solid foundation in the early Buddhist doctrines so that they will have a better capacity to decipher the subsequent development of theories and doctrines by other Buddhist schools. This perspective provides the students with a clear road map of the progression of the Buddha's teachings. The course includes the most fundamental teachings of the Buddha and critical terms and concepts of Buddhism, such as Dependent Origination, the Four Noble Truth, the Doctrine of Non-self, The Doctrine of Karma. These will be elaborated, and it will be shown how these teachings are interrelated doctrinally and practically forming a systematic whole. *Dhammadipa Sak*

HREL 31990 – Towards Ecumenical Buddhism

There are many Buddhist traditions around the world which can be categorized into three major traditions: Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana. Each of these traditions claims the legitimacy of their teachings, directly passed down from the Buddha, which holds the supreme authority and is the purest form of Buddhism. This seminar will give students an understanding of the ideals of these three traditions by studying their cultural, ethnic, political, and scriptural contents. Based on the ideology of these traditions on their doctrines, they may more simply be classified into two: Bodhisattva Path and Arahant Path. The seminar will aim at helping the participants to identify similarities among them, to foster a clearer picture of the core teachings of the Buddha, and offers itself as one way among many of disclosing certain aspects of the field, possibly the missing link of each other to form a uniformity. The seminar will be arranged into two parts, a discussion of the reading list and presentations. The readings and discussion will be organized to focus on the concept of the Buddha, monasticism, rituals, salient Buddhist norms such as emptiness, nirvana, perfect beings and even their possibly cultural or political influences on each other on the emergence of Buddhism, to foster the understanding of core Buddhist teachings.

Dhammadipa Sak

HREL 32900 – Classical Theories of Religion

This course will survey the development of theoretical perspectives on religion and religions in the 19th and 20th centuries. Thinkers to be studied include Kant, Hume, Schleiermacher, Feuerbach, Marx, Muller, Tiele, Tylor, Robertson Smith, Frazer, Durkheim, Weber, Freud, James, Otto, van der Leeuw, Wach, and Eliade. *Christian Wedemeyer*

HREL 34358 – Hindu Goddesses and the Deification of Women

This course has two focuses. The first is to examine how and why representations of goddesses in her iconic, aniconic and symbolic forms are embraced by various religious traditions (Buddhist, Saiva, Vaishnava and Jaina) of India. The second focus includes: 1) an examination of the manner in which the power of the feminine has been expressed socially, mythologically, and theologically in Hinduism; 2) how Hindu women have expressed their religiosity in social and psychological ways; 3) how and why women have been deified, a process that implicates the relationship between the goddess and women; and 4) how various categories of goddesses can be seen or not as the forms of the so-called "Great Goddess" (Mahadevi), and how these goddesses reflect varying relationships with human women. *Sree Padma Holt*

HREL 34419 - What is Authority?

The aim of the seminar is to clarify the notion of authority in its (historically shifting) relation to neighboring concepts such as power, violence, domination, law, obedience, among others. Readings will be drawn from literature (Shakespeare, Kafka), philosophy (Hegel, Derrida, Agamben), psychoanalytic theory (Freud, Lacan), political and cultural theory (Benjamin, Schmitt, Arendt), anthropology (Geertz), and sociology (Weber, Durkheim). *Eric Santner and Mladen Dolar*

HREL 40010 - Contemporary Topics in the Study of South Asian Religion

This course takes up theoretical problems in religious studies, issues specific to the study of South Asia, and the intersections between the two. It foregrounds history, that is, the historical lives of religion in the subcontinent. Theory, in both the sense of conceptualizing religion and the concepts of religious actors themselves, is treated as an historical object, as emerging from and participating in history. Topics covered in the course range between: religious encounter and shared practices; sexuality and spirit-possession; epics and everyday ethics; poverty and plenitude; hospitality and healing; colonial systems of classification; caste and regimes of unfree labor. *Anand Venkatkrishnan*

HREL 43497 – Ethnographies of Buddhism in Southeast Asia

A study of the ways in which contemporary Theravada Buddhist practice has been observed and analyzed in Thailand, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia by anthropologists and historians of

religions. Among the topics considered in relation to Buddhist traditions: death rites, spirit cults, monastic ordination, social hierarchies, gender, and rites celebrating the efficacy of sacred texts. Lecture and discussion formats. *John Holt*

HREL 45803 – Dunhuang Studies

This year we will read ritual texts from the Dunhuang cache--yuanwen, zhaiwen, huanwen, etc--in the context of relevant archaeological finds. *Paul Copp*

Islamic Studies

ISLM 20320 - Persian Poetry: Shahnameh of Ferdowsi

"The Shahnameh, the Persian ""Book of Kings,"" is generally classed as an epic or national epic. While it does not lack for battling champions and heroic saga, it also includes episodes in a variety of disparate genres and themes: creation narrative, mythology, folk tale, romance, royal chronicle, and political history.

In this course we gain familiarity with the style and language of Ferdowsi's Shahnameh by slow reading and discussion of select episodes in Persian, in tandem with a reading of the whole text in English translation. We approach the work as a foundational text of Iranian identity;; compendium of pre-Islamic mythology and lore; a centrifugal axis of Persianate civilization and Iranian monarchical tradition throughout Anatolia, Central Asia and South Asia; and as an instance of ""world literature."" We will read with an eye toward literary structure; genre; Indo-Iranian mythology; political theory and commentary; character psychology; ideals of masculinity, femininity and heroism; the interaction of text, oral tradition, illustration, scholarship, and translation in the shaping of the literary reception of the Shahnameh; and, of course, the meaning(s) of the work. We also address wider issues of textual scholarship: the sources of the Shahnameh, the scribal transmission of Ferdowsi's text, and the production of modern critical editions and theories of textual editing. Class discussions will be in English. Prerequisites: PERS 30320; 2 years of Persian or the equivalent. *Franklin Lewis*

ISLM 30092 - Classical Arabic Linguistics

This course delves into debates in Arabic linguistics of the classical period (before the fifteenth century) on questions such as, What is the origin of language? How does language work? How do languages relate to one another? Where does the Arabic language come from? Is the distinction between literal and figurative uses of language real? We read writings by seminal Arabic linguists, such as al-Tabari, Abu Hilal al-'Askari, Ibn Faris, al-Qadi 'Abd al-Jabbar, and Ibn Taymiyya, addressing not only linguistics proper but also topics in fields such as Quranic exegesis, theology, and legal theory. We also discuss key works of secondary scholarship on the

subject. Undergraduate students by instructor permission only. Prerequisites: 3 years of Arabic or the equivalent. *Ahmed El Shamsy*

ISLM 30100 - Introductory Qur'anic Arabic 1

This course is the first in a 3-quarter sequence Introduction to Qur'anic Arabic (IQA), which aims to provide students with foundational philological and reading skills by covering the essentials of Qur'anic/Classical Arabic grammar. The sequence also aims to introduce students to the academic study of the Qur'an. The 3 quarters of IQA are sequential, and students are strongly encouraged to join in the first quarter. Exceptions can be made on a case by case basis.

Graduate and undergraduate students from any department are welcome to register. The absolute minimum prerequisite for IQA I is knowledge of the Arabic script. Training equivalent to at least a quarter of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is highly desirable. The IQA sequence is also open to students who may have had more exposure to Arabic (modern or classical) but wish to acquire a solid foundation in Arabic grammar, and/or students who feel they are not yet ready for fast-paced third-year Arabic courses. The core textbooks for IQA I are *Ten Lessons of Arabic*, *Fundamentals of Classical Arabic*, and *Qasas al-nabiyyin*. *Amir Toft*

ISLM 30500 - Islamic History and Society I: The Rise of Islam and the Caliphate

This course covers the period from ca. 600 to 1100, including the rise and spread of Islam, the Islamic empire under the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs, and the emergence of regional Islamic states from Afghanistan and eastern Iran to North Africa and Spain. *Fred Donner*

ISLM 30601 - Islamic Thought and Literature I

This sequence explores the thought and literature of the Islamic world from the coming of Islam in the seventh century C.E. through the development and spread of its civilization in the medieval period and into the modern world. Including historical framework to establish chronology and geography, the course focuses on key aspects of Islamic intellectual history: scripture, law, theology, philosophy, literature, mysticism, political thought, historical writing, and archaeology. In addition to lectures and secondary background readings, students read and discuss samples of key primary texts, with a view to exploring Islamic civilization in the direct voices of the people who participated in creating it. All readings are in English translation. No prior background in the subject is required. This course sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. *Tahera Qutbuddin*

ISLM 32419 – Major Trends in Islamic Mysticism

This course examines Islamic mysticism, commonly known as Sufism, through an exploration of English translations of some of the greatest masterpieces of Sufi literature in Arabic and Persian. The goal is to gain first-hand knowledge of a broad spectrum of literary expressions of Islamic

spirituality in their historical context, and to understand exactly what Sufis say, and how they say it. Each of the units will comprise of lectures and close readings of excerpts from the text in Arabic/Persian and English translation. *Yousef Casewit*

ISLM 40101 - Advanced Arabic Syntax I

This two-quarter sequence is an introduction to the classical Arabic language. It is useful for students whose research includes the reading of classical Arabic texts in varied fields such as literature, history, political science, theology and philosophy. In the class 1) rules of Arabic grammar are studied intensively, topic by topic; 2) parsing (i'rab) is an important component, with a view to understanding the structure of the language; 3) brief texts from different fields of classical Arabic are read focusing on their grammatical structure, and 4) some theory about the development of the grammatical genre is introduced, as are the basic features of prosody ('arud) and rhetoric (balagha). Prerequisites: Three years (or equivalent) of Modern Standard Arabic. Open to grads and undergrads. *Tahera Qutbuddin*

ISLM 40925 - Readings in Islamic Law

This course provides a survey of the primary literatures of Islamic law and their treatment in modern scholarship. Primary texts read and discussed in class cover the following genres: compendium (mukhtasar), commentary (sharh), legal disputation (jadal), legal theory (usul al-fiqh), legal maxims (qawa'id fiqhiyya), handbooks for judges (adab al-qadi), handbooks for muftis (adab al-mufti), and legal responsa (fatawa). We will read closely selected excerpts from each of these genres and discuss relevant secondary literature in order to contextualize the primary texts thematically and historically and to examine critically the research questions that have thus far animated the modern study of Islamic law. Undergraduate students by instructor permission only. Prerequisites: 3 years of Arabic or the equivalent. *Ahmed El Shamsy*

Religions of the Americas

RAME 39402 – Race and Religion in America in the 20th Century

This course examines how religion has been shaped, constructed, and formed in response to and in the context of changing racial realities in America in the 20th century. Most of our emphasis will be attuned to the central black/white divide and Christian communities, though you are encouraged to write your final paper on a topic of your choosing that does not fit into any of these categories. *Curtis Evans*

RAME 43600 – Religion in 20th Century America

This course is the second in a two-part series that examines the historical development of religious traditions in the United States from the Civil War to the late 20th century. For this

course, we begin with the 1920s. We examine a diverse array of religious traditions and issues, but a central theme of the course is the way in which various groups wrestle with how to maintain distinctive religious cultures in the midst of broader social and cultural changes. Among the issues discussed through lectures and the readings are the following: women and gender, race, debates about the public role of religion, the problems and perennial contentions around increasing religious diversity, the quest for “spirituality” apart from religious institutions, and increasing uneasiness over organized religion as a normative source of authority. *Curtis Evans*

