

Religion Department Course List Fall 2024

RN 100: Introduction to Religion

Anthony Petro | T/R, 9:30AM-10:45AM

Religion matters. It makes meaning and provides structure to life, addressing fundamental questions about body, spirit, community, and time. But what is it? How does it work in our world? This course explores religion in ritual, philosophical, experiential, and ethical dimensions. Carries humanities divisional credit in CAS. This course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Creativity/Innovation

RN 101/JS 120: The Bible

Michael Zank | MWF, 12:20PM-1:10PM

Introduction to the great canonical anthologies of Jews and Christians. Students will learn to read for historical context and genre conventions; study classical and modern strategies of interpretation; and create a collaborative commentary or piece of "fan-fiction." Carries humanities divisional credit in CAS. Effective Fall 2018, this course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Aesthetic Exploration, Historical Consciousness, Creativity/Innovation.

RN 103: Religions of Asia

April Hughes | MWF, 10:10AM-11:00AM

Study of Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, and Shinto. Focus on the world view of each tradition and the historical development of that world view. Effective Fall 2018, this course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Historical Consciousness, Critical Thinking. Effective Fall 2023, this course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Aesthetic Exploration, Teamwork/Collaboration.

TENTATIVE

RN 104: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Instructor TBD | MWF, 11:15AM-12:05PM

Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in historical and cultural context, origins to the present. Examines diversity of practices, belief systems, and social structures within these religions. Also addresses debates within and between communities as well as contemporary controversies and concerns. Effective Fall 2018, this course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Historical Consciousness, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy. Effective Fall 2022, this course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Aesthetic Exploration, Creativity/Innovation.

RN 106: Death and Immortality**Laura Harrington | T/R 11:00AM-12:15PM**

Examines death as religious traditions have attempted to accept, defeat, deny, or transcend it. Do we have souls? Do they reincarnate? What to do with a corpse? Other topics include mourning, burial, cremation, martyrdom, resurrection, near-death experiences. This course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Creativity/Innovation.

RN 200: Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Religion**Teena Purohit | T/R 9:30AM-10:45AM**

Origins and history of the academic study of religion. Different constructions of religion as an object of study and the methods that arise from them. The role of the humanities and social sciences in understanding religion's place in history and contemporary experience. This course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Historical Consciousness, Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings, Critical Thinking.

RN 210: Buddhism**Daigengna Duoer | T/R, 11:00AM-12:15 PM**

A historical and critical introduction to the major themes of Buddhist thought and practice in India and Southeast Asia, with special attention to the transmission of Buddhism to Tibet and the modern West. This course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Historical Consciousness, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Critical Thinking.

RN 211/LC 261: Chinese Religion**April Hughes | MWF, 1:25PM-2:15PM**

A historical survey of Chinese religions from the ancient period to modern times. Covers cosmology, divination, philosophy, divine kingship, ancestors, art, the Silk Road, death and afterlives, popular deities, Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. This course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings, Creativity/Innovation.

RN 213: Hinduism**Teena Purohit | T/R, 12:30PM-1:45PM**

The course will provide the student with the opportunity to study on an introductory level Hinduism, the majority religion of India and Nepal. It is structured for the student who has had little or no previous background in the study of Hinduism from either an anthropological perspective or from a literary and historical point of view. It will focus on the development of the Hindu textual tradition, the philosophy and mythology it expounds, and the ritual practices related to it. Emphasis will be placed on how Hindu traditions adapted to changing historical conditions. This course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Aesthetic Exploration, Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings.

RN 214: Islam**Kecia Ali | T/R, 9:30AM-10:45AM**

The rise and spread of Islam from the seventh century to the present; introduction to its central beliefs, institutions, and practices, and its impact on the religious and cultural history of Asia and Africa. Continuity and change in the modern period. This course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Ethical Reasoning, Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings, Teamwork/Collaboration.

RN 239: Religion and Science**Yair Lior MWF 10:10AM-11:00AM**

Examines the complex relationship between science and religion, focusing on historical episodes (e.g., the "Galileo Affair") and current controversies (e.g., "Intelligent Design" movement's influence on school curricula, "Spirituality and Health" research, and "Ecology and Religion.") Effective Spring 2023, this course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Digital/Multimedia Expression, Ethical Reasoning, Teamwork/Collaboration.

RN 242/HI 203: Magic, Science, and Religion**Deeana Klepper | T/R, 2:00PM-3:15PM**

Boundaries and relationships between magic, science, and religion in Europe from antiquity through the Enlightenment. Explores global cultural exchange, distinctions across social, educational, gender, and religious lines, the rise of modern science, and changing assumptions about God, Nature, and humanity. Carries humanities divisional credit in CAS. This course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Historical Consciousness, Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings, Critical Thinking.

RN 245/PH 245: Quest for God and the Good**Diana Lobel | MWF, 1:25PM-2:15PM**

Pre-req: WR 120 or equivalent, An interactive seminar, investigating the meaning and purpose of human life, the significance of God or an Absolute, the role of contemplation and action in the spiritual quest, relationships between philosophy and religious thought, East and West. Effective Fall 2023 this course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Writing-Intensive Course, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings

RN 296/AA 296: Religion and Hip Hop**Margarita Guillory | MWF, 9:05AM-9:55AM**

Uses digital media studies to explore diverse religious expressions in hip hop culture. Through critical reading, community field trips, and hands-on technology usage, students consider an often overlooked element in the study of hip hop culture: religion. Effective Fall 2020, this course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Digital/Multimedia Expression, Aesthetic Exploration, Creativity/Innovation.

