**Fall Quarter 2022**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| RLST Course No.  | Course Title | Instructor | Requirement Fulfilled | Course Description | Crosslisting |
| RLST10100 | Introduction to Religious Studies | Rosengarten, Richard | Required Introductory Course | This course introduces students to the field of Religious Studies through addressing a foundational question: “What is religion?” We will approach this question from multiple angles. We will study the cults, codes, and creeds of a range of religions with reference both to their self-understandings and to modes of analysis (chiefly from the humanities and the social sciences) that concern themselves explicitly with religion. The scope of the course is in principle limitless: as old as the Vedas and the Epic of Gilgamesh and as recent as the front page of your preferred news source. The selections for the first five weeks will provide an overview of religions that have a global presence, and of theoretical perspectives that aspire to give a comprehensive account of religion. Each of the last four weeks will be a “case study” of a specific religion and its theorization that will be determined by the class from a list provided by the instructor. Three short (1-3 pp.) analytic essays (submitted on Fridays and returned the following Mondays) during the first five weeks will be followed by a final assignment synthesizing the material of the course. No prior knowledge of the religious traditions or the theoretical perspectives covered is expected. | SOCI 20541 |
| RLST 11004 | Introduction to the Hebrew Bible | Chavel, Simeon | Gateway course;(A)Historical Studies | Critical introduction to the genres, ideas, styles, and formation of the Hebrew Bible (the ancient Jewish treasury of literature from Israel, Judea, and Babylonia), framed by ancient comparative material and modern literary theory. | BIBL 31000 (parent), HIJD 31004, JWSC 20120, NEHC 20504/30504 |
| RLST 22010 | Jewish Civilization I: Ancient Beginnings to Medieval Period | Yiftach Ofek (01) | Civilizations; (A) Historical Studies | Jewish Civilization is a three-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 through the Middle Ages. Its readings will include material from the Bible and writings from the second temple, Hellenistic, rabbinic, and medieval periods. All sections of this course will share a common core of readings; individual instructors will supplement with other materials. It is recommended, though not required, that students take the three Jewish Civilization courses in sequence. Students who register for the Autumn Quarter course will automatically be pre-registered for the winter segment. In the Spring Quarter students have the option of taking a third unit of Jewish Civilization, a course whose topics will vary (JWSC 1200X). | JWSC 12000 (parent), MDVL 12000, NEHC 22010 |
| RLST 22810 | Hinduism of the Living and the Dead | Venkatkrishnan, Anand | (A) Historical Studies | An introduction to Hinduism through the lens of everyday life, including popular shrines, roadside religion, ghost stories, digital representation, and traditions of the South Asian diaspora. | SALC 22810 |
| RLST 23250 | Introduction to Islamic Theology | Casewit, Yousef | (B) Constructive Studies | Survey of ideas and arguments formulated by renowned Muslim theologians and responses that their doctrines triggered. Major doctrines will be covered, starting with early debates over the nature of belonging to the Muslim community, the nature of God, revelation, prophecy, freewill and predestination. The course roughly follows the historical development of Islamic theology in conversation with other Islamic sciences (philosophy, sufism, law), with a close examination of the confrontation between a group of rationalist theologians (Muʿtazilites), the traditionalist hadith-scholars, and the emergence of Sunni Ashʿarite theology between the 9th and 11th centuries. Course Notes: No knowledge of Arabic is required. Reading materials will be in English. Open to graduate students. | ISLM 36250 (parent) |
| RLST 23809 | Pain, Truth, and Justice | Kelly, Maureen | (B)Constructive Studies  | Why should the truth hurt? Does pain guarantee the truth told? Is pain the price of exposure to the truth? Does that make it a just punishment? In this class, we will take a historical and philosophical look at the relationship between pain, truth, and justice to consider the underpinnings of the relations and to find grounds for a critical perspective to encounter them. In the premodern period, we will draw from Genesis, Sophocles’ Oedipus, Augustine, Tertullian, martyrdom accounts, and public penitential rites in medieval Christianity. To study the theme in the early modern nation-state spectacles of punishment, colonial contexts, and contemporary scenes of justice we will turn to the writings of Foucault, Fanon, and others. Over the course of the historical and philosophical examinations, we will trace the themes of body, affect, and performance; truth, law, and ritual; power, religion, and the nation-state. In the end, we will turn a critical eye to contemporary cultural discourses and representations of pain, truth, and justice in the arts, law, literature, philosophy, and politics. | MDVL 23809, CLCV 23809, GNSE 23809 |
| RLST 24550 | Major Trends in Islamic Mysticism | Casewit, Yousef | (B) Constructive Studies | 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. The average reading load per unit is 100 pages. Course Note: No Arabic required. | ISLM 32419 (parent); SIGN 26068, MDVL 24550, GLST 24550 |
| RLST 24715 | On Dialogue: Introduction to a Genre | Kelly, Maureen | (B) Constructive Studies | The figure of Socrates is famous for engaging Athenians in dialogue, but what was so important and effective about this mode of exchange? How did Socrates’ dialogue work as a philosophical exercise? Why was the dialogue suited to mediate between gods, Socrates, and citizens? In this class, we will take a philosophical and historical approach to the genre of dialogue, analyzing key moments in the genre and related texts to trace the relationships between the mode of dialogue, the role of the divinity, the obligations of the citizen, and the formation of the subject. Starting from the dialogue of Socrates, we will read from classical antiquity into the Christian context, with attention to the creative transformations of the genre and the changing notions of subject, god, and citizen. In the final turn, we will return to two canonical texts of modern philosophy, the Dialogues by David Hume and Dialogues by Jean-Jacques Rousseau to examine how modern philosophical texts deploy the mode of dialogue, invoke the classical and Christian modes, and transform the genre again. | CLCV 24722, CMLT 24715, general literature course or pre-20th century literature course for Creative Writing |
