

Department of Religious Studies

Fall 2017 Schedule of Undergraduate Classes

Introduction to Religious Studies

REL 100.001

McCutcheon, TR 9:30-10:45 NL 2009

This Core Humanities course examines the relationships between religion and human beliefs, practices, & culture; surveys debates in the history of the field, e.g., definition of religion, insider/outsider problem, & theories about the origins and function of religion. An ideal intro to the study of religion as carried out in a public university. **HU INB**

Religions of the World

REL 102.001

Ramey, TR 2:00-3:15 TH 125

This Core course comprises an interdisciplinary introduction to the comparative study of practices and concepts identified as the world's religions, highlighting different ways individuals and communities across cultures organize their lives and values; students will compare two different religions in relation to four selected elements. **HU INB**

Honors Introduction to Religious Studies

REL 105.001

Touna, TR 12:30-1:45 MA 207

REL 105.002

Ikeuchi, TR 11:00-12:15 GP 231

REL 105.003

Bagger, TR 2:00-3:15 MA 308

As the Honors/Core Humanities introduction to the study of religion, REL 105 examines the material in greater detail than REL 100, and in a smaller class setting. A minimum 3.3 GPA is required to register. **HU INB**

Introduction to the Old Testament

REL 110.001

Jacobs, TR 11:00-12:15 FA 214

An introduction to the books of the Old Testament (also known as the Hebrew Bible) in their historical settings, with emphases on textual analyses, literary forms and their function and use in the past and present in both the Jewish and Christian religious traditions. **HU INB**

Religion and Science

REL 120.001

Bagger, TR 9:30-10:45 LY 330

This course is a study of the construction of "science" and "religion," focusing on the ways these concepts have been co-constructed and mutually defined throughout history, looking at the uses of the terms in the history of science and contemporary debates, examining the scientific

revolution, nature, gender, science as religion, and cognitive science. **HU**

Religion, Politics, and Law

REL 130.001

Altman, TR 12:30-1:45 FA 214

This introductory level course examines the construction of religion through law, politics, and the nation-state. Students are introduced to the role of religion in liberal political theory, secularism, and the modern rise of the nation-state. This course will be particularly helpful to students interested in religious studies, history, political science, law, and philosophy. **HU**

Survey of Asian Religion

REL 220.001

Loewen, TR 11:00-12:15 GP 346

In this course we will examine religious identities and practices in various regional contexts of Asia, including those described as Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Parsi, Jain, Sikh, Jewish, Christian, Shinto and John Frum (so-called "cargo cults"). Through this regional approach, we will survey the elements associated with each religion and the various ways people negotiate the diverse practices and ideas of their contexts. By considering the complexity of contemporary life, the interactions (both positive and negative) between people identified with different religious communities become a focus of our discussion. **HU INB**

Islam

REL 236.001

Bagger, TR 3:30-4:45 LY 233

This course comprises a broad, interdisciplinary introduction to the practices and conceptions within Islam and the various ways they have been interpreted and represented. Topics will include the narratives of Islamic origins, the literary, theological, and ritual nature of the Qur'an, contemporary practices within Islamic communities, historical developments, and Sufism. **HU INB**

Philosophies of Judaism

REL 238.001

Jacobs, TR 2:00-3:15 MA 207

A survey of the major philosophical thinkers within the Jewish tradition, their formulations of the nature and role of the Jew and Judaism, their interactions with the larger societies where they resided, and the larger philosophical questions which have always concerned the human intellect. **INB**

Apocalypse in Contemporary Film

REL 240.001

Trost, T 3:30-5:50 LY 335

The question of the end times has long fascinated people; this course examines its contemporary portrait in such films as *Blade Runner*, *The Matrix*, and *The Left Behind*. While these films constitute our basic “texts,” conversations will be supplemented with careful readings from the biblical *Book of Revelation* and other scholarship.

Theories of Myth

REL 341.001

Touna, M 3:30-5:50 MA 210

What makes something a myth? What’s the difference between a myth and a story? How did scholars try to explain the origin and function of myths? Do we produce myths today? The course will address those questions by looking at several myths of the ancient Greco-Roman world but also will look at the theories scholars developed in order to understand those stories. **INB**

Religion in Popular Culture

REL 360.001 40548

Bagger, R 6:00-9:00 Aug. 29, Sept. 12, Oct. 3,
Nov. 14, April 11 LY 123

This one credit hour course, offered each semester, involves monthly films, discussions, & either the Day or Aronov Lecture. Students will also write a small number of brief commentaries & blog posts on the films. Different films are used each semester, and the course is repeatable for up to 3 credit hours. **Open to all students.**

Religion in the American South

REL 415.001

Simmons, TR 9:30-10:45 MA 210

Using the UA campus as its own case study, this course will focus on how notions of “the past” come to be invented in different ways for different social purposes. Along with learning about various traditions that find their homes in the region, students will tackle analytical classifications and contestations of “the South” as an identifiable geographical and cultural space. **W**

Gospel of Mark

REL 420.001

Trost, MW 2:00-3:15 MA 210

After a preliminary reading of the entire Gospel of Mark from the New Revised Standard Version translation, this advanced seminar will explore Mark’s many nuances under the guidance of contemporary Biblical scholars, literary critics, and cultural theorists. Active engagement in the weekly seminars is a key component of this class. **W**

HU: Core Humanities Designation
ASST: Asian Studies Credit

Theories of Religion

REL 440.001

McCutcheon, T 3:30-5:50 MA 210

Instead of simply describing or comparing religions, there is a long history of scholars offering explanations for why religions exist in the first place; beginning with late-19th century writers, this course will examine classic and contemporary explanatory theories of religion that aim to identify either the origin or the function of religion. **HU**

Global Christianities

REL 483.001

Ikeuchi, R 3:30-5:50 MA 210

While the image of Christianity as a “Western religion” remains influential, the majority of self-identifying Christians today live in the Global South, outside of Europe or North America. This class explores the wide breadth of definitions, narratives, and systems associated with Christian identities around the globe, from Africa to Latin America. In doing so, we will investigate a set of major theoretical themes in the study of Global Christianity, such as personhood, modernity, globalization, and colonialism. **INB**

Social Theory Functions

REL 501.001

Ramey, W 3:30-5:50 MA 210

This course, required of all incoming MA students, offers an overview of contemporary social theory, produced from across disciplines, on which scholars can draw in their studies of the rhetorics and effects of religion. Useful throughout the degree program, this course will familiarize students with theoretical approaches that they will integrate into their final thesis projects.

Public Humanities Foundations

REL 502.001

Altman, MW 12:30-1:45 MA 210

This course, required of all incoming MA students, introduces students to a variety of digital tools on which they may draw throughout their degree program (including their thesis). Working closely with the Alabama Digital Humanities Center (ADHC), students will experiment with new software and work on a variety of practical projects.

Independent Study

REL 560.001

Incoming MA students will also enroll in 3 credit hours of Independent Study with their supervisor (unless beginning language training is recommended by your supervisor). This will either entail a reading list and weekly meetings or completing additional coursework while attending a 400-level REL seminar already offered by the Department.

INB: International Business Designation (College of Commerce)
W: Core Writing Designation