

**REL 100/Basic Issues in Religion**

**1 course unit**

(every semester)

A course examining religious phenomena and their relationship to human understanding of oneself and society providing an opportunity to examine religion sympathetically but critically.

**REL 110/World Religions**

**1 course unit**

(every semester)

A course comparing several of the world's major religious traditions. Students will examine and compare the essential teachings, and the historical and cultural context, of most or all of the following: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and one or more additional non-Western tradition(s).

**REL 111/Buddhism and Buddhist Thought**

**1 course unit**

(every semester)

A course examining Buddhism and some of the intellectual traditions that have flourished in conjunction with it. Students will study the historical origins and essential teachings of this religion and explore some of the literary and philosophical traditions that developed from or in close connection with Buddhism.

**REL 112/Hinduism and Hindu Thought**

**1 course unit**

(annually)

A course examining Hinduism and some of the intellectual traditions that have flourished in conjunction with it. Students will study the historical origins and essential teachings of this religion and explore some of the literary and philosophical traditions that developed from or in close connection with Hinduism.

**REL 113/Islam and Islamic Thought**

**1 course unit**

(annually)

A course examining Islam and some of the intellectual traditions that have flourished in conjunction with it. Students will study the historical origins and essential teachings of this religion and explore some of the literary and philosophical traditions that developed from or in close connection with Islam.

**REL 120/Early Judaism**

**1 course unit**

(fall)

A course examining the fundamentals, history and development of the Jewish faith and way of life. Students will study the Jewish historical experience and the evolving theological responses to that experience from the beginnings of Judaism until the French Revolution.

**REL 121/Modern Judaism**

**1 course unit**

(spring)

A course examining the fundamentals, history and development of the Jewish faith and way of life. Students will study the Jewish historical experience and the evolving theological responses to that experience from 1492 to the present.

**REL 170/Topics in Religion**

**1 course unit**

(occasionally)

This is a Topics Course with no prerequisites, open to and appropriate for first-year students.

**REL 210/Indian Philosophy**

**1 course unit**

(occasionally)

*Prerequisite:* One course in religion or philosophy or permission of instructor

A course critically examining major issues and positions in Indian philosophy of the Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions. The course will revolve around four main questions: What is Indian philosophy? Who or what am I? What is reality and how can it be known? How should I live? Students will be encouraged to learn from great thinkers of the past and of the present, to

examine their own values and beliefs, and to take reasoned and informed stands on the issues treated. (Course is the same PHL 210/Indian Philosophy.)

**REL 220/Catholicism**

**1 course unit**

(occasionally)

A course tracing the development of the Catholic faith from the first through the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It presents the basics of Catholicism in terms of: essential beliefs and practices, scriptures, theological understandings, authority and political life. The major philosophical, cultural and political influences on the practices and beliefs of Catholicism are considered, as well as how Catholicism has evolved and changed over time, using a model of major paradigm shifts.

**REL 251/Epistemology of Religion**

**1 course unit**

(occasionally)

*Prerequisite:* One course in philosophy or religion or permission of instructor

This course critically examines major issues and positions in the epistemology of religion. Topics treated include the nature of religious belief, the relationship of faith and reason, religious experience, knowledge of the divine, the evidence of miracles, and the relationship between science and religion. Students will be encouraged to learn from great thinkers of the past and of the present, and to take reasoned and informed stands on the issues treated.

**REL 252/Metaphysics of Religion**

**1 course unit**

(occasionally)

*Prerequisite:* One course in philosophy or religion or permission of instructor

This course critically examines major issues and positions in the metaphysics of religion. Topics treated include the nature of divinity, divine attributes, the problem of evil, arguments for divine existence, and immortality. Students will be encouraged to learn from great thinkers of the past and of the present, and to take reasoned and informed stands on the issues treated.

**REL 270/Topics in Religion**

**1 course unit**

(occasionally)

This is a Topics Course with no prerequisites, offered primarily for sophomores, juniors, and seniors. It may not be appropriate for freshmen.

**REL 305/Ancient Christianity**

**1 course unit**

(annually)

A course focusing on the emergence of early Christianities during the first four centuries of the Common Era, in the Roman Empire and surrounding areas. The course will take into account the philosophical, political, cultural, and religious interactions (conflicts and differences within emerging communities) which challenged Christian groups and gradually shaped the Catholic Orthodox faith. Beliefs, ritual practices, scriptures, and structures of authority will be examined. We will also address issues of anti-Jewish sentiment, issues involving the theological understanding and role of women, and the role of violence in these developments.

**REL 313/Medieval Christianity**

**1 course unit**

(occasionally)

A course investigating the transformation of Christian cultures and institutions, in western Eurasia and the Mediterranean, from the fifth to the thirteenth centuries of the Common Era. Topics studied in depth include Christian relations with non-Christian populations (pagans, Jews, Muslims); the development of the papacy; relations between church and state authority; the cult of saints; the Crusades; mysticism. Attention is also given to the significance of Christian beliefs, ritual practices, and institutional structures for children, women, and homosexuals.

**REL 320/Holocaust: Historical and Religious Perspectives**

**1 course unit**

(annually)

A course that provides a background to the actual events and an introduction to the

historiographic, philosophical and religious dimensions of the Holocaust. The main focus of the course will be interpreting the causes, events, and lessons in light of historical, philosophical, and religious perspectives. This course will lead students to a fuller understanding of the Holocaust and its effects on contemporary religious and philosophical life.

**REL 370/Special Topics in Religion**

**1 course unit**

(occasionally)

*Prerequisite:* One course in religion or philosophy

A seminar on a problem, text, religious thinker, historical period or other topic in religion not covered in depth in regular courses. Topics will vary depending on the instructor.

**REL 391/Independent Study in Religion**

**1 course unit**

(every semester)

*Prerequisite:* One course in religion or philosophy and permission of the instructor

Independent study of a particular topic in religion, in close consultation with a member of the department.

**REL 495/Senior Capstone**

**1 course unit**

(every semester)

*Prerequisite:* Permission of the instructor

Working in consultation with, and mentored by a faculty member, a student in this capstone course will write a substantial essay on a topic on Religious Studies. The course will be conducted as an independent study.