Religious Leadership and Practice

RELP 30500 - Colloquium: Introduction to Religious Leadership and Practice

This year-long integration seminar grounds first year M.Div. students in habits and perspectives essential to the practice of religious life and leadership. Students will cultivate the discipline of attention--learning to read closely, to listen deeply, to interrogate their experience, and to participate in rigorous critical conversation, across religious traditions. During the first quarter, students will explore the relationship of language, narrative; and belief; the second quarter will engage students in a close encounter with urban ministry; during the third quarter, students will integrate tradition, reason, and experience as they articulate definitions of ministry. First year MDiv students only. *Cynthia Lindner*

RELP 35150 - Arts of Religious Leadership and Practice: Ritual and Speaking

This is the first of a three-course sequence in the arts of religious leadership that spans the entire year in the second year MDiv curriculum. In this course students will explore the world-making power of ritual--religious and secular, personal and corporat-- and practice the craft of speaking as meaning-making. *Cynthia Lindner*

RELP 40600 - Field Work Practicum I

The Practice of Ministry offers technologies for reflection on students' experiential learning in their second year field placements. Open to MDiv students concurrent with their second year field placement. *Erika Dornfeld*

RELP 42800 - Senior MDiv Thesis Seminar

The seminar meets once a month all year as students craft thesis proposals, short public essays and an original thesis, and offer public presentations of their work in the spring quarter. Enrollment limited to MDiv students in their third or fourth year. *Cynthia Lindner*

Religious Ethics

RETH 31101 – History of Religious and Theological Ethics I

This is the first part of a two-part history. It is conducted through the study of basic, classic texts. The course moves from the philosophical ethics of the Greek and Roman worlds through strands of Hebrew scripture, the origins of the Christian movement, the end of the Roman age to the emergence of Islam, and, finally, Christian and Jewish scholastic and mystical thought in the Western middle ages. While the golden thread of history is the origin and differentiation of Christian moral thinking, this is set within with the complexity of traditions (Hellenistic philosophical, Jewish, Islamic) that intersect and often collide throughout these formative century in Western thought. The course proceeds by lectures and discussion. Most readings are in translation. There will be a final examination. No previous work in theology, philosophy, or ethics is required but it is suggested. *William Schweiker*

RETH 45502 – Religion and the Political Order

This is a seminar on religion and political order, drawing on Western theological and philosophical thinkers from Aristotle to Wollstonecraft. Focal topics include religious and political authority, the ends of politics, political rationality, obedience and freedom, liberty and equality, and moral sources in nature or convention. Special attention will be paid to the role of religion in the political theories under review along with the norms and ideas that are used to conceptualize religion or to distinguish between religions in political life. *Richard Miller*

RETH 50800 – God and Morality

This research seminar examines a fundamental question in Religious Ethics and Theology, namely, what is the relation, if any, between claims about the Divine and the human moral good. Classical and contemporary thinkers will be explored. *William Schweiker*

RETH 51301 - Workshop: Law and Philosophy

The theme for 2019-20 is “Migration and Citizenship.” Confirmed speakers as of 1/19 include David Miller, Joseph Carens, Ayelet Shachar, Adam Hosein, Adam Cox, Aziz Huq, and Seyla Benhabib, who will also be the Dewey Lecturer on January 15. This is a seminar/workshop many of whose participants are faculty from various related disciplines. It admits approximately ten students. Its aim is to study, each year, a topic that arises in both philosophy and the law and to ask how bringing the two fields together may yield mutual illumination. Most sessions are led by visiting speakers, from either outside institutions or our own faculty, who circulate their papers in advance. The session consists of a brief introduction by the speaker, followed by initial questioning by the two faculty coordinators, followed by general discussion, in which students are given priority. Several sessions involve students only, and are led by the instructors. Students write a 20-25 page seminar paper at the end of the year. The course satisfies the Law School

Substantial Writing Requirement. Prerequisites: Students are admitted by permission of the two instructors. They should submit a c.v. and a statement (reasons for interest in the course, relevant background in law and/or philosophy) to the instructors by e mail by September 20. Ph.D. students in Philosophy and Political Theory and law students do not need permission. Students must enroll for all three quarters to receive credit. *Martha Nussbaum and Daniel Guillery*

RETH 52990 – Good and Evil: Reading Levinas and Arendt

Our goal is to reflect on a puzzle: why do humans choose to be good or evil? Note how the shape of the question is complex and self-reflective, assuming that moral action is a choice. But is it? How do we understand the human capacity for good and for evil? What is meant by these categories? This seminar will respond to the complexities of this question by reading the work of two master Jewish philosophers, Emmanuel Levinas and Hannah Arendt. They share a certain history and a fascination with the question: both were gifted students and favorites of Martin Heidegger, the German philosopher who joined the Nazi Party promptly and enthusiastically. Both narrowly escaped from the Holocaust (Shoah.) Both then turned their research toward the problem of human relationally, duty, judgment and moral action. Both produced a large body of dense, intricate moral theory that has come to define post-modern Jewish thought. We will read their works slowly, using the manner of classic text study that characterizes the classic study of tradition texts in Jewish religious life. The first 5 sessions will focus on Levinas, reading *Otherwise Than Being*, considered by many to be his masterpiece, and a selection of his philosophic essays. The next 5 sessions will focus on Arendt's *Responsibility and Judgment* and *The Origins of Totalitarianism* Both texts respond to our puzzle of moral agency, responsibility and moral action. *Laurie Zoloth*

Religion, Literature, Visual Culture

RLVC 42100 - The Enlightenment in England and America

This course explores the impact of the broad intellectual movement known as the "Enlightenment" from 1688 to 1830 as it developed in England and America -- the sources in philosophy, theology, and politics common to both, and the cross-Atlantic congress that ensued of ideas about what a wide variety of writers did not hesitate to judge to be good and bad religion. That religion was in this time frame recognized as a fact of life, and that right opinion about it was at once urgent yet far from conceded, will prompt us to think about the relations between what were basic epistemological issues (e.g., reason and revelation as sources of knowledge) and how formulations of their relationship had import for a range of practices: how to read the Bible and how to think about its accounts of miracles; whether history had its source in human causality or divine plan; what was the proper relation of religion to the state; and in

turn, how to formulate the appropriate prerequisites for citizenship and, by implication, how to think and what to do about those who did not meet those prerequisites. *Richard Rosengarten*

Theology

THEO 47200 – Barth’s Church Dogmatics

This course will consider several of the most important sections of Barth's magnum opus, the Church Dogmatics. *Kevin Hector*

Religious Studies

RLST 21117 - Hinduism for Theoretical Midwestern Teens

This introductory course provides a historical survey of Hindu religious, philosophical, and political traditions. It emphasizes the rich practices of debate, dissent, and disagreement that contest and constitute these traditions. The course focuses on the textual and performative cultures of the Indian subcontinent. As such, it is also a study of the many traditions - Buddhist, Jain, Muslim, Sikh, Christian - that shape what comes to be called Hinduism. *Anand Venkatkrishnan*

RLST 22010 - Jewish Civilization I: Ancient Beginnings to Early Medieval Period

Jewish Civilization is a two-quarter sequence that explores the development of Jewish culture and tradition from its ancient beginnings through its rabbinic and medieval transformations to its modern manifestations. Through investigation of primary texts-biblical, Talmudic, philosophical, mystical, historical, documentary, and literary-students will acquire a broad overview of Jews, Judaism, and Jewishness while reflecting in greater depth on major themes, ideas, and events in Jewish history. The Autumn course will deal with antiquity to the early medieval periods. Its readings will include works from the Bible, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Philo, Josephus, the Rabbis, Yehudah Halevy, and Maimonides. All sections of each course will share a common core of readings; individual instructors will supplement with other materials. It is recommended, though not required, that students take these two courses in sequence. Students who register for the Autumn Quarter course will automatically be pre-registered for the winter segment. *James Robinson ; Cathleen Chopra-McGowan*

RLST 22050 - Murder, Adultery, and Thy Neighbor’s Ass: The Ten Commandments in the Hebrew Bible and Contemporary America

The Ten Commandments, presented in the Hebrew Bible millennia ago, inhabit a curious place in American society, one that is continually being redefined, contested, and entrenched. This

course interrogates the nature of the commandments' history: the biblical text contains two competing presentations of the commandments, in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. We will examine these passages, situating them in their literary contexts, and in the broader context of Ancient Near Eastern law codes. Are the commandments moral guidelines or legal injunctions? What kind of status do they claim for themselves, and when are they to be enforced? By whom, and for whom? Do the commandments have the same function in both texts (Ex 20 and Deut 5)? Addressing these questions will have salience for understanding how the Decalogue has been used to reinforce and define particular kinds of communities and ideologies within the United States. *Cathleen Chopra-McGowan*

RLST 24110 - The Ethics of War: Reading Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations

This course will involve a close reading of Michael Walzer's classic text on the ethics of war and his constructive account of the just-war tradition. Among the topics to be addressed are: moral relativism, human rights, and the ethics of various cases, e.g., terrorism, interventions, war crimes, blockades, assassinations, guerrilla warfare, reprisals, pre-emptive warfare, and nuclear deterrence. Relevant now no less than when it was first published in 1977, Walzer's work raises basic questions about the rights of nations and their moral obligations to their citizens and to others during times of war. *Richard Miller*

RLST 24503 - Dreams in the Ancient World

Dreams belong to the universals of human existence as human beings have always dreamt and will continue to dream across time and cultures. The questions of where do dreams come from and how to unravel a dream have always preoccupied the human mind. In this course we will focus on dreams in the Greco-Roman and Greco-Egyptian cultural environments. We will cover dreams from three complementary perspectives: dreams as experience, dream interpretation, and dream theory. The reading materials will include: (a) a selection of dream narratives from different sources, literary texts as well as documentary accounts of dreams; (b) texts that document the forms and contexts of dream interpretation in the Greco-Roman and Greco-Egyptian cultures; and (c) texts that represent attempts to approach dreams from a more general perspective by, among others, explaining their genesis and defining dream-types. *Sophia Torallas-Tovar, Anastasia Maravela*

RLST 24800 - Foucault and the History of Sexuality

This course centers on a close reading of the first volume of Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*, with some attention to his writings on the history of ancient conceptualizations of sex. How should a history of sexuality take into account scientific theories, social relations of power, and different experiences of the self? We discuss the contrasting descriptions and conceptions of sexual behavior before and after the emergence of a science of sexuality. Other writers

influenced by and critical of Foucault are also discussed. Prerequisites: One prior philosophy course is strongly recommended. *Arnold Davidson*

RLST 25050 - Religion and the Nobel Peace Prize

Since 1901, the Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to 106 people. The recipients have been inspiring, controversial, and—more often than not—religious. In this course, students learn about and compare the great advocates of peace and human rights over the last century. Students will discuss the roles religion plays in the thought of these figures and how these leaders wrestle with ethical questions. We will, for example, analyze how the *Bhagavad Gita* inspired Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence, discuss Martin Luther King Jr.'s Christian theology of civil disobedience, and hear the Qur'anic echoes in Tawakkol Karman's speeches. We will compare the arguments religious and nonreligious traditions provide for nonviolent social action. Guiding questions include, Are conceptions of peace and human rights the same across religious traditions? What happens to ideas like *satyagraha* and "the beloved community" when they get translated into different religious contexts? Does nonviolence make sense without a religious framework? No prior experience in religious studies is necessary. *Russell Johnson*