| RLST 26301 | Religion and AIDS | Lambert, Mark M. | (C)Cultural Studies | "The AIDS crisis was not an epoch that we survived. It is a battle that we are still fighting…when Americans talk about AIDS they are rarely just talking about a scientific problem or a pharmaceutical solution. They are instead offering a sociology of suffering and a plan for spiritual warfare." – Kathryn LoftonIs it possible to understand current debates over public health or the role of religion in the public sphere without first examining religious responses to the AIDS crisis? This course focuses on the emergence of the AIDS epidemic during the peak of the American culture wars. As such, students will analyze the fraught intersection of political power structures, medical epistemologies, and religious views on bodies, sex, and public morality. Through a varied catalog of disciplinary frameworks, e.g., history, theology, medical ethics, sociology of religion, and history of medicine, students will weigh the accuracy of Lofton's claim that for Americans, AIDS is more than just a disease. Thus, we will scrutinize moral rhetoric surrounding contraception and its public availability. We will discuss the extent to which religious philanthropy, especially on the international stage, reshaped approaches to global health. Finally, we will revisit the role of religious communities in providing both care for the sick and theological responses to suffering. Prior knowledge of religious studies and/or medical history is not required for the course. | PBPL 25301, HLTH 26301, HIPS 26301, CCTS 21014, GNSE 23142, CHST 26301, HIST 28007, SOCI 20563 |
| RLST 27075 | The Latinx Religious Experience: Race and the Politics of Faith in the US | Zegarra, Raul. E. | (C)Cultural Studies | Latinos? Hispanics? Latinx? How much do we know about one of the largest minorities (18.5%) in the USA? How does their culture shape their religious experience? What is the role of religion in their politics and activism? In this class we will explore these and other questions drawing from biographical narratives, history, sociology, and theology. In the first part of this course, students will be introduced to foundational biographical narratives and historical sources for studying the Latinx religious experience. In the second part of the course, students will examine the diversity of Latinx religion and the multiple functions of faith and devotion in the Latinx community. The course culminates with a close examination of three authors (Roberto Goizueta, Michelle González, and Nancy Pineda-Madrid) whose work allows us to understand the complex and diverse links between theological reflection, religious practice, and political action in the Latinx community. No prerequisites.  | AMER 27075, ANTH 23326, CRES 27075, LACS 27075, SOCI 20539 |
| RLST28705 | Christian Iconography | Krause, Karin | (C)Cultural Studies | 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. | ARTH 28705, MDVL 28705 |
| RLST 29800 | BA Paper Seminar I  | Peterson, Matthew J. |  | The two-quarter senior sequence will assist students in the Research Track with the preparation of the required BA paper. During May of their third year, students will work with the preceptor to choose a faculty adviser and a topic for research, and to plan a course of study for the following year. These must be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Students will take part in the BA Paper Seminar convened by a preceptor during Autumn and Winter Quarters. This seminar will allow students to prepare their bibliographies, hone their writing, and present their research.  |  |

Cross-Listed Courses in RLST – for Course Descriptions, please see the [College Catalog](http://collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/thecollege/religiousstudies/) or [Divinity’s Website](https://divinity.uchicago.edu/academics/courses):

* RLST 15100 – Introductory Qur’anic Arabic I (*Scott Doolin*) Fulfills: n/a
* RLST 17700 – Advanced Readings in Classics Ethiopic (Ge’ez) (*Rebecca Hasselbach-Andee*) Fulfills: n/a
* RLST 20111 – History of Death (*Katie Hickerson*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 20201 – Islamicate Civilization I: 600-950 (*various*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 20401 – Islamic Thought and Literature I (*various)*  Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 21440 – Fundamentalism (*William Schultz*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 21450 – Coptic Bible (*Sofia Torallas-Tovar*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 21865 – Zion and Zaphon: Biblical Texts and Memory Studies (*Simeon Chavel*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 22640 – The Book of Ruth: Bible, Literature, Gender (*Ilana Pardes*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 23001 – Confucian Philosophy and Spirituality (*Brook Ziporyn*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
* RLST 23314 – Philo of Alexandria (*David Martinez*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
* RLST 24120 – The Ethics of War: Foundational Texts (*Richard Miller*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
* RLST 24275 – Chinese Buddhist Omnicentrism: Tiantai and Huayan (*Brook Ziporyn*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
* RLST 26002 – Literature and Hunger (*Rosanna Warren*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 26062 – Jewish Graphic Narrative: Between Memory and Caricature (*Na’ama Rokem*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 26212 – Moses and Modernity (*Sam Catlin*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 26321 – Good Vibes Only: Spiritual Energy Healing and Alternative Medicine in America (*Rachel Carbonara*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 26604 – The Holocaust: History and Meaning (*Nizan Lebovic*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 26305 – Moral Reasoning Between Church and State: The Case of Abortion (*Jonathan Tran*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 27601 – Women and Islam (*Maliha Chisti*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 28755 – Making “I’ll Take You There: The Life of Mavis Staples” at Court Theatre (*Nina Titone*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 28774 – Racial Capitalism (*Jonathan Tran*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies

**Winter Quarter 2022**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| RLST Course No.  | Course Title | Instructor | Requirement Fulfilled | Course Description | Crosslisting |
| RLST12000 | Introduction to the New Testament: Texts and Contexts of Interpretation | Mitchell, Margaret M. | Gateway course; (A)Historical Studies | An immersion in the texts of the New Testament with the following goals: 1. through careful reading to come to know well some representative pieces of this literature; 2. to gain useful knowledge of the historical, geographical, social, religious, cultural and political contexts of these texts and the events they relate; 3. to learn the major literary genres represented in the canon (“gospels,” “acts,” “letters,” and “apocalypses”) and strategies for reading them; 4. to comprehend the various theological visions and cultural worldviews to which these texts give expression; 5. to situate oneself and one's prevailing questions about this material in the history of research, and to reflect on the goals and methods of interpretation; 6. to become intelligent and critical “consumers” of biblical scholarship as it appears in academic and popular media.; 7. to raise questions for further study. PQ: Interest in this literature, and willingness to enter into conversation with like-minded and non-like-minded others on the texts and the issues involved in their interpretation. | BIBL 32500 (parent), FNDL 28202, MDVL 12500 |
