RELST 2299  Buddhism  3 credits
Boucher, D.  MW  10:10-11:00
Crosslisted with ASIAN 2299

This course will explore the Buddhist tradition from its origins in ancient India to its migrations throughout Asia and eventually to the West. The first part of the course will deal with Indian Buddhism: the Buddha, the principal teachings and practices of his early followers, and new developments in spiritual orientation. We will then turn to the transmission of Buddhism to Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia, where at least one of the early schools has been preserved. Next we will look at Mahayana Buddhism as it moves north and east, encompassing China, Japan, and Tibet. While much of the course will be devoted to developments in traditional times, we will also look at some of the ways Buddhist cultures have responded to modernity.

Discussions:
Disc 201  F  10:10-11:00  Staff
Disc 202  F  11:15-12:05  Staff

RELST 2651  Judaism, Christianity, and Islam  3 credits
Haines-Eitzen, K  TR  10:10-11:00
Crosslisted with NES 2651, JWST 2651

Have you ever wondered how Jews, Christians, and Muslims can worship the same universal deity, yet find themselves in conflict with one another, often to the point of demonizing adherents of another tradition? How can Jews consider Abraham the first Jew, Christians regard him as the first Christian, and Muslims look upon him as the first Muslim? How each can put forth exclusive claims to truth, to what is required of women and men, and to control of sacred sites such as Jerusalem? This course explores the ways in which communities of Jews, Christians, and Muslims came to define themselves and by extension those outside their religious community through the production and subsequent interpretation of "authoritative texts," including The Hebrew Bible, The (Christian) Bible, and the Arabic Qur'an. We will consider each tradition's tremendous diversity and elasticity; the features that unify adherents; and how views of the "other" from within each tradition vary across time.

Discussions:
Disc 201  F  9:05-9:55  Staff cancelled
Disc 202  F  10:10-11:00  Staff
Disc 203  F  11:15-12:05  Staff
Disc 204  F  12:20-1:10  Staff
Disc 205  F  1:25-2:15  Staff cancelled

RELST 2655  Introduction to Islamic Civilization  3 credits
Powers, D.  MW  11:15-12:05
Crosslisted with NES 2655, HIST 2530

We consider the major themes of Islamic civilization as they developed from the lifetime of Muhammad until the twentieth century. While the readings provide the student with the
chronology of Islamic history, lectures are devoted to an analysis of thematic units, such as art and architecture, science, and cities. The class meets three times weekly, and the classroom format is that of a lecture/discussion in which students are encouraged to participate actively. Lectures are accompanied by slide presentations when appropriate.

Discussions:
Disc 201        F   11:15-12:05  Staff
Disc 202        F   12:20-1:10  Staff
Disc 203        F   11:15-12:05  Staff
Disc 204        F   12:20-1:10  Staff cancelled

RELST 2677     The Jewish Galilee in Late Antiquity                     3 credits
Herman, G.     TR    8:40-9:55     Staff
Crosslisted with NES 2677, JWST 2677, CLASS 2637

This course will study themes in the political, social, cultural and religious history of the Jews of the Galilee in late antiquity (3-6th centuries CE). Utilizing rabbinic sources (primarily from the Palestinian Talmud); material sources (such as synagogues, mosaics, inscriptions, and artifacts, but also piyyut, Roman and Christian sources, and lists of the priestly courses, it will explore the evolution of the Jewish settlement in this region. Topics to be studied will include synagogue and communal structure, Jewish priesthood, Hellenism, rabbinization, Christianization; the patriarchate, revolts, ethnic and social tension; and attitudes towards the Roman Empire.

