RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Humanities Quadrangle, 203.432.0828
http://religiousstudies.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
Frank Griffel

Director of Graduate Studies
Linn Tonstad (*Divinity*)

Professors Joel Baden (*Divinity*), Stephen Davis, Carlos Eire, Steven Fraade, Paul Franks (*Philosophy*), Bruce Gordon (*Divinity*), Frank Griffel, John Hare (*Divinity*), Jennifer Herdt (*Divinity*), Noel Lenski (*Classics*), Nancy Levene, Kathryn Lofton, Ivan Marcus, Andrew McGowan (*Divinity*), Laura Nasrallah, Sally Promey (*American Studies*), Chloë Starr (*Divinity*), Gregory Sterling (*Divinity*), Elli Stern, Kathryn Tanner (*Divinity*), Shawkat Toorawa (*Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations*), Miroslav Volf (*Divinity*), Tisa Wenger (*Divinity*), Travis Zadeh

Associate Professors Maria Doerfler, Eric Greene, Zareena Grewal (*American Studies*), Willie Jennings (*Divinity*), Noreen Khawaja, Hwansoo Kim, Todne Thomas

Assistant Professors Supriya Gandhi, Sonam Kachru

Lecturers Jimmy Daccache, Felicity Harley-McGowan (*Divinity*)

FIELDS OF STUDY

Students must enroll in one of the following fields of study: American Religious History, Asian Religions, Early Mediterranean and West Asian Religions, Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, Islamic Studies, Medieval and Modern Judaism, Philosophy of Religion, Religion and Modernity, Religious Ethics, and Theology.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

Students are required to take a minimum of twelve term courses that meet the Graduate School Honors requirement, including RLST 510, Method and Theory, normally taken in a student's first year. Proficiency in two modern scholarly languages, normally French and German, must be shown, one before the end of the first year, the other before the beginning of the third; this may be done by passing an examination administered by the department, by accreditation from a Yale Summer School course designed for this purpose, or by a grade of A or B in one of Yale's intermediate language courses. In the field of American Religious History, students must demonstrate proficiency in two skilled areas. Typically students study two foreign languages, but occasionally students study one foreign language and one technical knowledge area directly related to their proposed dissertation, such as musicology, financial accounting, or a performance art. Mastery of the languages needed in one's chosen field (e.g., Chinese, Hebrew, Greek, Japanese) is also required in certain fields of study. A set of four qualifying examinations is designed for each student, following guidelines and criteria set by each field of study; these are normally completed in the third year. The dissertation prospectus must be approved by a colloquium, and the completed

dissertation by a committee of readers and the departmental faculty. Upon completion of all predissertation requirements, including the prospectus, students are admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. This is expected before the seventh term in American Religious History, Philosophy of Religion, Religion and Modernity, Religious Ethics, and Theology; before the eighth term in other fields. Students begin writing their dissertation in the fourth year and normally will have finished by the end of the sixth. There is no oral examination on the dissertation.

In the Department of Religious Studies, the faculty considers learning to teach to be an important and integral component of the professional training of its graduate students. Students are therefore required to teach as teaching fellows for three terms as an academic requirement and one term as a financial requirement during their graduate programs. Such teaching normally takes place during their third and fourth years, unless other arrangements are approved by the director of graduate studies.

A combined Ph.D. degree is available with African American Studies. Consult department for details.

MASTER'S DEGREES

M.Phil. See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

M.A. Students who withdraw from the Ph.D. program may be eligible to receive the M.A. degree if they have met the requirements and have not already received the M.Phil. degree. Students in Religious Studies must take seven graduate-level courses to be eligible for the M.A.

Program materials are available online at http://religiousstudies.yale.edu.

COURSES

RLST 510b, Method and Theory Noreen Khawaja
Required seminar for doctoral students in Religious Studies. Others admitted with instructor's permission.