| RLST 20668 | Introduction to Aggadic Literature of the Rabbinic Period | Mandel, Paul | (A)Historical Studies | We will make acquaintance with *midrash*, the idiosyncratic rabbinic method of textual interpretation of the Bible, concentrating on *midrash aggadah*, which deals with non-legal material (biblical narrative and ethical teachings). We will deal with questions of interpretation (how did the rabbis interpret the biblical text?), relevancy (in what ways did they view the ancient text as relevant to their lives?), and literature (an appreciation of the literary aspects and genres of *midrash aggadah*). Rabbinic readings will be compared with biblical interpretations of the Second Temple period (in Philo, Josephus, Apocrypha, and the Dead Sea Scrolls). Texts will be read in the original Hebrew and Aramaic with English translation. PQ: Basic reading skills in biblical Hebrew desirable. | HIJD 30668 (parent), BIBL 30668, JWSC 20668 |
| RLST 20904 | Introduction to Jainism | Taylor, Sarah Pierce | Gateway course; (A)Historical Studies | Jainism has long been on the margins of Religious Studies, little known beyond its otherworldly emphasis on extreme forms of asceticism, nonviolence, and vegetarianism. This course seeks to expand this popular understanding of Jainism by posing a question: What does it mean to be a Jain in the world when the Jain religion is fundamentally otherworldly in its orientation? By reading ethnographies and historical studies alongside primary sources, this course will introduce students to Jainism as an enduring lived religion whose meaning and practice has changed over time, across regions, between sectarian communities, and in conversation with Buddhism and Hinduism. By the end of the quarter, students can expect to understand Jainism as a minor religion with a major impact. | SALC 20910, GLST 20994 |
| RLST 21118 | Modern Muslim Revolutionary Thinkers | TBD | (A)Historical Studies | Beginning in the eighteenth century and continuing until the present day, intellectuals across the Muslim world have been debating how to reform or in some cases revive Islam. This course will examine these movements, first by surveying them (particularly the Salafi movement, the rationalist and liberal movements, and the modern Sufi movements), and then by analyzing key representative texts and figures from these movements. While we will study the political theory and theology of central figures like Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Rida, Muhammad Iqbal, and Ali Shariati, our course will also privilege voices that appeared in different genres including for instance, the works of the feminist playwright and novelist Zaynab Fawwaz, or the feminist writer Malak Hifni Nasif. This multi-dimensional approach will allow us to investigate the Islamic reform movement at a foundational level. The variety of standpoints will allow us to examine where the different reform movements converged and where they differed. We will see that role secularism played in these movements. We will also compare how these reformers, in their treatises, poems, or novels, thought about the role of faith in the life of the individual on the one hand, and the life of the polity and community on the other?  |  |
| RLST 21304 | Religion and the American Civil Rights Movement | Evans, Curtis | (A)Historical Studies | This undergraduate course examines the religious actors and institutions of the Civil Rights movement from the late 1950s to the early 1970s. We look at the evolution of religious and racial change from a number of different angles, trying especially to understand what the various reformers hoped to accomplish. We also will study the opponents of the black freedom struggle, paying attention to the religious and theological defenses of segregation and trying to understand how they persisted in different forms even when legal segregation in the South ended. Some time is devoted to understanding key concepts and moments: desegregation, integration, freedom, and equality, and the different meanings of personal and social transformation. Primary attention is on the black-white divide and most of my examples come from Christian individuals and traditions since they comprised the majority of activists on both sides of Civil Rights activism. | Democracy Studies elective |
| RLST 22040 | Religion in Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and Peacemaking | Barak-Gorodetsky, David | (A)Historical Studies | The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is arguably the most intractable political conflict at present. The conflict has been subjected to various historiographies and narrative explorations, offering often-competing explanations in an attempt to understand its origin and evolvement, and also the failure of its resolution. This course explores the role of religion in the historical development of the conflict and in its contemporary manifestation, while at the same time probing the potential role of religion in the resolution of the conflict and outlining the history of attempts for religious peace-making in Israel/Palestine. Combining concrete historical analysis and intellectual history, the course will focus on the Jewish, Muslim and Christian views of the conflict and its potential resolution, relating to such themes as covenant, messianism, political theology, the sanctity of the land and the role of Jerusalem. These concepts and others will be explored against the backdrop of the concrete history of the conflict, focusing initially on the formative period of 1897-1948, pivoting to the 1967 war and its aftermath and concluding with the religionization of politics in recent decades and its far-reaching consequences. | CRES 20240, HIST 25900, JWSC 24040 |
| RLST 23808 | Suffering, Grief, and Consolation | Trotter, Christine R. | (B) Constructive Studies | Why do people suffer and die? How can we find comfort? Should we hope for a better future, focus our energies on making peace with the present, or attempt to do both? How do we cultivate joy in the midst of adversity? Can pain be productive? The literature of ancient consolation engages these questions as it bears witness to the myriad ways in which ancient Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians attempted to comfort suffering people. The goal was not simply to defeat grief, but to replace grief with its opposite, joy. This course introduces students to ancient consolation literature, a genre composed of various literary forms (e.g., funeral orations, consolatory letters, apocalypses, prophecies) but united by a common store of vocabulary, expressions of sympathy, arguments against grief, and exhortations to admirable behavior amid hardship. At the end of the course, we will bridge the horizons between ancient approaches to consolation and current debates about how to treat grief and facilitate human flourishing during hardship. If there is sufficient interest, the course may feature Languages Across the Curriculum sessions in which students who have knowledge of Latin will be able to read select course texts in Latin. Participation in the LxC sessions is elective and separate from the main course sessions.  | JWSC 23808, CLCV 23823 |
