# Religious Studies (REL)

**REL 101 Introduction to Religious Studies 3**  
Inquiry into religion through consideration of forms, patterns, categories, symbols, and practices which characterize various religious experiences.  
**GE Core:** GPR  
**GE Marker:** GL

**REL 104 Religion, Ritual, and the Arts 3**  
A study of how myths and stories are used in ritual and the arts. The specific traditions treated will vary.  
**GE Core:** GPR

**REL 109 Religion and Contemporary Culture 3**  
Understandings of religion as shaped by contemporary social institutions, the arts, politics, and philosophy.  
**GE Core:** GPR

**REL 111 Introduction to Asian Religion 3**  
Comparative study of Asian religions and their contributions to modern religious self-understanding, focusing critically and evaluatively on such patterns of expression as myth, ritual, and social forms.  
**GE Core:** GPR

**REL 121 Religious Themes in World Literature 3**  
Religious attitudes and themes concerning suffering, bafflement, and evil.  
**Notes:** May be repeated when topic changes.

**REL 190 Introduction to Scriptural Language 1-3**  
Introduction to the language of a major scriptural tradition, such as Hebrew, Chinese, Tibetan, or Sanskrit. Emphasis on writing system, grammar, and vocabulary.  
**Notes:** May be repeated when topic changes.

**REL 201 The Bible in Western Culture 3**  
Study of significant themes and issues in the Bible and their expression in the religious literature and history of Europe and America.  
**GE Core:** GPR  
**GE Marker:** GL

**REL 202 Hebrew Bible 3**  
Study of the Hebrew scriptures (the Old Testament) in historical, sociological, and literary context.  
**GE Core:** GHP  
**LEC:** GPM

**REL 204 New Testament and the Origins of Christianity 3**  
Study of the New Testament texts in their historical, sociological, and literary contexts.  
**GE Core:** GHP  
**GE Marker:** GL  
**LEC:** GPM

**REL 205 Non-Western Religion 3**

**REL 207 Modern Problems of Belief 3**  
Exploration of ways in which God has been understood in the context of the eclipse of religion in Western culture from the Enlightenment to the present.  
**GE Core:** GPR

**REL 209 Elements of Christian Thought 3**  
Investigates the coherence of Christian accounts of such topics as incarnation, trinity, creation, evil, sacraments, the body, and salvation.  
**GE Core:** GPR  
**GE Marker:** GL

**REL 210 Christianity to the Reformation 3**  
Study of classic Christian texts, symbols, rituals, and social movements to the dawn of the Reformation.  
**GE Core:** GHP  
**GE Marker:** GL  
**LEC:** GPM

**REL 212 Christianity from the Reformation to the Present 3**  
Examination of a range of themes in the history of Christian thought from the sixteenth century to present, through reading of a variety of texts representative of Christian traditions.  
**GE Core:** GHP  
**GE Marker:** GL  
**LEC:** GPM

**REL 215 Judaism 3**  
Introductory study of Judaism, its history, texts, life, and thought.  
**GE Core:** GHP  
**GE Marker:** GL  
**LEC:** GPM

**REL 217 The Synagogue 3**  
The synagogue has been and remains the center of Jewish life. This course will explore the nomenclature, history, architecture, art, and literature of the synagogue in ancient, medieval, and modern times.  
**LEC:** GPM

**REL 218 Chinese Religion 3**  
A study of the religions of China in the classical and modern periods focusing on thought, ritual, social structure, and aesthetics.  
**GE Core:** GPR  
**GE Marker:** GN

**REL 220 Japanese Religion 3**  
A study of the religions of Japan in the classical and modern periods focusing on thought, ritual, social structure, and aesthetics.  
**GE Core:** GPR  
**GE Marker:** GN

**REL 221 Buddhism 3**  
Introduction to the origin, development, and impact of Buddhism in Asian cultures. Focus on religious doctrines, forms of community, religious practices, techniques, art and iconography, and the implications of the Buddhist perspective for the contemporary world in both Asia and the West.  
**GE Core:** GPR  
**GE Marker:** GN

**REL 223 Hinduism 3**  
Introduction to the Hindu religious tradition, its myths, rituals, music, social structure, and philosophical thought.  
**GE Core:** GPR  
**GE Marker:** GN

**REL 225 Islam 3**  
Introduction to origins of Islam and its development as a world religion focusing on doctrine, ritual practices, and community structures.  
**GE Core:** GPR  
**GE Marker:** GN

**REL 226 Approaches to the Qur'an 3**  
Study of significant themes and stories of the Qur'an, with an emphasis on diversity of interpretations.  
**GE Core:** GPR  
**GE Marker:** GN
REL 227W Am Rel Thght II: Romantc Tradn 3
REL 229 Introduction to African American Religions 3
Examination of the diverse beliefs and practices of African American religious traditions and their development in the Americas.
GE Core: GHP
LEC: GMO

REL 231 Religion in America 3
Diverse religious traditions and thinkers that have played a significant role in the history of the United States from Native American beginnings to the present.
GE Core: GHP
LEC: GMO

REL 232 American Religious Thought: A Survey 3
Three Americans—Jonathan Edwards (1702–1756), a Puritan-reformed Christian; Ralph Waldo Emerson (1802–1882), a Romantic; and William James (1843–1910), a pragmatist—pursue tensions between grace and law.

