Sources of Hindu belief and practice date back as early as 1500 BCE, but the mythologies of India harken to time immemorial. The tradition that is today known as Hinduism developed through the rise and fall of empires, the evolution of social hierarchies, and through colorful stories about heroes and divinities. Today, Hindu practices are part of the landscape not only in India, but in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and the Americas, too. Through the readings, art and images, and numerous films and audiovisual materials, this course will offer students an introduction to the methods and theories of Religious Studies as it reveals the diversity of Hinduism.

A survey of the major world religions and their perspectives concerning ultimate reality, humankind, and the world; contrasts between Asian and Abrahamic religions.

An introduction to the content and background of the Hebrew Bible and to modern approaches to its study. The course will examine what some of these approaches have suggested about the origin and growth of the Hebrew Bible in its ancient Near Eastern context. The course will include a study of (a) the history of ancient Israel, including its religious and social institutions, (b) the literary forms and themes of the Hebrew Bible, and (c) some of the sociological forces involved in its formation.

What do we know about the beginnings of Christianity and how do we know it? This course is designed to introduce you to the historical circumstances that gave rise to the religious movement we now call Christianity. Through the close and careful reading of both New Testament literature and a variety of relevant ancient sources from outside of the Christian canon, we will work together to understand the world of the first through third centuries CE. Beyond literary evidence, we will also use tools from other disciplines such as archaeology, art history, anthropology, the social sciences, gender studies and cognitive science to help us understand how the movement took root and flourished in the Roman world.

An introductory survey of the history of religion in America, including religions that have been most prominent (Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism), native to the land (Native American), and non-traditional (“cults,” Buddhism, Islam).

An introduction to the religion, culture, and history of Islam, examining the context in which Islam emerged, the Prophet Muhammad, the Qur'an, Muslim ritual and devotional practices, Islamicate aesthetics, law, and issues of gender. Readings and lectures will focus on Islam as a diverse, lived tradition.

The religions of Asia loom large in American popular consciousness, yet are at best dimly understood. This course will peel back the platitudes of fortune cookies and “Eastern wisdom” to reveal the richness of Asian religious traditions in their cultural contexts. Students in this highly selective survey will be exposed to some of the major traditions of South and East Asia (such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, and Shinto) gaining a familiarity with their ideas, practices, and sacred figures as well as certain key issues and categories in the academic study of religion.

A survey of the development of Judaism from antiquity to modern times.

All Catholics regard human sexuality as a special gift from God. Nevertheless, a great debate is currently taking place in the Church about this complex
reality. This course will examine the Church's official teaching on sexuality as well as contemporary critiques of that teaching. Among the principal topics to be explored are (1) the Bible and sexuality, (2) salvation and sexuality, and (3) sexual morality. Special attention will be given to current discussions about marriage, reproduction, and homosexuality.

300 Q  
Spiritual Healing in the Americas: From Controversy to Cure [Maldonado/MM-314]
W: T/TH 12:30 – 1:45 p.m.
Miraculous and nonmedical healing is often accused of being superstitious and bogus, particularly when it comes in conflict with scientific knowledge, biomedical practices, and government regulation. In spite of this religious healing today has garnered increasing visibility and legitimacy. This course explores an inter-disciplinary discussion of religious healing in the Americas with an emphasis on healing practices in numerous religious traditions and controversies surrounding faith healing. This course counts toward the Religion and Health Care Major/Minor.

325 G  
Jesus in Myth and History [Walsh/MPC-101]
MWF 2:30 - 3:20 p.m.
Who was Jesus? No other historical figure has been written about, depicted and debated more than the Galilean peasant known as Jesus of Nazareth. Nor has any other figure been interpreted with so many variations over time. This course surveys how Jesus has been portrayed from the earliest extant accounts of his life to the present day. Given our source material, we will focus on his treatment in literature, devotional accounts, art and popular culture, observing how his characterization shifts or changes according to particular historical, cultural and social circumstances. As we move chronologically through this evidence, we will also test the thesis that Jesus has evolved over time to reflect the concerns and needs of those engaged in re-imagining his life and significance. In short, we will ask the question: is Jesus who we make him?

350 O  
Current Issues in Religion [Devarajan/MM-215]
W: T/TH 9:30 – 10:45 a.m.
This course will explore bioethics and ecological ethics in the traditions of Hinduism and Jainism. Through course readings, film and audiovisuals, news and social media, and classroom discussions, students will learn about the religious diversity of South Asia, and their various understandings of life (human, animal, and beyond). We will consider biomedical and ecological issues such as euthanasia, female infanticide, the definitions of marriage, and conservative efforts, that are a part of ongoing public discourse in South Asia and across diaspora communities.