RLST 26670 – Religious Autobiography

The decision of a person to present in written form the story of their life – and through that, what they take to be their selfhood – has spawned a literary tradition with an abiding and distinctive presence in religion. This course explores the phenomena of specifically religious autobiography as variations on the form of "confession," tracing its roots in early Christianity (Paul and Augustine), and juxtaposing these expressions with readings in a range of authors who adapt the classic articulations of "confession" to their specific selves and contexts: examples will include Jean-Jacques Rousseau's "enlightened" confession, Leo Tolstoy's "Catholicism", Frederick Douglass' "(anti) slave religion," Mahatma Gandhi's "non-violent resistance," and Maggie Nelson's "transition". The course will conclude by studying the adoption of the confessional mode in the graphic novel, which introduces explicitly visual representations of selfhood and carries forward the general spirit of overt non-conformity. *Richard Rosengarten*

RLST 26805 - Philosophy as Resistance: Adorno, Horkheimer, Levinas and Benjamin in the face of the Catastrophe

This course will explore the thinking of T. W. Adorno, M. Horkheimer and E. Levinas in particular, along with W. Benjamin, regarding the possibility of philosophy in the face of the Catastrophe. These philosophers, each in their own way and with varying forcefulness, had the courage, the strength, the perception, or sometimes simply the desperation to try and understand what happened, to let themselves be tested by the event and by the shock that it produced, to face questions which by their very nature challenged their own right to exist as philosophical questions. Moreover, these sometimes greatly differing authors shared a vehement sense of the

necessity of testifying to the suffering and death imposed on the victims of history (Benjamin) and the victims of the gas chambers (Adorno, Horkheimer and Levinas), the necessity of subjecting their personal thoughts to the ordeal of this scandal and facing this danger. They felt the urgent need for their thinking to deal with the agony of those whom History overwhelmed and of those who died at Auschwitz. It is with attention to this injury that we will explore and compare their texts to find out how, for each, a philosophy after Auschwitz is only possible as testimony and as resistance. *Orietta Ombrosi*

Winter 2020

Anthropology and Sociology of Religion

AASR 33100 – Problems in the Anthropology of Religion 2

This is the second course of a two-quarter sequence surveying of some of the key problems in the anthropology of religion. Topics include belief, meaning and interpretation, ideology, power, embodiment, rationality, alterity, and the politics of representation. *Alireza Doostdar*

Biblical Studies

BIBL 32500 - Introduction to the New Testament

This is an introductory course to the history, literature, and interpretation of the New Testament. Our primary focus will be to read select texts of the New Testament, with an emphasis on their literary nature, their historical problems and sources, their theological visions, their history of interpretation, and their historical, geographic, social, political, religious and cultural contexts in early Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds. One will have the opportunity to situate one's own questions about and approaches to these texts in light of the history of scholarly research and through critical reflection about the methods and goals of interpretation in conversation with rhetorical, narrative, postcolonial, intercultural, feminist, and queer hermeneutics, and the history of sexuality. *Jeffrey Jay*

BIBL 34000 - Introductory Biblical Hebrew II

This course is the second of a two-quarter sequence designed to introduce students to the language of biblical Hebrew, with special emphasis on the fundamentals of its morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. The course follows a standard textbook supplemented by lectures, exercises, and oral drills aimed at refining the student's grasp of grammatically sound

interpretation and translation. At the conclusion of the two-quarter sequence students will be prepared to take a biblical Hebrew reading course in the spring quarter. *Doren Snoek*

BIBL 35300 - Introductory Koine Greek II

In this two-course sequence, students will learn the basic mechanics of Koine Greek and begin reading texts from the Greek New Testament and Septuagint. The autumn course and the first three-fourths or so of the winter course will introduce the vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and style of the Greek New Testament, and to a limited degree those of the Septuagint, after which point we will focus on reading and interpreting a New Testament document in Greek at length. Upon the conclusion of the sequence, students will be able to read and comprehend entire passages of Koine Greek text with the aid of a dictionary. This sequence aims to prepare students to successfully participate in a Greek exegesis course in Spring 2017 or thereafter. *Nathan Hardy*

BIBL 43220 - Biblical Law in its Near Eastern Context

This course will consider biblical legal texts in relation to other legal material from the ancient Near East. We will address issues such as the origin of biblical laws, their relation to real legal practice, their similarities to and differences from other Near Eastern laws, their relation to the narratives in which they are embedded, and their legal reasoning. Prerequisites: Hebrew required; facility with other ancient Near Eastern languages desirable. *Jeffrey Stackert*

BIBL 49900 – The Corpus Hermeticum

According to Clement of Alexandria Hermes Trismegistus authored 42 "fundamental books" on Egyptian religion. The writings under his name which are extant, dating between the first and third centuries AD, incorporate many styles and genres, including cosmogony, prophecy, gospel, popular philosophy, anthropology, magic, hymn, and apocalypse. The first treatise in the collection well represents the whole. It tells how the god Poimandres manifests to his follower a vision, revealing the origin of the kosmos and humanity, and how archetypal man descends to his fallen state and may be redeemed. We will begin with the Poimandres and then read other sections of this strange but absorbing body of material (including Books 4, 10, 13 and 16). PQ: Two years of Greek Required. *David Martinez*

Philosophy of Religion

DVPR 38750 – Philosophizing with a Hammer: Nietzsche, Freud, Kofman

Jacques Derrida said of Sarah Kofman that she read Nietzsche and Freud inside and out, pitilessly and implacably, like no one else in the century. In this course, Kofman will not only be a guide to our own rigorous reading of Freud and Nietzsche, but we will also explore the version of deconstruction that she both derives from these writers and applies to them. In the process we

will consider the means by which all three thinkers attempt to avoid the ruse of mastery in their work and the moments in which they succumb to its lure. We will consider as well the roles of gender and autobiography in their writings. In sum, Kofman will help us examine the relationship between religion, literature, and philosophy in the Twentieth Century, and the status of these discourses after Auschwitz. *Ryan Coyne and Sarah Hammerschlag*

DVPR 41700 – Readings in the Madhyamaka

This course will involve close philosophical attention to a representative range of Indian Madhyamaka texts. PQ – Some Sanskrit or Tibetan is expected, though there can be exceptions with consent of the instructor. *Dan Arnold*

DVPR/HIJD 51210 - Literature of the Shoah, Philosophy in the Shoah

This seminar will focus on three authors—Charlotte Delbo, Primo Levi, and Zalman Gradowski—each of whom wrote a literary masterpiece about their experiences in Auschwitz. All of their works also raise profound philosophical questions. Delbo, a member of the French Resistance, was deported to Auschwitz and wrote a truly remarkable trilogy, *Auschwitz and After*, that makes use of a variety of literary genres. Levi, deported as a Jew, wrote two classic prose works, *If This is a Man* and *The Drowned and the Saved*. Gradowski, the least well known of these authors, was assigned to the Sonderkommando in Auschwitz. Before being murdered, he wrote two extraordinary manuscripts and buried them under the ashes of Birkenau, where they were discovered after the war. Delbo and Levi both exist in English translation. However, there is not yet a complete translation of Gradowski into English. (His manuscripts were written in Yiddish). We will read the superb French translation of his manuscripts, which is accompanied by an important critical apparatus. Reading knowledge of French is therefore a prerequisite for this course. A central concern of this seminar will be the relation between literary expression and philosophical insight. We will also take up the question of how the Shoah can be represented and what philosophy can say about it. Finally, we will consider writing as a form of ethical and political resistance. We will read these works from several perspectives—philosophical and theological, literary, and historical. All students interested in enrolling in this course should send an application to jbarbaro@uchicago.edu by 12/13/2019. Applications should be no longer than one page and should include name, email address, phone number, and department or committee. Applicants should briefly describe their background and explain their interest in, and their reasons for applying to this course. *Arnold Davidson*

[History of Christianity](#)

HCHR 43959 - Varieties of Dominican Mysticism: Albert the Great, Meister Eckhart, and Catherine of Siena

This seminar will focus on three major Dominican mystical theologians: Albert the Great, Meister Eckhart and Catherine of Siena and, through a study of their thought, map out developments in late medieval mysticism and intellectual history. The focus will be on the mystical path towards union with God, with a sub focus on the mediating role of nature and natural philosophy on the one hand and of the church and sacraments on the other. Prerequisites: Knowledge of Latin and/or German is recommended but not required. *Willemien Otten*

History of Judaism

HIJD 42700 – Interactions b/t Jewish Philosophy and Literature during the Middle Ages

Any study of Jewish philosophy that focuses on a small collection of systematic summas tells only half the story. In this seminar, the emphasis will be shifted from canonical theologies to lesser-known works of literature. Each class will examine the way a different genre was used to defend philosophy and teach it to the community at large. Emphasis will be on literary form and style, rhetoric, methods of teaching and argumentation, all in relation to questions about reception and dissemination, progress and creativity, science and religion. *James Robinson*

HIJD 48610 - Jewish Sufism

During the Middle Ages the Jews in the Muslim world developed a robust synthesis of Jewish Spirituality and Islamic Sufism. Even those who did not subscribe to a Sufi pietistic Judaism nevertheless introduced Sufi language and ideas into their Jewish thought. This course will introduce several important figures in this Jewish Sufi movement, from Bahya ibn Paquda in 11th-century Spain to Maimonides and his descendants in 12th-14th century Egypt. *James Robinson*

HIJD/ISLM/HCHR 37106 - Race and Religion: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

What does race have to do with religion? This course will explore how racial concepts - ideas about the transmission of characteristics through blood and lineage - emerged in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, often in response to episodes of large-scale conversion. The word "race" was itself first applied to humans in response to one of these episodes: the mass conversions of Jews and Muslims to Christianity in late medieval Spain. We will study this and other episodes, beginning with early Christianity and early Islam, and concluding with conversions to Islam in South Asia, and of enslaved Africans and native peoples to Christianity in the New World, in order to ask how these episodes of conversion influenced the mapping of culture (religion) onto reproduction (nature, biology). Did they effect the racialization of religion? and what influence did these mappings have on racial concepts in modernity? *Dean David Nirenberg*

Islamic Studies

ISLM 30200 - Introductory Qur'anic Arabic II

This course is the second in a 3-quarter sequence “Introduction to Qur’anic Arabic” (IQA), which aims to provide students with foundational philological and reading skills by covering the essentials of Qur’anic/Classical Arabic grammar. This course also features readings of select passages from the Qur’an, Ḥadīth and Tafsīr. The 3 quarters of IQA are sequential, and students are strongly encouraged to join in the first quarter. Exceptions can be made on a case by case basis. Prerequisites: Successful completion of Introductory Qur’anic Arabic I. *Amir Toft*

ISLM 30600 - Islamic History and Society II: The Middle Period

This course covers the period from ca. 1100 to 1750, including the arrival of the Steppe Peoples (Turks and Mongols), the Mongol successor states, and the Mamluks of Egypt and Syria. We also study the foundation of the great Islamic regional empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Moghuls. *John Woods*

ISLM 30602 - Islamic Thought and Literature II

What are the major developments in thinking and in literature in the Islamic world of the “middle periods” (c. 950 – 1800 C.E.). How did noteworthy Muslims at various points and places think through questions of life & death, man & God, faith & belief, the sacred & the profane, law & ethics, tradition vs. innovation, power & politics, class & gender, self & other? How did they wage war; make love; shape the built environment; eat & drink; tell stories; educate their youth; preserve the past; imagine the future; perform piety, devotion and spirituality; construe the virtuous life and righteous community, etc.? How did these ideas change over time? What are some of the famous, funny, naughty and nice books read in the pre-modern Muslim world?

