RELST 2204  Introduction to Quranic Arabic (ASRC 2204, NES 2204)  4 credits
MWF  1:25-2:15  Younes, M.

Prerequisite: Knowledge of the Arabic alphabet. This course is designed for students who are interested in reading the language of the Qur’an with accuracy and understanding. The first week (4 classes) will be devoted to an introduction of the history of the Qur’an: the revelation, collection, variant readings, and establishment of an authoritative edition. The last week will be devoted to a general overview of “revisionist” literature on the Qur’an. In the remaining 12 weeks, we will cover all of Part 30 (Jus’ ‘Amma, suras 78-114) and three suras of varying length (36, 19, and 12). We will start with the shortest suras and move gradually to longer ones. The Suras will be presented and analyzed, and new vocabulary and grammatical structures will be discussed, explained, and practiced systematically. Each lesson will include, in addition to the text of the sura, word-building exercises devised to facilitate the acquisition and retention of new vocabulary. At the end of the semester, the successful student will have mastered a working vocabulary of between 1500-2000 words, correct pronunciation, and the most commonly used grammatical structures. In addition, the course will provide the student with a firm foundation on which to build advanced study of Classical Arabic.

RELST 2250  Introduction to Asian Religions (ASIAN 2250)  3 credits
MW  2:30-3:20  Law, J.

This course will explore a range of religious traditions in South Asia (Pakistan, India, and Sri Lanka) and East Asia (China and Japan) including Hinduism, Buddhism (South and East Asian), Confucianism, Daoism, and Shinto. We will concentrate on these religions in traditional times in order to understand better the historical foundations that have influenced much of what these cultures are today.

RELST 2277  Mediation in Indian Culture (ASIAN 2277)  3 credits
MWF  11:15-12:05  Gold, D.

This course probes the truths behind traditional claims of the priority of internal practice in Indian traditions. We will examine both practices themselves - techniques of meditation and contemplation - religious ways of using intellect, forms of chant and ritual, and the dynamics through which these have left a wider mark on South Asian civilization. These dynamics include not only the evident reverberations of practice in philosophical reflection and socioreligious institutions, but also wide-ranging processes of stylization, elaboration, and popularization found throughout South Asian culture. In order to get a sense of the experiences treated in classical religious texts, students will be expected to experiment with some basic meditation practices. At least as important for the work of the course (and much more important for the grade) will be the ways in which students situate these practices within larger South Asian world views as suggested by doctrines, rituals, iconic forms, and literary texts. To keep the interaction between internal practice and broader world views central, we will examine both Hindu and Buddhist sources, consistently examining the ways in which similar practices are given distinct shapes by the two religious traditions. (RL)
This course will survey the cultic practices and beliefs of ancient Babylonia and Assyria, the two major civilizations of Mesopotamia. We will examine the major myths of this region, e.g., Ishtar's Descent into the Netherworld, Etana, and Gilgamesh, in light of what they reveal about Mesopotamian religion, politics, and understanding of the afterlife. We will also examine the performance of magical rituals and incantations, methods of predicting the future, and the role of sacred marriage, prostitution, and slavery in the ancient temple.

An introduction to some of the main issues in philosophy of religion. Topics may include the existence and nature of God, the problem of evil, the nature of faith, and the epistemology of religious belief. Readings are drawn from the history of philosophy and contemporary philosophical debates.

This course is designed to acquaint students with the varieties of Judaism from ancient times to the early modern period. A strong emphasis will be placed on ancient Jewish civilization, and how ancient structures shaped later religious, social, and political trends. Particular attention will be devoted to moments of continuity and change in ideas and practices in each major phase of their historical development. Students will learn to analyze material evidence and primary texts in translation, to engage with the questions brought to bear on this material by contemporary scholars, and to generate their own critical questions. This course will also explore the ways Judaism and the Jewish people have been understood through various interpretive lenses, including sociology, religious studies, anthropology, musicology, women's studies, and film studies. Students will be encouraged to think creatively and to engage in experiential and hands-on investigation of particular issues.

A selective survey of Western philosophical thought from the fourth 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.

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<tr>
<td>RELST3270</td>
<td>Constantinople/Istanbul (CLASS 3770, MEDVL 3270, NES 3270, ARTH 3270, VISST 3270)</td>
<td>Anderson, B.</td>
<td>4 credits</td>
<td>TR 8:40-9:55</td>
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Ancient Byzantium, rebuilt and renamed by the Roman emperor Constantine the Great, raised by his successors to be the capital of a “Byzantine” empire, object of desire for travelers and crusaders, crowning conquest of the Ottoman sultan Mehmet: the city on the Bosporus stands at the center of the late antique, medieval, and early modern Mediterranean. We will consider its urban development from ancient polis to modern metropolis, its marvels of religious architecture from the Hagia Sophia to the Süleymaniye, the splendor of its residences from the Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors to the Topkapi Sarayi, and the daily life of its humbler residents from the games of the Hippodrome to the taverns and brothels.

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<tr>
<td>RELST3420</td>
<td>Myth, Ritual, and Symbol (ANTHR3420)</td>
<td>Willford, A.</td>
<td>4 credits</td>
<td>TR 1:25-2:40</td>
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Examines how systems of thought, symbolic forms, and ritual practice are formulated and expressed in primarily non-Western societies. Focuses on anthropological interpretations of space, time, cosmology, myth, classificatory systems (e.g., color, totems, food, dress, kinship), taboos, sacrifice, witchcraft, sorcery, and rites of passage (birth, initiation, marriage, death). Examines both the roles of specialists (e.g., spirit mediums, curers, priests, ascetics) and nonspecialists in producing these cultural forms.