351 O  
Religious Issues in Death and Dying [Sapp/AA-523]
W: T/TH 9:30 – 10:45 a.m.
Consideration of the teachings of major religious traditions about death and the nature of the dying process, with attention to the students’ personal experiences with and attitudes toward death.

352 S  
Religion and Science [Newell/MM-116]
W: T/TH 3:30 – 4:45 p.m.
This course is intended to facilitate a dialogue on the ways in which science and religion have, for the last 500 years, attempted to answer fundamental questions about our universe and humanities’ place in it. During the course of this semester, we will explore the respective search for answers to four key questions: Is the Earth a special or unique place? What unifies the Universe? What does it mean to be human? What is time? All four of these questions have been addressed directly by notable figures in the “science versus religion” debate, and have expanded over the centuries to encompass many variations on both question and answer. Together, we will examine and discuss the many permutations of these four questions, the scientific figures who brought them to society’s attention, and the cultural implications of the answers for both science and religion.

360 H1  
Religion and Bioethics [Swanson/MPC-103]
MW 3:35 – 4:50 p.m.
How do we determine what is ethical in the practice of healthcare? To try to answer, you are invited to an interdisciplinary exploration of medical, philosophical, religious, and public policy issues. Through discussion, film, and lecture the class will discover what is happening in medicine, and what are the moral implications. Topics range from reproductive technologies, genetics, organ transplantation, euthanasia, and assisted suicide.

370 1T  
Islam in Modern Times [De Sondy/MM-317]
W: Tuesdays 5:00 – 7:40 p.m.
Explorations in Film, Media and Music
In the current international political climate, the mass media is full of images, narratives and metaphors relating to Islam. The world at large is intrigued and interested to know more about a religion that offers
conflicting views, either as terrorists or peace-loving builders of Mosques. This course will examine how film, music and the wider media present us with an accurate or inaccurate image of Islam. In what way have film, media and music been utilized by progressive/liberal/conservative/traditional elements in the Muslim and non-Muslim world to support their agenda? In what way do these agendas root back to Islamic theology? Conversely, we will use images, metaphors, and teachings found in religion to discuss the layers and elements visually and audibly portrayed on screen. Through the three critical approaches of theology, mythology, and ideology, this course will examine how religion, as variously defined, pervades the modern cinema and how one may engage in dialogue with this phenomenon in exploring modern images of Islam and Muslims.

375 1K Religion and Democracy in Israel [H. Green/TBA]
Wednesdays 6:25 – 9:05 p.m.
An examination of Israel’s evolution as a nation and a society, especially the correlation between nationalism and religion, between ethnicity and culture, and between democracy and religion.

403 01 Supervised Reading in Religious Issues or Problems [W. Green]
Independent study to enable students to read extensively in an area of personal interest in religious issues or problems.

405 Special Topics in Religious or Historical Traditions
W: [Ritzinger/MM-TBA]
Tuesdays 5:00 – 7:40 p.m.
The relationship between “religion” and “modernity” is both intimate and vexed. This has been especially true in China where both terms were encountered at a fraught historical moment filled with imperialism, revolutions, and instability, yet also exciting new ideas, novel values, and unprecedented opportunities. This course will examine the transformations of Buddhism, which was arguably the most successful of China’s traditional religions in reinventing itself as a “modern religion.” Attention will be paid both to its internal reorientations and restricting as well as its place within the rapidly shifting religious field of modern Chinese societies from the late nineteenth through the early twenty-first centuries.

406 4H Special Topics in Religious Issues or Problems [Newell/TBA]
Wednesdays 3:35 – 6:05 p.m.
In Religion, Nature, and Ecology, we look at the way in which popular perceptions of American wilderness have both influenced, and been influenced by, religion. We begin by exploring how Biblical notions of paradise and wilderness shaped the experiences of early European settlers in North America; look the way in which the Western frontier first became a sight of exploitation, then of sacredness; and examine the way concepts such as the science of ecology, stewardship, and nature have changed from the 19th to the 20th (and even 21st) centuries. We trace the history of the science of ecology in America, discuss how the study and preservation of wilderness in America has alternately been a religion and a science, and explore modern movements that seek to unite the two.

