RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Director of undergraduate studies: Kathryn Lofton, 451 College St., 432-0830, kathryn.lofton@yale.edu; religiousstudies.yale.edu

FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Professors Gerhard Böwering, Vasudha Dalmia, Stephen Davis, Carlos Eire, Steven Fraade, Paul Franks, Bruce Gordon, Philip Gorski, Phyllis Granoff, Frank Griffel, John Hare, Christine Hayes (Chair), Bentley Layton, Ivan Marcus, Dale Martin, Sally Promey, Harry Stout, Denys Turner, Robert Wilson

Associate Professors Kathryn Lofton, Hindy Najman

Assistant Professors Zareena Grewal, Noreen Khawaja, Andrew Quintman, Eliyahu Stern

Senior Lecturers John Grim, Stephen Latham, Koichi Shinohara, Mary Evelyn Tucker

Lecturers Hugh Flick, Jr., Margaret Olin, George Syrimis

The study of religion investigates religious traditions, institutions, cultural practices, texts, and ideas in many different ways. Courses in the Religious Studies department concentrate on the history of religious traditions (Western and Eastern, ancient and modern) and the role of religion in shaping past human cultures and current events; on textual traditions and religious literatures of various kinds; and on ethical and philosophical issues central to religious reflection, such as the nature of the divine or the problem of evil and suffering. Because religious studies is an interdisciplinary field, it makes use of a wide variety of methods and academic disciplines. Students who want a broad introduction to the study of religions can choose courses listed under Groups A or B below, though courses listed under Group C are also open without prerequisite. Religious Studies majors develop specialized concentrations as they plan a major program in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies and other members of the faculty.

Religious Studies course offerings, other than freshman seminars, are arranged in four categories. Group A features general, comparative, and thematic courses that engage one religious tradition. Group B includes survey courses that provide a broad introduction to a particular religious tradition or scripture in historical context. Group C includes courses on specialized topics in religious studies, both introductory and intermediate. Group D offers advanced courses on specialized topics. Normally, courses in Groups A to C have no prerequisites while courses in Group D have a specific prerequisite or require the permission of the instructor.

The major The department offers two programs for students majoring in Religious Studies: the standard major and a major in which religious studies is combined with another subject closely related to the senior essay. Both programs require a core of courses and a two-term senior essay.

Core requirement A core of six term courses in Religious Studies is required of all majors. One core course involves the comparative study of world religions; for qualifying courses in 2013–2014, consult the director of undergraduate studies. Three core courses are in the historical or textual study of specific religious traditions, most commonly from Group B. Each of the three courses must focus on a different tradition; at least one must focus on a monotheistic religion (e.g., Judaism, Christianity, or Islam) and one on a non-monotheistic religion (e.g., Buddhism or Hinduism). One core course, selected in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies, focuses on systematic thought (ethics, philosophy of religion, or theology). The final core course is RLST 490, the junior seminar that requires a major research paper. In Program I, this seminar must be an elective in Religious Studies. In Program II, it may be a course in Religious Studies, or it may constitute one of the four term courses outside the department.

Program I. The Standard Major Program I consists of twelve term courses in Religious Studies, including the core of six required courses, the two-term senior essay, and four electives. The electives are usually selected from Groups C and D and form a coherent unit to help the student prepare for the senior essay. Certain cognate courses in other departments that investigate religious phenomena or literature and are integral to the student’s area of concentration may count toward the major with permission of the director of undergraduate studies. Normally the maximum number of cognate courses that may be applied is two. Two terms of an ancient language requirement outlined above. The four courses outside the department need not directly concern religion, but they must form a coherent unit. Through them students can develop expertise in a methodological approach, cultural area, historical period, or body of literature contributing to the senior essay. Examples of successful combinations might be: four courses in Chinese history, language, and literature with a senior essay topic on Chinese Buddhism; four courses in early American history and literature with a topic on colonial American religion; four courses in a specific area of biology and medical science with a topic on biomedical ethics. Each student’s petition to take this program will be judged on its contribution to the student’s senior essay. Normally, introductory courses in other departments may not count among the outside courses; appropriate language courses at a higher level may. Students electing Program II must, at the end of the junior year and in no case later than the beginning of the senior year, obtain approval for their proposed program from the director of
undergraduate studies. Students who think they may elect this program should consult the director of undergraduate studies as early as possible in their studies to begin suitable selection of courses.

