

RLST Courses 2024-2025

Fall Quarter 2024

RLST Course No.	Course Title	Instructor	Requirement Fulfilled	Course Description	Crosslisting
RLST 10100	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	(A) Historical Studies, Gateway course	The course introduces the Jewish/Hebrew Bible as a literary treasury with a material history. We will survey the genres and the different works, review scholarly theories about the texts and about ideas in them, and situate them in the history of Israel and Judea and in the culture of ancient Southwest Asia. We will also engage theories of history, literature, and narrative. The course includes a weekly Discussion Section for mixed-modes activities and conceptual	FNDL 11004, JWSC 20120, NEHC 20504

				discussions. Course Note: This course counts as a Gateway course for RLST majors/minors.	
RLST 20300	Readings in Islamic Law	Abdulkadir, Abubakar	(A) Historical Studies	This course explores the history and theoretical foundations of Islamic law in North and West Africa, with a focus on the Maliki texts that formed the basis of legal education from the late medieval period to the present. In addition to discussing secondary literature addressing themes of scholarly authority, knowledge transmission, embodiment, and canonization, we will study selected legal texts authored by key figures such as Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī, Khalīl ibn Ishāq and Sīdī ‘Abd Allāh wuld al-Ḥājj Ibrāhīm [in translation]. All readings will be available in English. PQ: No prerequisites, but there will be opportunities for students with Arabic proficiency to make use of it.	NEHC 20300
RLST 22401	Zen Before Zen: Chan Buddhism in China	Ziporyn, Brook	(A) Historical Studies	This course is part of a two-sequence series, to be followed by a course on Japanese Zen Buddhism taught by Professor Stephan Licha in Winter 2025. "Chan" is a partial Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit word "Dhyana," meaning meditation practice; the same Chinese character is pronounced "Zen" in Japanese. This course will consist of the close reading (in English translation) and discussion of both the Indian Buddhist scriptures and indigenous Chinese sources that form the core of the tradition spanning Chan and Zen, with a few secondary descriptions of Chan institutions and cultural influences. Our focus will be on the development of ideas concerning the nature of sentience and the implications this has for understanding the existential predicament of sentient beings, touching on central themes of dependent co-arising, non-self, Emptiness, consciousness-only, Buddha-nature and original enlightenment, and the methods of realization (doctrinal, non-doctrinal, and indeed anti-doctrinal) proposed to redress this existential predicament at each stage of Chan history. This will be done both with an eye to the historical continuity of these sometimes seemingly contradictory forms thought and practice, and also to	EALC 22401

RLST Courses 2024-2025

				extract from them whatever transhistorical philosophical and spiritual valences we care to derive from the texts.	
RLST 23023	Self-Deception: What is it and How is it Possible?	Wood, William	(B) Constructive Studies	This seminar considers philosophical, theological, and literary accounts of self-deception, with the goal of helping participants understand why the very idea of self-deception seems paradoxical, even as it also seems to be a ubiquitous phenomenon. Self-deception seems paradoxical because the very same agent is both the deceiver and the deceived. What must the self be like, such that this paradoxical behavior is possible? The seminar will first consider a variety of theoretical accounts of self-deception and related phenomena, drawn from a wide array of sources, that range from Freud and Sartre to contemporary analytic philosophy. We will then consider whether literary portraits of self-deception do a better job of revealing its key aspects. Finally, we will consider the original question, “What must the self be like, such that self-deception is possible?” as a religious and theological question that invites to think about self-deception functions in the lives of religious adherents.	
RLST 23150	Capitalism and Doing Good?	Hopkins, Dwight	(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? Course Note: This course meets the Perspectives requirement for the Business Economics Specialization in ECON.	GLST 23150
RLST 23304	Abolitionist Theologies	Bustion, Olivia	(B) Constructive Studies	How might religions activate the abolitionist imagination? The contemporary abolition movement is not just about dismantling prisons or the police. It is about imagining alternatives to this apparatus of fear, punishment, and scarcity—and experimenting with new modes of living together premised on mutual aid rather than state power. Many abolitionist thinkers thus see abolition as a sacred force interrupting the normalized brutalities of everyday life. This course focuses on Jewish, Christian, and Islamic theologies that interrogate incarceration, capitalism, the war on terror, and the settler colonial state. We will analyze the possibilities and limits of these	RDIN 23304, GLST 23304

				<p>theologies as revolutionary resources. Our readings will include a variety of genres: scriptural interpretation, spiritual autobiography, and speculative fiction.</p> <p>No prior experience with academic theology or abolition required.</p>	
RLST 24200	Philosophy and Literature in India	Venkatkrishnan, Anand	(B) Constructive Studies	<p>Is philosophy literature? Is literature philosophy? What constitutes either of these seemingly disparate enterprises, formally and thematically, and what kinds of conjunctions can we imagine between them (philosophy in/of/as literature)? Can one translate these terms across cultures? Are they the sole prerogative of leisured elites, or can they harbor and cultivate voices of dissent? Above all, what does it mean to reflect on these categories outside the parochial context of the Western world? This course explores these questions by introducing some of the literary cultures, philosophical questions, storytelling traditions, and aesthetic theories of the South Asian subcontinent. Students will encounter a variety of genres including scriptural commentary, drama and courtly poetry, and the autobiography. Readings, all in translation, will range from Sanskrit literature to Sufi romances and more.</p>	CMLT 24202, SALC 20903, SIGN 26073
RLST 25591	Never Forget? Memorialization and the Ethics of Memory	Taylor, Zachary	(B) Constructive Studies	<p>Philosopher George Santayana famously stated that “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” This widely shared sentiment presupposes an uncomplicated responsibility to remember the past. Is memory, however, an unalloyed good? Can there ever be too much memory or even harmful memory? How do we commemorate past injustices? Do we ever have an obligation to forgive and forget? In this course, we will examine different conceptions of memory offered by religious thinkers, philosophers, and historians. We will then compare theories that articulate the basis for memorial norms, duties, and responsibilities. To conclude the course, we will use the theories canvassed in the first two parts to evaluate two contemporary memory issues: the debate over “working-off-the-past” (<i>Vergangenheitsaufarbeitung</i>) in relation to crimes perpetrated by Nazi Germany, and the legacy of the Civil War in the United States. By the end of this course, students will be able to</p>	