408 1E Special Project in Religious Traditions:
408 1F Holocaust Survivors Service Internship [Rothman]
TBA
408 1Q Tuesdays 12:30 – 1:45 p.m. TBA
Students enrolled in this program provide valuable services to Jewish survivors of Nazi atrocities while developing their leadership abilities and giving them an appreciation for the historical significance of the Holocaust. Student participants are matched with local survivors, whom they visit 4 to 5 times each semester over a period of two semesters. Students also participate in academic enrichment meetings several times during the semester for background information, training and problem solving. Students receive academic credit for their participation and are eligible for funds towards travel expenses up to $250 per semester and for a Sue Miller Fellowship at the end of two semesters.

499 3T Method and Theory in the Study of Religion [Callender & W. Green/MRC-137]
Thursdays 5:00 – 7:40 p.m.
This is a required course for REL majors and is open to all REL minors. One unusual feature of the course this semester is that it will be a “dinner course,” with discussions about the theory and method of religion conducted in the context of a communal meal.

**Summer A & B**

101 1G Introduction to Religion [Callender/MM107]
[Summer A] MW 6:00-9:35 pm
101 5V [Callender/MM 117]
[Summer B] T/TH 6:00-9:00 pm
101 Y [Maldonado/TBA] [Summer A/B] TBA
A survey of the major world religions and their perspectives concerning ultimate reality, humankind, and the world; contrasts between Asian and Abrahamic religions.

131 1V Religion in American Life [Kling/MM 119]
[Summer B] MW 6:00-9:35 pm
The history of religion in the U.S. from the pre-colonial period to the present. Includes study of the religion of Native Americans, African Americans,
Asian Americans, women, Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and cults.

171 1Q Introduction to Islam [De Sondy/MM 110]  
[Summer B] T/TR 10:05am-1:40pm  
History of Islam, the Qur'an, and the systematization of Islamic law. Emergence of the theological schools, the mystical and philosophical traditions, and the spread of Islamic civilization.

330 Y Caribbean Religion [Maldonado/ TBA]  
[Summer A/B] TBA  
Caribbean Religion with an emphasis on African Diaspora and Creole religions. The religious traditions we will cover include: Rastafarianism, Regla de Ocha (Santeria), Voodoo, Espiritismo, Regla de Palo, and Obeah.

335 5G American Religion in Modern Film  
[Kling/MM 104]  
[Summer A] T/TH 6:00-9:35pm  
This course is a study of the role of religion (primarily Christianity) in popular culture and the way in which religion becomes the vehicle for aesthetic, social, political, and other cultural purposes. In particular, this course explores contemporary American religious life with special attention given to groups and issues depicted through the medium of film. We focus on how film uses religion rather than on how religion uses film. That is, we analyze how mainstream movies (both directly religious and essentially secular) appropriate religious imagery and themes, rather than how religions use film to communicate their beliefs and practices.
About the Program

The University of Miami’s new URome program is unique in that it combines the breadth of the American University of Rome’s course offerings with two core courses taught by faculty members from the University of Miami. UM students pay regular UM tuition to participate in the program, plus the URome program fee, which covers housing. All financial aid, including scholarships and loans, is applicable as though students were studying in Coral Gables.

UM faculty will offer two three-credit courses in Rome. Students who participate in the URome program must take one of these courses and may take both. The courses are “All Roads Lead to Rome: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Religion and Rome” (REL 349) and “The Sanctity of Life: Selected Themes from the Ancient World to the Present” (REL 362). Each course carries three Religious Studies credits and is team-taught by faculty members from UM’s Department of Religious Studies and other UM departments.

In addition to taking one or both of the REL courses, UM students may take up to four courses from the curriculum offered by AUR, which emphasizes an interdisciplinary approach by drawing links among various fields of study. Students in International Relations, for instance, engage in the study of history, political theory, government, economics, law, and public administration as they focus on the regions of Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East. The Business Studies program has an international focus with opportunities for students to explore the social and cultural ramifications of operating in a global economy. Archeology, Art History, Business Studies, and Italian Studies collaborate to offer programs in The Business of Art, Cultural Heritage Management, and The Italian Business Environment. As these examples illustrate, AUR has a holistic perspective that serves to integrate its course offerings and thus to afford students the opportunity to examine the same subject matter from a number of related perspectives.

Classes at AUR are held Monday-Thursday, giving students a three-day weekend to study, explore the city of Rome, and travel throughout Italy.

AUR Courses: Spring 2015

A complete list of AUR courses that are scheduled for the spring semester of 2015 will be found on the AUR website in the fall of 2014. The list may be viewed or downloaded in a pdf format and the AUR course database searched.

NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR A MAJOR OR MINOR IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

To ensure that students who major or minor in Religious Studies gain a well-rounded appreciation of the field of study, the Department requires that they take a specified number of credits in different subject areas. A major in Religious Studies leading toward the B.A. degree requires 24 credits in Religious Studies, passed with a grade of "C-" or higher. At least 12 credits must be earned in courses numbered 300 or above, and at least three credits must be taken in each of the following subject areas:

1) Religious Texts; 2) Historical Traditions; 3) Contemporary Issues. A major must earn writing credit (W) in at least one course in the department and must take REL 499, Method and Theory in the Study of Religion. An undergraduate minor requires 12 credits, passed with a grade of "C-" or higher. At least six credits must be earned in courses numbered 300 or above, and at least three credits must be taken in each of two of the three subject areas. Religious Studies 101 or 102 or 103 is required of all majors and minors.

Transfer students who major in Religious Studies must complete at least 12 credits in departmental courses numbered 300 or above in residence at the Coral Gables Campus. Transfers who wish to minor in the department must complete at least 6 credits in the same manner.

COURSES

Religious Studies courses are grouped within the following areas:

(1) Religious Literatures or Texts; (2) Religious Traditions or Historical Traditions; (3) Religious Issues and Problems. In some cases, courses may count in more than one area. Such courses are so indicated with the area number following the listed course.

1) RELIGIOUS LITERATURE OR TEXTS

111 INTRO TO THE HEBREW BIBLE (OLD TESTAMENT)
121 INTRO TO THE NEW TESTAMENT
305 RELIGION AND CULTURE IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST (2)
311 PROPHECY AND PROPHETIC LITERATURE
312 FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES
321 JESUS AND THE GOSPELS
322 ST PAUL: LETTERS AND CONTROVERSIES
324 THE BIBLE AND MODERN FILM (2)
325 JESUS IN MYTH AND HISTORY (2)
326 THE BIBLE IN HISTORY
401 SUPERVISED READING IN RELIGIOUS LITERATURE OR TEXTS
404 SPECIAL TOPICS IN RELIGIOUS LITERATURE OR TEXTS
407 SPECIAL PROJECTS IN RELIGIOUS LITERATURE OR TEXTS
501 SUPERVISED READING IN RELIGIOUS LITERATURE OR TEXTS
510 SEMINAR IN HEBREW BIBLE

2) RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS OR HISTORICAL TRADITIONS

102 THE PROBLEM OF GOD (3)
131 RELIGION IN AMERICAN LIFE
171 INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM
231 JEWISH CIVILIZATION: SOCIETY, CULTURE, AND RELIGION
232 HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY
236 CULTS AND NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN AMERICA
238 HOLY WAR AND TOLERATION IN WESTERN RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS
268 RELIGION IN MODERN ISRAEL
301 ANCIENT GREECE
302 HELLENISTIC AGE
303 THE ROMAN REPUBLIC
304 THE ROMAN EMPIRE
305 RELIGION AND CULTURE IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST (1)
306 RELIGION AND CULTURE IN ANCIENT EGYPT
307 RELIGION AND CULTURE IN PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA
308 THE GRECO-ROMAN CONTEXT OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY
314 RISE OF JUDAISM
315 JEWISH MYSTICISM
324 THE BIBLE AND MODERN FILM (1)
325 JESUS IN MYTH AND HISTORY (1)
330 CARIBBEAN RELIGION
331 RELIGIONS OF ASIA
332 JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM
334 THE AMERICAN JEWISH EXPERIENCE: HOLLYWOOD & POPULAR CULTURE (3)
335 AMERICAN RELIGION IN MODERN FILM
336 THE AMERICAN ENCOUNTER WITH ASIAN RELIGIONS
338 LATIN AMERICAN LATINO/A RELIGION (3)
343 CATHOLIC LIFE AND THOUGHT (3)
345 RELIGION AND GENDER (3)
348 REFORMATION EUROPE
349 ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME
353 RELIGION AND AMERICAN POLITICS (3)
355 RELIGION AND ITS INTERPRETERS (3)
356 MYTH AND RELIGION (3)
357 SEX, GENDER, AND POLITICS (3)
361 RELIGION AND YOUTH IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA (3)
370 ISLAM IN MODERN TIMES (3)
371 ISLAM AND GENDER (3)
375 RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY IN ISRAEL (3)
377 SUFISM: ISLAMIC MYSTICISM (3)
380 ARCHEOLOGY OF PALESTINE FROM PRE-HISTORY TO ISLAM
402 SUPERVISED READING IN RELIGIOUS OR HISTORICAL TRADITIONS
405 SPECIAL TOPICS IN RELIGIOUS OR HISTORICAL TRADITIONS
520 SEMINAR IN NEW TESTAMENT
408 SPECIAL PROJECTS IN RELIGIOUS OR HISTORICAL TRADITIONS

2) RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS OR HISTORICAL TRADITIONS (continued)

502 SUPERVISED READING IN RELIGIOUS OR HISTORICAL TRADITIONS
505 SEMINAR IN ANCIENT STUDIES
530 SEMINAR IN RELIGIOUS OR HISTORICAL TRADITIONS

3) RELIGIOUS ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

102 THE PROBLEM OF GOD (2)
151 RELIGION AND MORAL CHOICES
252 RELIGION AND HUMAN SEXUALITY
334 THE AMERICAN JEWISH EXPERIENCE: HOLLYWOOD & POPULAR CULTURE (2)
338 LATIN AMERICAN LATINO/A RELIGION (2)
343 CATHOLIC LIFE AND THOUGHT (2)
345 RELIGION AND GENDER (2)
347 EXPERIENCING RELIGION: CONVERSION
350 CURRENT ISSUES IN RELIGION
351 RELIGIOUS ISSUES IN DEATH AND DYING
352 RELIGION AND SCIENCE
353 RELIGION AND AMERICAN POLITICS (2)
354 RELIGION AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL
355 RELIGION AND ITS INTERPRETERS (2)
356 MYTH AND RELIGION (2)
357 SEX, GENDER, AND POLITICS (2)
358 RACE AND RELIGION
360 RELIGION AND BIOETHICS
361 RELIGION AND YOUTH IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA (2)
362 THE SANCTITY OF LIFE
370 ISLAM IN MODERN TIMES (2)
371 ISLAM AND GENDER (2)
375 RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY IN ISRAEL (2)
376 SHI’SIM: RELIGION, CULTURE, AND HISTORY
377 SUFISM: ISLAMIC MYSTICISM (2)
378 RELIGION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
403 SUPERVISED READING IN RELIGIOUS ISSUES OR PROBLEMS
406 SPECIAL TOPICS IN RELIGIOUS ISSUES OR PROBLEMS
409 SPECIAL PROJECTS IN RELIGIOUS ISSUES OR PROBLEMS
450 PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION
451 ETHICS AND GENETICS
503 SUPERVISED READING IN RELIGIOUS ISSUES OR PROBLEMS
550 SEMINAR IN RELIGIOUS ETHICS
560 SEMINAR IN CONTEMPORARY RELIGIOUS ISSUES

GENERAL AREA COURSES:

101 INTRODUCTION TO RELIGION
102 THE PROBLEM OF GOD

103 ONE GOD: JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM
491 SENIOR HONORS THESIS I (1,2, or 3)
492 SENIOR HONORS THESIS II (1, 2, or 3)
499 METHOD AND THEORY IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION

RELIGION AND HEALTH CARE TRACK COURSES:

151 RELIGION AND MORAL CHOICES
1XX RELIGION AND HEALTH CARE
252 RELIGION AND HUMAN SEXUALITY
351 RELIGIOUS ISSUES IN DEATH AND DYING
352 RELIGION AND SCIENCE
354 RELIGION AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL
360 RELIGION AND BIOETHICS
451 ETHICS AND GENETICS
CLA233 ANCIENT MEDICINE

* These courses address specific topics or projects (appearing as a sub-titles) offered by different faculty.

PLEASE NOTE: Only one course co-listed under the rubric of another department may count towards the Religious Studies major or minor.
Honors Courses and General Honors

The Department of Religious Studies participates in the University of Miami’s Honors Program and each semester offers at least one course for Honors credit. These Honors courses, which may be taken by all students who are enrolled in the Honors Program, count toward the fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with “General Honors.” With the permission of departmental faculty, Honors students may also transform a regular course (at the 300-level or above) into an Honors course by doing specified additional work. This additional work is detailed on a so-called “pink sheet” that must be signed by the faculty member and submitted to the Honors Program Office by the student before the indicated deadline. For more precise information on the requirements for graduating with “General Honors” and on the regulations regarding “pink sheets,” please contact the Honors Program Office.

