In keeping with the mission of Wabash College to educate men to “think critically, act responsibly, lead effectively, and live humanely,” the Religion Department promotes the academic study of religion as part of a rich, well-rounded liberal arts education. We recognize that learning how people have understood and practiced religion throughout history and around the globe is not only important for understanding our world, but also intellectually exciting and personally enriching.

In our courses, we encourage broad and rigorous critical thinking about, and engagement with, religion and theology. We use lectures, discussions, and immersion learning, as well as a wide diversity of methods, including those of theology, philosophy, history, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, and literature and the arts. We invite students to study everything from ancient texts to contemporary issues, from religious traditions that they likely know well to those that are new to them.

As such, our courses are intended for all students, including believers, skeptics, and seekers of all kinds. They typically challenge and complicate students’ religious beliefs, while at the same time giving them the tools to broaden and deepen their beliefs. We thus prepare our students for success in graduate school, in religious vocations, as teachers of religion, and in all the career options open to liberal arts college graduates.

As it has done for many years, the Religion Department also supports a variety of activities on campus, such as the annual Christmas Festival with the Music Department, events hosted by the Muslim Students Association, a weekly religious chapel in the Protestant Christian tradition, the Roman Catholic Newman Club, Wabash Christian Men, and other student religious activities.

We try to provide a large number of “entry points” for interested students.

- 100-level courses: Courses numbered in the 100s are all appropriate to take as a first course in religion. Most are lecture courses, but some are discussion courses (e.g. REL-194 Religion and Film, REL-195 Religion & the Arts, REL-196 Religion & Literature). 100-level courses do not have prerequisites.

- 200-level courses: Courses numbered in the 200s are smaller discussion courses. Some have prerequisites; some do not. 200-level courses without a prerequisite are also appropriate to take as a first course in religion.

- 300-level courses: Courses numbered in the 300s are more advanced seminars and usually have prerequisites as indicated.

- REL-490 Sr. Sem: Nature & the Study of Religion is usually taken by majors in the fall of their senior year.

### Requirements for the Major

A minimum of nine course credits including:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REL-171</td>
<td>History of Christianity to Reformation</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-172</td>
<td>Christianity: Reformation to Modern Era</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Select two course credits from the following:</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-141</td>
<td>Hebrew Bible/Old Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-240</td>
<td>Topics in Hebrew Bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-340</td>
<td>Seminar in Hebrew Bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-162</td>
<td>His &amp; Lit of the New Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-260</td>
<td>Topics in New Test. &amp; Early Christianity</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-360</td>
<td>Seminar in New Test. &amp; Early Christ.</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-272</td>
<td>Topics in History of Christianity</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-372</td>
<td>Seminars in the History of Christianity</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-173</td>
<td>Introduction to Theology</td>
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<td>REL-273</td>
<td>Topics in Theology</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-370</td>
<td>Contemporary Theology</td>
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<td>REL-373</td>
<td>Seminar in Theology</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-270</td>
<td>Theological Ethics</td>
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<td>REL-274</td>
<td>Topics in Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-374</td>
<td>Seminar in Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-181</td>
<td>Religion in America</td>
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<td>REL-280</td>
<td>Topics in American Religion</td>
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<td>REL-380</td>
<td>Seminar in American Religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-275</td>
<td>Topics in Religion &amp; Philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-194</td>
<td>Religion and Film</td>
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<td>REL-195</td>
<td>Religion &amp; the Arts</td>
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<td>REL-196</td>
<td>Religion &amp; Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-294</td>
<td>Topics in Religion &amp; Film</td>
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<td>REL-295</td>
<td>Religion and the Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-296</td>
<td>Religion and Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-150</td>
<td>History of Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-250</td>
<td>Topics in History of Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-350</td>
<td>Seminar in History of Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-387</td>
<td>Independent Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-103</td>
<td>Islam and the Religions of India</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-210</td>
<td>Topics in Islam</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-220</td>
<td>Topics in South Asian Religions</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-310</td>
<td>Seminar in Islam</td>
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<td>REL-320</td>
<td>Seminar in South Asian Religions</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-104</td>
<td>Religions of China and Japan</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-230</td>
<td>Topics in East Asian Religions</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-330</td>
<td>Seminar in East Asian Religions</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-151</td>
<td>Studies in Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-251</td>
<td>Topics in the Study of Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-351</td>
<td>Seminar in Jewish Thought</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-290</td>
<td>Topics in Comparative Religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-388</td>
<td>Independent Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-297</td>
<td>Anthropology of Religion</td>
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<td>REL-298</td>
<td>Sociology of Religion</td>
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<td>REL-370</td>
<td>Contemporary Theology</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL-490</td>
<td>Sr. Sem: Nature &amp; the Study of Religion</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