RLST Courses 2024-2025

				address a wide array of moral problems related to memory, such as whether and how we should remember the dead, past atrocities, revolutionary triumphs, and terrorist attacks. There are no prerequisites for this course.	
RLST 26304	Religion and Abortion in American Culture	Crews, Emily D.	(C) Cultural Studies	<p>In American public discourse, it is common to hear abortion referred to as a “religious issue.” But is abortion a religious issue? If so, in what ways, to whom, and why?</p> <p>In this course we will answer these questions by tracing the relationship between religion and abortion in American history. We will examine the kinds of claims religious groups have made about abortion; how religion has shaped the development of medical, legal, economic, and cultural perspectives on the topic; how debates over abortion have led to the rise of a certain kind of religious politics in the United States; and how issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and the body are implicated in this conversation. Although the course will cover a range of time periods, religious traditions, and types of data (abortion records from Puritan New England, enslaved people’s use of herbal medicine to induce miscarriage, and Jewish considerations of the personhood of the fetus, among others), we will give particular attention to the significance of Christianity in legal and political debates about abortion in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. There are no prerequisites for this course and no background in Religious Studies is required. However, this course may be particularly well-suited to students interested in thinking about how certain themes or areas of study—medicine and medical sciences, gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity, political science—converge with religion and Religious Studies.</p>	AMER 26304, CCTS 21015, GNSE 12115, HIPS 26304, HIST 28008, HLTH 26304, HMRT 26304, PBPL 25304, SOCI 20564, ANTH 26304, SSAD 26304
RLST 26635	Liberatory Violence	Doostdar, Alireza	(C) Cultural Studies	<p>From 18th century slave rebellions in the Americas to 20th and 21st century anticolonial revolutions, oppressed peoples' struggles for liberation have often incorporated violent tactics, even against non-combatants. This course examines anticolonial violence in light of the work of the Martiniquan revolutionary Frantz Fanon and some of his interlocutors. We study specific freedom movements: Nat Turner's</p>	ANTH 26636, RDIN 26635, GLST 26635, SSAD 26635

				slave rebellion, the Haitian and Algerian revolutions against French colonialism, Malcolm X and the Black Panthers' mobilization against white supremacy and police violence, and the ongoing Palestinian struggle against Zionist settler colonialism, ethnic cleansing, and apartheid. Throughout, we will pay attention to how revolutionaries evaluated the place of violence in their own movements, including religious criteria for justifiable and unjustifiable use of force.	
RLST 27657	Rethinking Pilgrimage: Pop-Culture Tourism and Religious Travel	Winkelman, Bruce	(C) Cultural Studies	The term pilgrimage is usually associated with journeys to ancient religious sites such as the Vatican or Mecca. But why do superfans who travel to Disney World often describe this in terms of a pilgrimage? Why is it that when anime fans visit real-life sites from their favorite shows, this is frequently called a “journey to sacred sites” (seiichi junrei)? In this course we will discuss these and other questions about pilgrimage in its religious and secular forms. We will consider examples such as the Islamic Hajj, the Crusades, and a 750-mile Buddhist pilgrimage in Japan, alongside journeys to Platform 9¾ at King’s Cross, Elvis’s Graceland, and the sets of Hobbiton. After first exploring theories of travel, tourism, and pilgrimage through a global array of examples, the second half of the course consists of a deep dive into connections between anime tourism, religious travel in Japan, and the worldwide boom of Japanese pop culture. At the end of the course students will present a small research project on a pilgrimage/tourist destination of their own choosing. No prior coursework on religion required.	EALC 27657, ANTH 27657
RLST 28447	It’s the End of the World as We Know It: Apocalypticism and Religious Thinking about the End Times	Cunningham, Marshall	(C) Cultural Studies	Why and how will the world end? How much time is left? What happens to humans in those final days—and after? This course will examine art, rituals, and sacred texts — along with the movements that produced them — in order to understand how religious communities have answered such questions throughout history. Along the way, we will learn about the circumstances that have inspired Apocalyptic movements, the religious traditions that they have emerged from, and the theological and political principles that have animated them. We will cover a wide range of contexts,	CMLT 28447, GLST 28447, HIST 25219, JWSC 28447

RLST Courses 2024-2025

				including Roman-occupied Judea during the first century CE, the Xhosaland of southern Africa in the mid 19 th century, and the rise of QAnon and climate activism in the 21 st century United States. No prerequisite knowledge of the historical periods or religious traditions examined required.	
RLST 29024	The Election Race of 2024: Ethics, Religion, and the American Polity	Zoloth, Laurie	(C) Cultural Studies	This course will follow the ongoing Presidential election of 2024 as it unfolds in real time during this quarter. We will read, as primary texts, newspapers from across the political spectrum and consider the claims therein. In parallel, we will explore theoretical and historical writing about democracy and its challenges. We will consider how religion and culture affect the American political process and critically examine social the competing truth claims and values that structure these processes.	ANTH 29024, AMER 29024
RLST 29068	Christianity and Consumer Culture in the United States	Ozmun, Hannah	(C) Cultural Studies	In the United States, everything is for sale—including religion. Religious books, objects, and films are produced and marketed to recruit converts and to entertain and edify adherents. Churches can be seen as commodities as people “shop” for a new congregation or sect. Some scholars have suggested that consumption itself has become a religious act, with its own rites, rituals, and promises of salvation. In this course we will explore the intersecting histories of Christianity and consumer culture in the US from the late nineteenth century to the present day. Reading classic texts in history and sociology, as well as more contemporary scholarship on American consumer culture, we will attend to the questions that consumer culture poses for American Christians and for scholars of religion. Has consumer culture contributed to the secularization of American society? Has Christianity been corrupted by consumer culture? Can Christians redeem the marketplace? How can the study of religion help us understand our culture of consumption, and how can consumerism help us understand religion?	HIST 27721, ANTH 29068, AMER 29068
RLST 29800	BA Research Seminar I	Hoekstra, Pieter		This class meets weekly to provide guidance for planning, researching, and writing the BA research paper. The two-quarter senior sequence will assist students in the Research Track with the	