Religious Studies majors and minors may enroll in any course offered by the Department of Religious Studies, including Honors courses, provided that they have the necessary prerequisites or permission of the instructor.

Departmental Honors in Religious Studies

The Department of Religious Studies encourages its majors and minors to intensify and deepen their knowledge of religious texts, traditions, and issues through its Departmental Honors Program. The program is designed to give our students the opportunity to explore various topics and problems in religion that are of particular interest to them, to work more closely with faculty in the department, to develop skills in research and thesis preparation, and in some cases to prepare for graduate work in religious studies.

Minimal requirements for the program are as follows: 1) a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.30; 2) a cumulative grade point average in religious studies of at least 3.50; and 3) a thesis that is approved by departmental faculty.

For the determination of honors, cumulative grade point average means either the average of all grades earned at the University of Miami or the combined average of all graded work taken at the University of Miami and elsewhere (whether or not the transfer work is accepted toward a degree at the University of Miami), whichever is lower.

Students have three options for writing the thesis. First, they may take six credit hours of senior thesis (REL 492). Third, in exceptional circumstances, a student’s thesis may be written as part of the requirements for earning six credits in religious studies courses at the 300-level or above.

In all three cases, the thesis must be a single, coherent work of scholarship through which the student earns six credit hours in religious studies.

In addition to completing the written thesis, students must orally present the results of their work to faculty and students at a special honors colloquium to be held during the reading days at the end of the semester.

Graduation Honors: Magna cum Laude and Summa cum Laude

Please check the Honors website: http://www6.miami.edu/UMH/CDA/UMH_Main/0,1770,2619-1;2659-2,00.html#Summa_Magna_Cum_Laude

Awards for Graduating Seniors

Because every significant field of study intersects at crucial points with aspects of religion, the discipline of religious studies is extremely broad. The Department of Religious Studies attempts to offer course work in as many areas as its faculty have expertise. To facilitate the goal of majors acquiring both breadth and depth in their knowledge of religion, the Department divides its courses into three areas: Religious Texts, Historical Traditions, and Current Issues.

Each spring semester the Department of Religious Studies bestows up to five awards on graduating seniors. The two highest awards are presented at both the Honors Convocation and the TAK induction ceremony. The first is the Theta Alpha Kappa Award, typically given to the student who has excelled in all three areas of study offered by the Department. The second is the Honors Day Award, bestowed on the outstanding Religious Studies major, who usually will have excelled in at least two of the three areas of study.

Three additional awards are typically presented at the Theta Alpha Kappa induction ceremony that recognizes excellence in each of the three areas of study offered by the Department.
Since 1995 the Department of Religious Studies has been proud to house the Alpha Beta Upsilon chapter of Theta Alpha Kappa (TAK), the national honor society for religious studies and theology. Each spring the chapter inducts eligible faculty, students, and members of the community who have distinguished themselves in the academic study of religion. The chapter presents all student inductees with an honors cord that they may wear at the University’s Honors Convocation and Commencement.

To be eligible for induction into TAK as an undergraduate, students must have a cumulative grade point average in all academic subjects of at least 3.30 and earn an overall grade point average of 3.50 or higher in at least 12 academic credits in Religious Studies. Graduating seniors who are in the process of fulfilling the requisite 12 academic credits in Religious Studies will be considered for induction into the Society, provided that they meet the other criteria. Eligible students are reviewed by the faculty each spring. Those who are approved by the faculty are offered induction into TAK, which is one of the highest honors that the faculty can bestow on majors and minors.

TAK publishes the Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa, which each year features undergraduate papers in all fields of religious studies and theology. The best undergraduate paper is awarded a prize worth $200. For additional information on TAK and the paper competition, please contact Dr. David Kling.

Majors and minors who have achieved academic excellence and have completed 90 credits (12 credits in Religious Studies) are eligible to join TAK. Each spring the chapter inducts eligible faculty, students, and members of the community who have distinguished themselves in the academic study of religion. The chapter presents all student inductees with an honors cord that they may wear at the University’s Honors Convocation and Commencement.

http://thetaalphakappa.net/
Professor Dexter Callender holds a Ph.D. in Near Eastern languages from Harvard University, where he studied Hebrew Bible, ancient Near Eastern history and literature, and myth and myth theory. Professor Callender is the recipient of the 2000 Provost’s Excellence in Teaching Award and was the 2001 Panhellenic Association Professor of the Year. He is the author of *Adam in Myth and History: Ancient Israelite Perspectives on the Primal Human* (Harvard Semitic Museum/Eisenbrauns, 2000). The courses he teaches include “Introduction to the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament),” “Prophecy and Prophetic Literature,” “Myth and Religion,” and “Religion and Culture in the Ancient Near East.”

