

Religious Studies

Chair of Undergraduate Studies: Susan Schreiner, S 300D, 702-8243

Director of Undergraduate Studies: Lucy Pick, S 306B, 702-8278

Program of Study

The field of Religious Studies engages perennial questions about religion and human society. It investigates religions and how they shape and are shaped by human cultures. The concentration in Religious Studies exposes students to different sources, problems, and methodologies in the study of religion. Students explore one particular question in depth by writing a senior paper. The program is designed to attract students who wish to take interdisciplinary approaches to the study of religion, including those that are historical, philosophical, theological, sociological, or literary-critical. The interests of such students may be descriptive, explanatory, or normative.

Program Requirements

A concentration in Religious Studies consists of twelve courses, including one introductory course and a two-quarter senior seminar. It is preferable that students consult the Director of Undergraduate Studies and declare their concentration in Religious Studies before the end of their second year. Students and the Director of Undergraduate Studies will work together to create a program of study. The goal is to develop depth in one area so that a satisfactory B.A. paper will be written in the fourth year.

Students will normally be permitted to count language courses toward their concentration that go beyond the College language requirement and are pertinent to the area of research of their B.A. paper. Placement credit may not be used for these courses. With the consent of the Director of Undergraduate Studies, students may also count two additional extra-departmental courses toward the concentration. Students are encouraged to explore more than one religious tradition through their course work.

Introductory Course. All concentrators in Religious Studies are required to take Introduction to Religious Studies (RLST 10100). It need not precede other course work in the concentration, but students are advised to have completed it by the end of their second year. It will normally be offered every year during Autumn Quarter. This course will introduce students to some of the central themes in Religious Studies; its particular focus will vary according to the interests of the individual instructor.

Course Distribution. Religion is expressed in many forms throughout the world's cultures, and the academic study of religion therefore requires multiple perspectives on its subject. Students of religion should have some knowledge of the historical development of specific religious traditions, understand and critically engage the ethical and intellectual teachings of various religions, and begin to make some comparative appraisals of the roles that religions play in different cultures and historical periods. To introduce students to these multiple perspectives on religion and to provide a sense of the field as a whole, students are required to take at least one course in each of the following areas. To identify the areas, refer to the boldface

letter at the end of each course description.

- A. *Historical Studies in Religious Traditions*: courses that explore the development of particular religious traditions, including their social practices, rituals, scriptures, and beliefs in historical context
- B. *Constructive Studies in Religion*: courses that investigate constructive or normative questions about the nature and conduct of human life that are raised by religious traditions, including work in philosophy of religion, ethics, and theology
- C. *Cultural Studies in Religion*: courses that introduce issues in the social and cultural contingencies of religious thought and practice by emphasizing sociological, anthropological, and literary-critical perspectives on religion, and by raising comparative questions about differing religious and cultural traditions

Senior Seminar and B.A. Paper. The two-quarter senior seminar (RLST 29800 and 29900) will assist students with the preparation of the required B.A. paper. During May of their third year, students will work with a preceptor to choose a faculty adviser and a topic for research, and to plan a course of study for the following year. These must be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Students will enroll in the B.A. Paper Seminar convened by a preceptor during Autumn and Winter Quarters. This seminar will allow students to prepare their bibliographies, hone their writing, and present their research. The B.A. paper will be due early in the Spring Quarter. Normally it is between thirty and forty pages, with the upward limit being firm.

Grading. Religious Studies concentrators must receive letter grades in all courses in the concentration. Nonconcentrators may take Religious Studies courses on a *P/N* or *P/F* basis if they receive the prior consent of the faculty member for a given course.

Honors. Students who write senior papers deemed exceptional by their faculty advisers will be eligible for consideration for graduation with honors. They will be required to have a 3.5 GPA or higher in the concentration and a 3.25 GPA or higher overall.

Summary of Requirements

Concentration	1	Introduction to Religious Studies (RLST 10100)
	1	course in historical studies in religious traditions
	1	course in constructive studies in religion
	1	course in cultural studies in religion
	6	additional courses in religious studies
	1	B.A. Paper Seminar (RLST 29800)
	1	B.A. Paper (RLST 29900)
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Faculty

A. Boden, C. Brekus, D. Browning, A. Carr, K. Culp, A. Davidson, W. Doniger, J. Elshtain, M. Fishbane, T. Frymer-Kensky, F. Gamwell, W. C. Gilpin, D. Hopkins, M. Kapstein, H. Klauck, J. Kraemer, B. Lincoln, S. Mahmood, D. Martinez, B. McGinn, F. Meltzer, P. Mendes-Flohr, M. Mitchell, M. Murrin, M. Nussbaum, W. Olmsted, L. Pick, M. Riesebrodt, R. Rosengarten, S. Schreiner, W. Schweiker, W. Sullivan, K. Tanner, D. Tracy, A. Yu

Courses

Boldface letters in parentheses refer to the areas noted in the preceding Program Requirements section.