**Senior requirement** Students in both programs must write a senior essay under the supervision of a faculty adviser in the student’s area of concentration. In selecting a senior essay topic, students normally choose a topic on which they have completed course work before commencing the senior year. The essay counts as two term courses toward the major and is taken in both terms of the senior year. The student should begin choosing a senior essay topic during the second term of the junior year, and early in the first term of the senior year must submit a Statement of Intention approved by a faculty adviser and the director of undergraduate studies. The senior essay course, RLST 491 and 492, includes research and writing assignments as well as colloquia in which seniors present and discuss their research. The student must submit at least ten pages of the essay to the director of undergraduate studies by the last day of classes of the first term in order to receive a grade of "satisfactory" for that term.

**Courses in the Divinity School** Students in Yale College may take certain courses in the Divinity School, and Divinity School faculty are eligible to advise senior essays. Information about courses and faculty may be found in the Divinity School bulletin (http://www.yale.edu/printer/bulletin/htmlfiles/div). Some Divinity School courses may count toward the major, with permission of the director of undergraduate studies.

Students majoring in Religious Studies who plan to do graduate work in the subject are strongly encouraged to study languages of which a reading knowledge will be needed for their graduate program.

**Requirements of the Major**

**Prerequisites** None

**Number of courses** 12 term courses (incl senior req)

**Specific course required** RLST 490

**Distribution of courses** Both programs — 1 course in world religions; 3 courses in historical or textual study of religious traditions, as specified; 1 course in systematic thought, as specified; 1 sem other than junior sem, as specified; Program I — 4 electives; Program II — 4 nonintro courses in another subject linked with senior essay, approved by DUS

**Substitution permitted** Both programs — Divinity School courses, with DUS permission; Program I — 2 related courses in other depts, with DUS permission

**Senior requirement** Senior essay (RLST 491, 492)

*RLST 335b / HUMS 210b / ITAL 317b / LITR 180b / WGSS 317b, Women in the Middle Ages* Christiana Purdy Moudarres

Medieval understandings of womanhood examined through analysis of writings by and/or about women, from antiquity through the Middle Ages. Introduction to the premodern Western canon and assessment of the role that women played in its construction. Tr

**Freshman Seminars**

*RLST 013b / EAST 013b / SAST 056b, The Dalai Lama* Andrew Quintman

The institution of the Dalai Lama and the individuals who have filled that role from fifteen-century Tibet to twenty-first-century exile in India. Survey of the most important Dalai Lamas; regional histories of Buddhism; the Tibetan tradition of recognized reincarnations and the Buddhist philosophical principles that support it; activities of the current Dalai Lama as interpreted by Chinese government media, Indian exile communities, and the modern West. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program.

*RLST 014a / JDST 016a, Authorship, Originality, and Forgery* Hindy Najman

The concept of authorship in the production of writing, art, and music. Variation in production and reception practices across cultures and historical periods. Concepts of originality and attribution in ancient Judaism and Christianity, including their role in the generation and reception of scriptural and interpretive traditions. Anachronistic conceptions of intellectual property and forgery in modern interpretations of ancient texts. WR, HU

*RLST 050b / MMES 050b, Islam and Modernity* Frank Griffel

Introduction to contemporary Islam and to the notion of modernity. Focus on whether Islam excludes modernity and a democratic society and how Muslims see the relationship among Islam, modernity, and democracy. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program. HU

**General, Comparative, and Thematic Courses (Group A)**

RLST 105a / SAST 175a, Religious Movements in Modern India* Vasudha Dalmia

Sacred texts and religious practices of India as they have been disseminated, reinterpreted, and enlisted in various political and cultural projects during the colonial and postindependence periods. Focus on Hindu traditions, with some attention to Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam. Readings include theological writings, doctrinal tracts, novels, anthropological and sociological analyses, poetry, autobiography, and historical overviews. HU
*RLST 107a, Theism and Atheism  
Nancy Levene
Introduction to key ideas in modern religious and philosophical thought in the West, such as faith, doubt, God, freedom, obedience, law, and the problem of meaning. Focus on where thinkers fall on the spectrum from theism to atheism, and on diversity and common themes in religious and postreligious worldviews. Works by Descartes, Pascal, Spinoza, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, Sartre, and Camus.