Professor Amanullah De Sondy earned his Ph.D. in theology and religious studies at the University of Glasgow, Scotland, with a focus on Islamic Studies. His dissertation was on “Constructions of Masculinities in India and Pakistan between the 18th and 21st Centuries.” While he was at Glasgow, he was the lead researcher on a project on “Philanthropy for Social Justice in the British Muslim Societies” that was funded by the Ford Foundation ($160,000). He has been active in interfaith dialogue events and has twice served as an umpire at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships. His interest in presenting Islam and Muslims in the media has led to him making regular contributions to BBC Radio Scotland and to writing a blog on “Progressive Scottish Muslims.”

Professor Arthi Devarajan is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Miami. She received her Ph.D. in West and South Asian Religions from Emory University in 2010. Her research focuses on the physical body as a site of religious activity; she explores the ways that the body is a sentient, intellectual faculty that participates in the construction of religious identity, ethics, and social categories. Prof. Devarajan’s first book project examines the body through the practices of traditional classical dance forms of India as sites of religious and ethical pedagogy. Her teaching interests include ethnography of religion and the study of religious performance in Hinduism and other religions of South Asia. In the fall 2014, she will teach REL 100: Introduction to Hinduism and REL 350: Current Issues in Religion: The Ethics of Life.

Professor David Graf received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. He is an ancient historian and archeologist specializing of the Greco-Roman world in the Levant and Arabia, Co-editor of the multi-volume *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (1992), he is the author of *Rome and Its Arabian Frontier from the Nabataeans to the Saracens* (1997) and more than 100 scholarly articles. He is currently directing excavations in the ancient Nabataean-Roman city center of Petra in Jordan and leading a consortium of universities is the first joint American-Saudi project at Jurash (Khamis Mushayt) in the SW ‘Asir province of Saudi Arabia. His current projects include the preparation of over 300 new Greek and Aramaic funerary texts from Umm al-Jimal (in Roman Arabia), a new edition of some Greek historians for *Brill's New Jacoby*, the study of the aromatics trade in South Arabia, and the Silk Route between Syria and China. He is a Member of the Institute of Advanced Study in Princeton and a recent recipient of the Provost's Award for Scholarly Activity.

Professor Henry A. Green received his Ph.D. from St. Andrews University (Britain) after postgraduate work at the Sorbonne (France) and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Israel). He is the author of four books, including *Research in Action* (education of at-risk populations in Israel); *The Economic and Social Origins of Gnosticism*; *Mosaic: Jewish Life in Florida*; and *Gesher Vakesher, Bridges and Bonds: The Life of Leon Kronish* (The Israelization of American Jewry and the story of Jewish Miami). Professor Green is the former Director of the Judaic Studies Program (1984-2001). He has served as a Visiting Fellow at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Oxford University, and the University of Toronto. Among his awards are the Canada Council, the Israel Fellowship, and the Skirball Fellowship (England). Professor Green recently served as the national chair of a literacy and school readiness program (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters, HIPPY) and conducts social policy research in the areas of education and health. His research interests and courses include modern Israel, American Jewry, and spirituality and education.
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**Professor David W. Kling** is currently chair of the department. He received his Ph.D. in the history of Christianity from the University of Chicago. He is the author of the award-winning *A Field of Divine Wonders: Village Revivals and the New Divinity in Northwestern Connecticut, 1792-1822* and co-editor of *Jonathan Edwards at Home and Abroad: Historical Memories, Cultural Movements, Global Horizons*. His latest book, *The Bible in History: How the Texts Have Shaped the Times*, was selected as the “Editor’s Pick” for History Book Club. He is an area editor for *The Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, 30 vols. (de Gruyter, 2009—), and is currently writing a book on the history of Christian conversion for Oxford University Press. He teaches “Religion in American Life,” “Cults and New Religious Movements in America,” “History of Christianity,” “Fundamentalisms in the Modern World,” and “American Religion in Modern Film.”