| RLST 24114 | Justice in the Struggle of History | Schweiker, William | (B)Constructive Studies  | From the Black Lives Matter and #MeToo movements back to the dawn of history, people have always struggled for justice. This simple observation arises important, even burning, philosophical and religious questions. What do we mean by justice? What are the types of justice? Who defines what is just unjust: God, those in power, prophets, lawgivers? Is it possible to realize a just society within the complexity of history? How is the struggle for justice related to hope? This course examines those kinds of questions at the crossroads of religion and social ethics with a focus on two intertwine topics: (1) the meaning and justification of conceptions of justice, and (2) the possibility of realizing justice within the flux of human history. The course moves in interlocking steps: (1) an inquiry into ancient religious and non-religious ideas of justice (The book of *Amos*, the Hebrew Prophet, and Plato's *Gorgias*), the first Christian theology of History (Augustine's *City of God*, selections), and Martin Luther's *Temporal Authority*; (2) modern accounts (Immanuel Kant's *Perpetual Peace* and John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*); and, (3) contemporary accounts (Martin Luther King, Jr., *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, Martha Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities*, and Paul Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice*). By the end of the course, we will have then come full circle to the questions, if not the answers, found in the ancient texts. |  |
| RLST 25377 | #Blessed: The Prosperity Gospel, The Bible, and Economic Ethics | Walsh, Erin G. and Schultz, William J. | (B)Constructive Studies  | Is wealth a sign of divine favor? What would Jesus do when it comes to money? How does the Bible inform contemporary views of charity, economic ethics, and material possessions? This class examines the multiple messages about material wealth contained within biblical literature and the diverse ways these passages have been interpreted. After a survey of shifting approaches to economic ethics among Christians over the centuries, students will turn to the phenomenon of the “Prosperity Gospel” within the modern period. The class will query the ways the Bible has been harnessed to an economic vision tied to capitalism and ostentatious displays of personal wealth. Previous knowledge of the Bible and the historical periods covered is not expected.  | CLCV 25322 |
| RLST 25560 | A Latinx Philosophy of Religion? Exploring the Religious Foundations of Latino Identity | Zegarra, Raul | (B)Constructive Studies  | In this class, we will explore Latinx identity from an unusual perspective: philosophy of religion. We will focus on the conditions of possibility, development, and problems of the Latinx religious experience and its theoretical articulation in Latinx theology and religious thought. To pursue this task, we will examine three key features of the Latinx experience: mestizaje (miscegenation), lo cotidiano (everyday life), and religiosidad popular (popular religiosity). In the first part of the class, we will turn to mestizaje: Is this concept useful to describe the Latinx experience despite its ties to the violence of colonialism? Can this term account for Afro-Latinos and indigenous peoples? In the second part, we will focus on the primacy given to lo cotidiano by Latinx theologians. Is this primacy warranted? Is everyday experience self-evident or inherently better than abstract thought? Lastly, we will study religiosidad popular. Is the focus on popular religion a reflection of a Catholic bias? Can the focus on popular religion and its role in identity-formation overshadow questions of political and economic justice? The course concludes sketching alternative paths for Latinx theology/religious thought, stressing the importance of a greater plurality of perspectives and a more robust engagement with non-Christian and non-religious expressions of the Latinx experience.No prerequisites.  | LACS 25560 |
| RLST25704 | Environmental Justice in Chicago | Fredericks, Sarah E. | (B)Constructive Studies | This course will examine the development of environmental justice theory and practice through social scientific and ethical literature about the subject as well as primary source accounts of environmental injustices. We will focus on environmental justice issues in Chicago including, but not limited to waste disposal, toxic air and water, the Chicago heat wave, and climate change. Particular attention will be paid to environmental racism and the often understudied role of religion in environmental justice theory and practice. Throughout the course we will explore how normative commitments are expressed in different types of literature as well as the basis for normative judgments and the types of authorities authors utilize and claim as they consider environmental justice. | ENST 25704, PBPL 25704, KNOW 25704, CHST 25704, AMER 25704, CRES 25704 |
| RLST 25806 | The Political Theologies of Zionism | Barak-Gorodetsky, David | (B)Constructive Studies | The relationship between nationalism and religion has throughout history been a stormy one, often characterized by antagonisms and antipathy. In this course we will examine from various aspects the complex nexus of these two sources of repeated ideological and political dispute within Judaism, and more specifically within Zionism as its political manifestation. Zionism has mostly been considered a secular project, yet recently, Zionist theory is scrutinized to identify and unearth its supposedly hidden theological origins. In nowadays Israel, a rise in religious identification alongside an increasing religionization of the political discourse calls for the consideration of new theopolitical models of Zionism applicable in a post-secular environment. The aim of this course is to explore this complex intertwining of politics and religion in Israel from both historical and contemporary perspectives. The first part of the course will outline the theoretical foundation of post-secular and political-theological discourses. The second part will address the explicit and implicit political theologies of Zionism. The third part will outline contemporary aspects of political-theological thought in Israel, and their actual appearance in the political sphere. | HIJD 35806, THEO 35806, HIST 39403, JWSC 27940, NEHC 25806 |