We will survey a broad geographic area stretching from Morocco and Iberia to the Maldives and India – even into the New World – through lectures, secondary readings and discussion. You will engage with a variety of primary texts in English translation, as well as various visual, aural and material artifacts. *Ahmed El Shamsy*

History of Religions

HREL 32204 - The Veda and its Interpreters

What, according to the Veda, is required of us? What is our response to it? What is the Veda, why does it matter, and to whom? This course seeks to cultivate an understanding of how scriptural commentators have grappled with notions of authority, obligation, ritual action, and liberating knowledge. We are primarily interested in the reception of Vedic figures, themes, and

ideas among its many interpreters, scholastic, literary, and political. Particular attention is given to the hermeneutical tradition of Vedānta, in both its premodern and modern incarnations. *Anand Venkatkrishnan*

HREL 35844 - Daoism and Chinese Religion

Daoism is the collective name for a group of interrelated Chinese religious traditions, including the “Ways” of the Celestial Masters, of Highest Clarity, of Numinous Treasure, and of Complete Reality, among many others. Taken together, they have sometimes been characterized as “China’s indigenous higher religion,” in part for the ways they grew out and systematized the myriad disparate religious practices of China’s antiquity, such as a vast range of “shamanic” and therapeutic techniques, and the philosophical and visionary ideas found in classic texts such as the Laozi, the Zhuangzi, and the Songs of Chu. More than this, however, the various forms of Daoism also grew by absorbing and remaking religious practices and ideas from across Eurasia, most importantly those found in the various styles of Buddhist religion that entered China in the first millennium AD and often formed, in this period and later, Daoism’s main rival. In this course we will cover the entirety of Daoism’s history in China, but focus mainly on its formative periods and on its place in China (and the world at large) today. Open to MAPH and MA Divinity students, not PhD students. *Paul Copp*

HREL 36000 - Second Year Sanskrit II

This sequence begins with a rapid review of grammar learned in the introductory course, followed by readings from a variety of Sanskrit texts. The goals are to consolidate grammatical knowledge, expand vocabulary, and gain confidence in reading different styles of Sanskrit independently. The winter quarter will be a reading of the Mahabharata. *Wendy Doniger*

HREL 45820 - Chinese Buddhist Texts and Thought

This course is intended as an introduction to the major textual and philosophical currents of Chinese Buddhism for Ph.D. students of Chinese art, history, and literature (though it is in principle open to anyone who can read literary Chinese). We will read sections from important scriptures such as the Vimalakirti, Lotus, and Heart sutras, as well as from Chan literature, with the primary goal of understanding basic Buddhist doctrines (such as "expedient means," "emptiness," "conditioned arising," "Buddha-nature," etc), as well as to gain familiarity with the language and styles of Chinese Buddhist texts and thought. *Paul Copp*

HREL 52200 – Problems in the History of Religions

A seminar for students in the PhD program in the History of Religions working on their colloquium paper, orals statement for the Qualifying Examination, or dissertation chapter. PQ – Only PhD students in HREL. *Christian Wedemeyer*

Religions of the Americas

RAME 42901 – Christian and Slavery in America, 1619-1865

We will be examining the relationship between Christian thought and the practice of slavery as they evolved historically, especially in the context of European enslavement of peoples of African descent in the colonies of British North America and in the antebellum South. The following questions will be addressed in some form through our readings and class discussions: Why did some Christians oppose slavery at a specific time and in a particular historical context? In other words, why did slavery become a moral problem for an influential though minority segment of the United States by the early 19th century? How and why did white evangelical Christians, especially in the South, become the most prominent defenders of slavery? What were some of the consequences of debates about slavery in regard to efforts to engage broader social reform? What role did race play in the historical development of slavery? How did people of African descent shape and practice Christianity in British North America and in the Southern States of the United States? *Curtis Evans*

RAME 43302 – Becoming Modern: American Religion in the 1920s

Terms such as “acids of modernity” and the “modern temper” were commonly used in the 1920s to describe a new phenomenon in American history. Historians still regard the 1920s as a significant moment in US History, even while revising older narratives that viewed such changes as leading to a decline in church attendance and religious practice. In the 1920s, the nation struggled with the effects of massive immigration, decades of urbanization, and significant cultural and social changes that had profound implications for religious practice and belief. This course takes an extended look at the 1925 Scopes Trial, the fundamentalist modernist controversy, and the intellectual and cultural challenges to traditional religious beliefs and practices. Some attention is devoted to increasing religious and cultural diversity as a challenge to Protestant dominance. *Curtis Evans*

Religion, Literature, Visual Culture

RLVC 38000 - Disability Studies and the Question of Religion

How are religious and secular understandings of disability different? How do religious and secular medical forms of care diverge? How are crippled bodies made functional or even sacred for a multiplicity of traditions? In contrast, how do people with disabilities challenge or problematize religious theologies of physical and spiritual wholeness? What is the connection between divine possession and madness? These opening questions are among the many that

animate the Study of Religion and Disability Studies. Despite the ways in which these fields are in complement, the mainstream of Disability Studies and Crip Theory has moved away from its early and robust engagement with the question of religion (e.g. Garland-Thomson, Watts Belser). This course will provide an introduction to current trajectories within Disability and Crip Theory with an eye towards religion and an invitation to reinvigorate and recenter religion in relation to this body of contemporary scholarship. *Sarah Pierce Taylor*

RLVC 41290 – Blake’s Theopoetics

Study of William Blake's unique combination of poetry-making and print-making, with special attention to its service to his theology. *Richard Rosengarten*

RLVC 41295 - Anthropos and Anthropocene in Bunyan and Milton: The Pilgrim's Progress and Paradise Lost

Analysis and comparison of the two major imaginative expressions of Christian faith in seventeenth century England. *Richard Rosengarten*

RLVC 42910 - Gender and Sexuality in South Asian Religions

From *Vātsyāyana’s Kāmasūtra* to debates around widow remarriage in the colonial period, the nexus of gender and sexuality fundamentally shapes religious practices and beliefs as well as the lives of women and gender non-conforming people. The central questions guiding this course are: How do South Asian religious traditions incorporate sexual practice and/or restraint into a vision of ethical life? When does one’s gender become dangerous or unethical? How do histories of imperialism interfere with and transform the study of gender and sexuality in South Asian religions? In pursuing these questions through a range of methodological approaches to the field, students will gain a deep familiarity with practices of religious asceticism, the place of erotics within religious discourse, new perspectives on queer and trans theory, emic feminisms, and sexual ethics. *Sarah Pierce Taylor*

RLVC 43010 – Art and Ritual in Byzantium

What was the place of architecture, images and objects in the various rituals of Byzantium – public and private, sacred and secular? In what ways did works of art respond to the ritualistic purpose for which they were created? To what extent is the latter reflected in the design of buildings, their urban setting, their pictorial decoration, their furnishings and mobile equipment? These are the key questions underlying this course, to which must be added: What are the limitations encountered by those aiming to reconstruct the function of buildings that have survived in a fragmentary or refurbished state and of artifacts now isolated from their original context? We will approach this topic by critically confronting surviving visual material from

Byzantium with various written sources. We will also explore these texts as a key source of information on works of art and architecture that no longer exist. *Karin Krause*

Religious Ethics

RETH 31200 – History of Religious and Theological Ethics II

This course traces the history of Western Religious and Theological Ethics from the Late Middle Ages to the 20th century. *William Schweiker*

RETH 36002 – The Ethics of War: Foundational Texts

This course will focus on foundational texts in the just-war tradition and the ethics of using force, drawing on the works of Augustine, Aquinas, Vitoria, Grotius, Walzer, and Fanon, along with those who have critically engaged their works. *Richard Miller*

RETH 53219 – Justice in an Unjust World: Theories of Justice

Classic theories of justice suggest an essential situation of scarcity and a modality and a justification for distribution of social goods. Yet each theory also assumes a particular ontology and a relationship to some larger order, a social contract with others; a covenant with an heteronomous law giver, sacred, or historical, or some internalized structure. The self who is situated in a world of scarcity is thus variously portrayed as an independent person with rights, a subject with duties, or a moral actor with capacities and desires. Against these theories, of course, is a material world of human existence which is rarely understood as "fair." This seminar will explore seven leading theories of justice in detail, and will assess the potency, practicality and principles of each. *Laurie Zoloth*

RETH 53510 – Augustine, Kierkegaard, and the Problem of Love

This advanced seminar will examine how Augustine and Kierkegaard theorized about the virtues and obligations of love, focusing on their respective theologies, moral psychologies, and normative accounts of interpersonal relationships. We will also examine how their ideas about love served as a basis for their political and cultural criticism. To sharpen our analyses of the primary sources, we will read influential receptions and interpretations of their works by Hannah Arendt and M. Jaime Ferreira. *Richard Miller*

Religious Leadership and Practice

RELP 32500 - Theology in the Public Square

This course examines the religious thought of religious leaders such as Dorothy Day, Thich Nhat Hanh, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and Reinhold Niebuhr in conversation with each other and as resources for American public life today. This is a required course for first year MDivs; open to MA students in the Divinity School only with consent of instructor. *Kris Culp*

RELP 35202 - Arts of Religious Leadership and Practice: Spiritual Care and Counseling

This course is the second of a three-quarter sequence introducing students to essential aspects of religious leadership; the sequence is required for second-year M.Div. students and complements their work in field education. In this course, students explore and practice the requisite skills for spiritual care and counseling in congregations, hospitals, university chaplaincies and other settings. Participants will interrogate human experience through several lenses, including theological and philosophical anthropologies, family systems theory, and relational and self-psychologies, with special attention to theories of race, ethnicity and gender. Practice labs will help students hone listening skills and narrative therapies, diagnosis and referrals, and healing rituals. Second year M.Div. students, or by permission of instructor. *Cynthia Lindner*

RELP 40700 - Field Work Practicum II

The course provides a forum for practical theological reflection through ongoing discussion with classmates of both field experience and general issues of ministerial practice. *Erika Dornfeld*

Theology

THEO 41190 - The Theology of James H. Cone

James H. Cone died in 2017. He was known as the founder of a new discipline -- liberation theology from the perspective of black Americans. We cover the beginning and end of his academic writings, including his last book published after his death. *Dwight Hopkins*

Religious Studies

RLST 10100 - Introduction the Religious Studies

What are we talking about when we talk about religion? There are a multitude of answers to that question, and this course provides students with an entryway into a longstanding conversation-involving insiders, outsiders, and those in between-around the meanings of a word that indexes ideas of god and the gods, of origins and ends, and of the proper places of humans (and everything else, including animals) above, in, and below the globe. Talk about religion

today is, in fact, cheap: this course will aim to promote a grammatical currency (morphology, vocabulary, syntax) to enhance the value of such talk. *Ryan Coyne*

RLST 20121 - The Bible and Archaeology

In this course we will look at how interpretation of evidence unearthed by archaeologists contributes to a historical-critical reading of the Bible, and vice versa. We will focus on the cultural background of the biblical narratives, from the stories of Creation and Flood to the destruction of the Jerusalem temple by the Romans in the year 70. No prior coursework in archaeology or biblical studies is required, although it will be helpful for students to have taken JWSC 20120 (Introduction to the Hebrew Bible). *David Schloen*

RLST 20840 - Radical Islamic Pietists: 1200 to 1600

Some knowledge of primary languages (i.e., Arabic, French, German, Greek, Latin, Persian, Spanish, Turkish) helpful. This course examines responses to the Mongol destruction of the Abbasid caliphate in 1258 and the background to formation of regional Muslim empires. Topics include the opening of confessional boundaries; Ibn Arabi, Ibn Taymiyya, and Ibn Khaldun; the development of alternative spiritualities, mysticism, and messianism in the fifteenth century; and transconfessionalism, antinomianism, and the articulation of sacral sovereignties in the sixteenth century. All work in English. This course is offered in alternate years. PQ: Consent of Instructor. *Cornell Fleischer*