HU

RLST 108a / AMST 150a G / HIST 145a, Religion in Modern America, 1865–2000  
Kathryn Loften
An examination of U.S. religious history from the close of the Civil War to the present day, a period of climactic change in the histories of capitalism, pluralism, secularization, and globalization. Locations discussed include Indian reservations and world fairs, auto plants and soap factories, storefront churches and stadiums; individuals include female evangelists and talk show hosts, presidents and pariahs, traveling monks and pop rabbis. Focus on how subjects are selected for historical inquiry.

HU

*RLST 114b G / JDST 238b, Prophecy in Context  
Hindy Najman and Robert Wilson
Comparative study of the religious phenomenon of prophecy, with a focus on Jewish and Christian traditions. Biblical narratives about prophetic activity explored in their original Near Eastern and Greek cultural settings; the role of prophecy in the Hebrew Bible and in later interpretive traditions; modern examples of the relationship between prophecy and apocalypse.

HU

RLST 120a / JDST 272a / PHIL 220a, Medieval Philosophy  
Paul Franks and Stephen Ogden
Introduction to central problems and themes in medieval philosophy. The confrontation between Greek philosophy and the Abrahamic or scriptural religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; conceptions in metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of mind, and ethics to which the encounter gave rise. Philosophers include Augustine, Saadiah, al-Farabi, al-Ghazali, Maimonides, ibn-Rushd, Aquinas, Crescas, and Ockham.

HU

Surveys of Religious Traditions (Group B)

RLST 125a / SAST 267a, Introduction to Buddhist Thought and Practice  
Andrew Quintman
Significant aspects of Buddhism as practiced mainly in India and South Asia, including philosophy and ethics, monastic and ascetic life, meditation and ritual practices, and the material culture of Buddhist societies. The Mahayana tradition that emerged in the first century B.C.E.; later forms of esoteric Buddhism known as tantra; the development of modern Buddhism in Asia and its manifestation in the West. Readings from Buddhist texts in translation.

HU

*RLST 130a / EALL 241a / HUMS 418a / SAST 367a, Traditional Literature of India, China, and Japan  
Koichi Shinohara and Phyllis Granoff
Introduction to literary works that shaped the great civilizations of Asia. Focus on traditional literature from India, China, and Japan. Readings range from religious and philosophical texts to literature of the court, poetry, drama, and epics.

HU Tr

RLST 145a / HUMS 349a / JDST 110a, The Bible  
Christine Hayes
The writings common to both Jewish and Christian scripture examined as diverse and often conflicting expressions of the religious life and thought of ancient Israel. The works' cultural and historical setting in the ancient Near East; the interpretive history of selected passages influential in Western culture. Introduction to a wide range of critical and literary approaches to biblical studies. Students view course lectures, which survey the entire Bible, on line; class time focuses on specific biblical passages and their subsequent interpretation in Jewish and Christian culture.

HU

*RLST 147a G / JDST 235b, Introduction to Judaism in the Ancient World  
Steven Fraade
The emergence of classical Judaism in its historical setting. Jews and Hellenization; varieties of early Judaism; apocalyptic and postapocalyptic responses to suffering and catastrophe; worship and atonement without sacrificial cult; interpretations of scriptures; law and life; the rabbi; the synagogue; faith in reason; Sabbath and festivals; history and its redemption. No prior background in Jewish history assumed.

HU

RLST 148a G / ER&M 219a / HIST 219a G / JDST 200a G / MMES 149a, History of the Jews and Their Diasporas to Early Modern Times  
Ivan Marcus
A broad introduction to the history of the Jews from biblical beginnings until the European Reformation and the Ottoman Empire. Focus on the formative period of classical rabbinic Judaism and on the symbiotic relationships among Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Jewish society and culture in its biblical, rabbinic, and medieval settings. Counts toward either European or non-Western distributional credit within the History major, upon application to the director of undergraduate studies.

HU RP

*RLST 151b, The New Testament in Culture and History  
Matthew Croasmun
The historical development and cultural significance of the New Testament, with attention to theological debate, politics, and art. The historical Jesus and Paul; the authorship and historical function of early Christian documents; variations in the interpretation and political and cultural uses of the New Testament in different cultural locations, including medieval Europe and contemporary Africa and Latin America. May not be taken after RLST 150.

HU

RLST 153b G / HIST 351b / MMES 193b, The Golden Age of Islam  
Gerhard Böwering
The development of Islamic civilization in the Middle East, North Africa, Spain, Iran, and India from Muhammad through the Mongol invasions to the rise of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal empires (600–1500 C.E.). Emphasis on the intellectual and religious history of Islam in the age of the caliphates and during the rule of regional dynasties.