				<p>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 Research Seminar convened by a preceptor during Autumn and Winter Quarters of their senior year. This seminar will allow students to prepare their bibliographies, hone their writing, and present their research. PQ: Consent of faculty supervisor and Director of Undergraduate Studies. Course Note: Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form.</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--

Cross-Listed Courses in RLST – for Course Descriptions, please see the [College Catalog](#) or [Divinity's Website](#):

- RLST 13900 – Introductory Biblical Hebrew I (*Emily Thomassen*) Fulfills: n/a
- RLST 14100 – Introductory Koiné Greek I (*Doug Hoffer*) Fulfills: n/a
- RLST 20201 – Islamicate Civilization I: 600-950 (*Cecelia Palombo*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 20122 – Documentary Cultures in Early Islamicate Societies (*Cecelia Palombo*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 20228 – History of Jews in Middle East 1492-1947 (*Orit Bashkin*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 20401 – Islamic Thought and Literature I (*Austin O'Malley, Jack Buredn*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 20410 – Introduction to Arabic and Islamic Studies (*Mehmetcan Akpınar*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 20510 – Early Jewish Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible (*Simeon Chavel*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 21613 – Saints and Sinners in Late Antiquity (*Richard Payne*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 22010 – Jewish Civilization I: Ancient Beginnings to Medieval Period (*Staff*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 22023 – Interpreting the Gospel According to Matthew (*Margaret Mitchell*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- ~~RLST 22215 – Athanasius on the Incarnation (*David Martinez*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies~~
- RLST 23550 – Slavery and Social Justice in the Hebrew Bible (*David Harris*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
- RLST 23816 – Hope in Theological, Philosophical, and Political Perspective (*Kevin Hector*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
- RLST 23830 – Simone Weil: Spirituality, Metaphysics, and Politics (*Kevin Hector*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
- RLST 23906 – Nature and Dao (*Paul Copp*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
- RLST 23908 – Bergson and China: Buddhist and Confucian Reboots (*Brook Ziporyn*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
- RLST 25122 – Modern Philosophy of Religion: A Historical Perspective (*Dan Brudney*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies

RLST Courses 2024-2025

- RLST 26337 – Race, Justice, and the Assemblage of American Moralities (*Samah Choudbury*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 26400 – John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (*Timothy Harrison*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 26677 – American Jewish Literature (*Sheila Jelen*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 26702 – Arabic into Hebrew: Translation and Cultural Change during the Middle Ages (*Dean James T. Robinson*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 26717 – Diasporic Literature and Modern Islam in the Imperial Core (*Samah Choudbury*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 26815 – Strange Lit: Estrangement and Literature (*Rana Ghuloom*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 29110 – Media Islam (*Tom Maguire*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies

Winter Quarter 2025

RLST Course No.	Course Title	Instructor	Requirement Fulfilled	Course Description	Crosslisting
RLST 10100	Introduction to Religious Studies	Pinkney, Foster	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.	SOCI 20541

				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.	
RLST 11040	Introduction to the Qur'an	Apkinar, Mehmetcan	(A) Historical Studies; Gateway course	The primary goal of this course is to introduce students to the text and context of the Qur'an. Emphasis is placed upon both the historical setting as well as the thematic and literary features, major biblical figures, and foundational narratives of the Qur'an. Explorations of medieval exegetical literature on the Qur'an and its reception in the early (8th - 10th century CE) and medieval periods (11th - 15th century CE) will feature in this course.	FNDL 11040, NEHC 11040, MDVL 11040
RLST 12000	Introduction to the New Testament: Texts and Contexts of Interpretation	Walsh, Erin	(A) Historical Studies, Gateway course	This class introduces students to the texts that make up the New Testament through close readings of representative examples. Through course lectures and readings, students will gain familiarity with the historical, geographical, social, religious, cultural, and political contexts of New Testament literature and the events they narrate. We will also learn about the central literary genres found within the collection of texts that came to form the canonical New Testament, including "gospels," "acts," "letters," and "apocalypses"), and we will examine how awareness of genre conventions enhances our reading of these works. Students will also learn about the distinctive theological and cultural viewpoints contained within various New Testament texts. As we learn about the history of biblical scholarship, especially the goals and methods of biblical interpretation, we will practice refining our questions. Assignments and discussion will allow students to develop their skills as attuned readers of both ancient texts as well as modern biblical scholarship. PQ: No prior knowledge of biblical literature, the ancient world, or Christianity is expected. The only expectation is commitment to engaged discussion about the challenges of interpretation with classmates holding various	FNDL 28202, MDVL 12500, CLCV 22524

RLST Courses 2024-2025

				viewpoints. Course Note: This course counts as a Gateway course for RLST majors/minors.	
RLST 22402	Japanese Zen Buddhism	Licha, Stephan	(A) Historical Studies	What is Zen? Impossibly, seemingly, everything to everybody. In this course, we will explore Zen's protean transformations through a close reading of primary sources in translation. Rather than asking what Zen is, we will focus on how in these materials the Zen traditions are continually de/re-constructed as contingent religious identities from medieval Japan to the contemporary United States and Europe. The focus of the course will be the premodern Japanese Zen tradition, its background in Chinese Chan, and its reception in the West. The course will include field trips to Zen communities in the Chicago area. Students wishing to take this course are strongly encouraged to also take Prof. Ziporyn's course on Chan during the fall quarter.	EALC 22402
RLST 22655	Themes in the European Reformation(s)	Macfarlane, Kirsten	(A) Historical Studies	This course provides an introduction to the study of the Reformation(s) in early modern Europe. As well as covering the key theological ideas of famous Protestant reformers (Luther; Zwingli; Calvin), it will give ample space to the impact that these religious revolutions had on contemporary society, including attitudes to gender, politics, economics, and visual/material culture. It will cover the reformations and renewals undergone by Catholicism in the same period, and discuss the key arguments, questions, and concerns which have preoccupied historians of the Reformation since the nineteenth century. Students will have the opportunity to read and engage with famous texts from the period (for instance Erasmus's <i>On Free Will</i> ; Luther's <i>95 Theses</i> ; Calvin's <i>Institutes</i>) as well as lesser-known but still influential works (e.g. the poetry of the female Italian humanist Olympia Fulvia Morata and the writings of early Jesuit missionaries to China and Japan), in addition to historically significant documents (such as contemporary witchcraft confessions and extracts from Reformation demonologies). Finally, there will be time devoted to unpacking the complex legacies of the Reformation and the	HIST 23010