RLST 550a / EALL 707a, Translation and Commentary in Early Chinese Buddhism Eric Greene
This seminar introduces the literary sources relevant for the earliest era of Chinese Buddhism, during the (Eastern) Han and Three Kingdoms period, which primarily consist of early translations of Indian Buddhist literature and a few pioneering Chinese commentaries to them. Largely unstudied by modern scholars owing to their archaic language and vocabulary, these sources document the first recorded intellectual encounters between the Indian and East Asian worlds. Together with a careful reading of a selection of the relevant primary sources, we also take up secondary readings on the history of early Chinese Buddhism and broader works on the problematics of translation and commentary, in the context of China and elsewhere.

RLST 584a / JDST 709, Jewish and Christian Bodies: Ritual, Law, Theory Shraga Bick
This course employs a variety of methodological tools to explore the place and meaning of the body in Judaism and Christianity by examining several central issues related to the body, such as observing the commandment, Martyrdom, illness and death, sexuality and gender, and the performance of rituals.

RLST 598a / EAST 511a, Modern Korean Buddhism from Sri Lanka to Japan Hwansoo Kim
This course situates modern Korean Buddhism in the global context of the late nineteenth century to the present. Through critical examination of the dynamic relationship between Korean Buddhism and the Buddhisms of key East Asian cities —Shanghai, Tokyo, Taipei, and Lhasa—the course seeks to understand modern East Asian Buddhism in a transnational light. Discussion includes analyzing the impact of Christian missionaries, pan-Asian and global ideologies, colonialism, Communism, capitalism, war, science, hypermodernity, and atheism.

RLST 616b / HIST 603b / JDST 806b / MDVL 603b, How the West Became Antisemitic: Jews and the Formation of Europe, 800–1500 Ivan Marcus
This seminar explores how medieval Jews and Christians interacted as religious societies between 800 and 1500.

RLST 625a, The Quran Travis Zadeh
Introduction to the study of the Quran. Topics include: the literary, historical, and theological reception of the Quran; its collection and redaction; the scriptural milieu of late antiquity; education and religious authority; ritual performance and calligraphic expression; the diversity of Muslim exegesis.

RLST 630b / AMST 696b / ENGL 906b / ER&M 696b / HSHM 782b / WGSS 696b, Michel Foucault I: The Works, The Interlocutors, The Critics Greta LaFleur
This graduate-level course presents students with the opportunity to develop a thorough, extensive, and deep (though still not exhaustive!) understanding of the oeuvre of Michel Foucault, and his impact on late-twentieth-century criticism and intellectual history in the United States. Non-francophone and/or U.S. American scholars, as Lynne Huffer has argued, have engaged Foucault's work unevenly and frequently in a piecemeal way, due to a combination of the overemphasis on *The History of Sexuality, Vol 1* (to the exclusion of most of his other major works), and the lack of availability of English translations of most of his writings until the early twenty-first century. This course seeks to correct that trend and to re-introduce Foucault's works to a generation of graduate students who, on the whole, do not have extensive experience with his oeuvre. In this course, we read almost all of Foucault's published writings that have been translated into English (which is almost all of them, at this point). We read all of the monographs, and all of the Collège de France lectures, in chronological order. This lightens the reading load; we read a book per week, but the lectures are shorter and generally less dense than the monographs. [The benefit of a single author course is that the more time one spends reading Foucault's work, the easier reading his work becomes.] We read as many of the essays he published in popular and more widely-circulated media as we can. The goal of the course is to give students both breadth and depth in their understanding of Foucault and his works, and to be able to situate his thinking in relation to the intellectual, social, and political histories of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Alongside Foucault himself, we read Foucault's mentors, interlocutors, and inheritors (Heidegger, Marx, Blanchot, Canguilhem, Derrida, Barthes, Althusser, Bersani, Hartman, Angela Davis, etc); his critics (Mbembe, Weheliye, Butler, Said, etc.), and scholarship that situates his thought alongside contemporary social movements, including student, Black liberation, prison abolitionist, and anti-psychiatry movements. Instructor permission required.

