

Religious Studies

Course Offerings – Fall 2015

RELI 1000-01	Introduction to Religion – USP/A&S Core 2003: CH, G, Non-Western; USP/A&S Core 2015: H, G	Fall
TR 1:20-2:35 pm	Religion is central in shaping culture. While cultural differences stem from religion, many similarities find their expression in religion. Learn about several world religions and the way each understands the world and influences its adherents.	
RELI 1000-42	Introduction to Religion – USP/A&S Core 2003: CH, G, Non-Western; USP/A&S Core 2015: H, G	Outreach
Online	Refer to on-campus course description.	
RELI 1101-40	First-Year Seminar: From Gilgamesh to the Bomb – USP 2015: FYS	Keller
Online	How have humans described the relationship between human governance and divine authority across time and cultures, and what does this tell us about our world today? This FYS begins with the stone tablets of the Epic of Gilgamesh, travels through the age of reason, and concludes with digital discussions of the “holy power” of atomic weaponry, helping students situate contemporary questions of religion and politics against the backdrop of human history.	
RELI 2080-01	Holocaust – USP 2003: CH	Penland
TR 2:45-4:00 pm	Surveys the destruction of European Jewry and other targeted groups, 1933-1945. The details of the Holocaust, its origins and course and the daily lives of perpetrators, victims and bystanders will form the basis of the course. (XL: HIST 2080)	
RELI 2110-40	Introduction to the Old Testament – USP 2003: CH	Fall
Online	Introduces students to the books of the Old Testament and people whose way of life they describe. Pays particular attention to religion of the Israelites, their history and culture. Focuses on different historical circumstances in which the books were written.	
RELI 2175-01	Life and Teachings of Jesus	Spaulding
TR 9:35-10:50 am	Jesus the Christ has impacted the world unlike any other person in human history. This course presents the life and teaching of Jesus in the social, political and religious conditions of the time. By examining the four gospels and extra-biblical sources, we will detail the message and the meaning of Jesus for his day.	
RELI 2225-01	History of Christianity	Utterback
MW 3:10-4:25 pm	In its 2000 year history, Christianity has grown from a persecuted sect of Judaism whose leader was executed as a criminal by the Roman authorities to the largest religion in the world. Study its rise from obscurity to dominance, its attempts to maintain that dominance through many centuries, and its various struggles, both internal and external. Learn where the Church “got it right” and where it sometimes went terribly wrong. Consider why the church in the 21st century is growing rapidly in Africa, South America and Asia, even as European churches stand largely vacant. (XL: HIST 2225)	
RELI 2250-01	American Religion I: History – 1865 – USP/A&S Core 2003: CH, D; A&S Core 2015: D	Staff
MWF 11:00-11:50 am	Traces the history of religion in America through the Civil War. We will pay particular attention to the intertwining of religion and colonialism; the tension between emerging Protestant hegemony and religious pluralism; and the roles religion has played in justifying oppression and pursuing liberty in American history.	
RELI 2315-01	History of Non-Western Religions: Buddhism – USP/A&S Core 2003: CH, G, H, Non-Western; USP/A&S Core 2015: H, G	DeNapoli
TR 9:35-10:50 am	This course examines what Buddhism is about in the contexts of its doctrines and teachings; texts; practices; communities of practitioners; material and visual cultures; historical, institutional, and socio-political developments; and its migrations to the West. While this course addresses questions of what Buddhists believe and how Buddhism is practiced, it concentrates on questions of how Buddhist concepts and practices shape and constitute Buddhist worlds of meaning. (XL: HIST 2315)	
RELI 2320-01	History of Islam – USP 2003: CH, G; USP/A&S Core 2015: Com2, G	Ward
TR 11:00 am-12:15 pm	The Media gives the impression of Islam as a religion of “angry young men” who hate. Learn how Islam is a religion of love of God and family, as well as respect for others. Learn how Islam has been practiced through time and what events shaped it. (XL: HIST 2320)	
RELI 2410-01	Varieties of Non-Belief – USP 2003: CH	Fall/Downs
TR 2:45-4:00 pm	A broad, chronological survey of different types of non-belief, primarily from the Renaissance onwards. It examines critiques by philosophers, politicians, poets, and novelists aiming to understand their objections to religion and analyzing how these objections shaped the modern religious landscape and the way we understand religion itself.	
RELI 2450-40	Traditional African Religion – USP 2003: CH, G; USP/A&S Core 2015: Com2, G	Keller
Online	Just as Africa is a continent of many peoples, it is also a continent of many religions. These religions divide as well as unite the peoples. Focus on the traditional religions that originate in Africa while studying the importation and exploitation of outside religions-especially Christianity and Islam. (XL: AAST 2450)	
RELI 3200-01	Religion and American Culture	Staff
TR 11:00-12:15 pm	Explore the role of religion in the history of American culture. Consider how developments in American religious history reflect larger trends, and how those developments have helped shape American society and culture.	
RELI 3220-01	Modern Middle East – USP 2003: G; A&S Core 2015: G	Kamp
MWF 9:00-9:50 am	Surveys the Middle East from 1700 to the present. Emphasizes the demise of the Ottoman Empire, the rise of domination by European colonial powers, transformations in political, social, religious and cultural life, the rise of nationalist movements, the influence of oil, the growth of Islamist political groups and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (XL: HIST 3220)	
RELI 3235-01	Medieval Christianity	Utterback
T 2:45-5:15 pm	The Middle Ages, ca. 500 – 1500, saw European Christianity develop many of its most recognizable aspects, including the papacy as a spiritual and governmental power, the crusades, persecution of Jews and religious minorities, and the idea of purgatory. These developments were hotly contested, as groups vied for power and authority, seeking control of this life and the next. (XL: HIST 4990)	
RELI 4000-01	Theory of Religion – USP 2003: WC; USP 2015: Com3	DeNapoli
W 9:00-11:30 am	Is religion an “illusion” or a “neurosis,” as Freud wrote? Is it anthropology’s “cultural system,” or society’s representation of itself, or...? Examine what some of the world’s most influential thinkers have said about what religion is and how it should be studied. Warning: this capstone course is not for the intellectually faint of heart.	
RELI 4260-01	Modern Judaism	Ward
TR 1:20-2:35 pm	Learn how an ancient tradition adapts to modernity! Modern Judaism starts with Columbus, and is shaped by the Spanish Inquisition and Expulsion; the spread of Kabbalah and the thought of Spinoza; emancipation and anti-Semitism. Learn about dramatic shifts in belief, practice, language and demography, and especially the rise of American Judaism and the State of Israel.	
RELI 4500-01	Topics: Middle East & Israel in Film	Ward
W 6:00-10:00 pm	Films often capture the deepest hopes and dreams of broad populations. Israeli, Egyptian, American and other films provide a unique avenue for insights into such Middle East and Israeli issues as national identity, love and despair, corruption, persecution and terror, and hopes for peace and reconciliation in the region.	
RELI 4500-02	Topics: Religion and Fantasy	Aronstein
TR 1:10-2:35 pm	This course begins with the “founding” of Modern High Fantasy by the Inklings (C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams) during the turbulent years surrounding World War II. We will then read more recent authors (Susan Cooper, Patricia McKillip, Guy Gavriel Kay, Phillip Pullman, Ian Hearn) who expand the world of High Fantasy, building on and disputing the founders’ moral and religious vision as they offer readers a new vision. (XL: ENGL 4640)	