HU
*RLST 164b / HUMS 317a or b, Modern Christian Thought*  
Devin Singh  
Recurring themes, concerns, and tensions in modern Christian thought. Focus on innovations in Protestant theology from works by Schleiermacher, Barth, Cone, and McFague. Movements such as rationalism, romanticism, liberal theology, neoorthodoxy, black theology, and feminist theology.  

**HU**

*RLST 160a / HIST 280a / HUMS 348a, The Catholic Intellectual Tradition*  
Carlos Eire and staff  
Introductory survey of the interaction between Catholicism and Western culture from the first century to the present, with a focus on pivotal moments and crucial developments that defined both traditions. Key beliefs, rites, and customs of the Roman Catholic Church, and the ways in which they have found expression; interaction between Catholics and the institution of the Church; Catholicism in its cultural and sociopolitical matrices. Close reading of primary sources.  

**HU**

*RLST 170a / MMES 192a, The Religion of Islam*  
Gerhard Böwering  
The rise of Islam in Arabia; Muhammad and the Qur’an; Muslim tradition and religious law; crucial issues of Islamic philosophy and theology; basic beliefs and practices of the Muslim community; Sufism and Shi’ism; religious institutions and modern trends; fundamentalism and violence; freedom and democracy.  

**HU**

**Topics in Religious Studies (Group C)**

**RLST 183b / SAST 366b, The Bhagavad Gita**  
Hugh Flick, Jr.  
An examination of the Bhagavad Gita in its historical and religious context. Exploration of the major interpretations of this important religious text. All readings in translation.  

**HU**  
**Tr**

**RLST 187a / HSAR 142a / SAST 265a, Introduction to the History of Art: The Classical Buddhist World**  
Mimi Yiengpruksawan  
Buddhist art and architecture of India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and central Asia from earliest beginnings to the tenth century, and including Greco-Roman, Persian, and Islamic contact.  

**HU**

**RLST 188b / HSAR 143b / SAST 266b, Introduction to the History of Art: Buddhist Art and Architecture, 900 to 1600**  
Mimi Yiengpruksawan  
Buddhist art and architecture of East Asia, Southeast Asia, and Tibet from the tenth century to the early modern period. Emphasis on cross-regional engagements including the impact of Islam.  

**HU**

**RLST 190b / HUMS 449b / SAST 466b, Narrative Space in Asian Religions**  
Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara  
The many spaces of Asian religious practice, good and bad, real and imaginary, explored through readings from Indian, Chinese, and Japanese texts in translation.  

**HU**

**RLST 193a / JDST 322a / MMES 197a, Zionism**  
Eliyahu Stern  
Introduction to the core ideas of the Zionist movement from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth. Focus on internal Jewish debates and criticism of the movement by European and Middle Eastern intellectuals. Social, political, cultural, and messianic ideological strands within the movement and their interpretations of various historical experiences and ideas located in the Jewish tradition.  

**HU**

**RLST 197b / MMES 389b / PLSC 329b, Islamic Law and Ethics**  
Andrew March  
Introduction to key theoretical and practical dimensions of Islamic jurisprudence. Theological problems in Islamic law; topics in positive Islamic legal doctrine; historical survey of public and constitutional law in Islam; modern debates about the role of Islamic law in independent sovereign states. Case studies include Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, and Pakistan.  

**SO**  
**RP**

**RLST 201a / HIST 232a / HUMS 443a / JDST 270a / MMES 342a, Medieval Jews, Christians, and Muslims Imagining Each Other**  
Ivan Marcus  
How members of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities thought of and interacted with members of the other two cultures during the Middle Ages. Cultural grids and expectations each imposed on the other; the rhetoric of otherness—humans or devils, purity or impurity, and animal imagery; and models of religious community and power in dealing with the other when confronted with cultural differences. Counts toward either European or Middle Eastern distributional credit within the History major, upon application to the director of undergraduate studies.  

**WR, HU**  
**RP**

**RLST 202b / HIST 345b / JDST 265b / MMES 148b, Jews in Muslim Lands from the Seventh to the Sixteenth Centuries**  
Ivan Marcus  
Jewish culture and society in Muslim lands from the Prophet Muhammad to Suleiman the Magnificent. Topics include Islam and Judaism; Jerusalem as a holy site; rabbinic leadership and literature in Baghdad; Jewish courtiers, poets, and philosophers in Muslim Spain; and the Jews in the Ottoman Empire.  