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<tr>
<td>RELST3720</td>
<td>Women in Ancient Israel (FGSS 3220, JWST 3720, NES3720)</td>
<td>Monroe, L.</td>
<td>4 credits</td>
<td>TR 2:55-4:10</td>
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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 it will address the strengths and weaknesses of so-called “feminist” approaches to the Hebrew Bible.

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<tr>
<td>RELST4100</td>
<td>Latin Philosophical Texts (MEDVL 4002, PHIL 4002)</td>
<td>MacDonald, S.</td>
<td>1-4 credits</td>
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Reading and translation of Latin philosophical texts.

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<tr>
<td>RELST4260</td>
<td>Biblical Seminar II (COML4260)</td>
<td>Carmichael, C.</td>
<td>4 credits</td>
<td>W 2:30-4:25</td>
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Discussing attitudes to sexuality in the Bible, we will examine in Old and New Testament texts the clash between ancestral behavior and subsequent laws, as well as the contrast between legal and religious ideas. Topics will include: marriage and divorce, incest, intermarriage, gender discrimination, guilt and shame, homosexuality, women and purity, sexual language and symbols. It should be possible to say something new about the topics and also, because of the perennial nature of the issues, to say something that is relevant to contemporary life.
Byzantine iconoclasm is one of the most enigmatic phenomena in early medieval history. The eighth and ninth centuries witnessed a ferocious debate about the suitability of religious images and their role in worship. The ultimate “victory of the icons” was of decisive importance for the later development of Byzantine culture and Orthodox Christianity, but the origins and nature of the debate remain obscure. Was Byzantine society convulsed for a century by arguments about the nature of representation? Or did these arguments serve to mask a power struggle among elites and emperors? We will consider these questions from multiple viewpoints (art historical, social historical, theological, etc.) and also consider related trends in the early medieval West and the early Islamic world.

This course will explore the origins and early developments of a movement in Indian Buddhism known as the Great Vehicle. We will intensively examine a small slice of this movement’s voluminous literature so as to better understand its call for a new spiritual orientation within Buddhism. Topics of discussion will include the career of the bodhisattva, the lay/monk distinction, attitudes of Mahayanists toward women and other Buddhists, and the development of Buddhist utopias and transcendent buddhas.

This course provides advanced students in Religious Studies or the humanities a working familiarity with important methodological issues in the academic study of religion. Following a brief historical outline of the development of the academic study of religion, we will survey major approaches to the academic study of religion currently used and discussed in Religious Studies today. We will read representative and seminal works from the following approaches to the study of religion: anthropology, philosophical hermeneutics, phenomenology, history of religions, the sociology of religion and critical ideological studies. For each of these cases, we will see how these studies both build upon the nineteenth century assumptions of the nature of religion and have addressed twentieth century religious and theoretical issues. For each of the texts we will be reading, we will try to grasp why particular approaches had the appeal they did when they did. The course operates as an intellectual history of the rise of the study of religion as an academic (as opposed to confessional) subject.

This course explores the relationship between various religious traditions and different environmental concerns. This class will focus on cases from Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Jain and Christian (Roman Catholic primarily) discourses on the natural world. We explore a variety of models of formulating the human/natural relationship: dominion, stewardship, illusion, primary sacrality and alienation. We study specific case studies and read works of contemporary writers on religion and the environment. A number of field trips to regional religious centers working on environmental concerns (farming, animal rights, burial and industry) are also a part of this class.

This class will introduce students to Arabic historical texts. The topic for this year’s seminar will be the Arab conquests. Review of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary.
Chinese discourses have long linked the circulation of cosmic energies, political power, and bodily vitalities. In these models political order, spiritual cultivation, and health are achieved and enhanced through harmonizing these flows across the levels of Heaven-and-Earth, state, and humankind. It is when these movements are blocked or out of synchrony that we find disordered climates, societies, and illness. In this course, we will examine the historical emergence and development of these models of politically resonant persons and bodily centered polities, reading across primary texts in translation from these otherwise often separated fields. For alternate frameworks of analysis as well as for comparative perspectives, we will also examine theories of power and embodiment from other cultures, including recent scholarship in anthropology and critical theory.

**RELST4991** Directed Study  
TBA  
TBA

Permission of director required. Enrollment limited to: majors in Religious Studies.

**RELST4996** Senior Honors Essay  
TBA  
TBA

Requirement for honors in Religious Studies.

**RESLT6020** Latin Philosophical Texts (LATIN 7262, PHIL 6020)  
TBA  
MacDonald, S.

Reading and translation of Latin philosophical texts.

**RELST6351** Problems in Byzantine Art (ARTH 4351, CLASS 4752, MEDVL 4351, NES 4351, VISST 4351)  
M 10:10-12:05  
Anderson, B.

Byzantine iconoclasm is one of the most enigmatic phenomena in early medieval history. The eighth and ninth centuries witnessed a ferocious debate about the suitability of religious images and their role in worship. The ultimate “victory of the icons” was of decisive importance for the later development of Byzantine culture and Orthodox Christianity, but the origins and nature of the debate remain obscure. Was Byzantine society convulsed for a century by arguments about the nature of representation? Or did these arguments serve to mask a power struggle among elites and emperors? We will consider these questions from multiple viewpoints (art historical, social historical, theological, etc.) and also consider related trends in the early medieval West and the early Islamic world.