

# Department of Religious Studies

Fall 2018 Schedule of Classes

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## Undergraduate Courses

### Introduction to Religious Studies

**REL 100.001 46757**

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

**REL 100.002 48425**

Simmons, TR 9:30-10:45, FA 214

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**

### The Violent and the Sacred

**REL 101.001 48426**

Jacobs, TR 11:00-12:15, MA 207

First, we address such topics as problems, theories & theorists, academic disciplines, and common elements as we attempt to answer the question “How do we study academically the socio-cultural construct we call ‘religion’ within the university?” Then, we apply it to the question of “Religion and the Problem of Human Suffering” by looking at such topics as theories of evil, violence, and hate. **HU**

### Religions of the World

**REL 102.001 43678**

Ramey, TR 2:00-3:15, FA 214

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 40211**

Staff, TR 9:30-10:45, MA 308

**REL 105.002 42124**

Staff, TR 11:00-12:15, MA 308

**REL 105.003 43679**

Staff, 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 Ancient Religions

**REL 106.001 48428**

Touna, TR 12:30-1:45, BC 260

“Religion” is a fairly modern concept, yet, we often think of the ancient world in religious terms. As a general introduction to the academic study of ancient religions, this new course examines how scholars define “ancient religion” and then describe ancient cultures (from Greece, to Rome, Egypt, & Mesopotamia). The course therefore focuses on the problem of defining ancient religion and the practical implications (social, economic, political) of defining it in this or that way. **HU**

### Introduction to the New Testament

**REL 112.001 48429**

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

This course is an introduction to the ancient Hellenistic world as the social matrix in which early Christianity appeared. The course examines the narrative traditions about Jesus that were variously framed and organized in the Gospels, and the writings of Paul. **HU INB**

### Survey of Asian Religion

**REL 220.001 45532**

Loewen, TR 9:30-10:45, MA 207

We examine 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”) and survey the elements associated with each and the various ways people negotiate the diverse practices and ideas of their contexts. **HU INB**

### Islam

**REL 236.001 45331**

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

This course comprises a broad, interdisciplinary introduction to the practices and conceptions within Islam and the various ways they have been interpreted and represented. **HU INB**

### American Religious History

**REL 241.001 49659**

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

This Core course offers a broad overview of changing conceptions of religion in American culture, history, & society, from the colonial period to today; emphasis will be placed on race, politics, immigration, & cultural power. **HU**

**Theories of Ritual**  
**REL 342.001 48431**

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

The seminar tackles two books: *Violent Origins: Ritual Killing and Cultural Formation* (1987) and Jonathan Z. Smith's *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (1987), in an effort to explain the function of that subset of human practices known as rituals, with special attention given to those commonly known as sacrifice. **W**

**Rhetoric of Religious Conviction**  
**REL 355.001 48432**

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

Can one person's "talk" change the course of history? Or do great cultural forces simply allow for moments when certain individuals can be heard? These kinds of questions will guide our study of Dorothy Day, an activist in the Catholic Worker Movement; Muslim minister and civil rights activist, Malcolm X; and Martin Luther King, Jr., a Protestant minister and civil rights activist. **W**

**REL Goes to the Movies**  
**REL 360.320 40255**

Staff, T 6:30-9:00 Aug. 27, Sept. 17, Oct. 15, Nov. 12 Location: TBD

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 & is repeatable for up to 3 credit hours. Open to all students.**

**Theorizing Ancient Religions**  
**REL 372.001 48442**

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

This seminar course examines how the ancient Greek world is often described and represented in the present, in museums, social media, scholarly works, etc. and towards what modern effects. We will also be discussing such topics as heritage, tradition, identity formation and nation-states, as they relate to discourses on the ancient Greek past, all in an effort to develop skills for how we study religion and the past.

**Religion and Genocide**  
**REL 410.001 48450**

Jacobs, TR 2:00-3:15, MA 210

This course explores genocide by examining its relationship to religion in both its institutional and theological frameworks, beginning with scriptural passages having genocidal intent. Both historical and contemporary examples are examined to ascertain

whether there are religious components to their genocides.

**Race and Religion**  
**REL 483.001 46142**

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

In this seminar, students will use critical theory to explore "race" and "religion" as tools people use to organize their social worlds. Emphasizing scholarship and texts within African American Studies and the academic study of religion, this course encourages students to think about the structural dynamics at work in popular notions of experience, history, and identity.

**Graduate Courses**

**Social Theory Foundations (required)**  
**REL 501.001 46143**

Ramey, W 3:30-5:50, MA 200

This graduate seminar introduces students to terms and ideas from social theory and their relevance to the academic study of religion. Throughout the course, students will apply theories to analyze examples relevant in Religious Studies, both ancient and modern.

**Public Humanities Foundations (required)**  
**REL 502.002 46945**

Altman, M 1:00-3:20, MA 210

In this course, students are introduced to a number of digital tools for research and the presentation of their research to a larger public. The course also explores what a public religious studies might look like.

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M.A. Students: **speak with your supervisor or Prof. Simmons, the Graduate Director, about reading courses, language training, or classes outside REL.**

*Find us on Vimeo, SoundCloud or at*



B.A. Students: **be sure to make your advising appointment with Prof. Trost, the Undergrad Director, prior to registering for Fall 2018**