| RLST 25910 | bell hooks and Cornel West: Education for Resistance | Johnson, Russell P. | (B)Constructive Studies | Cornel West and bell hooks are two of the most influential philosophers and cultural critics of the past half-century. Their writings—including their co-authored book—address pressing questions about politics, religion, race, education, film, and gender. In different ways, they each find resources for hope, love, and liberation in an unjust social order. In this course, we will read selections from their writings over the last forty years alongside the authors who influenced their thinking (including Du Bois, Freire, Morrison, King, and Baldwin). We will pay special attention to how hooks and West communicate to popular audiences, how they engage religious traditions (their own and others’), and the role of dialogue in their thought and practice. The goal of the course is not just to think about hooks and West, but to think with them about ethics, writing, American culture, and the aims of education. No prior familiarity with either author is required. | FNDL 25911, GNSE 25910, CRES 22910 |
| RLST 26316 | Medical Innovation and Religious Reform in the Enlightenment | Lambert, Mark M. | (C)Cultural Studies | Through a survey of innovative medical authorities and religious reformers, students will investigate the co-constitution of two bodies of knowledge at a historical moment (the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) when questions of authority and epistemology are in considerable flux. This period has long been implicated in the "conflict thesis"—a hugely influential argument that portrays the centuries-long relationship between religion and science/medicine as an inherently adversarial one. This course shall scrutinize that argument through a discussion of seemingly contradictory examples where reformers that touted the all-encompassing reach of divine providence also promoted intricate public health infrastructures; where the Vatican increasingly relied on university-trained physicians to validate saints and their miracles; where theologians were viewed as authorities on Galen and responsible for medical breakthroughs; and where medicine and metaphysics were considered complementary pursuits. Ultimately, students will unveil a portrait not of conflict, but of a symbiotic relationship between religion and medicine. The goal of our course will then be to query why religious reformers were not only unthreatened by but also actively esteemed the medical arts as a valuable ally. | CCTS 21013, HIST 24924, HLTH 26316, HIPS 26316  |
| RLST 26910 | Religion, Sex, and Law in American History | Simmonds, Erin | C)Cultural Studies | Religion and law both offer frameworks for how we ought to live and behave, and often these frameworks become entangled in ways that affect who we are, what we can do, and with whom we can do it. To make things even more complicated, religion is also an object of the law—the law tries to adjudicate the rights of religious Americans under a system of religious freedom, with varying degrees of success. Often, the tension between law and religion comes to a head on issues of sex. The collision of religion, sex, and law presents a whole host of problems and questions: How have religion and law historically related to each other when it comes to sex? How has religion shaped the law on issues of sex, and vice versa? What is, or should be, the role of the law in adjudicating issues of sexual morality and religion? In this class, we will begin with the question: how do religion and law shape our lives? Through attention to issues of sex and gender, we will explore what it means to live within the institutions of law and religion and how those institutions interrelate. The class will focus on topics such as: marriage, anti-miscegenation laws, reproductive justice, sexual education, and religious freedom. This class is intended to be interdisciplinary and assumes no prior knowledge. This class is especially suitable for students interested in religious studies, law and letters/pre-law, gender studies, and history. | GNSE 23146, HIST 28009 |
| RLST 27501 | Indigenous Religions, Health, and Healing | Lambert, Mark M. | (C)Cultural Studies | This course introduces students to the dynamic, often-contested understandings of health, healing, and religion among the Indigenous peoples of the Americas. Our task will be threefold: first, to examine the drastic effects of settler colonialism upon the social determinants of health for Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas, including the Caribbean, Mexico, United States, and Hawaii. Second, we shall attempt to understand healing practices as they are steeped in and curated by Indigenous traditions and religious beliefs. Our goal is to counteract centuries-old stereotypical images of Native peoples and challenge our preconceived notions of wellness, selfhood, and the boundaries of medicine. Third, we will reflect upon contemporary Indigenous approaches to health and healing with particular attention to the postcolonial hybridity of these practices. Throughout the course we will attend to a generative diversity of epistemologies, anthropologies, and religious worldviews with the ultimate goal that a renewed understanding of Indigenous healing traditions will augment our own approaches to global/public health and the study of religion. | HLTH 27501, HIPS 26316, CCTS 21016, CHST 27501, CRES 21501 |
| RLST29900 | BA Paper Seminar II | Peterson, Matthew J. |  | The two-quarter senior sequence will assist students in the Research Track with the preparation of the required BA paper. During May of their third year, students will work with the preceptor to choose a faculty adviser and a topic for research, and to plan a course of study for the following year. These must be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Students will take part in the BA Paper Seminar convened by a preceptor during Autumn and Winter Quarters. This seminar will allow students to prepare their bibliographies, hone their writing, and present their research. |  |

Cross-Listed Courses in RLST – for Course Descriptions, please see the [College Catalog](http://collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/thecollege/religiousstudies/) or [Divinity’s Website](https://divinity.uchicago.edu/academics/courses):

* RLST 15200 – Introductory Qur’anic Arabic II (*Scott Doolin*)
* RLST 20202 – Islamicate Civilization II: 950-1750 *(various)* Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 20270 – Islam in African History (*Katie Hickerson*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 20402 – Islamic Thought and Literature II (*various*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 20444 – God, Self, Nation, and Revolution in East European Jewish Life and Thought, 1850–1939 (*Kenneth Moss*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 21780 – Poetry of the Hebrew Bible (*Simeon Chavel*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 22011 – Jewish Civilization II: Early Modern Period to 21st Century *(Instructor)* Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 22308 – Phoenician Religion (In Their Own Words And Those of Their Neighbors) (*Carolina López-Ruiz*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 23907 – Gandhi and His Critics (*Anand Venkatkrishnan*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