				‘unintended consequences’ attributed to it, focusing especially on the afterlives of Max Weber’s analyses.	
RLST 24116	Buddhism and the Good Life	Licha, Stephan	(B) Constructive Studies, Gateway course	Forbes Magazine has styled the Tibetan Buddhist monk Mingyur Rinpoche, “the happiest man alive.” Like no other religion, Buddhism in the public imagination is associated with providing us with an accessible way towards leading a good and happy life. But what is the “good life” according to the Buddhist tradition, and what is “happiness” supposed to lead us towards? In this course, we will explore these questions through a close reading of Buddhist sources in translation. Through these readings the course will introduce the doctrinal and practical foundations of the Buddhist traditions and serve as a gateway to more specialized studies. Course Note: This course counts as a Gateway course for RLST majors/minors.	EALC 24116
RLST 25301	History, Religion, and Politics in Augustine’s <i>City of God</i>	Otten, Willemien and Allen, Michael I.	(B) Constructive Studies	Augustine’s <i>City of God</i> is a major work of history, politics, and religion. Written after Rome was sacked by the Visigoths in 410, the work begins an apology (justification) of the Empire’s turn to Christianity and expands to offer a sweeping and deeply theological account of human history and society in terms of earth-bound versus heaven-centered community. Augustine’s citizenship and politics entails living out membership in either fellowship while commingled on earth with the other. Augustine analyzes Roman history and politics as well as the new religion first encouraged and eventually imposed in the wake of Constantine’s conversion. We shall read the entire work in translation, attending to historical observations, political stances, and religious views. Augustine made arguments of his own but saved huge swaths of Varro and other otherwise lost sources to fashion his historical critique of Rome, social analysis, and many ultimately fresh views on matters like human sexuality in paradise and in heaven. The class will meet once a week. A supplementary Latin reading group will also convene once a week for close reading of	CLCV 26421, FNLD 25304, HIST 22116, LATN 26421

RLST Courses 2024-2025

				important and demanding selections in the original. There will be some invited international guest speakers. Course Note: Latin is helpful but not necessary. There will be a weekly Latin reading group for Classics and other students who want to tackle Augustine's Latin.	
RLST 25704	Environmental Justice in Chicago	Fredericks, Sarah	(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.	AMER 25704, CEGU 25704, CHST 25704, RDIN 25704, ENST 25704, HMRT 25704, KNOW 25704, PBPL 25704
RLST 26620	Tradition and Modernity in Jewish Thought and Literature	Redfield, James A.	(C) Cultural Studies	The concept of tradition often takes a back seat to modernity but what does it mean to be part of a tradition in the modern world? How does tradition challenge received views and stimulate creativity, against the modern view of tradition as the "dead hand of the past"? How have the concept; ideology; and cultural role of tradition changed in Jewish culture since the Enlightenment? This course explores those questions in three bodies of work: (1) late 18th- to mid-20th-century German-Jewish historians, critics, & theologians; (2) modern Hebrew & Yiddish writers; and (3) their shared biblical, rabbinic, and mystical inspirations. Through close readings of these writers' reflections on their own literary traditions, tradition emerges as both a resource and a problem for Jewish cultural creativity; one that calls for its own theoretical vocabulary and can be set in dialogue with the modern evolution of other traditional cultures.	JWSC 26620

RLST 28280	<i>The Good Place</i> and the Bad Place: Judgement, Punishment, and Living a Good Life	Pinkney, Foster	(C) Cultural Studies	Do you believe that you are a good person and, if so, why are you good? This course will investigate the connections between personal intentions to be a "good person" and the fear of punishment. What do we owe each other as ethical actors? Do the intentions of our actions matter or only the results of our actions? How can one be good in an increasingly complicated web of intersecting needs, social developments, and understandings of morality? This course will examine conceptions of hell, eternal punishment, and justice in a variety of religious traditions. In addition to reading authors such as Dante and John Milton, students will critically engage <i>The Good Place</i> , a sitcom which tackles deep questions of faith, morality, and the complexity of the human person. We will think through competing understandings of justice (retributive, distributive, and restorative) alongside our individual beliefs surrounding fairness and deservingness. No prior knowledge of religious studies or ethics is expected.	FN DL 28280, CMLT 28280
RLST 28405	Religion in Anime and Japanese Pop Culture	Licha, Stephan	(C) Cultural Studies	How does <i>Spirited Away</i> reflect teachings of Japanese Buddhism and Shinto? Or what about <i>Neon Genesis Evangelion</i> ? What can pop culture tell us about religion? In this course, we will consider what Japanese religions are (and are not) by looking at their representations in popular cultural forms of past and present. Sources are drawn from a range of popular cultural forms including anime and manga, but also literature, artistic performances, visual arts, and live-action movies. The course covers foundational aspects of Japanese religious life through non-traditional sources like <i>Bleach</i> , <i>The Tale of Genji</i> , and <i>Your Name</i> . At the end of the course, students will be able to speak to the great diversity of religious practices and viewpoints in Japan, not only its centers but also its peripheries and minorities. Meanwhile, we will consider broader questions about the complex connections between religion and popular culture. No prior knowledge of Buddhism, Shinto, or Japanese history is expected.	CMLT 28405, EALC 28405, MADD 14805