At least one course at the 200-level or 300-level, apart from those courses listed above. |

Total Credits

9
Comprehensive Examinations

Senior majors write for two days, three hours each day. The usual pattern has been to write on two questions the first day. There is a wide range of questions from which to choose, and questions characteristically draw on material from more than one course. On the second day, students typically write on one question, which focuses on an issue having to do with the nature and study of religion in general.

Requirements for the Minor

A minimum of five course credits.

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<tr>
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<td>At least one credit from Religion courses numbered</td>
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<td>are taken as part of the two-course sequence.</td>
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Religion Electives

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<td>History of Judaism</td>
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Total Credits 5

REL-103 Islam and the Religions of India

This course is an introduction to Islam, and the indigenous religions of India. The first part of the course studies the history, beliefs, and practices of Islam in the Middle East from Muhammad to the present day. The second part studies the history, beliefs, and practices of the religions of India (Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism), down to the coming of Islam in the 8th century. The third part deals with the religious developments in India that have resulted from the interactions between Islam and Hinduism in the modern period. Emphasis is placed upon readings in primary texts of these religions. This course is offered fall semester.

Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-141 Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

This course will be reading and discussion of primary texts from the Torah, Prophets, and Writings of the Hebrew Bible. The emphasis will be reading for literary and narrative themes and theological issues in the text, with some discussion of historical context. This course is offered in the fall semester.

Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-150 History of Judaism

This course will address, at the introductory level, various topics in Jewish history, such as Second Temple Judaism, Rabbinics, or medieval Jewish thought. Topics will vary from year to year. REL 150 applies to requirement B for the major. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.

Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-151 Studies in Judaism

This course will address, at the introductory level, various aspects of Jewish thought and theology, such as contemporary Jewish thought, Jewish-Christian dialogue, and responses to the Holocaust. Topics will vary from year to year. REL 151 applies to requirement C for the major. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.

Prerequisites: none
Credit: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-162 His & Lit of the New Testament

This course is an introduction to the social-historical study of the writings that came to be the New Testament of the Christian churches. We will survey the social, political, and religious contexts of the Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds of the first century, the actions and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, and the missionary activity of Paul of Tarsus. We will study most of the texts included in the New Testament, as well as other ancient Jewish and early Christian writings to learn about the development of the various beliefs and practices of these first Christian communities.

Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion, Literature/Fine Arts
Equated Courses: CLA-162
REL-171 History of Christianity to Reformation
An introduction to the history of Christianity from the patristic, post-New Testament period to the medieval period and the early Renaissance. Principal themes include the emergence and meaning of early Christian beliefs and practices, their development during the Middle Ages, the social and cultural environments of the ancient, medieval, and early Renaissance church, and the trends leading up to the Reformation. This course is offered in the fall semester.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-172 Christianity: Reformation to Modern Era
This course is an introduction to the history of Christianity from the sixteenth-century Reformation to the present. The course focuses primarily on Christianity in the West, but also examines the global spread of Christianity. Principal themes include the challenges of modern thought and culture to traditional Christianity, religious innovation and pluralism, missionary movements, the interaction between Christianity and its social and cultural environments, and new forms of Christian theology and institutions. This course is offered in the spring semester.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-173 Introduction to Theology
This is a course which introduces students to the principal themes, issues, and genres of Christian theology. Special attention will be given to method in theological thought, as well as the themes of creation, redemption, and reconciliation. Readings will typically be drawn from the modern period, including Tillich, Caputo, Placher, Moltmann, and Keller. In some years the course may be offered for half (0.5) credit.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-181 Religion in America
An introduction to the religious history of America, this course will explore the historical development of the primary religious traditions in America, especially Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism, as well as the formative influence of religion among women, African Americans, and American Indians. Principal themes include pluralism, the impact of religious disestablishment, revivalism and reform, theological movements, and religious innovation. This course is offered in the fall semester.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-194 Religion and Film
This course is an introduction to the genre of film as an imaginative vehicle for religious beliefs, practices, and traditions. These can be explored not only in doctrinal forms, but also creatively and often indirectly in artistic forms like film or other videographic media. The course will employ film criticism as well as theological reflection as tools for understanding films with religious themes and insights
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion, Literature/Fine Arts