RELST 2724     Introduction to the Hebrew Bible                           3 credits
Monroe, L.     MWF   10:10-11:00  Staff
Crosslisted with NES 2724, JWST 2724

The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) is a repository of ancient Israelite religious, political, social, historical and literary traditions. For the modern reader these ancient traditions are often obscured by a focus on the text as revelation. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the biblical world by reading the Hebrew Bible in translation, on its own terms, as a body of literature that evolved in an ancient Near Eastern context. The Bible itself will be the primary text for the course, but students will also be exposed to the rich and diverse textual traditions of the ancient Near East, including Mesopotamia, Egypt, Moab and Ugarit. In addition, this course will explore the impact of early biblical interpretation on shaping the monotheistic traditions inherited in the West. As participants in a secular course on the Bible, students will be challenged to question certain cultural assumptions about the composition and authorship of the Bible, and will be expected to differentiate between a text’s content and its presumed meaning.

RELST 3150     Medieval Philosophy                                      4 credits
Staff          TR    10:1-11:00     Staff
Crosslisted with PHIL 3210

Prerequisite: one previous philosophy course. A selective survey of Western philosophical thought from the 4th to the 14th century. Topics include the problem of universals, the theory of knowledge and truth, the nature of free choice and practical reasoning, and philosophical theology. Readings (in translation) include Augustine, Boethius, Anselm, Abelard, Aquinas, Scotus, and Ockham. Some attention will be given to the development of ideas across the period and the influence of non-Western traditions on the West.
RELST 3280  Literature of the Old Testament  4 credits
Carmichael, C  TR  8:40-9:55
Crosslisted with COML 3280

Analysis of small sections of well-known material for in-depth discussion.

RELST 3310  Heavens, Hells & Purgatories: Buddhist & Christian Notions of the Afterlife  4 credits
Boucher, D.  MW  2:55-4:10
Crosslisted with ASIAN 3310

Buddhists and Christians have envisioned and prepared for the afterlife. We will focus on ways different communities within these traditions have described states of supreme bliss, have warned followers of the perils of perdition, and have guided them through states in between. We will be particularly interested in how the promise and threat of these post-mortem states offers insight into forms of social and political coercion via religious sanction.

RELST 3342  Death of God  4 credits
Robcis, C.  TR  11:40-12:55
Crosslisted with HIST 3342, JWST 3342, FREN 3342, GERST 3542

This course will focus on European writers, philosophers, and social scientists who have attempted to grapple with “the death of God.” In various ways, these thinkers have tried to re-imagine life without transcendence, ethics without universal, objective, and absolute values, existence without the certainty of man’s centrality to the cosmic order. The class will focus on contextualization and close readings of each text. Authors might include Spinoza, Voltaire, Rousseau, Sade, Marx, Nietzsche, Dostoyevsky, Freud, Durkheim, Bataille, Heidegger, Camus, Sartre, Althusser, and Foucault.

RELST 3587  Qur’an and its Interpreters  4 credits
Powers, D.  MW  2:55-4:10
Crosslisted with NES 3587

In this seminar, we will read and analyze the Qur’an (in English translation), with attention to the following topics: the collection and redaction of the text; Qur’an recitation; structural, linguistic and literary features of the text; occasions of revelation and abrogation; major themes; law in the Qur’an; and modes of interpretation. Knowledge of Arabic is not required.

RELST 3680  Marriage & Sexuality in Medieval Europe  4 credits
Hyams, P.  MWF  11:15-12:05
Crosslisted with HIST 3680, FGSS 3680

Few topics generate heat so readily as gender relations and sexuality. Behind the current controversies like decisions made in the first Christian centuries, and firmed up in the course of the Middle Ages; these still affect all of us, believers and unbelievers alike. This course studies Western attempts to deal with the problem of sexuality up to about 1500. The class will first clarify the church’s normative rules of law and theology. Armed with this framework, it will then turn to more specific topics, including homosexuality, prostitution, rape/abduction and sexuality in medieval literature. The goal is to be able to compare the ideal model with the reality, and thus to assess the product the medieval church passed on to Western culture and ourselves. No formal prerequisite, though some prior knowledge of medieval European history is desirable.
## RELST 3720  
**Women in Ancient Israel**  
4 credits  
Monroe, L.  
MW 2:55-4:10  
Crosslisted with NES 3720, JWST 3720  