RLST Courses 2024-2025

RLST 29900	BA Research Seminar II	Hoekstra, Pieter		<p>This class meets weekly to assist students in the preparation of drafts of their BA paper, which are formally presented and critiqued. 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 of their senior year. This seminar will allow students to prepare their bibliographies, hone their writing, and present their research. Course Note: Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form.</p>	
---------------	---------------------------	------------------	--	---	--

Cross-Listed Courses in RLST – for Course Descriptions, please see the [College Catalog](#) or [Divinity’s Website](#):

- RLST 14000 – Introductory Biblical Hebrew II (*Emily Thomassen*) Fulfills: n/a
- RLST 14200 – Introductory Koiné Greek II (*Doug Hoffer*) Fulfills: n/a
- RLST 20202 – Islamic Civilization II: 950-1750 (*Staff*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 20402 – Islamic Thought and Literature II (*Staff*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 21101 – Papyrology and Early Christian Backgrounds (*David Martinez*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 22011 – Jewish Civilization II: Early Modern Period to 21st Century (*Sheila Jelen*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 22501 – Foundations of East Asian Buddhism (*Paul Copp*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- ~~RLST 23974 – Henri Bergson in a (Particular) Theological Context (*Stephen C. Meredith*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies~~
- RLST 24003 – Death and Dying (*Alex Tate*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
- RLST 24550 – Major Trends in Islamic Mysticism (*Yousef Casewit*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
- RLST 24567 – Islamic Psychology (*Yousef Casewit*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
- RLST 25800 – Black Ownership of Wealth: A Theological Consideration (*Dwight Hopkins*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
- RLST 26107 – Moving Objects, Dispersed Cultures: Case Studies from China and the Middle East (*Cecelia Palombo, Wei-Cheng Lin*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 27310 – American Islam (*Tom Maguire*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 27522 – The Poetry and Prose of John Donne (*Timothy Harrison*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies

- RLST 27702 – Music and Love in South Asia (*Anand Venkatkrishnan, Anna Schultz*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 27707 – Anthropological Theory (*William Mazzarella*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 28402 – Race and Religion in the U.S. (*Curtis Evans*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 28810 – Devotion-Dissent-Disenchantment: Art in the Age of the Reformation (*Tamara Golan*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 29030 – Islam, Race, and Decoloniality (*Maliba Chishti*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies

Spring Quarter 2025

RLST Course No.	Course Title	Instructor	Requirement Fulfilled	Course Description	Crosslisting
RLST 22812	Introduction to Hinduism	Taylor, Sarah P.	(A) Historical Studies, Gateway course	What is Hinduism? Variously described as a world religion, a way of life, the basis of a national culture, and more, this course will consider how a multiplicity of traditions has become a singular “Hinduism” and, critically, what is left out. Beginning with the Vedic period in the first-millennium B.C.E and moving to our present day, we will track how complex historical interactions between Buddhists, Jains, Muslims—and eventually the British—produced the modern category of Hinduism. Students will become familiar with central religious tenets (including dharma, artha, kāma, and mokṣa), sectarian traditions such as Vaiṣṇavism, Śāivism, and Śāktism, and religious literature ranging from epic to devotional poetry. As we will see, Hinduism is a flexible and elastic term that names a shifting religious identity and community. Course Note: This course counts as a Gateway course for RLST majors/minors.	SALC 22812
RLST 20505	Pagans and Christians: Greek	Martinez, David	(A) Historical Studies	This course will examine some of the ancient Greek roots of early Christianity. We will focus on affinities between Christianity and the classical tradition as well as ways in which the Christian	MDVL 20505, CLCV 26216

RLST Courses 2024-2025

	Backgrounds to Early Christianity			<p>faith may be considered radically different from it. Some of the more important issues that we will analyze are: "The spell of Homer." How the Homeric poems exerted immeasurable influence on the religious attitudes and practices of the Greeks. The theme of creation in Greek and Roman authors such as Hesiod and Ovid. The Orphic account of human origins. The early Christian theme of Christ as Creator/Savior. Greek, specifically Homeric conceptions of the afterlife. The response to the Homeric orientation in the form of the great mystery cults of Demeter, Dionysus, and Orpheus. The views of the philosophers (esp. Plato) of the immortality of the soul compared with the New Testament conception of resurrection of the body. Ancient Greek conceptions of sacrifice and the crucifixion of Christ as archetypal sacrifice. The attempted synthesis of Jewish and Greek philosophic thought by Philo of Alexandria and its importance for early Christianity.</p>	
RLST 23200	Faith: A Conceptual History	Coyne, Ryan	(B) Constructive Studies	<p>A close examination of the concept of faith in Christian theological sources and in modern European philosophy: what is faith? How does its meaning change over time? What are the major models of faith among recent and contemporary Christian theologians? To what extent is theology the "self-understanding of faith"? In this course we will ask these and other questions while reading closely thinkers including Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Bultmann, Barth, and Gutierrez, among others.</p>	FNDL 23200
RLST 23300	Religion and Psychiatry	Joyce-Coughlin, Owen	(B) Constructive Studies	<p>This course will investigate the many theoretical and practical problems which emerge where the domains of psychiatry and religion overlap. We will explore questions such as: What are the common realities that religious and psychiatric frameworks seek to explain? Are being "divinely inspired" and being "mad" mutually exclusive? How do religious and other cultural categories shape the development of what are called "mental disorders"? Are cognitive behavioural therapists more effective</p>	ANTH 23301, CCTS 23300, HLTH 23300