REL 240 Modern Judaism 3
A survey of modern Jewish thinkers from Spinoza to Rozensweig.
GE Core: GHP
GE Marker: GL
LEC: GMO

REL 248 Comparative Religious Ethics 3
Comparative study of the ethical teachings of two or more Western and non-Western religious traditions focusing on the diversity within and among traditions and their effects on modes of life.

REL 250 Religious Traditions and Care of the Earth 3
Examination of the thought, ethics, and practice of major religious traditions and worldviews with regards to the care of the earth. Emphasis on non-Western, indigenous, and ecofeminist traditions.

REL 251 Topics in Biblical Studies 3
Examination of specific biblical texts, themes, or interpretations in the context of Jewish and Christian religious traditions or in terms of significant literary or historical issues.
Notes: May be repeated for credit when topics vary, with permission of instructor.

REL 252 Ritual Studies 3
Inquiry into ritual through the consideration of the relations among ritual experience, practice, and theory. The specific traditions treated will vary.
Notes: May not be repeated for credit when topic varies.

REL 253 Religion, Art, and Visual Culture 3
Explores religion and its relation to visual culture through the exploration of specific works of art. The specific traditions treated will vary.
Notes: May not be repeated for credit when topic varies.

REL 254 Religion in Traditional Societies 3
Study of religion in traditional societies in which the basic question "What is it to be human?" is raised by entering into the diverse symbolic worlds of native Americans, Africans, or others.
GE Marker: GN

REL 258 Darwin, Evolution, and Human Nature 3
The Origin of Species and The Descent of Man revolutionized our understanding of life. In this course, we explore the religious, philosophical, and ethical implications of Darwin's evolutionary theory.
GE Core: GPR

REL 259 Philosophy of Religion 3
Arguments concerning God's existence, the problem of evil, God's foreknowledge and human freedom, the analysis of divine attributes, immortality and the soul.

REL 298 Thinking About Religion 3
Critical reflection on the academic study of religion. Evaluation of theories of religion drawn from the social sciences, humanities, and religious traditions themselves through their application to case studies.

REL 301 Early Christianity 3
Development of various kinds of Christian beliefs and practices from the second to seventh centuries. Focus on primary sources.

REL 303 Christianity in Byzantium 3
Explores the formation of Orthodox Christianity from the sixth to the twelfth century. Topics include liturgy, icons, church architecture and decoration, saints' cults, monasticism, and lay practice.

REL 305 Religions of the Greco-Roman World 3
Study of themes in Judaism, Christianity, and pagan religious movements of the Mediterranean world from Alexander to Constantine.

REL 309 Spirituality and Culture in the West 3
Examines spirituality in Western religious traditions in relation to changing roles of men and women, spiritual needs, culture, and identity.

REL 310 Christianity and the Construction of Gender 3
Study of the role of categories of male and female in the creation and maintenance of Christian notions of holiness, authority, and hierarchy in historical perspective.

REL 311 Topics in Biblical Studies 3
Examination of specific biblical texts, themes, or interpretations in the context of Jewish and Christian religious traditions or in terms of significant literary or historical issues.
Notes: May be repeated for credit when topics vary, with permission of instructor.

REL 312 Judaism and the Construction of Gender 3
Jewish understandings of gender from ancient to modern times, with focus on law and tradition, roles in the Jewish community, family, sexuality, and Jewish theology.
Notes: Same as WGS 312.

REL 313 Topics in Ancient Judaism 3
Diversity of Judaism in the ancient world; study of major themes, texts, and movements in ancient Judaism; focus on primary texts, material culture, and scholarly approaches.
Notes: May be repeated for credit when topics vary, with permission of instructor.

REL 314 Saint and Society in the Early Middle Ages 3
Examination of the concept of sanctity and of the rise and function of the veneration of holy men and women in Christian tradition from the fourth to the seventh century.

REL 315 Religious Autobiography in the West 3
Exploration of changing views of selfhood in the Western autobiographical traditions from Augustine's Confessions to the present.

REL 317 Islam and the Construction of Gender 3
Study of the role of gendered categories in the creation and maintenance of Islamic notions of piety, authority, and community.

REL 318 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion 3
Examination of theories of religion advanced by anthropologists, sociologists, historians, and theologians. Consideration of case studies to understand religion as a system of beliefs and practices.
REL 323 Religious Movements and Communities: Selected Topics 3
Selected topics will bring to bear historical, analytical, theological, and ethical tools to understand religious movements. Faculty and topics will vary.

Notes: May be repeated when topic varies.

REL 324 Philosophical Issues in Religion 3
Modes of philosophical reflection, groups of human conceptuality and their relation to the truth of religious claims.

Notes: May be repeated for credit when topic varies.

REL 325 Contemporary American Jewish Thought 3
Analysis and evaluation of American Jewish thinkers: Kaplan, Heschel, Soloveichik, and Fackenheim. Topics include the Holocaust, Israel, relations with Gentiles, Jewish life in a democracy, and relations with African Americans.