10100. Introduction to Religious Studies. *Required of concentrators.* This course introduces students to some of the central concerns, problems, and materials of Religious Studies. Students are exposed to a range of primary and secondary source material grouped around a set of themes chosen by the instructor. Possible themes include canon, prophecy, revelation, initiation, priesthood, sacred space, discipline, and ritual. *L. Pick. Autumn.*

11000. How to Read a Biblical Story. This course provides an overall introduction to the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), with specific attention to its literary, religious, and ideological contents. The diversity of thought and theology in Ancient Israel is explored, along with its notions of text, teaching, and tradition. Revision and reinterpretation is found within the Bible itself. Portions of the earliest post-biblical interpretation (in Philo, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and selected Pseudepigrapha) are also considered. *T. Frymer-Kensky. Autumn. (A)*

12000. Introduction to the New Testament. (=BIBL 32500, NTEC 21000/32500) This course is an immersion in the texts of the New Testament with the following goals: through careful reading to come to know well some representative pieces of this literature; to gain useful knowledge of the historical, geographical, social, religious, cultural, and political contexts of these texts and the events they relate; to learn the major literary genres represented in the canon (i.e., "gospels," "acts," "letters," "apocalypse") and strategies for reading them; to comprehend the various theological visions to which these texts give expression; and to situate oneself and one's prevailing questions about this material in the history of interpretation. *M. Mitchell. Winter. (A)*

13000. Introduction to Chinese Religion. (=DVHR 37900) *PQ: Consent of instructor.* *A. Yu. Winter. (A)*

20700. Medieval Women's Religious Writing. (=GNDR 23700, HIST 19800) The purpose of this course is to read different types of writing on religion by medieval women to investigate the relationship between gender and genre. We consider hagiography, letters, autobiography, theology, didactic treatises, and visionary writing by individuals such as Baudonivia, Hildegard of Bingen, Heloise, Christine de Pisan, and Teresa of Avila. *L. Pick. Spring. (A)*

21300. Religion and American Social Reform. (=HIST 18400) This

course examines the relation of religion to a wide variety of American social reforms (i.e., the abolition of slavery, temperance, fair labor practices, the vote for women) from approximately 1790 to 1990. Class discussion focuses on the writings of nineteenth and twentieth century reformers such as Harriet Beecher Stowe, Frederick Douglass, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Dorothy Day, and Martin Luther King. *W. C. Gilpin. Spring. (A)*

21400. Francis of Assisi and Franciscanism. (=DVHC 34300, ITAL 24300/34300) For course description, see Romance Languages and Literatures (Italian). Classes conducted in English. *A. Maggi. Autumn. (A)*

21500. Learning To Be Human: Genesis 1 to 11 in its Mythological Background. (=ANST 23400, BIBL 41300) This course takes a fresh look at the "primeval history" of Genesis. What do we learn when we read intertextually with other Bible passages that relate to God's cosmic activity in creation? What new perspectives do the great Mesopotamian epics and lesser known Sumerian and Akkadian myths provide? New approaches enable us to go beyond traditional explanations. *T. Frymer-Kensky. Spring.*

23600. Myths and Symbols of Evil. (=FNDL 22300, HUMA 21200, RELH 22300) For course description, see Fundamentals: Issues and Texts. *A. Carr. Winter. (B)*

24201. Indian Philosophy I: Origins and Orientations. (=DVHR 30200, DVPR 30200, HREL 30200, SALC 20901/30901) For course description, see South Asian Languages and Civilizations. *M. Kapstein. Autumn. (B)*

24202. Indian Philosophy II: The Classical Traditions. (=DVHR 30300, DVPR 30300, HREL 30300, SALC 20902/30902) *PQ: RLST 24201.* For course description, see South Asian Languages and Civilizations. *Winter. (B)*

24300. Beauty and Representation in the Christian Tradition. This course looks at the Christian understanding of the relation between the spiritual and the material by focusing on intersections between art and theology. The historical sampling of readings provides an introduction to both the history of Christian thought and to the history of Christian art, with emphasis on the impact of understandings of the incarnation as they relate to understandings of image, symbol, and representation. *K. Kearns. Spring. (B)*