				<p>than witchdoctors at restoring people to health? We will begin with a brief overview of the history of psychiatry, before analyzing a famous case of mass demonic possession in 17th century France. We will take several weeks to explore contemporary psychiatric diagnoses, contrasting how psychiatrists and religious authors describe similar symptoms in different ways. We will compare diverse therapeutic methods, modern and traditional, to ask what makes each of them effective or ineffective. Finally, we will survey proposed alternatives to the prevailing diagnostic frameworks within psychiatry, asking which, if any, our study of the overlapping domains of religion and psychiatry might lend support.</p>	
RLST 23507	Power and Responsibility in the Anthropocene	Weaver, Colin	(B) Constructive Studies	<p>Humanity's immense impact on Earth's systems has led some scientists to claim that we have entered a new geological epoch: the Anthropocene. Humans' influence on Earth's landscape, climate system, and biodiversity inspires many to ask, in turn, What should be done about humankind's planetary powers? Some scholars and religious leaders claim that people should take responsibility and influence Earth's systems for good ends, while others argue that we should radically scale down such power. Still others suggest that the Anthropocene requires us to entirely revise our ideas of power and responsibility and even develop new religious sensibilities. Through discussions and focused writing assignments, students in this class will explore and evaluate these and additional responses to the Anthropocene, paying specific attention to how Anthropocene ethical thought wrestles with the place of religion on a changing planet. The course culminates in an extended examination of how Anthropocene discourse conceals racial antagonisms and contemporary decolonial struggles.</p>	ANTH 23507, CEGU 23507, RDIN 23507, GLST 23507
RLST 23599	Christian and Anti-Christian: Kierkegaard and	Schweiker, William	(B) Constructive Studies	<p>This course explores two radically different assessments of religion and morality, one by the Protestant thinker Søren Kierkegaard, and the other by an arch-critic of religion and</p>	FNDL 23599

RLST Courses 2024-2025

	Nietzsche on Religion and Morality			<p>“morality,” Friedrich Nietzsche. The course will focus on their assessments of religious faith and its relation to morality and the human good. We will explore Kierkegaard’s <i>Fear and Trembling</i> and also Nietzsche’s works, <i>On the Genealogy of Morals</i>. The course moves in interlocking moments: an inquiry into Kierkegaard’s and Nietzsche’s account of religion and its moral outlook, and their outlooks on how best to live given their assessments of religion and morality. Additionally, the course will explore their styles of writing and the relation between style and the purpose and content of their thought. The general aim of the course, then, is to explore two seminal minds in the development of Western thought with the question in mind of their possible contribution to current religious and ethical thinking.</p>	
RLST 23608	Worshipping the God that Dances: Embodied Forms of Knowledge, Self, and Divinity	Berger, Jesse	(B) Constructive Studies	<p>Friedrich Nietzsche wrote, “I would only believe in a god that knows how to dance.” This course will use Nietzsche’s comment as a springboard for critical philosophical exploration of embodied theories of knowledge, reality, and the divine. Along the way, we will leverage the image of a ‘dancing god’ to interrogate philosophical and religious dichotomies in both Western and Eastern traditions (e.g., between sacred/profane, theory/praxis, transcendence/immanence, masculine/feminine). Some traditions have used the metaphor of dance to theorize about a god of dynamic becoming vs. a “wallflower” god of static being. Contemporary cognitive scientists, inspired by Buddhist philosophy, speculate that selfhood might resemble something like an embodied form of “dance,” rather than a substantial mode of existence. How, then, can the notion of a “dancing god” challenge orthodox, atemporal, or disembodied conceptions of God, reality, and human experience? In what ways does a practical ‘knowing how’ differ from a purely theoretical ‘knowing that’—and how does this impact the meaning and purpose of religious life? Readings will include Nietzsche, Durkheim, William James, Charles Hartshorne,</p>	

				Michael Polanyi, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and others; no prior experience with the philosophy of religion is required.	
RLST 24002	Is Religion Bad for Women?	Jones, Hannah	(B) Constructive Studies	Some scholars working in the study of gender and sexuality view religion as the conservative enemy of progress, irreconcilably antagonistic to the flourishing of any non-normative gender or sexuality. At the same time, some religious practitioners view feminism as a Western or liberal invention, an imposition that attempts to manage the lives of religious subjects. Still others find feminism and religious commitment mutually reinforcing, and have developed feminist, womanist, and queer rituals and theologies. This course examines contemporary texts, ethnographies, memoirs, and films that grapple with these tensions. In so doing, the course also helps students develop familiarity with foundational categories both in religious studies and in the study of gender and sexuality. Further questions to be explored include: Does religion facilitate or oppose the flourishing of women, queers, and people of color? Is religion a guardian of tradition that resists politically progressive aims, or do religions offer resources for interrogating secular liberalism? The course primarily considers Islamic, Christian, and Jewish traditions. Prior coursework in religious studies or gender and sexuality studies is helpful but not necessary.	GNSE 12130, RDIN 25002, GLST 24002
RLST 24240	Buddhism and Science: A Critical Introduction	Berger, Jesse	(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	CCTS 21018, HIPS 24240, KNOW 24240

RLST Courses 2024-2025

				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. Course Note: This course counts as a Cognitive Science extra-disciplinary course.	
RLST 25510	Christianity, Nonviolence, and Realism	Pinkney, Foster	(B) Constructive Studies	This course investigates the connections between personal spiritual development and social engagement with justice movements. What, if any, effect does personal belief and faith have in directing political will? How does nonviolent resistance encounter the institutional realities of social advocacy? And lastly, in what ways are religious orientations challenged by globalized financial systems and power structures? The nonviolent religious philosophies of Howard Thurman and Daniel Berrigan will be contextualized within their respective Christian traditions and interreligious commitments. We will then encounter the challenge of Political Realism through the works of Reinhold Niebuhr and Samantha Power to interrogate the place of personal faith commitments within a pluralized society and the concrete realities of war, peace, and international conflict.	
RLST 26001	Religion and Visual Culture in the Late Antique Mediterranean	Krause, Karin	(C) Cultural Studies	In this seminar, we examine sacred sites and artifacts of early Christians and their neighbors in the regions around the Mediterranean from the third century to about 750 CE. Case studies will illustrate the wealth of religious art and architecture associated with different religions that existed side by side—	CLCV 26024, JWSC 26020, ARTH 26001, MDVL 26001, NEHC 26001