RN 301: Varieties of Early Christianity**Andrew Jacobs | T/R, 12:30PM-1:45PM**

Undergraduate Prerequisites: junior standing. At least one prior course in biblical or New Testament literature recommended.

Surveys the many different and often competing forms of Christianity that arose and flourished in the second to the seventh century. Topics covered include martyrs, apocalypticism, Hell, Gnostics, prophecy, magical texts, angels and demons, and the various meanings of Christ. This course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Historical Consciousness, Social Inquiry I, Critical Thinking.

RN 312/GRS RN 612: Buddhism in America**Laura Harrington | T/R, 2:00PM-3:15PM**

The transplantation and transformation of Buddhism in the United States. Time period ranges from the eighteenth century to the present, but the emphasis is on contemporary developments, including the new Asian immigration, Jewish Buddhism, feminization, and engaged Buddhism.

RN328/JS 255/RN 628/STH TX 828: Judaism in the Modern Period**Steven Katz | T/R, 12:30PM-1:45PM**

Encounters between Judaism and modernity from the Renaissance and Reformation; the Spanish expulsion and creation of Jewish centers in the New World; emancipation and its consequences; assimilation, Reform Judaism, Zionism, the American Jewish community, non-European communities, Jewish global migration, and modern antisemitism. This course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Historical Consciousness, Critical Thinking.

RN 338/PH495/JS348/STH TT 811/RN 638: Philosophy and Mysticism: Jewish and Islamic Perspectives**Diana Lobel | T/R 2:00PM-3:15PM**

Prereq: First Year Writing Seminar; and one course from among the following: Philosophy, Religion, Core Curriculum (CC101 and/or CC102). A thematic introduction to mysticism and philosophy, with a focus on the dynamics of religious experience. Readings will be drawn from medieval Jewish and Islamic philosophy; Sufi mysticism and philosophy; Kabbalah, Sufi poetry, Hebrew poetry from the Golden Age of Muslim Spain. This course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Writing- Intensive Course, Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings. CAS RN384/JS260/GRS

RN 340/RN GRS 640/WS 341: The Quran**Kecia Ali | T/R 12:30PM-1:45PM**

The emergence of the Quran as a major religious text, its structure and literary features, and its principal themes and places within the religious and intellectual life of the Muslim community.

RN384/JS 260/GRS RN 684/STH TX 884: The Holocaust

Steven Katz | T/R, 3:30PM-4:45PM

Rise of German (and European) antisemitism; rise of Nazism; 1935 Nuremberg Laws; the initial Jewish reaction; racial theory; organizing mass murder including ghettos, concentration camps, killing squads, and gas chambers; bystanders and collaborators (countries, organizations, and individuals); Jewish resistance; post-Holocaust religious responses; moral and ethical issues. Effective Fall 2020, this course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Ethical Reasoning, Historical Consciousness, Critical Thinking.

RN 396/PH 466/PH 646/STH TX 850/GRS RN 696: Philosophy of Religion

Michael Zank | M 6:30PM-9:15PM

Critical investigation of the limits of human knowledge and the theoretical and practical demands for meaning attached to notions of God, providence, immortality, and other metaphysical conditions of human thriving, from Plato to modern philosophies of religion. Effective Spring 2022 this course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings, Social Inquiry I, Critical Thinking

RN 397/PH 456/GRS RN 697/PH 656/STH TT 821: Topics in Philosophy and Religion

Decosimo | T, 5:00PM-7:45PM

Topic for Fall 2022: Why are we here? Alongside philosophers and religious thinkers, this course explores different versions of this question. Why are we here reading and talking? Why are we at BU? Why are we here at all? Does life have some meaning? Effective Fall 2021, this course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings, Critical Thinking.

RN 416/AA 416//RN GRS 716/AA 616: Religion, Race, and Climate Change

James Hill Jr. | M, 2:30PM-5:15PM

A multi-disciplinary course delving into the influence of and race on human behavior and non-human, planetary realities at local and global scales. It focuses on the historical, systemic, and societal implications associated with ongoing climate change debates. Effective Fall 2024 fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Social Inquiry I.

CAS RN452/PH496/GRS RN752/STH TT838: Buddhism as Philosophy

Daigengna Duor | R, 3:30PM-6:15PM

Topic for Fall 2024: Zen Thought and Practice. Explores Zen thought and practice across various Asian and global Buddhist traditions through texts and material culture, focusing on debates on metaphysics, the mind, and knowledge as applied to meditation, ethics, aesthetics, militarism, environmentalism, and aspects of daily life.

RN 468/AN 568: Historical Overview

Adam Seligman | T/R, 11:00AM-12:15PM

Historical overview of ritual behavior, the role of symbolism in the study of culture, and the narrative quality of worldview and belief. Emphasis on verbal performance and public display events in specific cultural contexts. This course fulfills a single unit in each of the following BU Hub areas: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy, Social Inquiry II, Research and Information Literacy.