RLST 21010 - God and the Good Life

Do we need God to know right from wrong? Or should morality shape and limit (or forbid) religious belief? Should we worry more about uncertainty and ignorance or overconfidence and fanaticism? This course focuses on the religious quest for certainty about how we should live. We will explore a variety of perspectives on the possibilities and problems involved in efforts to connect belief in God to moral knowledge and behavior. Readings include the Hebrew and Christian Bibles, the Quran, Plato, Kant, Kierkegaard, and Feuerbach, as well as more recent voices like Martin Luther King and contemporary critics of religion. *David Barr*

RLST 22011 - Jewish Civilization II: Late Medieval to Modern Period

Jewish Civilization is a two-quarter sequence that explores the development of Jewish culture and tradition from its ancient beginnings through its rabbinic and medieval transformations to its modern manifestations. Through investigation of primary texts-biblical, Talmudic, philosophical, mystical, historical, documentary, and literary-students will acquire a broad overview of Jews, Judaism, and Jewishness while reflecting in greater depth on major themes, ideas, and events in Jewish history. The Winter quarter will begin with the late medieval period and continue to the present. It will include discussions of mysticism, the works of Spinoza and Mendelssohn, the nineteenth-century reform, the Holocaust and its reflection in writers such as Primo Levi and

Paul Celan, and literary pieces from postwar American Jewish and Israeli authors. All sections of each course will share a common core of readings; individual instructors will supplement with other materials. It is recommended, though not required, that students take these two courses in sequence. Students who register for the Autumn Quarter course will automatically be pre-registered for the winter segment. (There will be two sections) *Sarah Hammerschlag ; Cathleen Chopra-McGowan*

RLST 22330 - Flooding the World: Creation and Restoration in the Levant, Mesopotamia, and India

From Genesis to the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Rig Veda to modern novels like Geraldine McCaughrean's *Not the End of the World* (2004) and Jeanette Winterson's *Boating for Beginners* (1997), humans have repeatedly accounted for, imagined, and ironized civilizational collapse and restoration through stories of catastrophic floods. These texts, modern and ancient, are fraught with political, religious, and historical background. In this course, we will compare these texts, focusing on literary issues like narrative plot, the construction of characters, the literary devices used, and the role of the narrator in telling the story of the flood. We will attempt to ascertain why imaginings of a deluge are generative, while being attuned to the complex differences between the ancient narratives and their significantly different afterlives. Through sustained inquiry, we will both challenge notion of sacred exceptionalism even while confronting the enduring presence of this trope in the post-modern novel. *Cathleen Chopra-McGowan*

RLST 22811 - Zombie Hinduism

This course provides an introduction to the study of Hinduism from the perspective of material culture. We focus on the stuff of everyday life: blood, water, snakes, groves, foods, ghosts, cremation grounds, and roadside shrines. The course selects particularly from the fields of anthropology and art history. *Anand Venkatkrishnan*

RLST 23104 - Immanuel Kant's Critique of Practical Reason

The thought of Immanuel Kant's revolutionized ethics and moral theory and has decisively influence modern conceptions of justice, human rights discourse, and also democratic liberal political theory. This course is a careful reading and engagement with Kant's fundamental text in moral theory, his Critique of Practical Reason. If time allows, the course will also consider elements of Kant's political thinking in his famous treatise, *Toward Eternal Peace*. *William Schweiker*

RLST 24504 - Dreams, Religion, Psychology

This course examines the rise of psychological approaches to the nature and functions of dreaming, especially dreams with potentially religious significance. Psychologists have proposed

several different models for understanding dreams, starting with the early 20th century work of Freud and Jung and continuing into the 21st century with sleep laboratory research and cognitive neuroscience. Each of these models takes a distinctive stance towards certain recurrent forms and types of dreaming that are frequently interpreted in religious, spiritual, or existential terms. This course will look closely at how well modern psychological theories are able to account for the occurrence of such dreams as reported in historical and contemporary settings. *Staff*

RLST 24601 - Martin and Malcolm: Life and Belief

This course examines the religious, social, cultural, political, and personal factors behind the two most prominent public leaders and public intellectuals emerging from the African American community in the 1950s and 1960s: Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. We review their autobiographies, domestic trends within the United States, and larger international forces operating during their times. Their life stories provide the contexts for the sharp differences and surprising commonalities in their political thought and religious beliefs. The operative question is: what can Malcolm and Martin tell us about America during one of the most dynamic periods in the nation's personality metamorphosis? We use documentary videos of each man's speeches and of the social contexts in which they lived. *Dwight Hopkins*

RLST 25703 - Climate Ethics

Anthropogenic climate change is the largest challenge facing human civilization. Its physical and temporal scale and unprecedented complexity at minimum require extensions of existing ethical systems, if not new ethical tools. In this course we will examine how religious and philosophical ethical systems respond to the vast temporal and spatial scales of climate change. For instance, common principles of environmental ethics such as justice and responsibility are often reimaged in climate ethics even as they are central to the ethical analysis of its effects. In the course, we will take a comparative approach to environmental ethics, examining perspectives from secular Western philosophy, Christianity (Catholic and Protestant), Buddhist, and Indigenous thought. We will also look at a variety of ethical methods. Throughout the course we will focus on communication about climate change as well as articulating rigorous ethical arguments about its causes and implications. *Sarah Fredericks*

RLST 26101 - Buddhism

This course will survey central features of the Buddhist traditions in South, Central, and East Asia, over its roughly 2500 year history. Attention will be paid to the variety of disciplinary orientations (historical, philological, anthropological, sociological, economic, archaeological, philosophical) that may be taken to illuminate various aspects of the traditions. Consideration will also be given to the concurrent rise of distinctive Buddhist responses to modernity and the modern/academic study of Buddhism. *Christian Wedemeyer*

RLST 26302 - Religion, Medicine, and Illness

This course examines both the dynamic relationship between religion and medicine and the discursive role of religion as it relates to the experience of illness. Through a survey of a broad tapestry of religious traditions, textual genres, and case studies, students will evaluate how religion offers a pliable explanatory system (through myths, symbols, rituals, etc.) to address questions of causation, coping, and curing vis-à-vis illness. By no means does this course purport to be an exhaustive study of religion and medicine; rather, a heavy emphasis is placed on the sheer variety of responses to illness both across religious traditions and within those traditions. To support this aim the course has a distinct interdisciplinary approach—drawing upon literature from: art history, medical anthropology, sociology, history, and theology. *Mark Lambert*

RLST 26623 - Narratives of Assimilation

This course offers a survey into the manifold strategies of representing the Jewish community in East Central Europe beginning from the nineteenth century to the Holocaust. Engaging the concept of liminality-of a society at the threshold of radical transformation-it will analyze Jewry facing uncertainties and challenges of the modern era and its radical changes. Students will be acquainted with problems of cultural and linguistic isolation, hybrid identity, assimilation, and cultural transmission through a wide array of genres-novel, short story, epic poem, memoir, painting, illustration, film. The course draws on both Jewish and Polish-Jewish sources; all texts are read in English translation. *Bozena Shallcross*

RLST 28211 - Religion and Literature: Dramatic Encounters

This course will explore some of the major statements from the Western intellectual tradition on religion and literature as categories of thought, forms of human expression and communication, and sources of personal and social meaning. We will pay close attention to the various ways that the relationship between these two concepts has been understood and constructed by artists, philosophers, and theologians alike. Students from all concentrations are welcome; no prior knowledge or foreign language competency is required for enrollment. *Matthew Creighton*

RLST 28705 - Christian Iconography

In Christian culture, visual images have for many centuries played a pivotal role in ritual, devotion, intellectual thought, and religious instruction. The most important aims of this course are that students understand images convey meaning in very unique ways and learn how to decode their visual messages. The study of iconography encompasses a variety of methods used to identify the subject matter of a pictorial image, describe its contents, and analyze its discursive strategies in view of its original cultural context. We will cover some of the most important themes visualized in the arts of Christianity by analyzing imagery spanning different periods, geographical regions, pictorial media, and artistic techniques. While special emphasis is placed

on the intersections of art and literature, we will also examine pictorial themes that are independent of a specific textual basis. Alongside the study of Christian iconography, this course will address broader issues of visual inquiry, such as patronage, viewer response, emotions, and gender roles. In this course, students will acquire a 'visual literacy' that will enable them to explore all kinds of works of art fruitfully as primary sources in their own right. *Karin Krause*

RLST 29015 - Religion and Rationality after Modernity

This course provides an introduction to the relationship between religion and rationality as it has been conceived in the post-Enlightenment West. It is intended to provide students with a basic historical and theoretical framework for thinking about how these categories relate, how they have evolved, and what the work they do in our contemporary society. Our readings will challenge easy definitions of either “religion” or “rationality” (as well as their respective cognates), problematizing any neat opposition between (or conflation of) them. While these notions will serve to structure our overarching conversation, they also implicate corresponding binaries, such as nature and culture, universal and particular, fact and value, history and myth, empiricism and ideology. Readings will include seminal works by Kant, Hölderlin, Hegel, Marx, Weber, Cassirer, Eliade, Foucault, Butler, Latour, Asad, and Mahmood. *Lisa Landoe Hedrick*

Spring 2020

Anthropology and Sociology of Religion

AASR 42800 – Religion and Empire

This course explores transformations in religion and religious knowledge in sites of colonial contact. We will also study the production of knowledge about religion in colonial settings and new imperial contexts for governing religion. We will pay close attention to race, gender, and the formation of nation-states. *Angie Heo*

Bible

BIBL 33000 - Muses and Saints: Poetry Within the Christian Traditions

This course provides an introduction to the poetic traditions of early Christians and the intersection between poetic literature, theology, and biblical interpretation. Students will gain familiarity with the literary context of the formative centuries of Christianity with a special emphasis on Greek and Syriac Christians in the Eastern Mediterranean from the fourth through the sixth centuries. While theology is often taught through analytical prose, theological reflection

in late antiquity and early Byzantium was frequently done in poetic genres. This course introduces students to the major composers and genres of these works as well as the various recurrent themes that occur within this literature. Through reading poetry from liturgical and monastic contexts, students will explore how the biblical imaginations of Christians were formed beyond the confines of canonical scripture. How is poetry a mode of “doing” theology? What habits of biblical interpretation and narration does one encounter in this poetry? This course exposes students to a variety of disciplinary frameworks for studying early Christian texts including history, religious studies, feminist and literary critique, as well as theology. Students will also analyze medieval and modern poetry with religious themes in light of earlier traditions to reflect on the poetry and the religious imagination more broadly. Open to undergraduate and graduate students; Graduate students may choose to attend weekly translation group. *Erin Galgay Walsh*

BIBL 36000 - The Johannine Epistles

The Johannine Epistles raise fascinating theological and interpretative questions. In this course students will read the Greek text closely, examining the composition, genre, structure, theology, and purpose of these letters. Readings will also include New Testament and early Christian texts that help illuminate the hermeneutical questions and place of the Johannine epistles. Special attention will be paid to the questions surrounding the texts’ authorship and reception within later Christian traditions. Prerequisites: Graduate students who have completed classes I and II of the Koine Greek sequence or equivalent. Various levels can be accommodated; please feel free to consult with instructor. *Erin Galgay Walsh*