REL-195 Religion & the Arts
This is an examination of the arts of a particular period and place with a view to discovering the religious insights and attitudes that they embody.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-196 Religion & Literature
This course is an examination of one or more works of literature, with a view to discovering the religious insights and attitudes that they embody. The works and authors will vary from year to year, depending on the focus of the course. Recent topics have included classical Chinese poetry (Li Bo and Du Fu); Japanese literature; and novels and stories by John Updike, Shusaku Endo, Flannery O’Connor, Graham Greene, Anne Tyler, and C.S. Lewis.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-210 Topics in Islam
This is a discussion course on some topic in Islamic thought or history. Recent topics have included Muhammad and the Qur’an, and issues in contemporary Islam. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: Prereq REL-103 or Permission of Instructor
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-220 Topics in South Asian Religions
This is a discussion course on some topic in the religions of South Asia. Recent topics have included myth and art in classical Hinduism. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: REL-103
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-230 Topics in East Asian Religions
This is a discussion course on some topic in the religions of China and Japan. Recent topics have included Confucianism, Daoism, and Zen Buddhism. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: REL-104
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-240 Topics in Hebrew Bible
This is a discussion course on some topic related to the history and literature of ancient Israel. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: REL-141
Credit: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-250 Topics in History of Judaism
This is a discussion course on Jewish history. Recent topics have included Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Jewish War with Rome, and Second Temple Judaism. REL 250 applies to requirement B for the major. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion
REL-251 Topics in the Study of Judaism
This is a discussion course on Jewish thought and theology, such as contemporary Jewish thought, responses to the Holocaust, and the Jewish-Christian dialogue. REL 251 applies to requirement C for the major. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-260 Topics in New Test. & Early Christianity
This is a discussion course on some topic in the history and literature of the early Christian church. Recent topics have included apocalyptic, the letters of Paul, the Historical Jesus, and Jesus in cultural context (film, literature, the Greco-Roman world, etc.). (In some years REL-360 may be offered instead). Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-270 Theological Ethics
This is a discussion course that examines the relationship between religion and ethics from many different perspectives, beginning with theological models of talking about God, the self, and ethical goods and ending with discussions of specific ethical problems. American realism, Latin American liberation theology, Roman Catholic natural law theory, and environmental theology will be covered. Issues discussed include medical ethics, theology and economics, the problem of war, the role of the church in social change, and the nature of sin.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-272 Topics in History of Christianity
This is a discussion course on one or more figures, themes, or movements in the history of Christianity. Topics in recent years have included heretics and Gnostics, Christian lives, and world Christianities. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-273 Topics in Theology
This is a discussion course on one or more figures, themes, or movements in Christian theology. Topics in recent years have included Augustine and Aquinas, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and African Christianity. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-274 Topics in Ethics
This is a discussion course on one or more figures, themes, or movements in contemporary ethics. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-275 Topics in Religion & Philosophy
This is a discussion course on some topic concerning the use of philosophy in the study of religion, or some aspect of it. Topics in recent years have included the philosophy of religion, and hermeneutics and culture. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-280 Topics in American Religion
This is a discussion course on one or more figures, themes, or movements in American religion. Topics in recent years have included sects and cults in America, Puritanism, and African-American Religious History. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-290 Topics in Comparative Religion
This is a discussion course on a topic in two or more different religious traditions, for instance Biblical and Vedic, or Confucian and Christian, or ancient and modern. Examples include Sacred Scriptures; Bible and Qur’an; Symbol and Myth; Ritual; and Pilgrimage and the Holy. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-294 Topics in Religion & Film
This is a discussion course on some topic in the area of religion and film, with a view to its religious implications. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-295 Religion and the Arts
This is a discussion course on some topic in the area of religion and film, with a view to its religious implications. A recent topic was visual, literary and memorial representations of the Holocaust. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-296 Religion and Literature
This is a discussion course on some topic in the area of religion and film, with a view to its religious implications. A recent topic was visual, literary and memorial representations of the Holocaust. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-297 Anthropology of Religion
This is a discussion course examining the various ways anthropology describes and interprets religious phenomena. The course investigates anthropological theories of religion, and examines how they apply to specific religions in diverse contexts. Particular attention is paid to the social and symbolic functions of beliefs and rituals and to the religious importance of myths, symbols, and cosmology.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-298 Topics in Jewish History
This is a discussion course on some topic in Jewish history, such as Jewish thought and practice, history and society, and culture.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-299 Topics in Jewish Thought
This is a discussion course on some topic in Jewish thought, such as Jewish thought and practice, history and society, and culture.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-360 Topics in Jewish History and Religious Law
This is a discussion course on some topic in Jewish history and religious law, such as Jewish thought and practice, history and society, and culture.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

