

THE DEPARTMENT OF

RELIGIOUS
STUDIES

SPRING
2018

COURSE BOOKLET

REL 101: Introduction to Religion- URome Students ONLY

Callender, W. Green, Walsh, Graf, Stampino, Pals, Kling | Study Abroad

This course gives students an introductory exposure to various religions of the world as seen from the perspective of the academic study of religion. It takes an objective and non-sectarian approach and is intended to inform rather than to persuade. The course assumes that students are capable of understanding worldviews and value systems different from their own and that sympathetic exposure to such alternatives is both an integral part of a university education and an essential component of functioning as a responsible citizen of the 21st century.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Asian Religions: South and East Asia
- Christianity
- Islam
- Religion, Identity, and Pop Culture

REL 101: Introduction to Religion

Callender | Online Course

An overview of religious perspectives concerning ultimate reality, humankind, and the world, with special attention to major Asian and Abrahamic religions.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Asian Religions: South and East Asia
- Christianity
- Islam
- Religion, Identity, and Pop Culture

REL 111: Introduction to the Old Testament/Hebrew Scriptures

Callender | TR 12:30PM-1:45PM

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.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Judaism
- The Bible
- Religion, Myth, and Interpretation
- A survey of Jewish Literature.
- The Evolution of the Jewish People in their Homeland and the Diaspora

REL 151: Religion and Moral Choices

Vila | M 5:00PM-7:40PM

An introduction to major themes and important figures in religious and philosophical ethics. We will read, discuss, and write about ethical issues ranging from abortion to war, including topics such as the death penalty, environmentalism, and stem cell research.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion, Law, and Civic Engagement
- The Philosophy of Religion
- Religious Issues in the Modern World
- Ethics in the Humanities: Religion, Philosophy, Politics
- Religion and Medicine
- Politics and Religion

REL 232: A Global History of Christianity

Kling | MWF 10:10AM-11:00AM

An introduction to the history, themes, and issues in the history of Christianity from the first century to the present. Attention will be given to a variety of issues: theological (the formulation of beliefs); social (the formation of Christian communities); political (the interaction between political structures and the Christian church); biographical (the personal dimension of faith); and the role of Scripture.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Western Civilization: Historical Approaches
- Christianity

REL 236: Cults and New Religious Movements in America (January Intersession)

Kling | MTWRF 5:30PM - 9:00PM & Sa: 9:00AM - 1:00PM

Twentieth and twenty-first century religious groups in America, so-called “cults” or new religious movements (NRMs), located on the periphery of “mainstream” religion. An examination of the origins, beliefs, attraction, and interaction of the NRMs from a variety of disciplinary perspectives (historical, psychological, sociological) as well as from another variety of disciplinary perspectives (potential for violence, “brainwashing”, involvement of women, and charismatic leadership). The goal is to increase our understanding of certain aspects of contemporary religious activity and the general societal response to them, and hence, of religion in general.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion in the Americas

REL 240: Pilgrims, Shrines, Crusades, and Saints in Spain

Nesvig | W 3:35PM – 6:05PM

This course examines the dynamic between official and popular Catholicism in Spain. Focusing on the formative period from 700 to 1700 CE the course exposes students to the major trends in both formal Spanish

Catholic thought and every day, lived religion. The course is organized around the themes of pilgrimage, shrines, religious wars, and sainthood. Spain is home to several unique strains of Catholicism. It was the birthplace of two important religious orders, the Jesuits and the Dominicans, and also continues to be home to one of the world's major pilgrimage sites—the road to Santiago. Likewise, as it was the Spanish conquest which exported Catholicism to the Americas, the particular form of Catholicism in Latin America owes much to Spanish religious culture. This course exposes students to some of the particular and peculiar components of Spanish Catholicism—its flexibility (as in the many shrines), its noted military component (as in the wars of Reconquest, El Cid and Santiago Mayor), its art (notably in El Greco and Rivera), and its classic literary tradition (as in Teresa of Avila, Ignacio of Loyola and Cervantes).

REL 242: Religion in Revolutionary History

Pals | Online Course

Explores the pivotal role of religion in the revolutions that have shaped the modern Western world: the Puritan Revolt in 17th-century England, the American/French Revolutions of 1776 and 1789, and the Russian (Communist) Revolution of 1917.

REL 255: Religion and Sports: From the Ancients to the Present

Kling, Walsh | TR 3:30PM - 4:45PM

The intersection of sports and religion from the ancient Greeks to the present, with attention given to the role of religion and sports in American culture. The course examines the functions and significance of sport, play, ritual, and religion, recognizing both the dialectical and intimate relationship between sports and religion. Religion has not only influenced sports; sports has influenced religion. In some cases; the two have merged: sports has become a religion. Through various media we will study the topics of religion and sports, the spirituality of sports, and sports as a religion.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Sports Communication
- Popular Culture
- Religion, Identity, and Popular Culture

REL 281: Introduction to Buddhism

Ritzinger | TR 11:00AM - 12:15PM

The Buddhist tradition from a variety of angles and in several cultural contexts. We will attend to the ideas for which Buddhism is famous, while situating Buddhist practitioners in their social contexts at key historical moments. Throughout we will give attention to the issue of our own perspective and what it means to think across the porous borders of culture in an interrelated world.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Asian Religions: South and East Asia
- China Studies

REL 305: The Ancient Near East: Religion and Culture

Callender | TR 3:30PM - 4:45PM

Historical and cultural forces in the major religions of the ancient Near East, from 3000 to 300 B. C. E. Cultural achievements such as the Epic of Gilgamesh, the pyramids and the Bible.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion in the Ancient World
- Religion, Myth, and Interpretation
- The Evolution of the Jewish People in their Homeland and the Diaspora

REL 314 / JUS 314: The Rise of Judaism

Billings | TR: 1:25PM - 2:15PM

The history and literature of early Judaism, covering the period from the fall of Jerusalem in 587/586 BCE to the beginnings of rabbinic Judaism and the formation of the Mishnah (ca.200 CE).