BIBL 36010 - The Book of Psalms

The *Book of Psalms* is a collection of about 150 poems of varying genres, themes, motifs, lengths, and styles, written in ancient Hebrew, coming from ancient Israel, Judea, and possibly Babylon during the Iron Age (11th–6th cents. BCE) and the Persian period (6th–4th cents. BCE), nearly all about the deity Yahweh. We will read select psalms in Hebrew for their varied voicing, topoi, prosody, poetics, and religious ideas. This course will serve students interested in the literary and religious aspects of the Hebrew Bible. For students who have taken Biblical Hebrew I & II, this course will serve as Biblical Hebrew III. *Simeon Chavel*

BIBL 37612 - Literary Theory and the Hebrew Bible

Readings in literary theory and in select works of the Hebrew Bible, with special attention to voice and genre. Seminar-style presentations and discussion. *Simeon Chavel*

BIBL 42222 - Lesser Known Gospels

An introduction to the apocryphal gospels. Our primary task will be to read and discuss the primary texts in translation—gospel writings outside of the four canonical New Testament

gospels in conjunction with recent scholarship. We will focus on (among others) the Gospels of Peter, Thomas, Mary, the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, the Proto-Gospel of James, as well as other select Jewish-Christian and Nag Hammadi gospel texts. *Jeffrey Jay*

BIBL 48002 - Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi

This is a reading and exegesis course on the prophetic texts of Haggai, Zechariah (chs. 1–8), and Malachi. All texts will be read in Hebrew. *Jeffrey Stackert*

Philosophy of Religion

DVPR 33700 - Inquiry into the Possible Meanings of “The End of Metaphysics”

Having in a former class studied the different meanings of «metaphysics» (Aristotle, the medievals, Kant, Heidegger), this term will be devoted to explain the several conceptions of the «end of metaphysics». The discussion will first focus on its historical (diachrony) conception, positive (Hegel) or negative (Carnap), or both (Heidegger, either as the «destruction of ontology» or as the overcoming of Being). Then on the non-historical (synchrony) destitution of «metaphysics» (Pascal, Kierkegaard, a.s.o.), opening the question of givenness. *Jean-Luc Marion*

DVPR 34300 – Buddhist Poetry in India

The substantial Buddhist contribution to Indian poetry is of interest for what it teaches us of both Buddhism and the broad development of Indian literature. The present course will focus upon three phases in this history, with attention to what changes of language and literary genre tell us of the transformations of Indian religious culture from the last centuries B.C.E. to about the year 1000. Readings (all in translation) will include the Therīgāthā, a collection of verses written in Pali and the most ancient Indian example of womens’ literature, selections from the work of the great Sanskrit poets Āśvaghōṣa, Āryaśūra, and Māṛceta, and the mystical songs, in the Apabhraṃśa language, of the Buddhist tantric saints. *Matthew Kapstein*

DVPR 34619 – Giorgio Agamben’s *Homo Sacer* Project

This seminar will attempt to work through the nine (mostly short) volumes that constitute Agamben's effort to articulate a theory of the ways in which human life is "politicized," comes to be inscribed in relations of power and authority. Special consideration will be given to Agamben's recourse to literature -- above all, to the work of Kafka -- in the elaboration of his theory. *Ryan Coyne and Eric Santner*

DVPR 46477 – Coherence in Chinese Philosophy: Confucius to Tiantai

This course will undertake a history of Chinese philosophy from its beginnings to the advent of Neo-Confucianism in the Song dynasty, focusing on the evolution of notions of "coherence," eventually coming to converge around the concept of "Li" 理 as it plays out in Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist and hybrid traditions. Li will be viewed as a variable term indicating a subject-object Gestalt structured around dyadic bipolarities as generative of continuities with designated values and desires, as conceived variously by the various sub-traditions. The role played by this conception of continuity in logic and epistemology, as well as metaphysics and ontology, will be contrasted with philosophical conceptions rooted in traditions that dichotomize sameness and difference through conceptions such as universals, particulars, essences, substances, attributes, God, design, and truth. The course will consist of the close reading of the two-volume series, *Ironies of Oneness and Difference*, and *Beyond Oneness and Difference*.
Brook Ziporyn

DVPR 53330 - Revelation, Temporality, and Being

Following up the previous seminars on the history of the concept of Revelation and its alternative models (metaphysical, phenomenological, biblical, a.s.o.), this class will be devoted to a reverse interrogation: provided first that the concept of Revelation, in a Christian perspective, can only be understood from a trinitarian viewpoint (Barth and Balthasar, Basile of Cesarea and Augustine); provided then that the most crucial issues about Revelation should be addressed from this trinitarian viewpoint, one may try to understand not Trinity on the basis of the philosophical concepts of time and history (as Hegel and Schelling did) or of being (as Thomas Aquinas and Heidegger did), but on a contrary order, to consider being and time on the basis of Trinity and according to the logic of agapê. This means a reinterpretation of time as eschatology or krisis, and of being as givenness. *Jean-Luc Marion*

History of Christianity

HCHR 44004 - The Veneration of Icons in Byzantium: History, Theory and Practice

In order to appreciate the pivotal religious significance icons had in Byzantium for private devotion, in the liturgy, in civic ritual, and in military campaigns, we will survey the visual evidence along with a vast array of written sources. We will explore the origins of the Christian cult of icons in the Early Byzantine period and its roots in the Greco-Roman world of paganism. Through the close analysis of icons executed over the centuries in different artistic techniques, we will examine matters of iconography, style and aesthetics. We will also have a close look at image theory, as developed by Byzantine theologians and codified in the era of Iconoclasm.
Karin Krause

HCHR 45805 – Journeys Real and Virtual: Travel in the Pre-Modern Mediterranean

This course focuses on the art of travel in the Medieval and early modern Mediterranean. From the late Middle Ages through the sixteenth century, European pilgrimage to the Holy Land constituted some of the most advanced experiments in representing travel, describing foreign cities, and mapping out territories. Travel accounts represent the core material around which this course is structured along with images and maps in other contexts that such experiments influenced. Course material will span the fields of religious, art, literary, and urban history, encompassing historical geography, cartography, and cultural history. Students will engage directly with the verbal and visual modes that characterize the documentary legacy of mental and physical travel in order to come to terms with the different regimes of knowledge they construct as well as the cognitive demands they place on their audience. Through a comparison of techniques, students will explore the ways in which texts, images, and maps sought to understand human interaction, visualize geographical context, locate history, and make sense of the world beyond their drama of their local experience. *Karin Krause and Niall Atkinson*

History of Judaism

HIJD 30175 - Jewish Law from the Hebrew Bible to Jesus

This course explores the key role of law in the development of Second Temple Judaism and the place of Jesus traditions within this charged sphere. Debates concerning the interpretation and purpose of biblical law, as well as the issues of tradition, revelation and authority shaped the image of Jewish society and marked the dividing lines between ideological parties (e.g. Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes). The emergence of distinct legal ideologies nurtured the development of both rabbinic Judaism and the Jesus movement towards the end of the period. The course will consist of three sections: (1) Survey of the history of legal discourse during this period and acquaintance with the relevant works on law from Qumran (2) A thorough investigation of scholarly trends on Jesus and the law and close readings of major sources on law in the Gospels (3) Introduction to the study of early rabbinic literature and its relevance for the study of Second Temple traditions. Meetings will consist of introductory lectures, discussions of scholarship and readings of select ancient sources (in translation). *Yair Furstenberg*

HIJD 32333 - The Emergence of 'Israelite' and Other Ethnic Identities in the Iron Age Southern Levant

The question of Israel's emergence on the historical scene has puzzled scholars for decades, and constitutes one of the hottest debates in biblical studies and Levantine archaeology. This specific question is intertwined with the way other groups in the Iron Age southern Levant defined, negotiated and redefined their identities, including the groups known as the Philistines, the Canaanites, and others that evolved at the time. Combining the detailed archaeological and historical information with the insights of anthropological studies on identity-formation, the

course will examine the interaction between the various groups that existed in the region, and how it shaped and reshaped their identities. *Avraham Faust*

HIJD 36400 - Mystical Theology of Hasidism: The Circle of the Maggid of Mezeritch

This course is an introduction to the mystical and spiritual theology of early modern Hasidism (late eighteenth century), centering around the first major teacher of the movement and the significant figures who gathered around him (and later founded their own spiritual dynasties). We shall focus of the Scriptural teachings of the Maggid and his circle, emphasizing the hermeneutical insights and daring of these spiritual masters – particularly such issues as radical non-dualism, divine immanence, the contemplative self, service of God through corporeal life, and the unique role of language as the inner-structure of existence. The great masters of this circle include Rabbis Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev, Shneur Zalman of Liadi, Yehuda Aryeh Leib of Gur, and Menachem Mendel of Chernobyl. Texts will be studied in English with the Hebrew originals provided. *Michael Fishbane*

HIJD 43221 - Israel and Judah Under Empire

In the late 8th century BCE Israel, Judah and the other polities of the southern Levant came under Assyrian hegemony, and then under the Babylonian and Persian empires. The seminar will review the demographic and economic situation in the region before the arrival of the first empire in the late 8th century BCE, and the subsequent changes during the 7th-6th centuries BCE in an attempt to use the unparalleled data available from this region to (1) reconstruct life in the provinces and client kingdoms and (2) use the detailed information to learn about imperial encounters at large, and the impact of imperial control on the life of the peoples under its yoke. *Avraham Faust*

HIJD 44750 – Contemporary Jewish Theology: Types of Theological Writing in America

This course is intended to introduce students to four figures who wrote theology for American audiences – thoroughly engaged with the classic rabbinic tradition but simultaneously seeking a new voice of religious expression. The first two, Joseph B. Soloveitchik and Abraham Joshua Heschel, who came from Eastern European rabbinic dynasties and also trained at the University of Berlin, came to America and stimulated a renaissance after the Holocaust and its religious-cultural catastrophe. The second two, Arthur Green and Michael Fishbane, were born in America and influenced by these and other contemporary theologians, and were part of the renaissance of American Jewish religious life from the late 1960s on. We shall read essays and books by these theologians and assess their modes of composition, reinterpretation of the classical Jewish tradition, and visions for the renewal of Jewish life in contemporary times and circumstances. This course is suitable for students in the College and Divinity School students in

the areas of Jewish Studies, Theology and Religion and Literature. There is no language requirement. *Michael Fishbane*

History of Religions

HREL 42907 – Contemporary Theories of Religion

This course will explore developments in the study of religion from the Marburg Declaration of 1960 to the present. Participants will attend to the recent history of the field, intellectually and institutionally; to the analysis of select theoretical developments in this period, their prospects, accomplishments, and challenges; to the relationships between the History of Religions and work on religion in related fields of study (e.g., anthropology, sociology, history); and to the social location(s) of the study of religion in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. *Christian Wedemeyer*

HREL 42999 – Buddhist/Muslim Conflicts in Southeast Asia

The past 20 years have witnessed the rise of serious tensions and violence between Theravada Buddhists and Muslim communities in Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand respectively. This course provides an analytical, diachronic and comparative overview of the various social, economic, political and religious dynamics that have contributed to the recent outbreak of these conflicts. *John Holt*

HREL 43555 – Buddhist Scholasticism and its Practical Path Structures

It is always a question whether there is only one path (mārga) structure or many prescribed by the Buddha. The period of Abhidhamma and Abhidharma represent the historical stage when Buddhist scholasticism systematically formed. A foundational knowledge of the two traditions under the same umbrella as Śrāvakayāna (“Vehicle of Hearing” in contrast to Mahāyāna) will enable the participants to acquire an integrated perspective on the Buddhist development with regards to path structures. No prior acquaintance with the doctrines of either tradition is assumed.