HUM-296 Themes in World Literature
This is a discussion course on some topic in world literature, such as literary theory, critical and cultural studies.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

HUM-297 Themes in World History
This is a discussion course on some topic in world history, such as literary theory, critical and cultural studies.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

HUM-298 Themes in World Religion
This is a discussion course on some topic in world religion, such as literary theory, critical and cultural studies.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

HUM-299 Themes in World Culture
This is a discussion course on some topic in world culture, such as literary theory, critical and cultural studies.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

Equated Courses: HUM-296
REL-298 Sociology of Religion
This discussion course examines the various ways sociology describes and interprets religious phenomena. The course investigates the history and methods of sociology, and different sociological theories of religion, as applied to specific religions or social structures involving religion. Recent topics have included the expansion of early Christianity; religious persecution and violence; religion among teenagers and emerging adults in the United States; religious diversity in contemporary American society; and post-colonial approaches to the study of religion and society.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion, Behavioral Science
Equated Courses: SOC-298

REL-310 Seminar in Islam
This is an advanced seminar on some topic in Islamic thought or history. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: REL-103
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-320 Seminar in South Asian Religions
This is an advanced seminar on some topic in the religions of South Asia, such as Hinduism, Jainism, or Indian Buddhism. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: REL-103
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-330 Seminar in East Asian Religions
This is an advanced seminar on some topic in the religions of China and Japan. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: REL-104
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-340 Seminar in Hebrew Bible
This is an advanced seminar on some topic related to the history and literature of ancient Israel. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: REL-141
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-350 Seminar in History of Judaism
This is an advanced seminar on Jewish history, such as Second Temple Judaism, Rabbinics, or medieval Jewish thought. REL 350 applies to requirement B for the major. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-351 Seminar in Jewish Thought
This is an advanced seminar on Jewish thought and theology, such as contemporary Jewish thought, responses to the Holocaust, and the Jewish-Christian dialogue. (REL 351 applies to requirement C for the major.)
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-360 Seminar in New Test. & Early Christ.
This is an advanced seminar on the New Testament and early Christianity. Recent topics have included apocalyptic and the Apocalypse, gnostic writings, and the construction of orthodoxy and heresy. (In some years REL-260 may be offered instead). Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-370 Contemporary Theology
Seminar discussions of selected works of some significant theologians of the 20th and 21st centuries: Karl Barth, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Paul Tillich, William Placher, Sallie McFague, Jurgen Moltmann, and others. Special attention will be given to the role of scripture, Jesus, human experience (including race and gender issues), our understandings of God, theologies of liberation, and theology’s special contribution to contemporary issues.
Prerequisites: REL-171, 172, 173, 270, or PHI-242
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-372 Seminars in the History of Christianity
This is an advanced seminar on one or more figures, themes, or movements in the history of Christianity. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: REL-171 or 172
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-373 Seminar in Theology
This is an advanced seminar on one or more figures, themes, or movements in Christian theology. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-374 Seminar in Ethics
This is an advanced seminar on one or more figures, themes, or movements in contemporary ethics. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: REL-270
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-380 Seminar in American Religion
This is an advanced seminar on one or more figures, themes, or movements in American religion. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-387 Independent Study
REL 387 applies to requirement B for the major. (REL 388 applies to requirement C for the major.)
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion
REL-388 Independent Study
REL 388 applies to requirement C for the major. (REL 387 applies to requirement B for the major.)
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

REL-490 Sr. Sem: Nature & the Study of Religion
This course examines different theories of the phenomenon of religion, different methods of studying and understanding it, and the issues that arise from comparing these theories and methods. This course is required of all religion majors, normally in their senior year, and is open to other students with the consent of the instructor.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: History/Philosophy/Religion

Jonathan Baer
David Blix
Stephen S. Bowen
Derek R. Nelson (chair)
Gary A. Phillips
Ethan Yee