**HU**  
**RP**

**RLST 206a / HUMS 327a, Secularism from the Enlightenment to the Present**  
Eliyahu Stern  
The historical construction of secularism from the eighteenth century to the twentieth. Attention to scholarship on the formation of secular ideologies and their effect on conceptions of time, space, and knowledge. Readings include works by José Casanova, Reinhart Koselleck, Charles Taylor, and Talal Asad.  

**HU**

**RLST 214b / HIST 248b / JDST 293b, Introduction to Modern Jewish Thought**  
Eliyahu Stern  
An overview of Jewish philosophical trends, movements, and thinkers from the seventeenth century to the twenty-first. Topics include enlightenment, historicism, socialism, secularism, religious radicalism, and Zionism.  

**HU**
RLST 218b, Religion, Ethics, and Human Biotechnology  
Gerald McKenny and Gerald McKenny
Ethical and religious issues raised by recent and emerging research in human biotechnology. Public policy questions related to personal autonomy, cost-benefit decisions, and fairness; social norms and practices involving race, class, gender, and disability; the pursuit of human perfection, the practice of self-transformation, and responses to human limitations and vulnerability.  
HU

*RLST 221a / JDST 273a / NELC 267a, Jewish Sectarianism in the Medieval Islamic World  
Eve Krakowski
Varieties of Jewish religious life in the Islamic world from the ninth through the fourteenth century. The development of medieval rabbinic and nonrabbinic (particularly Karaite) literatures in their contemporary Near Eastern contexts; scripturalism, exegesis, theology, and legal writing; popular religion and religious identity in everyday life.  
HU

*RLST 240a, The Historical Jesus  
Dale Martin
Introduction to the study of Jesus in canonical and noncanonical sources. History of the quest for the historical Jesus, methods for reconstructing a historical account of Jesus, and versions of Jesus as offered by the early Gospels. No background in New Testament assumed.  
HU

*RLST 253b / HIST 211b / NELC 380b, The Making of Monasticism  
Bentley Layton
The social and intellectual history of Christian monasteries, hermits, ascetics, and monastic institutions and values in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, as seen in classic texts of monastic literature and in monastic archaeology. Readings in translation. (Formerly RLST 420)  
HU

*RLST 255a / JDST 239a, Paths of Purity in Ancient Judaism  
Yishai Kiel
The cultural and ideological underpinnings and the social and religious functions of purity systems in ancient Judaism, from biblical systems and their ancient Near Eastern context, through the purity debates of the Second Temple period, to rabbinic and early Christian discussions. The distinct religious realms associated with purity, including ritual purity, moral purity, holiness, and eating taboos; insights from recent scholarship in the field.  
HU

RLST 265a, Roman Catholic Moral Thought  
M. Cathleen Kaveny
Introduction to Roman Catholic moral thought, with a focus on development in moral doctrine. The moral tradition in relation to changing circumstances in the Catholic community; the evaluation of human acts, the relationship of actions to character, and the development of Catholic social ethics; the roles of natural law, scripture, tradition, and the magisterium in Catholic thought; disputes over feminism and homosexuality.  
HU

*RLST 267b / ENGL 175b / HSAR 436b, Sacred and Profane in Late Medieval Europe  
Jessica Brantley and Christopher Wood
The interdependence and collaborations of the sacred and the profane in late medieval European literature and visual art. Close reading of primary texts; analysis of paintings, sculptures, manuscripts, printed books, and prints in Yale University collections. Ways in which disciplinary difference matters to the understanding of culture.  
WR, HU

RLST 269b / HIST 282b / HUMS 413b, Golden Age Spain  
Carlos Eire
Survey of Spanish history, culture, and religion from 1500 to 1700. Emphasis on cultural history and the integration of various approaches to the past.  
HU

RLST 273a / PHIL 334a / PLSC 281a, Ethical and Social Issues in Bioethics  
Stephen Latham
A selective survey of issues in biomedical ethics. Comparison of different points of view about biomedical issues, including religious vs. secular and liberal vs. conservative. Special attention to issues in research and at the beginning and end of life.  
SO

*RLST 282a / EVST 280a, American Indian Religions and Ecology  
Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim
Study of the religious beliefs of diverse Native American peoples from a history-of-religions perspective. Oral-narrative and textual forms in which these beliefs have been recorded. Focus on myths, symbols, and rituals, and their relationships with native homelands, geography, and biodiversity. The significance of traditional environmental knowledge.  
HU