REL 326 American Religious Thought I 3
Exploration of American religious thought from settlement through the National Period (mid-19th century), focusing on the works of Puritans, Rationalists, and Romantics.

REL 327 American Religious Thought II: The Romantic Tradition 3
A study of thinkers like Emerson, Whitman, and Thoreau that focuses on issues concerning religion in a democracy, divinity and nature, and the 'revelatory' character of poetry.

REL 328 American Religious Thought III: The Pragmatic Tradition 3
Study of classic pragmatic religious thinkers, including Peirce, James, Royce, Santayana, and Dewey. Focuses on issues concerning the character of religious experience, divinity and nature, the problem of evil.

REL 330 Major American Religious Thinkers 3
Topics to vary. Analysis and evaluation of major works by an American religious thinker, e.g., Jonathan Edwards, or works exemplifying a particular intellectual movement, e.g., the Puritan Christian Enlightenment.

REL 332 Contemporary African American Religious Thought 3
Explores the variety of contemporary African American religious thought: Buddhist, Christian, Islamic, Judaic, and New World Yoruba. The relation between religious racial identities is a primary focus.

REL 333 Religion and Psychology 3
Presents classic Western and/or Asian psychological theories of religion and shows how various religious traditions understand the human psyche.

REL 340 Modern Jewish Thinkers 3
Analysis and evaluation of major works by a Jewish thinker, e.g., Martin Buber, or works exemplifying a particular intellectual movement, e.g., Jewish existentialism. Topics will vary.

Notes: May be repeated for credit when topic varies.

REL 341 Topics in Jewish Thought 3
Explores specific topics in Jewish thought. Topics vary and may include studies in mysticism, philosophy, literature, or culture.

Notes: May be repeated for credit when topic varies.

REL 355 The Religious Discourse of Civil Rights 3
Explores Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish involvement in American racial reform in the twentieth century.

REL 356 Religion and Colonialism 3
Explores colonialism as an ensemble of ritual performance—performances of charisma, violence, gender, race, and writing—that provide the interpretive context for the study of religion.

REL 357 Myth and Theory 3
An examination of theories of myth in light of intensive readings in Asian, African, and Western Mythology, with emphasis upon the role of myth in religion and culture.

REL 365 Myth and Theory 3
An examination of theories of myth in light of intensive readings in Asian, African, and Western Mythology, with emphasis upon the role of myth in religion and culture.

REL 366 Religions of China: Selected Topics 3
Explores selected aspects of Chinese religions. Possible topics include ritual, Taoist alchemy, ancestor worship, Ch'an Buddhism, the underworld and the dead.

REL 367 Religions of Japan: Selected Topics 3
Exploration of selected aspects of Japanese religions. Possible topics include ritual, Japanese festivals, Shinto, ancestor worship, Zen Buddhism, the underworld and the dead.

REL 368 Religion in South Asia: Selected Topics 3
Selected aspects of religion in South Asia. Possible topics include ritual, myth, festivals, and pilgrimage in Jainism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, or other religions of the Indian subcontinent.

Notes: May be repeated for credit when topic varies.

REL 370 Religions of Iran: Selected Topics 3
Explores selected aspects of Iranian religions. Possible topics include Zoroastrianism, Sufism, Twelver Shi'ism, and the Babi and Baha'i faiths.

Notes: May be repeated up to three times as the topic varies.

REL 382 Topics in Christian Thought 3
Examination of an issue in Christian thought or history.

Notes: May be repeated for credit when topic varies.

REL 383 Seminar in a Major Christian Thinker 3
Examination of a major thinker in Christian thought or history.

Notes: May be repeated for credit when topic varies.

REL 401 Tutorial 1-3
Directed program of reading, research, and private instruction.

Prerequisites: Permission of instructor.

REL 402 Tutorial 1-3
Directed program of reading, research, and private instruction.

Prerequisites: Permission of instructor.

REL 403 Tutorial 1-3
Directed program of reading, research, and private instruction.

Prerequisites: Permission of instructor.

REL 404 Tutorial 1-3
Directed program of reading, research, and private instruction.

Prerequisites: Permission of instructor.

REL 410 Senior Seminar 1-3
Colloquium on a unifying theme or major recent work in Religious Studies. Topic will vary with instructor.

Prerequisites: REL 298.

Notes: May be repeated for up to 9 hours of credit when topic varies. Required of all seniors.

REL 420 Internship in Religious Studies 3
Practical experience in a variety of professional settings. Includes 10 hours per week at internship site, plus regular meetings with a faculty advisor.

REL 493 Honors Work 3-6
Prerequisite: Permission of instructor; 3.30 GPA in the major, 12 s.h. in the major;

Notes: May be repeated for credit if the topic of study changes.
REL 503 Topics in Religious Studies 3
Study of role, nature, and function of selected social forms of religious
life through cross-cultural comparison or intensive study of one religious
tradition.
Notes: May be repeated once for credit.

REL 695 Independent Study 1-3
Directed program of reading, research, and individual instruction.
Prerequisites: Permission of department head and instructor.