24400. Psychology of Religion: Classic and Contemporary Contributions. (=PSYC 27400/37400) *PQ: Consent of instructor.* For course description, see Psychology. *M. Rosenberg. Autumn. (B)*

24500. Spinoza and the Question of Being. (=DVPR 34500, PHIL 24500/34500, RLST 24500, SCTH 34500) *J-L. Marion. Spring. (B)*

24600. Philosophical Thought and Expression in Twentieth-Century Europe. (=CMLT 23100/33100, DVPR 39400, PHIL 21401/31401) *PQ: One prior course in philosophy.* For course description, see Philosophy. *A. Davidson. Winter. (B)*

24700. Fear of Death. (=LATN 35100/45100, PHIL 21800/31800, RETH 35100) *PQ: Knowledge of Latin.* For course description, see Philosophy. Texts in English. *M. Nussbaum. Winter.* (B)

26400. Milton's *Paradise Lost*. (=FN DL 21900, GNDR 21600, HUMA 20800) For course description, see Fundamentals: Issues and Texts. *W. Olmsted. Autumn.* (C)

26500. Religion, Power, and Desire in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, *The Tempest*, and *The Winter's Tale*. (=FN DL 21000, HUMA 22500) For course description, see Fundamentals: Issues and Texts. *W. Olmsted. Winter.* (C)

27300. Religion, Sex, Politics, and Release in Ancient India. (=DVHR 32100, FN DL 23601, SALC 25701/35701, S CTH 35600) A study of the four goals of human life (urusharthas) in classical Hinduism with readings in the *Laws of Manu*, the *Kamasutra*, the *Arthashastra*, and the *Upanishads*. *W. Doniger. Autumn.* (C)

27400. Mythologies of Transvestism and Transsexuality. (=DVHR 40800, GNDR 29300, SALC 25900/35900) Studies in selected Greek and Hindu myths, Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*, Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly*, Roland Barthes *S/Z*, Marjorie Garber's *Vested Interests*, Wendy Doniger's *Splitting the Difference* and *The Bedtrick*, and selected operas (e.g., *Marriage of Figaro*, *Rosenkavelier*, *Arabella*) and films (e.g., *Queen Christina*, *Some Like it Hot*, *I Was a Male War Bride*, *Tootsie*, *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *All of Me*, *The Crying Game*, *Boys Don't Cry*). *W. Doniger. Winter.* (C)

27500. Medicine and Culture. (=ANTH 24300/44300, GNDR 24300/44300, HIPS 27300) For course description, see Anthropology. *J. Comoroff. Autumn.* (C)

27600. Art of Ancestral Worship. (=ARTH 20100/30100, CHIN 25000, EALC 25000) *PQ: Any 11000-level ARTH or COVA course, or consent of instructor.* This course focuses on various art forms, including ritual jades and bronzes, tomb murals and sculptures, and family temples and shrines, which were created between the third millenium B.C. and the second century A.D. for ancestral worship, the main religious tradition in China before the introduction of Buddhism. Central questions include how visual forms convey religious concepts and serve religious communications, and how artistic changes reflect trends in the ancestral cult. *H. Wu. Spring.* (C)

27700. Music of South Asia. (=MUSI 23700/33700, SALC 20800/30800). *PQ: Any 10000-level music course or consent of the instructor.* For course description, see Music. *P. Bohlman. Autumn.* (C)

27800. Mythical Thinking: Classics in the Study of Religion. (=FN DL 23801, RELH 23801) For course description, see Religion and the Humanities. *J. Z. Smith. Autumn, 2002.* (C)

27900. Thinking with Stories. (=FN DL 23802, RELH 23802) For course description, see Religion and the Humanities. *J. Z. Smith. Spring, 2002.* (C)

29700. Reading and Research Course. *PQ: Consent of faculty supervisor and director of undergraduate studies. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

29800. B.A. Paper Seminar. *RLST 29800 and 29900 form a two-quarter sequence that is required of fourth-year concentrators. This course meets weekly to provide guidance for planning, researching, and writing the B.A. paper. Autumn.*

29900. B.A. Paper. *RLST 29800 and 29900 form a two-quarter sequence that is required of fourth-year concentrators. The purpose of this course is to assist students in the preparation of drafts of their B.A. paper, which are formally presented and critiqued. Winter.*