*RLST 283b / HIST 212b, Reformation Europe, 1450–1650  
Bruce Gordon
Examination of a series of religious revolutions in Europe between 1450 and 1650. The causes and nature of the reformation that changed the religious, political, social, and economic landscapes of early modern Europe and shaped the course of Western civilization as a whole.  
HU

*RLST 287a / MMES 391a, Islamic Theology and Philosophy  
Frank Griffel
Historical survey of major themes in Muslim theology and philosophy, from teachings of the Qur’an to contemporary Muslim thought. The systematic character of Muslim thought and of the arguments given by thinkers; reason vs. revelation; the emergence of Sunnism and Shi’ism; the reaction of Muslim theology (from 1800) to the challenges of the West.  
HU

*RLST 300b, Ritual and Performance  
Patricia Hardwick
Performance as a way to embody cultural knowledge, interpret experiences, resist cultural norms, and facilitate healing. The importance of context; effects of rapid cultural change, colonialism, tourism, nationalist movements, and religious revival on performance forms and traditions; what embodied ways of knowing reveal about the performers and their relevance within particular cultures.  
HU
*RLST 304a, Religion and Political Power in the Western Tradition  
Devin Singh  
The relationship between religion and politics in Western thought, institutions, and communities, with a focus on the
Christian tradition. Church-state relations in various historical moments; the development of secular political thought. Ways in
which religious and political spheres have been and remain connected and mutually dependent.  

HU

*RLST 305b/G / ANTH 373b/G / SOCY 354b/G, Religion and Economy in Social Theory  
Devin Singh  
The relationship between religious and economic thought and practice in Marxism, structural functionalism, and modernization theory.
The basic claims and concerns of the three theoretical approaches; depictions of religion, of the economy, and of the interactions between
them; ways in which the encounter between religion and economy is fundamental to each theory’s broader explanation of modern society.

HU

*RLST 312b/G / GMAN 302b/G / HUMS 332b, Faith and Knowledge in Hegel and Derrida  
Paul North  
Examination of the frequently opposed human capacities of faith and knowledge through close reading of essays by Hegel and Derrida.
Differences between conceptualizations of the two capacities and of human capacities at these two points in the history of philosophy.
Some attention to contemporary background materials and to literary texts by Hölderlin and Kafka that offer strong counterpoints to the
philosophical accounts. Discussion in English; readings in German or English.  

HU  Tr

*RLST 313a/G / HIST 343Ja/G / MMES 344a / NELC 316a, Iran’s Prophets of Protest  
Abbas Amanat  
Iranian messianic movements from ancient to modern. Emphasis on continuity in patterns of dissent, social impact and challenges to
religious and political establishments, and influences on the Islamic world and beyond. Zoroastrian apocalyptic origins, Manichean moral
community and Mazdakite proto-communism, emergence of the Mahdi and Shi’i movements from Isma’ilis to Safavids, “Universal Peace”
from Mughal India to Babi-Baha’i modernity, and messianic trends from the Islamic Revolution to contemporary Iran.  

HU

*RLST 322a/G / GMAN 388a/G / HUMS 410a / JDST 237a / LITR 327a/G, Translating the Sacred  
Hindy Najman and Kirk Wetters  
Historical dynamics of cultural transfer, translation, reinterpretation of religious revelations, and foundational narratives from antiquity
to modernity. Readings from ancient scripture, modern literary works, and theoretical reflections.  

HU

*RLST 330b/G / J D S T 330b/G / MMES 350b, Multiculturalism and Jewish Law in Israel  
Yuval Sinai  
Introduction to the history of pluralism and multicultural models in the Jewish legal tradition. The role of Jewish law in contemporary
Israeli society; tensions between Jewish law and secular law; possible reconciliation of these tensions in light of both Jewish legal tradition
and the realities of the modern Jewish and democratic state of Israel.  

HU

*RLST 331a/G / J D S T 331a/G / MMES 351a, Jewish Law in the State of Israel  
Yuval Sinai  
A historical study of Jewish law as the basis for modern Israeli law. Examination of cases in Israeli secular civil courts and in rabbinical
courts. Attention to the wide range of subjects in which Jewish law has been utilized: public law, war and peace, criminal law, torts and
biomedical law, morality, employment, judicial processes of procedure and evidence, and civil rights.  