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**Professor Catherine Newell** earned both her M.A. and Ph.D. in Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her M.A. thesis was on “Infinite Space and the Popular Imagination,” which examined the process by which a scientific or religious concept can be assimilated into popular culture through science fiction. In her Ph.D. dissertation on “The Wheels of Titan: Faith, the Future, and the American Frontier,” Dr. Newell examined the process by which the myth of the American frontier shaped Cold War religion and culture, and how “the American Way of Life” influenced both the science and the spirit of space boosterism throughout the 1950s. At UC Santa Barbara she helped teach “Origins: A Dialogue between Scientists and Humanists,” and at UM she will be offering “Religion and Science” (REL 352) this fall semester.

**Professor James Nickoloff** earned his Ph.D. in Systematic Theology from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA, and taught at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA (1996-2009) before moving to South Florida in 2009. His areas of research and expertise include human sexuality, liberation theology, and Roman Catholic life and thought. He is the editor of *Gustavo Gutiérrez: Essential Writings* (1996), *An Introductory Dictionary of Theology and Religious Studies* (2007), and *In, Out and About on the Hill: Lesbian and Gay Alums Reflect on Life at Holy Cross* (2010). This fall semester he will be teaching “Latin American and U.S. Latino/a Religion” (REL 338), with a focus on liberation theology and the “underside” of history.
**Professor Daniel Pals** is Senior Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, having previously served as Interim Dean. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago and a joint appointment in the Department of History. His main interests are modern intellectual history, modern religion and society, and theories of religion. He is the author of *The Victorian “Lives of Jesus* and *Eight Theories of Religion*, and he is the editor of *Introducing Religion: Readings from the Classic Theorists*. He has also written journal articles on approaches to explaining religion. He teaches “Introduction to Religion,” “Religion and Science,” and “Senior Seminar.” He has also taught “Human Beliefs and Values,” a course that compares such belief systems as Marxism, Humanism, and Fascism with more traditional religious philosophies. Dr. Pals has received the Apple Polishing and the Interfraternity Council Professor of the Year Awards.

**Professor Justin Ritzinger** earned his Ph.D. at Harvard with a focus on Chinese Buddhism. His research explores the reimagining of values and ethics in modern Chinese Buddhism inspired by engagement with new ideas and ideologies, especially from the West. He is currently working on a manuscript, entitled “Anarchy in the Pure Land: Tradition, Modernity and the Reinvention of the Cult of Maitreya in Twentieth-Century China,” that investigates the incorporation of novel values derived from Western radicalism into Chinese Buddhist moral frameworks. Over the last few years, he has also written on a cluster of related issues in modern Chinese Buddhism, including eschatology and views of time, conceptions of social contingency, and responses to Darwinism. Professor Ritzinger teaches on a range of topics in Asian religions, including modernity, social engagement, narrative, ethics, and religious texts.

**Professor Stephen Sapp** received his Ph.D. in religious ethics from Duke University. He teaches “Religion and Human Sexuality,” “Religious Issues in Death and Dying,” “Religion and Bioethics,” and “Ethics and Genetics.” Dr. Sapp has received several teaching awards, including Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor twice, a University Freshman Teaching Award, and the University Excellence in Teaching Award. He is the author of *Sexuality, the Bible, and Science; Full of Years: Aging and the Elderly in the Bible and Today*; and *Light on a Gray Area: American Public Policy on Aging*; and numerous articles and book chapters. He is former chairperson of the Bioethics Committee at Miami Children’s Hospital (1990-2007) and of the University of Miami Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (2002-2006). He also chaired the Faculty Senate at UM from 2006 to 2009 and the Department of Religious Studies from 1997 to 2010.

**Professor Jonathan Swanson** was an economics major in college and worked as a fiscal analyst at the Federal Reserve before earning his Ph.D. in theological ethics at Baylor University. Combining his skills as an ethicist and economist, he wrote his dissertation on “The Future of Medicare.” He will be teaching “Religion and Moral Choices” (REL 151) this fall semester.

**Professor Robyn Walsh** earned her Ph.D. in Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean, with a focus on early Christianity, ancient Judaism and Roman archaeology, from Brown University. Her research interests include the letters of Paul, the history of the interpretation of the Synoptic problem, theory and method, cognitive science, and intersections between Roman archaeology and twentieth-century Fascist Europe (particularly in Spain and Italy). Most recently she has been working on the influence of Romanticism on the field of early Christian studies. Prof. Walsh has taught at Wheaton College (Mass.), The College of the Holy Cross, and received teaching certificates and pedagogical training at Brown University and Harvard University. She teaches courses on the New Testament, Greco-Roman literature and material culture. In 2014-2015, she will teach Introduction to the New Testament, Jesus in Myth and History, Paul: Letters and Controversies, and The Greco-Roman Context of Early Christianity.