RLST 646b / SAST 670b, Indian Philosophy in Sanskrit Literature Aleksandar Uskokov
In this course we focus on issues of philosophical significance in Sanskrit literature of "nonstandard" philosophical genres, i.e., other than the treatise and the commentary. Specifically we read from canonical Hindu texts such as the Upani#ads, Mahābhārata, Rāmāya#a, Bhāgavata Purā#a, Bhagavad-gītā, and Yogavāsi##ha; the classical genres of drama and praise poetry; and hagiographical literature, all in English translation. Attention is paid not only to substance but also to form. The selection of philosophical problems includes philosophy of mind and personal identity; allegory; the ethics of nonviolence; philosophy, politics, and religious pluralism; the highest good; theodicy; and philosophical debate.

RLST 654a, Biblical Interpretation in Early Christianity Maria Doerfler
Scripture was both the primary focus of early Christians' literary attentions and the most significant resource for resolving questions of theological, ethical, or practical concern in their communities. Yet Scripture frequently did not speak with sufficient clarity and univocality; it required mediation—in homily, hymn, commentary, and treatise—and, in the process, interpretation and exposition. This course introduces students to a survey of ancient Christian writers' exegetical efforts from the very beginnings of Christian interpretive activity through the flowering of exegesis across the Roman and Sassanid Empires in the fourth through sixth century.

RLST 675b, Antioch and Dura-Europos Laura Nasrallah
Antioch, a city located in ancient Syria (modern Turkey), and Dura-Europos, a city in Syria (close to the modern Iraqi border) were characterized by religious diversity. From them comes a wealth of stunning mosaics, frescoes, and other archaeological evidence. These, and a rich literary tradition, help us to understand life in the cities. In this seminar we join with students at Princeton University who are taking the same course, to learn about these ancient cities and their social and religious history. Cultural heritage is also addressed. Yale students travel once to Princeton, and Princeton students travel once to New Haven, to learn about the collections that each of our universities has due to early twentieth-century participation in excavations. There, and in our respective universities, we engage in new research into historical reconstructions of Antioch and Dura, focusing on the topic of religion and power, and using literary and material evidence.

RLST 680a / NELC 680a, Post-Classical Islamic Thought Frank Griffel
Whereas the classical period of Islamic theology and philosophy, with prominent movements such as Mu'tazilism, Ash'arism, *falsafa*, etc., has attracted the bulk of the attention of intellectual historians who work on Islam, research on the period after that has recently caught up and has become one of the most fertile subfields in Islamic studies. This graduate seminar aims to introduce students into the most recent developments in the study of Islam's post-classical period, which begins in the twelfth century in response to the conflict between Avicenna (d. 1037) and al-Ghazali (d. 1111). In this seminar we read Arabic texts by philosophical, theological, and scientific authors who were active after 1120, among them Abu l-Barakat al-Baghdadi (d. c. 1165), al-Suhrawardi (d. c. 1192), Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 1210), Athir al-Din al-Abhari (d. 1265), Qutb al-Din al-Shirazi (d. 1311), or Shams al-Din al-Samarqandi (d. 1322). The reading of primary literature happens hand in hand with the discussion of secondary works on those texts. Class sessions are usually divided into a discussion of secondary

literature and a reading of Arabic sources. Prerequisites: reading knowledge of classical Arabic and permission by the instructor.

RLST 685a, Islam Today: Modern Islamic Thought Frank Griffel
Introduction to Islamic thought after 1800, including some historical background. The development of Islamic modernism in the nineteenth century and of Islamic fundamentalism in the twentieth. Islam as a reactive force to Western colonialism; the ideals of Shari'a, Islam as a political ideology, and the emergence of Jihad movements. Different kinds of Salafism, Islamic liberalism, and feminism as well as the revival of Islam's intellectual heritage.

RLST 748a, Secularism Kathryn Lofton
An assessment of secularism studies with a focus on the history of its relationship to the history of religions.

RLST 773a / HIST 596a / JDST 761a / MDVL 596a, Jews and the World: From the Bible through 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.