* RLST 25130 – Introduction to Philosophy of Religions (*Daniel Arnold*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
* RLST 26336 – Religion, Nation, Race (*Sam Catlin*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 26655 – Global Society and Religion (*Andrew Kunze*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 26673 – Non-Violence: Gandhi, Mandela, and MLK (*Andrew Kunze*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 27518 – Praising the Gods: Greek Hymnic Poetry and Its Context (*Carolina López-Ruiz*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 27651 – Anthropology of Revolution: Orientalism, Islam, and the Middle East in Global Perspective (*Abhishek Bhattacharyya*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 28603 – Tragedy and the Tragic: Text/Theory/Event (*Richard Rosengarten*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies

**Spring Quarter 2022**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| RLST Course No.  | Course Title | Instructor | Requirement Fulfilled | Course Description | Crosslisting |
| RLST 20113 | Heaven, Hell, and Life After Death | Trotter, Christine R. | (A)Historical Studies | What happens after people die? Nothing at all? Does the same thing happen to everyone after death, or is there some form of postmortem reward and punishment? If heaven exists, what is heaven like? Is it possible for the living to communicate with the dead? Can the dead confer benefits on the living? This course engages with these questions as we explore the development and diversity of afterlife beliefs in Judaism and Christianity. Students will become familiar with afterlife beliefs reflected in the Bible, early Jewish literature, ancient Greek literature, ancient Roman literature, and early Christian literature. We will pay special attention to the relationship between religious persecution and the development of afterlife beliefs, especially in regards to instances when people perceived to be innocent or exceptionally faithful to God are killed. By the end of the course, students will not only be familiar with Jewish and Christian conceptions of the afterlife, but also conversant in perspectives on postmortem existence found in classical philosophy that continue to inform how we think about death in the contemporary world. | JWSC 20113, CLCV 20122 |
| RLST 20210 | Greek and Near Eastern Creation Stories | López-Ruiz, Carolina | (A)Historical Studies | This course will offer a comparative view of Greek traditions about the origin of the world (cosmogony) and the origin of the gods (theogony), and the multiple layers on which they were entangled with Near Eastern narratives. On the Greek side, we will focus on Hesiod, Homer, and the Orphic poems. Near Eastern sources will include Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Hittite, Phoenician, and Hebrew texts. The reading of primary sources will be done in translation (though students are always encouraged to check the texts in the original language for closer reading and discussion, if training allows). We will engage with secondary bibliography, especially works that take a comparative approach or discuss the comparative method. We will discuss the methodological challenges and advantages of comparative mythology and the phenomenon of cultural exchange, as revealed in these mythical and literary connection. | NEHC 20210, CLCV 20222 |
| RLST 20502 | Rebels of the Ottoman Empire | TBD | (A)Historical Studies | This course introduces students to the role of faith and ritual in the history of rebellion and resistance in the Ottoman Empire throughout the early modern and modern periods. From peasant rebellions to urban uprisings, from heretical movements to nationalist struggles, the course examines how the various communities of the empire used their faith to resist structures of power, be they bureaucratic, religious, social, or political. In doing so, we will learn about the context in which these events occurred and encounter the people who led and made up these movements- women and men, mystics and soldiers, farmers and artisans, teachers and journalists. We will trace the changes that occurred to the nature of resistance across time and space. Whether it was through swords and muskets on the street of Istanbul and Cairo, or through print journalism and secret meetings in Beirut and Damascus, the course will also examine the effect that technological advancements had on these movements. |  |
| RLST 23150 | Capitalism and Doing Good? | Hopkins Dwight N. | (B)Constructive Studies | This class asks the question: is it possible to believe in capitalism (i.e., the private ownership of wealth) and do good for society? Restated, are there values that can accompany capital accumulation for positive social impact on people and the environment? | GLST 23150 |
| RLST 23311 | The Past, Present, and Future of Feminist Ethics | Myers, Kat. R. | (B) Constructive Studies | Many injustices in the world are related to gender oppression and inequality. In this introductory course, we will examine the ways that feminist ethics aims to identify, assess, and correct gender biases that cause this harm. We will begin by situating feminist ethics within its historical context to understand how and why it developed. We will then consider different methods that feminists use to identify and critique oppressive social structures, including race and class in addition to gender. With these tools in hand, we will assess several acute sources of gender oppression and inequality, giving particular to attention to the global labor market, reproductive mores, and climate change. Throughout the course, we will consider the intersection of gender with religion, race, class, and global location, while being attentive to the role that Western feminism has had in shaping global views on oppression and inequality. We will focus on the influence of religion on feminist ethics. As we read, we will explore the normative commitments that are expressed in the texts, as well as the bases for these commitments and the religious and secular sources of authority to which the authors appeal as they claim to advance gender justice. This will include texts by feminists that engage with religious traditions, such as Judaism, Buddhism, and Indigenous religions. This course is an undergraduate course that assumes no prior knowledge in ethics, feminist studies, or religious studies. | GNSE 12114 (Foundations course), GLST 23311 |