HU

*RLST 382a / HSAR 477a / SAST 462a, Yoga in Art, Text, and Practice  
Tamara Sears and Andrew Quintman  
Critical investigation of texts, images, and the practice of yoga, focusing on Indian traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism,
as well as modern manifestations in the West. Themes include contemplative practices, bodily disciplines, ritual, narrative painting,
arithmetic, and the role of yoga in tantra. Readings emphasize primary sources and theoretical frameworks.  

HU

*RLST 383b/G / SAST 467b, Biography in Asian Religions  
Andrew Quintman  
The significance of life writing in the religious traditions of Asia. Readings both from primary texts in translation and from theoretical
works on biography and autobiography.  

HU

*RLST 384b / EAST 424b, Religion and National Identity in Modern Korea  
Se-Woong Koo  
Religion in modern Korea and its relation to the development of Korean national identity since c. 1900. Introduction of the modern
concepts of religion and the nation-state in Korean culture. Ways in which various religious systems have been defined, categorized,
managed, rewarded, and punished toward political ends. Both religion and nation as fundamental to Koreans’ overall conception of their
collective identity.  

Advanced Topics in Religious Studies (Group D)

*RLST 400a / J D S T 256a/G, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the History of Ancient Judaism: The Damascus Document  
Steven Fraade  
Study of the Damascus Document, one of the most important of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Attention to the document’s place in the history of
biblical interpretation and ancient Jewish law; the nature and rhetorical function of its textual practices, both narrative and legal; and its
relation to the central sectarian writings of the Qumran community. Prerequisite: reading proficiency in ancient Hebrew.  

L5, HU

RLST 402b / PHIL 326b, The Philosophy of Religion  
John Pittard  
The relation between religion and ethics, traditional arguments for the existence of God, religious experience, the problem of evil,
miracles, immortality, science and religion, and faith and reason.  

HU

*RLST 405b/G / JDST 392b/G, Mishnah Seminar: Tractate Rosh HaShanah  
Steven Fraade  
Close study of a tractate of the Mishnah, the earliest digest of rabbinic law, and its accompanying Tosefta, dealing with rules for the
establishment of New Moons, the intercalation of the lunar calendar, the testimony and examination of witnesses, the festival of
the New Year (Rosh HaShanah), and the sounding of the Shofar. Dual attention to the historical significance of the legal and ritual
institutions represented and to the cultural significance of the rhetoric of that representation, including the interplay of law and narrative. Prerequisite: reading fluency in ancient Hebrew.  L5, HU

*RLST 411aG / JDST 413aG / NELC 165aG, Biblical, Qumranic, and Targumic Aramaic  Aharon Maman
Survey of the historical and philological aspects of biblical, Qumranic, and Targumic Aramaic. Comparison of the dialects’ grammar and historical development; some attention to topics in comparative Semitic philology and historical linguistics; the influence of Hebrew and Aramaic on one another over time. Reading and extensive philological analysis of texts in each of the three dialects. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or equivalent.  HU

*RLST 425bG / JDST 414bG, Talmudic Narratives in Context  Yishai Kiel
Critical study of Talmudic narrative through analysis of selected stories from the Babylonian Talmud. Historical, literary, cultural, philological, comparative, and theological perspectives on the narratives. The role of the Babylonian redactors and storytellers and the significance of their cultural context in the formation of Talmudic stories; implications of the narratives for historical reconstructions; tools of theoretical and methodological analysis used in the field of Talmudic studies.  HU

Other Courses

*RLST 488a and RLST 489b, Individual Tutorial  Kathryn Lofton and staff
For students who wish, under faculty supervision, to investigate an area in religious studies not covered by regular departmental offerings. The course may be used for research or for directed reading. A long essay or several short ones are required. To apply, students should present a prospectus with bibliography of work they propose to undertake to the director of undergraduate studies together with a letter of support from the faculty member who will direct the work.

*RLST 490b, Approaches to the Study of Religion  Kathryn Lofton
An examination of current debates in the study of religion. Focus on the methods used in religious studies scholarship. Required for all junior majors; open to others with permission of the instructor.

*RLST 491a and RLST 492b, The Senior Essay  Kathryn Lofton
Students writing their senior essays meet periodically in the fall and weekly in the spring for a colloquium directed by the director of undergraduate studies. The essay, written under the supervision of a member of the department, should be a substantial paper between 12,500 and 15,000 words.