				Christianity, Judaism, polytheism, and emerging Islam. This course has five main objectives: (1) to examine how the designs of religious spaces, buildings, and objects respond to specific spiritual or ritualistic needs; (2) to gain familiarity with typical features characterizing the arts of each religion or sect; (3) to identify elements of a common visual language that result from shared traditions or artistic cross-pollination; (4) to examine different ways in which material artifacts were employed as means of ideological propaganda; and (5) to study art and architecture as evidence of doctrinal competition and conflict. While this course foregrounds the study of material culture, written sources (in translation) complement the analysis of the visual evidence.	
RLST 26636	Liberatory Violence: Part II	Doostdar, Alireza	(C) Cultural Studies	This course continues exploring liberatory violence by engaging the works of a selection of political theorists, historians, anthropologists, and revolutionary leaders engaged in armed struggle. Readings may include Georges Sorel and Walter Benjamin on violence; Talal Asad on suicide bombing; speeches and writings by Mao, Ho Chi Minh, Che Guevara, and Nelson Mandela; women guerrillas in the South African anti-apartheid struggle; the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad; the German Red Army Faction; and violence inflicted on the self, such as among hunger strikers in Ireland, Palestine, and Turkey. PQ: Open to student who took RLST 26635/AASR 46635 "Liberatory Violence" in autumn 2024, or by instructor's permission.	ANTH 26637, RDIN 26636, HMRT 26636
RLST 27005	Reality TV in East Asia and Beyond	Heo, Angie and Long, Hoyt	(C) Cultural Studies	Over the last several decades, reality television has become a central ingredient in media diets all across the world. One can practically trace a line from early hits like <i>Survivor</i> and <i>Big Brother</i> , which were quickly formatted for global circulation, to the recent viral success of <i>Squid Game</i> , a fictionalized account of a death-game tournament that spawned its own reality show. Why do audiences everywhere find reality TV so entertaining? What	EALC 23005, CMST 23005

RLST Courses 2024-2025

				<p>moral lessons do viewers take away from these shows? And what might scholars learn by taking this popular aesthetic form, in all its cultural variation, seriously? This course brings together media studies, aesthetic criticism, area studies, and the sociology of religion to try to answer some of these questions. The course will help students to think about the moral and spiritual beliefs embedded in popular cultural forms, but also to understand how these forms are now circulated and consumed in our contemporary media environment and what they tell us about late-stage global capitalism. Course readings will introduce students to scholarship in television studies, aesthetic criticism, religious studies, and cultural studies, providing them with the necessary foundations to analyze reality TV from multiple disciplinary perspectives. We will also screen examples of reality TV and its offshoots, with a specific focus on East Asian shows and the competition or elimination format. PQ: Students will develop skills in visual analysis, interpretation of secular religion and belief structures, social theory, and basic research and writing methods.</p>	
RLST 27107	<i>Frankenstein: Making Monsters in Science and Religion</i>	Matthews, Alex	(C) Cultural Studies	<p>“And now, once again, I bid my hideous progeny go forth and prosper,” writes Mary Shelley of <i>Frankenstein</i>. In framing her 1818 novel as itself a monster with agency, she raises questions about why and how we continue to create and regard our creations as monstrous. Why has the creation of artificial life fascinated us from ancient times to modern A.I.? How do we recognize and identify monsters, and what role do we have in their creation? Are creators responsible for their creations, or alienated from them? This class combines close reading of <i>Frankenstein</i> with religious and scientific texts on monsters, the creation of artificial life, and our moral responsibilities to our creations. We will discuss what narratives about the monstrous tell us about our values, how the “human” is contrasted with its</p>	FNDL 27107, HIPS 27107

				opposites, and why the story of <i>Frankenstein</i> —as well as its predecessors and imitators—remains so hauntingly compelling.	
RLST 27653	Judaism and Ethnography	Redfield, James A.	(C) Cultural Studies	Defining ethnography broadly as curiosity about human difference, this course engages close readings in a vast gallery of ethnographic portraits both of and by Jews, from the Bible to the early modern period. Together, we will construct a history of this tradition by tracing patterns in how Jews are represented and how they represent themselves, as well as their own Others, in dialogue with those cultures. While anthropologists and literary theorists will help us to appreciate the diversity and fluidity of Jewish (auto-)ethnography, these thinkers will also turn our critical gaze on Greek, Roman, and European Christian images of Jews and Judaism. This history is not simply a case-study in an overlooked ethnographic tradition but an archive where influential and often oppressive "Western" ways of thinking about human difference have been spawned, cross-fertilized, resisted, and transformed.	JWSC 27723, ANTH 27653
RLST 28498	Myth and Its Critics	López-Ruiz, Carolina	(C) Cultural Studies	Myth is essential to how humans make sense of the world: our foundational stories explain the nature of the world; they justify and explore social and sexual difference; they teach and test the limits of human agency. The course will survey contexts and uses of myth-making in the ancient Mediterranean world. We will also explore the many traditions of critique and anxiety about myth-making, among philosophers, literary critics and religious authorities.	CLCV 15000, HIST 17000, SIGN 26037
RLST 28308	Introduction to Byzantine Art	Krause, Karin	(C) Cultural Studies	In this course we will explore works of art and architecture as primary sources on the civilization of Byzantium. Through the close investigation of artifacts of different media and techniques, students will gain insight into the artistic production of the Byzantine Empire from its beginnings in the fourth century C.E. to the Ottoman conquest in 1453. We will employ different methodological approaches and scholarly resources that are relevant for the fruitful investigation of artifacts in their	ARTH 14006, MDVL 14006