The course will examine the fundamental path structure of Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda doctrines pertaining to spiritual praxis. Where appropriate, corresponding or parallel textual materials from the Yogācāra tradition will also be discussed with comparative studies. The course is designed to foster a clear and comprehensive understanding of the meditative system of both schools (Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda) and to provide clear perspectives on the development of the doctrines and practices in the diverse forms of meditative praxis found in Abhidhamma/Abhidharma sources. Reading in Chinese Abhidharma texts will be conducted if required. *Dhammadipa Sak*

HREL 43987 – Comparative Reading Pali and Chinese Buddhist Texts

Pāli language is the sole surviving Indic language used to document the Theravada Buddhist canon. Pāli is regarded by the Theravadin tradition as the language spoken by the Buddha himself, although linguistic scholars have argued that Pāli is only one of the many vernacular languages spoken in northern India during the middle period of Indian linguistic evolution.

This course is designed to provide a platform for the students to engage in reading selected Pāli suttas, commentaries, and literature. Students will be expected to analyze the sentence patterns and read sentences aptly. The selection of texts and literature will help the students develop their understanding of the core Pāli teachings. In addition, reading similar texts in ancient Chinese translated from probable Indic Languages between the 2nd and 11th centuries will provide participants a better sense of the transformation and contextualization of early Buddhist texts. The course provides the participants with skills in reading and comprehending Pali suttas and commentaries. The sessions will be highly focused on the discussion of the teachings and implications. Chinese parallels to the Pali texts will be given to read for comparative studies. Basic knowledge of either Pali or Sanskrit is required. *Dhammadipa Sak*

HREL 52402 - Readings: Advanced Tibetan III

Readings: Advanced Tibetan is for students who have successfully completed third year and fourth year or equivalent with placement test. The sequence is meant to expose students to a range of genres in Tibetan literature, including religious, historical, philosophical, scientific, and literary works. Instruction includes guided readings with continuing grammar review, practice in speaking, and application of philological methods. *Matthew Kapstein*

Islamic Studies

ISLM 30092 – Classical Arab Linguistics

This course delves into debates in Arabic linguistics of the classical period (before the fifteenth century) on questions such as, What is the origin of language? How does language work? How do languages relate to one another? Where does the Arabic language come from? Is the distinction between literal and figurative uses of language real? We read writings by seminal Arabic linguists, such as al-Tabari, Abu Hilal al-‘Askari, Ibn Faris, al-Qadi ‘Abd al-Jabbar, and Ibn Taymiyya, addressing not only linguistics proper but also topics in fields such as Quranic exegesis, theology, and legal theory. We also discuss key works of secondary scholarship on the subject. Undergraduate students by instructor permission only. *Ahmed El Shamsy*

ISLM 30300 - Introductory Qur'anic Arabic III

This course is the third in a 3-quarter sequence "Introduction to Qur'anic Arabic" (IQA), which aims to provide students with foundational philological and reading skills by covering the essentials of Qur'anic/Classical Arabic grammar. This course also features readings of select passages from the Qur'an, Ḥadīth and Tafsīr. The 3 quarters of IQA are sequential, and students are strongly encouraged to join in the first quarter. Exceptions can be made on a case by case basis. Graduate and undergraduate students from any department are welcome to register. The minimum prerequisite for IQA III is the successful completion of IQA II or equivalent training. The IQA sequence is also open to students who may have had more exposure to Arabic (modern or classical) but wish to acquire a solid foundation in Arabic grammar, and/or students who feel they are not yet ready for third-year Arabic courses. *Amir Toft*

ISLM 30321 - Persian Poetry: Shahnameh-2

"The Shahnameh, the Persian ""Book of Kings,"" is generally classed as an epic or national epic. While it does not lack for battling champions and heroic saga, it also includes episodes in a variety of disparate genres and themes: creation narrative, mythology, folk tale, romance, royal chronicle, and political history.

In this course we gain familiarity with the style and language of Ferdowsi's Shahnameh by slow reading and discussion of select episodes in Persian, in tandem with a reading of the whole text in English translation. We approach the work as a foundational text of Iranian identity,; compendium of pre-Islamic mythology and lore; a centrifugal axis of Persianate civilization and Iranian monarchical tradition throughout Anatolia, Central Asia and South Asia; and as an instance of ""world literature."" We will read with an eye toward literary structure; genre; Indo-Iranian mythology; political theory and commentary; character psychology; ideals of masculinity, femininity and heroism; the interaction of text, oral tradition, illustration, scholarship, and translation in the shaping of the literary reception of the Shahnameh; and, of course, the meaning(s) of the work. We also address wider issues of textual scholarship: the sources of the Shahnameh, the scribal transmission of Ferdowsi's text, and the production of modern critical editions and theories of textual editing. Class discussions will be in English. PQ: PERS 30320; 2 years of Persian or the equivalent. *Franklin Lewis*

ISLM 30603 - Islamic Thought and Literature III

This class explores works of Muslim intellectuals, who interpreted various aspects of Islamic philosophy, political theory and law in the modern age. We will look at diverse interpretations concerning the role of religion in a modern society, at secularized and historicized approaches to religion and at the critique of both religious establishments and nation states as articulated by Middle Eastern intellectuals. Consequently, we will contextualize concepts like "woman," "nation," "East" and "jihad" as we follow the meanings assigned to these conceptions by different intellectuals at different historical moments. The class likewise examines the ways in

which Muslim reformers synthesized cultural trends to revive the Islamic faith in face of Western economic and political hegemony. Our debate will focus on the influence of the colonial settings on the formation of these new readings and on the ways in which Muslim thinkers both appropriated and critiqued Western notions of civilization and guidance. We will consider the impact of these new ideas on political theory, and in particular on the political systems which emerged in the modern Middle East. Finally, the class will scrutinize the ways in which Muslim writers manipulated new means of communication such as the print media in order to propagate their ideas regarding the nature of their state and society. Generally, we shall discuss secondary literature first and the primary sources later. *Orit Bashkin*

ISLM 30630 - Introduction to Islamic Philosophy

This course offers an introduction to the terms and concepts current in Arabic philosophical writings in the classical period of Islamic thought (roughly 9th to 17th century). It begins with the movement to translate Greek texts into Arabic and the debate among Muslims about the validity of philosophy versus revelation. From a close reading of key works (in English) by important philosophers such as al-Kindī, al-Rāzī, al-Sijistānī, al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), al-Ghazzālī, Ibn Bājja, Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Suhrawardī, and Mullā Ṣadrā, a series of lectures will follow the career of philosophy in the Islamic world, first as a 'foreign' science and then, later, as selectively rejected but also substantially accepted as a natural component of sophisticated discourse. *Paul Walker*

Religious Ethics

RETH 50900 – Collective Agency and Responsibility

In the twentieth and twenty-first century, modern western notions of individual identity, agency, and responsibility have been challenged by collective experiences. Studies of collective atrocities such as the Holocaust, apartheid, racism and sexism have informed research on collective identity, agency, and responsibility. Research and legal developments on corporate agency and responsibility add to the discussion. Finally, global environmental challenges such as climate change raise questions about the types of agents responsible for these harms and for combating them. This class will explore a number of theories of collective agency and responsibility to interrogate the differences and relationships between individuals and collectives. *Sarah Fredericks*

Religion, Literature, Visual Culture

RLVC 39150 – Veiling the Image: Sacred and Profane from Antiquity to Modernity

This course will explore the fascinating culture of covering and veiling sacred icons, or images that were thought to cause trauma or outrage in the European tradition. It will begin in the ancient world and explore medieval, Renaissance and modern art – both paintings and sculptures, as well as images that represent the covering of images... It will attempt to restore the sensual, the tactile and the performative to the experience of viewing art and engaging with its powers, by contrast to the prevailing regime of disinterested contemplation encouraged by the modernist art gallery. *Jas' Elsner*

RLVC 41150 – Art & the World Religions: First Millennium from India to Ireland

This course, building on the recent Empires of Faith project at the British Museum will explore the interface of visual and religious identity in the formative period when all the religions currently considered ‘world religions’ were developing their characteristic iconographies. The course will attempt to open comparative and historical perspectives on religion through material culture, interrogating the normative models of constructing religion through written rather than visual sources. Students will be encouraged to work from images as well as texts. The course is open to graduates as well as undergraduates, and will be taught in a speeded up form twice a week for the first five weeks of the quarter. *Jas' Elsner*

RLVC 50010 – Writing Religion

This will be a course about the craft of scholarly writing. It will consider the conventions and conflicts of writing in a field as interdisciplinary as the study of religion and will explore the opportunities for creativity, voice and style within its various forms through reading and writing. We will work on everything from the sentence to the structuring of book-length manuscripts. The class will be organized to accommodate analysis, discussion and workshop and the final assignment will be the revision of a seminar paper into an essay suitable for publication. The course is geared primarily for PhD students and should be particularly useful to those in the dissertation writing phase. *Sarah Hammerschlag*

RLVC 51000 - Narrative in Crip and Queer Studies

This course focuses on Crip and Queer theories of time as ways to get at varied understandings of temporality that destabilize the wobbly formation of “normal” and produce non-linear forms of life as narratable. By focusing on narrative unfolding, circling back, slowing down, and the precarity of the future, the course proceeds by putting two distinct strands of Queer and Crip Theory in conversation. We begin with what theorists have conceptualized as a distinct queer temporality (e.g. Halberstam, Freeman) alongside its complement, crip time (McRuer). We then turn to questions about queer futurity alongside critiques within Crip Theory that fully embrace the future as a way of embracing the present. Following these two strands, we see the productive

dynamism and the tension between crip and queer temporalities in envisioning non-normative, non-heterosexual life. *Sarah Pierce Taylor*

Religious Leadership and Practice

REL 35300 - Arts of Religious Leadership and Practice: Community, Leadership, and Change

This course is the third of a three-quarter sequence introducing students to essential aspects of religious leadership; the sequence is required for second-year M.Div. students and complements their field education experience. In this final quarter of the year-long sequence, students study congregations as "communities-within-communities," examining the public life of congregations and their leaders as responsible agents of change, both within the religious community and in the wider context. Through research projects and case studies, students practice the skills of analysis, decision-making, negotiation and visioning that are essential to organizational vitality and constructive community engagement. *Cynthia Lindner*

REL 40800 - Field Work Practicum III

The Practicum sequence complements the MDiv Congregational Placement and offers opportunities for students to engage in critical reflection of their respective practical experiences of ministry leadership. In addition to this element of personal and practical reflections, students will engage a range of readings, written exercises, and classroom conversations to assist in articulating and refining their own practice of ministry. *Erika Dornfeld*

REL 50403 - Advanced Seminar: Topic TBA

Cynthia Lindner

Theology

THEO 31600 – Introduction to Theology

This course will consider a handful of theologies from a variety of religious traditions, paying special attention to the would-be practical wisdom exhibited in each. *Kevin Hector*

THEO 40801 – Theology and Cultural Studies

This course will study models of cultural studies and we will put these theoretical constructs in conversation with models of theology. Indeed, all theologies arise out of human culture and the attempt of the human being to make ultimate meaning out of all that he/she has created. Students

will engage different cultural analyses and develop their own cultural approach to constructing theologies interacting with cultural studies. *Dwight Hopkins*

THEO 46006 - Approaches to Suffering: Theological Perspectives and Contemporary Meditations

