

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (RELS)

undefined

RELS Courses

RELS 2201 Religion, Dialogue, and Society (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

2026-28 or later catalog: GE Area 4B

2020-26 catalogs: GE Area D2

Examine how interactions between religious traditions shape society at various levels. Case studies drawn from global religious traditions during the ancient and modern periods. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Area 4B (GE Area D2 for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly RELS 201.

RELS 2205 Jesus (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Exploration and analysis of the person of Jesus. Includes examination of our sources of knowledge about him, his self-understanding, and various interpretations of him in historical, comparative, and contemporary settings. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Formerly RELS 205.

RELS 2270 Special Topics (1-3 units)

Term Typically Offered: TBD

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Directed group study of special topics. The Class Schedule will list topic selected. Repeatable up to 6 units. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 1 to 3 lectures. Formerly RELS 270.

RELS 3301 Religions of Asia (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 3

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area C

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 3B (GE Area C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Comparative study of the religions of Asia, including Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist traditions, and the religions of China. Historical continuities/discontinuities, worldviews, sacred texts, practices, responses to modernity, and the place of women across the traditions. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 3 (GE Area Upper-Division C for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly RELS 301.

RELS 3302 Abrahamic Religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 3

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area C

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 3B (GE Area C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

An introduction to the global religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, with a focus on their shared origin in the Patriarch Abraham, including topics for each religion: the origins, worldview, scripture, practices, and relationship to modernity. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 3 (GE Area Upper-Division C for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly RELS 302.

RELS 3304 Judaism (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 3

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area C

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 3B (GE Area C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Origins, beliefs, and practices of Judaism and central themes in the Hebrew Bible. The development of Judaism in the post-biblical and Talmudic period. Jewish philosophy, life, rituals, and customs. The emergence of modern Judaism, Zionism, and post-Holocaust philosophy. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 3 (GE Area Upper-Division C for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly RELS 304.

RELS 3306 Hinduism (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 3

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area C

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 3B (GE Area C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Origins, beliefs, and practices of Hinduism from the Veda and the Upanishads through the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita and the Puranas. Modern Hindu institutions, saints and sages, and social philosophy contrasted with the ancient. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 3 (GE Area Upper-Division C for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly RELS 306.

RELS 3307 Buddhism (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 3

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area C

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 3B (GE Area C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Buddhist origins, viewpoints, and practices will be seen in their development in South Asia, including India, Tibet, China, Japan, and the United States. The life of the historical Buddha, the rise of Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana/Tantra. Encounters with Daoist, Confucian, and Shinto traditions. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 3 (GE Area Upper-Division C for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly RELS 307.

RELS 3310 Christianity (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 3

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area C

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 3B (GE Area C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Development of the Christian religion from the story of Jesus, the New Testament, Church formation, the role of St. Paul, dissenting ideas, Protestant and Catholic views, and contemporary issues of conscience, such as the Social Gospel and liberation theologies. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 3 (GE Area Upper-Division C for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly RELS 310.

RELS 3311 Islam (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 3

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area C

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 3B (GE Area C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Development of Islamic civilization from the inspiration of the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad and the Sunni-Shi'i split to contemporary political and social issues. Emphasis of Sufi literature, art, architecture, and philosophies of Islam. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 3 (GE Area Upper-Division C for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly RELS 311.

RELS 3344 Approaches to Religion and Spirituality (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 4

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area D

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of one lower-division course in GE Area 4 (GE Areas D1 or D2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Examination of religion from an academic perspective by surveying the various historical approaches employed within the discipline of religious studies to collect, analyze, and interpret religious phenomena cross-culturally. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 4 (GE Area Upper-Division D for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly RELS 344.

RELS 3370 Religion, Gender, and Society (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: TBD

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 3

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area C

USCP

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 3B (GE Area C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Critical examination of religious ideas and institutions in the United States. Focus on interlocking systems of sex, gender, race, class and religion; individual and group experiences at the intersection of religion, politics and culture. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Crosslisted as RELS/WGQS 3370. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 3 (GE Area Upper-Division C for students on the 2020-26 catalogs); and USCP. Formerly RELS/WGQS 370.

RELS 3372 Spiritual Extremism: Asceticism, Mysticism, and Madness (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 3

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area C

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 3B (GE Area C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Shaping influence of ascetics, mystics and the insane on global religious traditions. The relationship between spiritual extremists and society, cultural construction of holiness and insanity, and literary depictions of spiritual extremists. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 3 (GE Area Upper-Division C for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly PHIL 372.

RELS 3374 Religion and Violence (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 3

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area C

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 3B (GE Area C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Historical and contemporary case studies of how various religions have condoned, motivated, and justified violence. The place of sacrifice, martyrdom, self-injury and forced conversion in religious doctrines. Representations of religious violence in the media. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 3 (GE Area Upper-Division C for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly RELS 374.

RELS 3378 Religion and Contemporary Values (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 3

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area C

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 3B (GE Area C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Descriptive analysis of how diverse religious traditions construct moral decisions about a variety of contemporary issues including sexuality, ecology, and justice. Challenges for religious value systems in secular and pluralistic societies. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 3 (GE Area Upper-Division C for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly RELS 378.

RELS 3380 Religion and Politics in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: TBD

Prerequisite: Completion of one course in POLS or RELS.

The root causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its current manifestation. Possibilities for solutions from the perspectives of religious studies and political science. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Crosslisted as POLS/RELS 3380. Formerly POLS/RELS 380.

RELS 3390 Topics in Religious Studies (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: TBD

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 3

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area C

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of one lower-division course in GE Area 3 (GE Areas C1 or C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Examination and analysis of religious and spiritual themes and traditions. Topics may be of historical or contemporary importance. The Class Schedule will list subtitle selected. Repeatable up to 12 units. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division 3 (GE Area Upper-Division C for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly RELS 390.

RELS 4400 Special Problems for Advanced Undergraduates (1-3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: Consent of department chair.

Individual investigation, research, studies, or surveys of selected problems. Repeatable up to 6 units. Formerly RELS 400.

RELS 4470 Special Advanced Topics (1-3 units)

Term Typically Offered: TBD

Prerequisite: Junior standing and consent of instructor.

Directed group study of special topics for advanced students. The Class Schedule will list topic selected. Repeatable up to 6 units. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 1 to 3 lectures. Formerly RELS 470.

RELS 4490 Advanced Topics in Religious Studies (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: SP

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 3B (GE Area C2 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

In-depth examination and analysis of specific religious and spiritual themes, traditions, texts, and figures. Topics may be of historical or contemporary importance. The Class Schedule will list subtitle selected. Repeatable up to 12 units. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Formerly RELS 490.