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Judaism

REL 321: Jesus and the Gospels

Billings | MWF 11:15AM - 12:05PM

An examination of the Jesus tradition, focusing on the formative period of the first two centuries. Special emphasis on the four New Testament Gospels, with a survey of the treatment of Jesus in other documents, both Christian and non-Christian.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- The Bible
- World of Early Christianity

REL 324: The Bible and Modern Film

Billings | T 5:00PM - 7:40PM

The diverse ways in which contemporary cinematic arts interpret and depict narratives from the Bible and the ancient Mediterranean world.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Christianity
- The Bible

REL 351: Death and Dying

Garcia | M 6:25PM – 9:05PM

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.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- The Philosophy of Religion
- Religion and the Body: Embodiment in Religious Beliefs and Practices
- Ethics in the Humanities: Religion, Philosophy, Politics
- Religion, Identity, and Pop Culture
- Religion and Medicine

REL 352: Religion and Science

Maklakiewicz | R 5:00PM - 7:40PM

The religious and ethical issues created by modern science and technology.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion and Medicine

REL 354: Religion and the Problem of Evil

Swanson | W 5:00PM-7:40PM

Major religious perspectives on the origin and nature of evil and human suffering.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- The Philosophy of Religion
- Religious Issues in the Modern World
- Ethics in the Humanities: Religion, Philosophy, Politics
- Religion, Myth, and Interpretation

REL 362: The Sanctity of Life: Selected Themes from the Ancient World to the Present - URome Students ONLY

Callender, W. Green, Walsh, Graf, Stampino, Pals, Kling | Study Abroad

This course examines the religious foundation of the idea that human life is “sacred” and considers a wide range of historical and ethical issues associated with this central concept of Western thought. It explores the meaning of the multi-faceted phrase “sanctity of life,” including its implications for such ethical and legal concerns as conception, birth, and termination of life; human dignity and human rights; the quality of life; and social justice. We will examine how “life” is defined and described in different cultures at different times in history, and how various religions have influenced these matters.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion and the Body: Embodiment in Religious Beliefs and Practices

REL 364: Spiritual Healing in the Americas

Maldonado | TR 2:00PM – 3:15PM

A selective overview of spiritual healing in the Americas with an emphasis on healing practices in numerous religious traditions and controversies surrounding faith healing.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion and the Body
- Religion and Medicine
- Religion in the Americas

REL 370: Islam in the Modern World

Homayounvash | TR 9:30AM - 10:45AM

Islam's encounter with the west, the impact of modernization on the Muslim World, and the rise of Islamic Fundamentalism. Islam in America and the Afro-American Islamic movements will also be discussed.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Islam
- Religious Issues in the Modern World
- Religion, Identity, and Pop Culture

REL 372: Islam and the United States: The Politics of Race, Media and Terrorism

Homayounvash | TR 8:00AM – 9:15AM

A critical review of the cultural and political history of U.S. relations with various Muslim communities both domestic and foreign. Major themes include the experience of Muslims in North America, xenophobia, racism, national security, law enforcement and violence.

REL 380 / JUS 380: Archaeology of Palestine from the Persian Period to the End of the Herodian Dynasty

Graf | TR 9:30AM - 10:45AM

This course focuses on the excavations of key sites connected to the Hasmonean monarchy and the rise of Jewish independence, to the foundation of the Herodian Dynasty and its collapse, and including the rise of Christianity. The key sites connecting with the First Jewish Revolt (Jotapata, Gamla, Jerusalem, Masada, and the Herodian fortresses) will also be emphasized.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion in the Ancient World
- Religion, Law, and Civic Engagement
- World of Early Christianity
- Christianity

REL 383: Activist Bodhisattvas: Buddhist Ethics & Social Engagement

Ritzinger | TR 9:30AM - 10:45AM

One of the most important developments in modern Buddhism has been the turn toward social engagement and activism. Across Asia and beyond, Buddhist organizations and movements have emerged that consider improving society to be an intrinsic Buddhist concern alongside the classic focus on perfecting the self. Where does this development come from? To what degree is it a departure from previous tradition? How do these movements reconceive and rearticulate Buddhist teachings and practices to address the problems of their societies and the global community? What perspectives does socially engaged Buddhism offer to others movements seeking to address the

ills of our time? This course will explore these questions through a consideration of selected examples drawn from several Buddhist traditions.

Counts toward the following cognates:

- Religion, Law, and Civic Engagement
- Ethics in the Humanities: Religion, Philosophy, Politics
- Religious Issues in the Modern World
- Asian Religions: South and East Asia
- Politics and Religion
- Community Engagement and Social Change

REL 406 / PSY 474: Religion, Mind, and Society

W. Green, Mc Culloch | M 5:45PM – 8:00PM

This course titled “Religion, Mind, and Society” will explore cognitive scientific and cultural evolutionary approaches to and understandings of religion.

REL 505 / CLA 505 / MLS 625: Seminar in Ancient Studies: Age of Augustus

Dr. David Graf | T 6:25PM – 9:05PM

The Age of Augustus saw revolutionary changes that transformed Rome, Romanized the provinces, and witnessed an unequalled era of peace and prosperity across the Mediterranean world. This course will track these developments between 27 BCE and 68 CE, from Augustus to Nero, by analysis of the major sources, films, and a survey of the archaeological remains of the early empire.