Framed by a consideration of Susan Sontag on the representation of suffering, Elaine Scarry on *The Body in Pain*, and Judith Butler on grievable life, this seminar will seek to extend and enrich such contemporary meditations through conversation with varied theological approaches to suffering. One thesis of the course is that theodicy need not be viewed as the chief theological approach to suffering. Through close reading of selected works, we will consider interpretive frames such as creation and providence, wounding and healing, and crucifixion and resurrection, together with religious responses such as introspection, contemplation, mourning, witness, and resistance. Prerequisites: previous work in theology recommended; open to undergraduates by permission only. *Kris Culp*

THEO 52225 – Social Entrepreneurship

This course is an experiment. We will explore the possibility or reality of the following. Doing good requires capital and capital can do good. This is a major debate. Even before the 2008 financial crisis, most Divinity Schools, seminaries, and theological schools probably held the view that money is the root of all evil. Specifically, at the University of Chicago business school, Milton Friedman, one of its noted Nobel Prize winning thinkers, argued that the purpose of business is to maximize profits for its shareholders. And, for business to engage in the social is tantamount to dabbling in socialism. So, on one side of the campus, we find a legacy of bottom line profit for the wealthy. On the other side of the campus, we find a tradition of transcendent values for the people and notions of the common good. Is it God versus Mammon? The Divinity School versus the Business School? Can profit and purpose and cause and commercialization work together in harmony toward the same transcendent goals? *Dwight Hopkins and Steve Peterson*

Religious Studies

RLST 20100 - The Fetish: Theories and Methods in Religious Studies

The term fetish was coined in the 18th century by Portuguese sailors to describe the amulets or charms used by the indigenous people of Guinea. It was popularized soon after as a term used to describe the endowment of material objects with special powers among traditions deemed to be primitive. It has a long subsequent history within the Philosophy of Religions, Marxism, and Psychoanalysis, but in fact mostly disappeared from the taxonomic lexicon of scholarship within the field of Religious Studies once it was deemed a “category mistake” in the 20th century. It is

thus, a term that tells the story both of the construction of Comparative Religions as a European endeavor, as well as the reverberations of that story across the social sciences. In this course we will track its history from the 18th Century to the present and consider its recent redeployments and resignifications in recent theoretical texts.. Readings will include texts by David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, Marcel Mauss, Bruno Latour, Jacques Derrida, Sarah Kofman and others. *Sarah Hammerschlag*

RLST 20901 - Interpreting Jesus

An introduction to the critical study of this controversial figure and his far-reaching historical, political, and global impact. Our focus will be to analyze contemporary images of Jesus and the claims people make about him, his life, and his teachings in current religious, cultural, and political discourse, the literary imagination, plays, films, and art. We will ground our discussion in an informed reading of the major sources for his life, including the New Testament gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) as well as lesser known gospels (Thomas, Peter, Mary, Judas). We will also learn to interpret historically his parables and other teachings, healings and exorcisms, the crucifixion, the resurrection, and his erotic life and gender—all in the context of ancient Mediterranean society, Galilee and Palestine, and early Jewish and Roman imperial politics. *Jeffrey Jay*

RLST 21020 - Is Humanity Doomed?

This class explores the possibilities and perils of continued human existence on Earth. Taking climate change as a launching point, the class investigates the features of collective human life that make its prolonged existence a perennial challenge. The texts include those on challenges unique to the environment, like Stephen Gardiner's *A Perfect Moral Storm* and Jared Diamond's *Collapse*, as well as philosophical and religious theories of progress and their skeptics, centering class discussions on sources of hope and reasons for doubt about the human future. A central question of the course is whether climate change is unique or whether there are characteristics of human beings and human society (freedom, sin, tragedy) that make threats like it inevitable. *David Barr*

RLST 22400 - Tolkien: Medieval and Modern

J. R. R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings" is one of the most popular works of imaginative literature of the twentieth century. This course seeks to understand its appeal by situating Tolkien's creation within the context of Tolkien's own work as both artist and scholar alongside its medieval sources and modern parallels. Themes to be addressed include the problem of genre and the uses of tradition; the nature of history and its relationship to place; the activity of creation and its relationship to language, beauty, evil, and power; the role of monsters in imagination and criticism; the twinned challenges of death and immortality, fate and free will;

and the interaction between the world of "faerie" and religious belief. Prerequisites: Must have read "The Lord of the Rings" prior to first day. *Rachel Fulton Brown*

RLST 23810 - Guilt and Forgiveness

This course will consider the nature of guilt, punishment, and forgiveness. *Kevin Hector*

RLST 23880 - Villains: Evil in Philosophy, Religion, and Film

“You don’t really understand an antagonist,” screenwriter John Rogers writes, “until you understand why he’s a protagonist in his own version of the world.”

This principle holds true of movie villains, but also raises important questions about disagreement, dehumanization, and the diabolical in the real world. Are our enemies truly malicious, or just misunderstood? How does a person become a monster, and how does a person avoid it? Why are some villains so compelling, and what does this say about the good life? Do Hollywood movies enrich or distort how we imagine and respond to real-world evil? Did Thanos do anything wrong? This course combines readings from philosophical classics and religious traditions with comparative analyses of villains in films from *101 Dalmatians* (1956) and *Jaws* (1975) to *The Dark Knight* (2008) and *Black Panther* (2018). Students will discuss antagonists’ motivations, evaluate the visions of morality filmmakers are presupposing, and develop more nuanced understandings of ethics and moral psychology. No prior experience in religious studies or film criticism is required. *Russell Johnson*

RLST 24103 – Bioethics

This lecture course will introduce you to the field of Bioethics. We will use a case-based method to study how different philosophical and theological traditions describe and defend differences in moral choices in contemporary bioethics. This class is based on the understanding that case narratives serve as the motivation for the discipline of bioethics and that complex ethical issues are best considered by a careful examination of the competing theories as they work themselves out in specific cases. We will examine both classic cases that have shaped our understanding of the field of bioethics and cases that are newly emerging, including the case of research done at Northwestern University. Through these cases, we will ask how religious traditions both collide and cohere over such topics as embryo research, health care reform, terminal illness, issues in epidemics and public health, and our central research question, synthetic biology research. This class will also explore how the discipline of bioethics has emerged to reflect upon such dilemmas, with particular attention to the role that theology philosophy, law, public health, and religious studies have played in such reflection. We will look at both how the practice of different disciplines has shaped the field of bioethics and in particular at how different theological and philosophical claims, methodology, and praxis have continued to shape and inflect bioethics. We will examine the issue of epistemic stance, of truth claims, and of how

normative policies are created amid serious controversy. We will explore the nature of the relationship between religion and public policy and study how religious traditions and moral philosophy shape our view of issues as “bioethics controversies” to be addressed. *Laurie Zoloth*

RLST 24251 - The Bhagavad Gita: Differing Readings of a World Classic

Few religious classics have been as variously interpreted as the *Bhagavad Gītā*, which is surely among the most often-translated works in the world. A text of long-standing importance in Hindu traditions, the *Bhagavad Gītā* has had an especially interesting career in modernity, having been of great significance not only for M. K. Gandhi, but also for the likes of Thoreau and Eliot, not to mention the many less widely appreciated interpreters for whom the text’s martial setting has been of central significance. After taking some steps to situate this great Sanskrit text in the context of its early Indian history, this course will explore a representative range of its available interpretations. Along the way, it is hoped that we will learn something not only about the *Bhagavad Gītā*, but also about the very ideas of *interpretation* and *understanding*. *Dan Arnold*

RLST 24505 - The Dream in Modern Thought

This course will address the status accorded to the dream, its position or rank relative to other mental processes, by major thinkers situated in the modern continental tradition. Key themes will include the dream as a mode of expression, the dream as an object of analysis, and the privilege of vigilance in philosophical sources such as Descartes, Nietzsche, Foucault, and Levinas. Our discussion of philosophy, literature, and psychoanalysis will also consider what discourses on dreaming reveal about contemporary configurations of the religious. *Ryan Coyne*

RLST 26062 - The Jewish Graphic Novel

Over the past decade, there has been an explosion of “graphic novels” aimed at adult readers concerning Jewish society, history, and religion. This course explores the history of comics through the lens of its Jewish creators and Jewish themes, and the history of twentieth century Jewish culture through the lens of graphic storytelling. We learn to interpret this complex art form that combines words and hand-drawn images, translating temporal progression into a spatial form. Reading American, European, and Israeli narratives, our discussions will focus on autobiographical and journalistic accounts of uprooting, immigration, conflict, and loss. Authors whose work we will study include: Art Spiegelman, Rutu Modan, Leela Corman, Joann Sfar, Joe Sacco, R. Crumb. *Na’ama Rokem*

RLST 26170 - Why Do Animals Talk? Beastly Worlds in South Asian Literature

Comprised of a diverse set of languages covering a disparate set of regions, South Asian literatures share a deep investment in the figure of the animal. Whether imagined through the genre of political advice, in narrative tellings of the past lives of the Buddha, or simply as

characters in an expanded continuum of life, animals serve as important literary devices to reflect on human beings as well as autonomous subjects bound up with humans with their own distinct emotional and spiritual lives. Drawing particularly from the Sanskrit tradition among others, this course will introduce students to a broad survey of animal literature in South Asia alongside more recent scholarship in Animal Studies. By the end of the course, students can expect to have a myriad of answers to the question: why do animals talk? *Sarah Pierce Taylor*

RLST 26220 - Buddhism and Modernity: East and West

In the height of nineteenth-century triumph of progress, rationalism, and disenchantment with religion, many European and American intellectuals found inspiration in Buddhism as a spirituality fit for modern times, and expressed it in philosophy, literature, and even opera. On the other side, in Asian societies struggling with colonization, many intellectuals condemned Buddhism as a remnant of premodern superstition, while others hailed it as an essential element for the construction of modern identity and of the superiority of the “spiritual East” against the “materialist West.” These debates and images still determine the way in which Buddhism is globally represented today. In this course, we will discuss Buddhism and modernity using examples from various geographical and historical contexts, ranging from Nietzsche, to the American Beat generation, and to contemporary issues of nationalism and violence in South Asia. We will place the careful examination of these topics within the discussion of broader issues, such as the place of religion in modernity, cultural difference and appropriation, and the intersection of religion, gender, and race. *Paride Stortini*

RLST 28350 - Chan and Zen Buddhism

A history of Chan Buddhism in China and its Japanese form, Zen, focusing on philosophical and anti-philosophical doctrine and meditation and anti-meditation practices. *Brook Ziporyn*

RLST 28989 - Virtual Reality and Religious Realities

Virtual reality is at the cutting edge of modern technology and stands to impact many aspects of contemporary life. At the same time, religious and philosophical sources have been thinking about the concept of virtuality for centuries. Responding to popular efforts to ask how religion should respond to advances in technology and mass media, we will ask how religious thought has laid the groundwork for and even anticipated these advances, and therefore how it can be used as a resource to address contemporary ethical and political challenges. This class will take us from ancient Jerusalem to cyberspace in order to interrogate the various contexts and guises in which the problem of virtual reality has appeared. Doing so will ask us to think about memory and the archive, temporality and history, faith and truth, immanence and transcendence, robots and even ghosts. *Matthew Peterson*

RLST 29016 - Theology without God

This course examines recent scholarship that in some sense identifies as doing theology “without God”. To this end, we will read a number of theological works characterized by what they are “after” — including, but not limited to, theology after Auschwitz, after modernism, after secularism, and after atheism. Students will leave with an understanding of what it means to do theology when “God” in some sense ceases to be a viable notion. *Lisa Landoe Hedrick*