| RLST 23607 | Nietzsche, European Culture, and the Death of God | Haydt, Joseph | (B)Constructive Studies | This course introduces students to the period of cultural turmoil culminating in what Nietzsche called the “death of God.” On Nietzsche’s view, European culture in the 19th century was characterized by a profound rupture with its own history that could be seen in the domains of art, religion, and philosophy. Our task is to understand why Nietzsche believed that such a radical break had occurred, whether he was right, and what this tells us about our relation to our own traditions and values. The course will be divided into two parts. The first will explore theories of cultural collapse. Can a society lose touch with its past? What would it mean to live in such a society? How could we go on if we ceased to recognize ourselves in our cultural way of life? In addition to Nietzsche, readings will include such pivotal thinkers for the modern era as Ludwig Feuerbach, Karl Marx, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Jonathan Lear, and Cora Diamond. In the second part of the course, we will test these theories by looking for examples of rupture in literary texts of the period. Our questions: does a comparison of these works suggest a rupture in culture as Nietzsche claimed? And is it plausible to understand the social, political, and religious developments of this period in terms of the death of God? How does the “death of God” still shape our modern world? No prior study of the literature or philosophy discussed is expected. | GRMN 23607, HIST 29305 |
| RLST24103 | Bioethics | Zoloth, Laurie | (B)Constructive Studies | This is a lecture and discussion class that will explore how a variety of philosophic and religious thinkers approach the issues and problems of modern dilemmas in medicine and science in a field called bioethics. We will consider a general argument for your consideration: that the arguments and the practices from faith traditions and from philosophy offer significant contributions that underlie policies and practices in bioethics. We will use a case-based method to study how different traditions describe and defend differences in moral choices in contemporary bioethics. This class is based on the understanding that case narratives serve as another core text for the discipline of bioethics and that complex ethical issues are best considered by a careful examination of the competing theories as 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 our 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 and philosophy have played in such reflection. We will look at both how the practice of theologians and philosophers has historically shaped the field of bioethics and at how these 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” in the first place. | RETH 30600, SIGN 26069, HLTH 24103, BIOS 29216, LAWS 97112, HIPS 24103 |
| RLST 24240 | Buddhism and Science: A Critical Introduction | Berger, Jesse A. | (B) Constructive Studies | “Buddhism is the only religion able to cope with modern scientific needs.” This quotation, often erroneously attributed to Albert Einstein, prompts the question: Why are such statements about Buddhism so easily taken nowadays as credible and plausible? Currently, it seems no other religion is held as compatible with science as Buddhism: From the recent ‘mindfulness’ craze in psychology and medicine, to the ‘Emptiness’ of quantum physics, Buddhism is uniquely hailed as a ‘rational religion’ whose insights anticipated modern science by millennia. Some even suggest it is not a ‘religion’ at all, but rather a sort of ‘mind-science.’ This course functions as both an introduction to Buddhism and a critical survey of its modern scientific reception. As we explore Buddhism's relationship to contemporary scientific theories in psychology and physics, we will be guided by questions such as: What methodological principles distinguish the practices of religion and science? What are the different ways they can be brought into relation? Why is Buddhism, in particular, singled out as uniquely scientific? What modern historical factors, like colonialism and secularization, contribute to this contemporary meme? Why does it matter whether Buddhism is compatible with science or not? What, exactly, is at stake in this relationship? And for whom? No prior study of Buddhism or the philosophy of science is expected. | HIPS 24240, KNOW 24240, CCTS 21018, extra-disciplinary course for Cognitive Science |
| RLST 25102 | Reading Augustine’s *Confessions* | Miller, Richard B. | (B)Constructive Studies | This course will carry out a close reading of Augustine’s *Confessions*. We will study the work not only as a spiritual autobiography—a common approach—but also as a philosophical argument against various alternatives to Christian faith and practice in the late fourth century. With this bifocal approach in place, we’ll examine how Confessions interrogates the quality of human love, fear, hatred, and regret; moral responsibilities to ourselves and others; the (anxious) awareness that we are limited in body and time; and how to craft an honest narrative of self-understanding. We will ask, Is religion a source of psychic health, or an obstacle to it? What sorts of problems is religion meant to cure? What problems do religious beliefs create? How does religion bear on the self’s loves, its past, its mortality, its doubts? Along the way we’ll ask whether it is possible to want to do evil, whether it is possible to love or grieve too much, what it means to be a friend—and how Augustine’s answers to these questions presuppose a wider account of the order of the cosmos. | FNDL 27002, MDVL 25102 |
| RLST 26802 | Epic Religion: From the *Ramayana* to *Game of Thrones* | Kunze, Andrew | (C)Cultural Studies | What can epic literature and media teach us about religion? In this introductory seminar, students explore answers to this question, focusing on the ways epics dramatize the human relationship to divinity. We read the epics through the relationships of its central characters—humans, heroes, and gods. By following the winding quests and gory battles of these narratives, students examine how epics present various forms of human-divine relationships—transactional, intimate, inspirational, and manipulative. We employ a comparative approach to the genre; our readings originate in different world regions and historical periods—from ancient India and Greece to West Africa, England, and the contemporary US. We will read these texts closely and examine how they reflect particular views of the human condition within religious worldviews. Considering the contexts of post-colonization, nationalism, and globalization, we analyze how mass media—comic books, TV series, films, and social media—shape and spread those views to new popular audiences. | GLST 26802, CMLT 26802 |
| RLST 27659 | Parties and Feasting in/as Religion | Snoek, Doren | (C)Cultural Studies | Are parties and feasts—a *quinceañera*, a rave, Thanksgiving dinner—sacred or secular? How do we know, and how can we describe and analyze their religious significance? In this course, we will survey parties, feasts, and festivals from antiquity to the present. Topics will include sacrifice and communal meals, drinking and (divine) hangover cures, dance and communal ecstasy, pilgrimage (Mecca and Burning Man), party-associated violence, and the ethics and power dynamics of partying. Students will become familiar with selected texts (all in translation) from ancient Near Eastern, Greek, and Roman sources to modern journalism and ethnography of Islamic pilgrimage. We will also consider material evidence of parties and feasts ancient and modern (trash!). Students will begin to analyze these events comparatively and as ritual. Along the way, we will briefly consider difficulties for such analysis and/or for material studies of religion. No prior knowledge of texts, languages, or periods is assumed or required, but those enrolled must have previously attended at least one party or feast. | GLST 27659 |