RLST Courses 2024-2025

				respective cultural setting. In order to fully assess the pivotal importance of the visual arts in Byzantine culture, we will address a wide array of topics, including art and ritual, patronage, the interrelation of art and text, the classical heritage, art and theology, Iconoclasm, etc. <i>Karin Krause</i>	
RLST 28511	Star Wars and Religion	Johnson, Russell	(C) Cultural Studies	This course puts religious texts in conversation with George Lucas’s popular <i>Star Wars</i> film franchise with an eye toward understanding the power of myth in human life. In interviews, Lucas confessed 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 from different religions, 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 <i>Star Wars</i> (i.e., the Force) and the metaphysical and moral themes found in the <i>Star Wars</i> films. [This course features additional Monday discussion sections, scheduled in accordance with students' availability.]	
RLST 28929	Cabal, Cult, and Crisis: Religion and Contemporary Conspiracy Theory	Smolin, Justin	(C) Cultural Studies	We live in an age of crisis for liberal democracy, and conspiracy theories are often said to be at the heart of this crisis. While Alex Jones, Infowars, and QAnon have become household names, there is still no consensus on what makes a “conspiracy theory” or how scholars should approach these topics. Are “New World Order”-style conspiracy beliefs irrational or false on their face? Can liberal-democratic regimes which pride themselves on their ability to accommodate diverse religious viewpoints successfully integrate conspiracy believers? In this course, we will approach the subject of conspiracy theory by engaging with theorists in their own words, videos, and images, while sampling a range of academic and public-facing literature on new religious movements, religion and politics-related issues, and	ANTH 28929, MADD 10929

				epistemology. In so doing, we will apply critical lenses of diverse sorts to mixed media, as we collectively develop methodologies for carrying out original research on “low-status” subjects using un-curated archives. No prior acquaintance with conspiracy-oriented materials required.	
RLST 29300	Asceticism: Forming the Self	Walsh, Erin and Taylor, Sarah P.	(C) Cultural Studies	In recent decades scholars of the pre-modern period have turned to the body as a site of renewed historical inquiry. Within the study of religion, this shift has reanimated discussions around asceticism as a particularly potent technē for self-fashioning. Nevertheless, scholars have struggled to theorize asceticism across religious traditions. This signature course, taught by two scholars working in disparate historical periods and religious traditions (early Christianity and medieval Indian religious literature), explores how gender theory has engaged ascetic practices for understanding the body and human potential. Students will engage asceticism as a series of techniques or forms of life that envision the sexed and gendered human body as the horizon of corporeal expression and personal imagination. Asceticism serves as a neat conceptual device, allowing us to toggle between the mind and body while tackling questions that fall within the liminal space between them, including debates around gender, sexuality, sovereignty, and biopower. Students along with the instructors will contend with the challenges and opportunities of transnational and transhistorical feminist and queer inquiry as we traverse across the boundaries of tradition, language, and culture. While drawing on rich historical and religious archives, we will anchor our discussions around the interplay of two principal authors: Giorgio Agamben and Michel Foucault. PQ: No prior knowledge of the religious traditions or critical theory discussed is expected.	GNSE 29303, SIGN 26074, FNDL 29301, ANTH 29300, CLCV 29300

Cross-Listed Courses in RLST – for Course Descriptions, please see the [College Catalog](#) or [Divinity’s Website](#):

- RLST 20203 – Islamicate Civilization III: 1750-Present (*Carl Shook*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies

RLST Courses 2024-2025

- RLST 20250 – Mormons and Armenians in the Modern Middle East: Conversion, Persecution, and Immigration (*Kent Schull*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 20403 - Islamic Thought and Literature III: Education, Students, and Protests in the Modern MENA (*Orit Bashkin*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 20490 – The Plagues in Egypt: Tradition and Composition (*Jeffrey Stackert*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 20600 – Deuteronomy (*Jeffrey Stackert*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 21909 – Stoics and Epicureans (*Elizabeth Asmis*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 22014 – Jewish Civilization III: Narratives of Assimilation (Bozena Shallcross) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 22036 – The Johannine Epistles (*Erin Walsh*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 22203 – Italian Renaissance: Petrarch, Machiavelli, and The Wars of Popes and Kings (*Ada Palmer*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 22320 – Colloquium on Ancient Christianity (*Margaret Mitchell*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 22418 – The Scopes Trial in Historical Perspective (*Curtis Evans*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 22604 – The Reformation in Britain, 1450-1660 (*Kirsten Macfarlane*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 22667 – The Christian Right (*William Schultz*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 22780 – Readings: Sufism in Morocco (*Yousef Casenit*) Fulfills: (A) Historical Studies
- RLST 24055 – Understanding Practical Wisdom (*Anne Henly, Howard Nussbaum*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
- RLST 24920 – Platonic Theologies (*Kevin Hector*) Fulfills: (B) Constructive Studies
- RLST 26062 – Jewish Graphic Narrative: Between Memory and Caricature (*Na'ama Rokem*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 26306 – Religion, Medicine, and Human Flourishing on the South Side of Chicago (*John Yoon*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 26501 – Renaissance Demonology (*Armando Maggi*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 27332 – Themes in the Anthropology of Islam: Debates, Tradition and Critiques (*Alexis Chavez*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 27555 – Seeing Islam and the Politics of Visual Culture (*Samah Choudhury*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 27607 – Gender and Sexuality in World Civ III: Sex and Mysticism (*Kris Trujillo*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 27724 – Diasporism in Modern Judaism (*Sarah Hammerschlag*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 28312 – Iconoclasm (*Mohit Manohar*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 28711 – Law and Religion in the Modern United States (*Jacob Betz*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 28717 – The Veil and the Vision: Image and Cover in the Western Artistic Tradition (*Jaś Elsner*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 28775 – Racial Melancholia (*Kris Trujillo*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 28802 – Art and Pilgrimage from Antiquity to Christianity (*Jaś Elsner*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 28803 – Magical Politics (*William Mazzarella*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies
- RLST 28883 – Occult Powers: Divinatory and Magical Sciences in the Indian and Islamicate Worlds (*Jean Arzoumanov*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies

- RLST 29031 – Sufism and Coloniality (*Yousef Casewit, Maliba Chishti*) Fulfills: (C) Cultural Studies