This course will employ a range of methods in approaching the subject of women in ancient Israel. We will use biblical, archaeological, and ancient Near Eastern textual evidence to reconstruct aspects of the lives of Israelite women, concentrating on their economic, religious, social and political roles. We will analyze the portrayals of women in biblical prose and poetry and will consider the ways in which women function in biblical narrative, from a literary critical standpoint. In addition this course will examine how the roles of women in ancient Israel have been understood and integrated in later Jewish and Christian thought, and will address the strengths and weaknesses of so-called “feminist” approaches to the Hebrew Bible. Pre-requisite: at least one college-level course on Bible.

## RELST 4280  
**Biblical Seminar**  
4 credits  
Carmichael, C  
W 2:30-4:25  
Crosslisted with COML 4280  

A study of how biblical ethical and legal rules (in Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy) comment on incidents in the biblical narratives (Genesis-2 Kings). The link between law and narrative enables us to observe in detail how ancient thinkers evaluate ethical and legal problems of perennial interest.

## RELST 4444  
**Ritual Puppetry & Japan**  
4 credits  
Law, J. M.  
T 2:00-4:25  
Crosslisted with ASIAN 4444  

Following a review of critical literature in puppetry studies as it relates to ritual and a discussion of the ritual uses of human body effigies and puppets in other cultural contexts, this course surveys the major traditions of ritual puppetry in Japan, including the uses of puppets and effigies in appeasement rites developed at the Usa shrine and spread throughout the Inland Sea from the seventh century, the use of hitogata as human substitues, shamanistic uses of puppets in the Tohoku region of Japan by blind shamanesses, the use of infant body substitutes, and the practice of epidemic spirit appeasement using puppets. This course will focus on discerning the patterns of the ritual decision to use a human body substitute, a puppet or effigy, to broaden our understanding of the ritual and theatrical power of puppets. Students will be asked to pursue a research topic and write short responses to cases and readings throughout the term.

## RELST 4755  
**Rabbinic Literature in Translation**  
4 credits  
Herman, G  
M 12:20-2:15  
Crosslisted with NES 4755, JWST 4755  

This course will introduce the student to the diverse genres of classical rabbinic literature: covering the legal codes (Mishna and Tosefta); halakhic midrashim; the Yerushalmi and Bavli talmudim. The student will become acquainted with these compositions through studying the texts themselves, with the course leading to a more detailed exposure to the Bavli.

## RELST 4845  
**Secularism and its Discontents**  
4 credits  
Anker, E.  
R 12:20-2:15  
Crosslisted with SHUM 4845, ENGL 4075, GOVT 4845
Limited to 15 students, this course considers how contemporary literature engages with theoretical debates about the status of secularism. While global modernity is typically thought to be fundamentally secular, our readings will explore critics of that thesis. We will investigate notions such as "political theology"; the religious undercurrents of historical narratives of secularization; the relationship of indigenous worldviews to dominant conceptions of the secular; and some key political controversies, like those surrounding the veil, that have crystallized secularism's competing meanings. Course materials will include a collection of theorists (Connolly, Mahmood, Pecora, Viswanathan, Taylor, Asad) paired with literature (Danticat's Krik?Krak!, Wa Thiong'o's A Grain of Wheat, Pamuk's Snow, and Coetzee's Elizabeth Costello) and film (Malick's The Thin Red Line and Kushner's HBO miniseries Angels in America).

**RELST 4990**  
Directed Study  
1-4 credits  
Staff  
TBA

*For majors in Religious Studies; permission of director required.*

**RELST 4991**  
Directed Study  
1-4 credits  
Staff  
TBA

*For majors in Religious Studies; permission of director required.*

**RELST 4995**  
Senior Honors Essay  
1-8 credits  
Staff  
TBA

*Required for Honors in Religious Studies. Permission of Instructor required.*