RLST 777b / HIST 590b / JDST 764b / MDVL 590b, Jews in Muslim Lands from the Seventh through the Sixteenth Century Ivan Marcus
Introduction to 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.

RLST 797b / HIST 597b / JDST 861b, Twentieth-Century Jewish Politics David Sorkin
This seminar explores major aspects of twentieth-century Jewish politics with an emphasis on new forms of political practice.

RLST 819a / AMST 630a / HSAR 529a, Museums and Religion: the Politics of Preservation and Display Sally Promey
This interdisciplinary seminar focuses on the tangled relations of religion and museums, historically and in the present. What does it mean to "exhibit religion" in the institutional context of the museum? What practices of display might one encounter for this subject? What kinds of museums most frequently invite religious display? How is religion suited (or not) for museum exhibition and museum education? Permission of the instructor required; qualified undergraduates are welcome.

RLST 837a / SMTC 547a, Northwest Semitic Inscriptions: Official Aramaic Jimmy Daccache
Official Aramaic is the *lingua franca* of the Persian Empire during the sixth and fourth centuries BCE. This course is designed to familiarize students with texts from Achaemenid Egypt (the abundant papyri of Elephantine and Hermopolis), Bactria, Anatolia, and Mesopotamia. The Aramaic grammar is illustrated through the texts. Prerequisite: RLST 835, or some knowledge of Aramaic or a related Semitic language.

RLST 843b / NELC 582, Intermediate Ugaritic: Mythological Texts Staff
This course completes the introduction to Ugaritic language. Students have the opportunity to improve their knowledge of Ugaritic literature by reading and analyzing texts in the major genres, with special emphasis on mythological texts.

RLST 848a / SMTC 523a, Intermediate Syriac I Jimmy Daccache
This two-term course is designed to enhance students' knowledge of the Syriac language by reading a selection of texts, sampling the major genres of classical Syriac literature. By the end of the year, students are familiar with non-vocalized texts and are capable of confronting specific grammatical or lexical problems. Prerequisite: RLST 839/SMTC 514 or knowledge of Syriac.

RLST 868b / SMTC 524b, Intermediate Syriac II Jimmy Daccache
The goal of this course is to enable students to gain proficiency in the Syriac language at a higher level. We continue readings in the major genres of classical Syriac literature, with special emphasis on texts from the ninth century onward. By the end of the term, students will have mastered complex grammatical structures. Prerequisite: RLST 848/SMTC 523 or knowledge of Syriac.

RLST 874a / SMTC 553a, Advanced Syriac I Jimmy Daccache
This course is designed for graduate students who are proficient in Syriac and is organized topically. Topics vary each term and are listed in the syllabus on Canvas.

RLST 890a or b, Religion and Modernity Staff
Seminar for doctoral students working at the intersection of religion, philosophy, and politics in modernity. Readings and topics vary from year to year.

RLST 905a, Theology Doctoral Seminar Willie Jennings
Combining seminar and workshop formats, this course explores the themes from Christian theology and especially doctrines of creation in relation to race, decoloniality, and critical geography. Our goal through this exploration is to facilitate an ongoing communal practice of collegial and constructive reading and conversation. Sat/Unsat or Audit only. This is the required seminar for the doctoral program in theology, but doctoral students and faculty in other areas of the religious studies department or in the wider university community may also request permission to attend.

RLST 961a, Directed Readings: American Religious History Staff

RLST 962a, Directed Readings: EMWAR Staff
Directed readings in Early Mediterranean and West Asian Religions.

RLST 963a, Directed Readings: Asian Religions Staff

RLST 964a, Directed Readings: Ethics Staff

RLST 965a, Directed Readings: Judaic Studies Staff

RLST 966a, Directed Readings: Islamic Studies Staff

RLST 968a, Directed Readings: Old Testament/Hebrew Bible Staff

RLST 969a, Directed Readings: Philosophy of Religion Staff

RLST 970a, Directed Readings: Religion and Modernity Staff

RLST 971a, Directed Readings: Theology Staff