| RLST 28506 | Jesus: From Scripture to the Silver Screen | Zaleski, Richard A. | (C)Cultural Studies | Jesus holds particular significance for believers all around the world. But how is he portrayed in modern films? How faithful are these depictions to the Bible? Do these portrayals push a certain kind of theological position? In this course, we will examine film adaptations of Jesus, including biopics, dramas, comedies, and musicals. As we watch everything from Martin Scorsese’s *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988) to Monty Python’s *Life of Brian* (1979), we will compare these modern depictions to ancient texts and theology. During the course, students will become familiar with significant aspects of Jesus’s life both in canonical and noncanonical Gospels, as well as to how those texts have been understood in the antiquity and today. After the class, students will be able to analyze critically portrayals of Jesus in order to understand why certain decisions are made and address pivotal questions about biblical interpretation, cinema and adaptation, and the ethical challenges of representing religious figures in media. No prior familiarity with biblical studies or film criticism is required. | CMLT 28506 |
| RLST 28511 | Star Wars and Religion | Johnson, Russell P. | (C)Cultural Studies | This course puts religious texts into conversation with George Lucas's popular Star Wars film franchise with an eye toward understanding the power of myth in human life. In interviews, Lucas said he took bits and pieces from a variety of religious traditions to create the mythology of Star Wars. Through close readings of the films and primary texts, students will analyze these influences and evaluate how well the films hold these religious elements together. This course is not an in-depth study of any one religious tradition, but draws elements from different traditions to shed light on the portrayal of religion within Star Wars (i.e., the Force) and the metaphysical and moral themes found in the Star Wars films. |  |
| RLST 28612 | The Global Revolt Against Liberalism | Ofek, Yiftach | (C)Cultural Studies | Is liberalism in crisis? Only ten years ago, the ideology that won the Cold War seemed to reign supreme. Values such as individualism, free enterprise, representative government, and religious tolerance, were seen as more than hallmarks of order, but the very goals to which every nation should aspire. Since then, however, in the United States and across the globe, the liberal consensus has been challenged by populists, socialists, religious traditionalists, and others. Some have protested the close relationship between liberalism and capitalism. Some objected to liberalism’s breakup of “organic” ethno-religious communities. And some maintained that liberalism is no more than Western imperialism with a human face. What happened? Were these revolts mere setbacks on the long ‘arc of history’? Or were they, rather, a reflection of a deep philosophic unease with the very premises of modernity? Is this the end of the liberal world order? What will replace it? And what is the role of religion in the contemporary political imagination? This class will combine readings in political theory, the philosophy of history, and current events, to understand better these criticisms and gain some perspective on our present discontents. No prior knowledge is required. | GLST 28612, Democracy Studies elective |
| RLST 28901 | Religion, Science, and Naturalism: Is There a Problem? | Arnold, Daniel A. | (C)Cultural Studies | The idea that “religion” and “science” are often fundamentally at odds is familiar, indeed perhaps among the orienting ideas of modernity. Attending to some historically important approaches to the endlessly vexed question of how best to think about religion and science in light of one another, this class will consider such questions as whether the problems seem different if we ask not about religion and *science*, but rather about religion and *nature*. | SIGN 26072 |

Cross-Listed Courses in RLST – for Course Descriptions, please see the [College Catalog](http://collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/thecollege/religiousstudies/) or [Divinity’s Website](https://divinity.uchicago.edu/academics/courses):

* RLST 15300 – Introductory Qur’anic Arabic III (*Scott Doolin*)
* RLST 20203 – Islamicate Civilization III: 1750-Present (*Holly Shissler*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 20403 – Islamic Thought and Literature III (*various*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 20410 – Introduction to Islamic Studies (*Yousef Casewit*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 20751 – Global Jewish History since the 1960s (*Kenneth Moss*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 21303 – Christianity and Slavery in America, 1619-1865 (*Curtis Evans*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 21909 – Stoics and Epicureans (*Elizabeth Asmis*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 22015 – Jewish Civilization III: Jewish Spaces and Places: Imagined and Real (*Leora Auslander*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
* RLST 23510 – Ethics of Ethnographic Encounter (*William Mazzarella*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
* RLST 23829 – Foundational Readings in Christian Anthropology (*Erin Walsh*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
* RLST 24223 – *Parrhesia:* Fearless Speech From Socrates to Greta von Thunberg (*Christopher Wild*) Fulfills (B): Constructive Studies
* RLST 24801 – Heidegger’s *Being and Time* (*Ryan Coyne*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
* RLST 25006 – Theology and Polycrisis (*Christine Helmer*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
* RLST 26000 – Introduction to Religion, Literature, and Visual Culture (*Richard Rosengarten and Jaś Elsner*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 27552 – Race, Religion, and the Idea of Emancipation (*William Underwood*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 27652 – Broken Mirrors: Writing the Other from Herodotus to the Jewish/Christian Schism (*James A. Redfield*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 27722 – Evangelicals and Race (*Curtis Evans*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 28330 – Art and Religion from the Roman to the Christian Worlds (*Jaś Elsner*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 28710 – Theological Genealogies of Modernity (*Peter Harrison*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 28404 – Zen and Translation (*James Ketelaar*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 28499 – How Did The Ancients Interpret Their Myths? (*Carolina López-Ruiz*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
* RLST 29100 – “History of Religions” and Japan (*James Ketelaar*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies