A GUIDE FOR THE MAJOR
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Revised 8/14
THE DEGREE PROGRAM IN

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Religious Studies majors study the different religious models by which the people of the world orient, shape, and direct their lives. The study of religion challenges students and faculty alike to reflect upon the foundations of their own culture and the cultures of other people. These reflections make possible a better understanding of the envisioned possibilities of life and complexities of human motivation. Thus Religious Studies is a central program within the liberal arts.

Graduates of programs in Religious Studies have the skills and intellectual sophistication necessary to follow a variety of study and career paths. They have been accepted into Ph.D. programs, schools of law, medicine, journalism, and business. They have been employed by major corporations and businesses which recognize the ability of Religious Studies graduates to analyze and solve problems, to communicate well, to understand diverse people and cultures, and to succeed in a program requiring intelligence and rigor.

A degree program in the College of Arts and Science centers on a major, designed to permit specialization in a department of the student’s choice, and continuation of the process of liberal education by including work in other departments related to a student’s major interest.

To accomplish this twofold purpose, students who desire to study Religious Studies plan the major with the help of a faculty advisor. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate the planning of a major by the end of the sophomore year. Students who have already filed a major in another department may choose to add a major in Religious Studies as late as their junior year, but they should make certain that they have sufficient opportunity to complete all the requirements for a Religious Studies major during their remaining time as undergraduates. Graduation plans, available in the Department office, 221 A&S, or on the Religious Studies department’s homepage, must be completed and approved by the faculty advisor, the chair, and the Dean prior to registration for the first semester of the junior year.

The University of Missouri-Columbia does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, disability, status as disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era. The Department of Religious Studies also provides equal opportunity to all regardless of sexual orientation. Any person having inquiries concerning the University of Missouri-Columbia’s compliance with implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, is directed to contact the Assistant Vice Chancellor, Human Resource Services, University of Missouri-Columbia, 130 Heinkel Building, Columbia, MO 65211, (573) 882-4256 or Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education. If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and need special arrangements you may contact Disability Services, A038 Brady Commons, 882-4696. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your special needs.
THE RELIGIOUS STUDIES MAJOR AND MINOR

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of 30 hours must be in Religious Studies courses, including at least 21 hours in courses numbered 2000 and above. These courses should be selected in consultation with the Director of Undergraduate Studies. A major includes at least one course in each of three fields of study emphasized in this department (Asian, Indigenous, and Western).

Courses offered by the Department are indicated in the final section, The Curriculum, of this manual, and on the form used to file a graduation plan with a major in Religious Studies.

While students are not so required, course work in this major would normally include progress from lower-level to upper-level offerings, i.e., from 1000-level to 2000-level or 3000 and 4000 level courses. A C grade is required in all Religious Studies courses used to meet requirements for the major.

SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A Religious Studies major includes the following four required courses:

1. Rel St 1100
   Rel St 2110
   Introduction to Religion (3) OR
   Religions of the World (3)

2. Rel St 3990
   Majors Seminar (3)

3. Rel St 4100
   Advanced Theories and Methods (3)

4. Rel St 4990
   Senior Seminar (3)

First year students are advised to take Rel St 1100 Introduction to Religion. Those beginning the study of religion in any other year must take Rel St 2110 Religions of the World. Rel St 3990 Majors Seminar is normally taken in the second semester of the junior year. It is offered only during the Spring semester. Students may take Rel St 4100 Modern Perspectives either in their junior or senior years, but the department recommends they take it as seniors. It is offered only during the Fall semester. Majors must take Rel St 4990 Senior Seminar in their senior year. It is offered only in the Spring semester. Note that Rel St 4100 is a prerequisite for Rel St 4990, and, therefore, December graduates should plan to take Rel St 4100 before their final semesters.

To remain a student in good standing at the University of Missouri, undergraduates must maintain a GPA of at least 2.0.
THE MINOR

To earn a minor in Religious Studies, students complete a total of 15 credit hours with at least 6 hours at the 2000 level or above. A “C” grade is required in all courses toward the minor. The Minor must be declared in the religious studies department and filed with A&S Advising Center in 107 Lowry. At least one course must be taken from each of the following fields: Asian Religions, Indigenous Religions, Western Religions.

ASSESSMENT

The University requires that each department be assessed annually. This assessment is designed to allow departments to evaluate the education they are providing their majors. It is not intended as an assessment of the majors themselves, and the results of the assessment do not form part of a student’s record.

The Department of Religious Studies carries out such assessments by inviting an outside reviewer in order to review essay portfolios of students enrolled that semester in RS 4990, the senior seminar, and to interview those students.

For their portfolios, graduating seniors are asked to submit three to five papers they have written for Religious Studies courses. Each portfolio should contain at least one paper written in the beginning of religious studies course work and at least one in the senior year so that the papers represent a progression through undergraduate studies. Portfolios are maintained in the Religious Studies Department Office, 221 Arts & Science Building. Students may submit papers for their portfolios at any time, but the portfolios should be complete by the end of March of the semester they take RS 4990.

In addition to this departmental assessment, students may also participate in a general assessment scheduled by the Provost’s office.
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE REQUIREMENTS

Bachelor of Arts Degree

For graduation from the College of Arts and Science, a minimum of 120 hours of credit is required with a cumulative grade point average of 2.0. Students must pass at least 30 hours in courses numbered 3000 or above, including courses in Religious Studies. No more than 40 hours of courses in Religious Studies may count toward the total 120.

Every student in the College of Arts and Science must complete basic skills and foundation requirements. An Arts and Science advisor in the Advisement Center, 107 Lowry, will assist the student in making sure the requirements are met, when the student files the Graduation Plan. Described below are some of the ways the Religious Studies major meets those requirements.

BASIC SKILLS

English Composition. Students meet this requirement by taking English 1000 or English 1000GH.

Writing Intensive Courses. Students must take at least two courses designed as "Writing Intensive" (WI). According to College guidelines, at least one of these courses should be in the student's major. Various courses may be offered as Writing Intensive in Religious Studies, but RS 4100 is regularly offered as a Writing Intensive course.

Foreign Language. Students are required to attain the degree of fluency equivalent to completion of 12 or 13 hours in a single foreign language. Some students satisfy this partially or entirely with high school credit. Once students have begun foreign language study they are strongly advised to continue each semester until completion.

Mathematics. Students need to demonstrate competency in College Algebra. Proficiency can be demonstrated by examination. Also required is a course that demonstrates "Mathematics Reasoning Proficiency." The Mathematics Reasoning Proficiency requirement can be satisfied by passing any course that is designated as MRP in the Schedule of Courses. Note: For a transfer course to qualify as MRP, it must also have College Algebra as a prerequisite.

American History or Government. According to Missouri state law, a candidate for an undergraduate degree at MU must present for graduation at least one course in American history or American government.

FOUNDATION REQUIREMENTS

Biological, Physical, and Mathematical Sciences. Students must complete at least 9 hours, including at least one course with a laboratory. At least two of the sciences must be
represented.

**Behavioral Sciences.** At least 5 hours in Psychology, Sociology, and Anthropology are required. Some other departments also offer courses that meet this requirement—check the General Education list of courses for a complete list of options.

**Social Sciences.** Courses in Economics, History, Political Science, or Geography must be taken to earn at least 9 credits in at least 2 fields.

**Humanities and Fine Arts.** Students must have at least 12 hours from 3 different fields. Areas which may be included are: appreciation or history of art and music; foreign civilizations; literature; philosophy; creative and performing arts; speech and dramatic art; and the Humanities Sequence. Students have a wide range of choices in this area. However, Religious Studies courses used toward the major may not be used to fulfill foundation requirements.

**2000-level Requirement.** A candidate must pass a minimum of three courses numbered 2000 or higher from at least two of four areas: (1) biological, mathematical, and physical sciences; (2) behavioral sciences; (3) social sciences; and (4) humanities and fine arts.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

**Graduation Requirements.** For graduation, a candidate must pass 120 semester hours of credit with an overall average grade of at least C. Thirty of the last 36 hours must be completed in residence. Courses completed at MU with a grade of D may not be counted toward graduation unless balanced by A or B grades earned in residence at MU; departments may refuse to accept a D in specific required courses. A student dually enrolled in the College and in either the School of Medicine or the School of Law may not apply D grades in professional school course work toward the degree.

**3000-level Requirement.** A candidate must pass a minimum of 30 hours in courses numbered 3000 or above, including courses in the major. These courses must be regularly accepted for credit in the College of Arts and Science.

**Major.** At least 18 hours in courses numbered 2000 or above, completed with a grade of C or higher, must be in the major. A minimum of 12 hours at 2000 or above level in the major must be completed in residence at MU.

**Enrollment.** Full-time students must enroll in a minimum of 12 credit hours; a normal course load is 15-16 hours per semester. Consult the *Undergraduate Catalog* for details.
DOUBLE MAJORS

Many Religious Studies students also have a major in another Arts and Science department. Such students receive one bachelor's degree, which designates the two major areas. A student files for a double major by submitting two graduation plans. One form lists all foundation requirements and the departmental courses for the major in one area. The second form lists the courses in a second department that satisfy its major requirements. Students may list courses appearing on the second graduation plan to satisfy foundation requirements. So, for example, if a student wishes to major in Religious Studies and Psychology, he or she might fill out a Religious Studies graduation plan. In completing that form, the student could include courses in Psychology in fulfillment of the foundation requirement in the behavioral sciences (but no Religious Studies courses can be used for the Humanities requirement). The student would then also submit another form to the Psychology Department, which lists the courses required for a Psychology major. There are possibilities of crafting a double major to the specific needs and circumstances of a student, and therefore all students considering double majors should consult with an advisor from the Dean’s office when filing the Graduation Plan.

DUAL DEGREES

Some Religious Studies students earn another degree in a second college, such as Journalism. Such students receive two degrees, a BA degree from Arts and Science and a degree such as the BJ degree from Journalism. Students must meet the requirements of both colleges and must earn at least 132 hours of credit.

INTERDISCIPLINARY DEGREES

With the consent of the director of special degree programs, a student may follow a degree program that combines Religious Studies courses with courses in other departments and colleges. Students should consult the director of special degree programs for further information.

ACADEMIC HONORS

THE HONORS DEGREE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

A student who wishes to graduate with Honors in Religious Studies must submit an honors thesis. To be eligible to submit a thesis for Honors in Religious Studies, a major must be a senior or second semester junior and must have at least an overall GPA of 3.3 and a GPA of 3.5 in Religious Studies.
An honors thesis should arise from an original conception of the student and then involve significant research in appropriate primary and secondary sources. The student should ultimately have a command of the subject ordinarily expected of a master's degree candidate.

The honors thesis may be a newly conceived paper or a substantial revision and expansion of an earlier essay. In length it should comprise between 25 and 30 pages. The finished essay should follow the Turabian Chicago style, or another generally accepted standard format. It should be clear, coherent, and persuasive.

Work on the honors thesis must be done under the direction of a faculty advisor from the Religious Studies Department. A detailed proposal needs to be submitted to the faculty advisor and the Director of Undergraduate Studies in the semester prior to starting work on the thesis, i.e., in Fall if thesis work is planned for the Winter semester, or in Winter or Summer if thesis work is planned for the Fall semester. If the proposal is accepted, the student will enroll in RS 4960 "Directed Readings" in the following semester and will work closely with his/her advisor throughout that semester. The three credit hours of this course can be counted towards the minimum 30 hours required of the major.

Two copies of the completed thesis need to be submitted two weeks prior to that semester’s stop day, one to the advisor and one to a second Religious Studies faculty member. Two weeks later a formal defense will be held, during which the readers will determine whether or not the thesis merits honors.

THE HONORS COLLEGE

Eligibility for the Honors program is determined by the Honors College, 211 Lowry Hall. For incoming first year students, honors eligibility typically requires an ACT score of 29 or higher and ranking in the top 10% of their high school classes. For continuing and transfer students, a GPA of 3.5 or higher is required. A GPA of 3.0 is needed to remain in good standing. Both honors courses and honors sections are generally small and thus provide an opportunity for sustained interaction with instructors and with fellow students. The Department of Religious Studies regularly offers such honors courses and courses with honors sections. Students who take 20 credit hours in honors courses receive an Honors certificate and will have that distinction recorded on their transcripts and diplomas. For further information, contact the Honors College.

LATIN HONORS

Students in the College of Arts and Science earn Latin Honors if they have completed their last 60 hours at MU with no pass/fail coursework (unless a course is only offered on a
pass/fail basis) and have a minimum 3.7 cumulative GPA.

3.7-3.79 “cum laude,”

3.8-3.89 “magna cum laude,”

3.9-4.0 “summa cum laude.”

**HONORS SOCIETIES**

*Phi Beta Kappa*, founded in 1776, is the oldest Greek-letter scholastic honorary in American higher education. Whereas other honorary societies exist to reward scholarship in individual disciplines and in fields other than the liberal arts and sciences, Phi Beta Kappa is dedicated to the ideal of liberal learning and general education. Election to membership originates with a nomination process initiated from within the local chapter. Criteria for nomination of graduating seniors include outstanding scholarly achievement; integrity of character; and completion of a course of studies encompassing a broad range of disciplines and subject matter. *Mortar Board* is dedicated to promoting equal opportunities among all peoples, emphasizing the advancement of the status of women. It elects juniors based on the applicant’s superior scholarship, leadership, service to the university and dedication to their ideals. Students with GPAs of 3.3 or higher may apply in January or February. *ODK* is a junior honorary which recognizes individuals who have attained a high standard of achievements in collegiate activities. As representatives of *ODK*, they encourage others to strive for attainment in scholarship, athletics, social and service activities, religious activities, campus governments, journalism and the performing arts. *LSV* is a secret honorary which recognizes the most outstanding senior women on the Mizzou campus who, through their individual service to the University and the community, continually strive to promote and improve the status of women. *Mystical Seven*, formerly a secret honor society, selects the seven most outstanding men and women on campus on the basis of their good works throughout the community and unselfish leadership ability. *Golden Key National Honor Society* serves as a scholastic honorary for juniors and seniors in the top 15 percent of their classes. Membership is by invitation only and is based on grade point average. *Sigma Rho Sigma* is an organization composed of juniors who have excelled both in academics and extra-curricular activities. The honorary’s purpose is to recognize and honor these students, as well as to facilitate interaction among them in both service and social activities.

Missouri students with GPAs of 3.5 or higher are automatically designated *University Scholars*, if they are not already *Curators Scholars*, and are eligible for a small reduction in tuition. Students transferring from another college to MU with GPAs of 3.5 or higher should apply to Financial Aid to be designated University Scholars.
STUDY ABROAD

Studying abroad is an excellent way to enrich your college career educationally and personally. By studying abroad students can master a language, explore a culture, and gain new insights on the world. Imagine not only reading about the Aztecs, but climbing their pyramid of the sun in Mexico. Or how would you like to study at an Israeli university and live in the center of the Jewish, Christian and Muslim world? These and many other opportunities are available on a study abroad program.

Students can study just about anywhere in the world through an MU-or other university-sponsored program. MU has sites in Australia, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Russia, Spain, South Africa, the United Kingdom and others. MU also has several consortium agreements with other study abroad organizations which offer even more locations for you to choose from. For researching programs sponsored by other institutions, the International Center has guides and brochures about the options for study abroad.

Undergraduates who are in good standing and have completed one semester at MU are eligible to study abroad. Various programs have different requirements, such as a minimum GPA, sophomore or junior standing, or a language requirement. Study abroad program brochures will contain information about specific requirements.

Programs can be as short as a three-week summer session or as long as a full academic semester or year. Students usually earn 3 to 9 credits for summer programs, and 12 to 15 hours of credit per semester for semester and year-long programs. With careful planning with your academic advisor, you should be able to fulfill requirements for graduation.

Costs vary within each program, depending on the site and the length of stay. Some MU programs are exchanges, which means that the participant pays MU educational fees while attending an international university. Federal, state and campus-based financial aid can be applied to MU programs. Some financial aid can be applied to non-MU programs. You should speak to the financial aid advisor in charge of study abroad in 11 Jesse Hall (882-7506) to find out about your individual financial aid package. In addition to your regular MU financial aid, you could qualify for special study abroad scholarships through the International Center.

For more information about your options for study abroad, go to the International Center in N52 Memorial Union. The study abroad resource room is the place to begin your search. It has all kinds of information about study abroad, work abroad, and international travel. You are also encouraged to call the International Center at 882-6007 and visit their web site at http://international.missouri.edu/ for more information.
SCHOLARSHIPS

DEPARTMENT:

Chapman Scholars in Religion. Each year the department gives two $250 awards to majors for their accomplishments in the study of religion and their contributions to the program in Religious Studies. These awards have been made possible by a gift to the department from Dr. Charles L. and Paula Chapman.

The Community Service Scholarship. The department also awards one or two $250 scholarships each year to students who have demonstrated a commitment to public service. Majors, minors, and masters degree students are eligible. Nomination forms are available at the department office. A gift from Elizabeth MacKenzie allowed the department to establish this award.

UNDERGRADUATE:

Truman Scholarships provide up to $7,000 per year for four years, beginning in the junior year, for students who plan to pursue a career in government. At least one is selected from the state of Missouri each year, and 105 are selected nationwide. Because selection is made during the fall semester of the sophomore year, students should begin preparing as freshmen. Applications are usually due November 1.

Rhodes Scholarships provide funding for two years of study at Oxford University in England. Selection is usually made during the fall semester of the senior year. Applications are usually due November 1.

Fulbright Scholarships provide funding for research and study in other countries. Selection is usually made during the senior year or thereafter. Applications are due in June or September, depending on the country, for study a year later.

Rotary Scholarships, provided by Rotary Clubs, allow a year’s study in a country that has Rotary Clubs. Applications are usually due to local Rotary clubs by June for study a year later.

Foreign Language Scholarships, open to majors who want to develop a high level of ability in a language, is a two year award by the Air Force ROTC.

McNair Program. One of the most exciting aspects of the McNair Program is the opportunity for undergraduate students at the junior and senior levels to participate in research experiences.

Interns receive a stipend to conduct research and engage in other scholarly activities with faculty mentors from the areas in which they hope to pursue graduate study. McNair Scholars also attend professional conferences with their mentors, go to graduate school fairs, prepare for graduate school entrance exams, receive guidance through the graduate school application process and obtain information on securing fellowships, graduate assistantships, and loans. Participants learn about graduate school life, advanced library skills, and effective ways to present their work.
At the completion of the research internships at MU, McNair scholars make formal presentations of their research to faculty and peers at the McNair Scholars Conference and submit papers summarizing their work. Students who are in their freshman and sophomore years are considered recruits and participate in a pre-intern program. They learn about the opportunities associated with having a doctoral education, what research and scholarly activity entail, and what they should do as underclassmen to prepare to become McNair Scholars.

**Mentorship:** The College of Arts and Science has a fine program for honors-eligible students. Summer mentorships provide $3,000 to enable the student to research and write without having to do other kinds of work for the two months (June-July) of the formal mentorship period. Working closely with a professor, the student is expected to write a paper of publishable quality and to orally present his/her work at the end of July. Semester mentorships provide $500 for the same purposes. Applications may be made in March or November.

**AFTER GRADUATION**

The liberal arts background, which Religious Studies provides, opens a wide range of possibilities in postgraduate work. Graduates in Religious Studies have entered a variety of graduate programs and professional schools. In addition to graduate study in religion, students from this program have gone on to school in clinical psychology, English, music, history, economics, seminary, Asian and Oriental studies, law school and medical school. They have been accepted at institutions such as the University of Chicago, The Claremont Graduate Schools, The Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley, Duke University, Purdue University, Harvard, Washington University, University of Washington, and others. Other graduates have worked and traveled abroad, aided in their understanding of other cultures by the degree in Religious Studies. Others have found employment in journalism and business.

Placement services are offered by the **MU Career Center**, located in the Student Success Center at 909 Lowry Mall. These services include job listings, seminars on résumé writing, job interviewing, etc., and video-taped practice job interviews. Recruiters also hold interviews at the Center. The Center has lists of part-time jobs and of internships, externships and cooperative education programs which can help in planning a career.

**GOING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL?**

Our best recommendation is to *plan ahead*. Ask for advice from faculty in fields you might wish to study. Just within Religious Studies, the excellence and suitability of programs at a specific university may vary widely.

Most graduate programs require successful completion of the **Graduate Record Exam (GRE)**. You may retake the exam and submit your better score. Therefore, allow time to take your GRE twice. Contact the Learning Center, 231 Arts and Science, for advice about how to take the GRE, or attend a workshop.
Most graduate programs require one language (normally French or German) for the Master’s degree and a second for the Ph.D. Take language exams while your college language course is still fresh in your memory.

Apply to a variety of schools with a variety of tuition and entrance requirements. Include, for example, both private and state institutions. Explore early the options of financing.

Consider whether you want to be a Teaching or a Research Assistant. Since not all programs offer assistantships, investigate the possibility of such positions in the universities under consideration.

**RELIGIOUS STUDIES FACULTY**

Listed below are faculty, their degrees, office, telephone number, and e-mail address, and the courses they most regularly teach.

**Amponsah, David**, Ph.D., African American & African Diaspora Studies, Indiana University Assistant Professor (African Studies) 221A Arts & Science, 882-5692, email: amponsahd@missouri.edu  
Courses: Indigenous Religions, African American Religion

**Richard Callahan**, Ph.D., University of California (Santa Barbara), Associate Professor (American Religions), Chair of Religious Studies, 221K Arts & Science, 882-0060, e-mail: callahanri@missouri.edu. **Courses**: History of Religion in America, African-American Religion, Native American Religion.

**Signe Cohen**, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania – Director of Graduate Studies, Associate Professor (South Asian Religions), 221E Arts & Science, 882-4760, e-mail: cohens@missouri.edu. **Courses**: Major World Religions, Asian Humanities, Hinduism; Buddhism of South and Southeast Asia.

**Carrie Duncan**, Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of Pennsylvania Assistant Professor (Ancient Mediterranean Religions, Biblical Studies) 221A Arts & Science, 882-2979, email: duncance@missouri.edu. **Courses**: Intro to Hebrew Bible/Old Testament; Intro to the New Testament; The Problem of Evil; Theodicy in the Ancient Near East; Jesus in Myth, Tradition and History.

**Bob Flanagan**, Ph.D., University of Iowa – Director of Undergraduate Studies, Assistant Teaching Professor (Religion and Culture), 221H Arts & Science, 882-0059, e-mail: flanaganb@missouri.edu. **Courses**: Religion and Contemporary Social Issues; Intro to Religion; Contemporary Religious Thought; The Reality of God; Jewish-Christian Relations.

**Rabia Gregory**, Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Associate Professor (History of Christianity), 221F Arts & Science, 882-5505, email: gregoryra@missouri.edu
Courses: Medieval Christianity, Major Religious Thinkers, Women & Religion.

Nate Hofer, Ph.D., Emory University, Assistant Professor (Islam), 221G Arts & Science, 882-0058, E-mail: hofern@missouri.edu. Courses: Islam; Judaism

Dennis Kelley, Ph.D. University of California, (Santa Barbara), Assistant Professor (Religions of Native North America) 221J Arts & Science, 882-8831, E-mail: Kelleydf@missouri.edu. Courses: Indigenous Religions, Native American Religions, Religious Myth and Ritual.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES ADJUNCT FACULTY

Dan Cohen, Ph.D., University of Virginia
Assistant Teaching Professor (South Asian Religions; Religion and Culture)
221B Arts & Science, 884-1796, e-mail: cohenda@missouri.edu
Courses: Major World Religions, Hinduism, Religion and Film, Religion and Law.

Rabbi Yossi Feintuch, Ph.D., Emory University
Lecturer in Judaic Studies
Hillel Foundation, 1107 University Ave., 499-4855, e-mail: congbeth@tranquility.net
Courses: Judaism, Essential Stories of the Torah; Jewish Ethics.

Elaine J. Lawless, Ph.D., Indiana University
Adjunct Professor of Women & Religion
309B Tate, 882-6885, e-mail: lawlesse@missouri.edu.
Courses: Women and Religion, Religious Folklore.

Jill Raitt, Ph.D., University of Chicago
Professor Emerita of the History of Christianity
221 Arts & Science, 882-4769, e-mail: raittj@missouri.edu
Courses: History of Christianity.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES VISITING FACULTY

Leah Rosenberg, Ph.D., Emory University
Visiting Assistant Professor (Religions in America)
212A Arts & Science; email: rosenbergl@missouri.edu
Course: Death and Dying in America

RELIGIOUS STUDIES STAFF

Connie Benson
Office Support Assistant IV
221 Arts & Science, 882-4769, e-mail: dunnc@missouri.edu
THE CURRICULUM

Most courses satisfy general humanities requirements. However, Religious Studies courses used toward the major may not be used to fulfill foundation requirements for the Religious Studies major. All courses numbered in the 2000s and 3000s require sophomore standing; courses numbered in the 4000s require junior standing. Three credit hours are awarded for each course unless noted.

The Religious Studies major and minor require a distribution of courses among three fields of study [Asian (A), Indigenous (I), and Western (W)]. Courses that do not satisfy a field of study requirement are considered Electives (E). Distribution requirements satisfied by particular courses in the curriculum are indicated by capital letters in parentheses after the title of the course. For example, (A) following Hinduism indicates that course satisfies the Asian field of study requirements if you have questions about which requirements are satisfied by which courses, please consult with your advisor.

Directed readings courses, Rel St 2950, 4960, are intended to offer majors an opportunity to study in depth particular subjects which are not included in other courses offered within the university or to provide academic credit to students doing research projects with individual faculty. Students should already have had basic courses in the area to be studied before requesting a directed readings course. These courses are not designed to introduce an area of study. Students interested in such courses should consult with the faculty members in the appropriate fields.

1100 - Introduction to Religion (E)
Introduces students to: the academic study of religion, some of the questions religions claim to answer, some of the answers proposed by particular religions, and the historical and contemporary religious situations in local, national, and global contexts. This course or RS 2110 is required of the major.

1500 - Religion and Culture (E)
The study of religion as expressed in art, literature, music, dance, drama, and architecture.

1820 - Asian Humanities (A)
This course is an introduction to the literature and visual arts of Asia through selected master works. It focuses on India and China investigates the distinctive features of their cultures. (same as History 1820 & South Asian Studies 1152)

2001 Topics (General) and /2005 Topics (Humanities)
Organized study of selected topics that vary by semester and are announced at time of registration. Prerequisite: instructor’s consent.

2100 - Indigenous Religion (I)
Explores the central aspects of religious life in indigenous communities. Focusing on specific Native communities, it considers individual and group identity and the meaning of the sacred. (Same as Anthro 2100).

2110 – Religions of the World (E)
Explores the differing ways in which Asian and Western religions interpret life and reality. Includes study of Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese and Japanese religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This course or RS 1100 is required of the major.

2220 – Death and Dying in the Western World (E)
Drawing on theoretical perspectives and evidence from both religious and American studies, this course examines death and dying in America by focusing on psycho-social, cultural, and historical themes. Through course readings, lectures, and audio-visual media shifting attitudes towards the dead, as well as the treatment and management of the corpse will be examined. In addition to our text book, which will provide an intellectual framework for thinking about death and dying, this course is organized chronologically around case studies or key events. For example, we will examine the Civil War, a war that resulted in the terrible destruction of thousands of bodies along with new methods for burying and preserving the dead. We will also take a look at psycho-social and cultural attitudes towards death from the perspective of American war vets. We conclude this course by taking a close look at living and dying on death row, the death penalty, and the role of the state in putting people to death.

2230 – Religion and Popular Culture in the U.S. (E)
Explores intersection sof religion and popular culture and methods for analysis.

2240 – Harry Potter, Magic, and Religion (E)
This course explores religious themes in J.K. Rowling’s Harry potter series. Topics include ancient Greek, Roman, Celtic, and Norse mythological themes, the relationship between religion and magic, and reactions to the books among various religious groups.

2250 – Religious Perspective on Peace and War (E)
In this course we will study religious approaches to peacemaking as well as religious justifications of war. We will examine the life and work of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Thich Nhat Hanh, and Dorothy Day, among other religious leaders. Traditions studied include Native American, Buddhist, Hindu and Christian.

2260 – Gods, Dwarves, and Dragons: Introduction to Old Norse Mythology (E)
This course is an introduction to the pre-Christian religion and mythology of Northern Europe.

Topics covered include Old Norse society, gender roles, and values. Main deities and mythological figures are explored through images and texts. Graded on A-F basis only.
Credit Hours: 2. Possibly offered through the intersession in January.

2270 – Modern Literature and the Quest for Values (E)
This course is an interdisciplinary study of the religious and ethical questions, quests, and
solutions in the literary works of selected modern writers: Beckett, Eliot, Camus, Kazantzakis, O’Connor, Updike, Wiesel, Percy, Morrison and Dillard. (Cross-listed with Honors 2270H)

2280 – Biblical Themes in American Literature (E)
A study of the sources in the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament and their reinterpretation in classic American texts. Such a study, initially textual, results in a history of American ideas. Authors studied include MacLeish, Baldwin, O’Conner, Updike, Percy, and Morrison.

2310 – Religions of China and Japan (A)
Introduction to the religions of China and Japan, focusing on both popular beliefs and institutionalized religion. Topics include Buddhist, Confucian, and Daoist traditions of China; Buddhism and Shinto in Japan; self-cultivation practices; spirit-mediumship; ritual; cosmology; religion and society; religion and the state.

2400 – Judaism (W)
A comprehensive introduction to Judaism: an overview of Jewish philosophy and theology, rituals and customs.

2410 – Essential Stories of the Torah (W)
Students will examine major narratives and texts from the Pentateuch section of the Hebrew Bible. This class will present ancient, medieval, and contemporary interpretations that demonstrate how biblical texts can be construed in more than one way.

2420 – Jewish Ethics (W)
The study and discussion of selected traditional and modern Jewish ethics (e.g., anger, fair speech, gratitude, charity, the animal world) that derive from ancient sources such as the Hebrew Bible, the Talmud, Rabbinic commentaries and contemporary resources.

2450 – The Holocaust and Reflections on Genocide (E)
Examines the nature of genocide as an historical phenomenon using the Holocaust as the primary case study.

2500 – Introduction to the Hebrew Bible and its World (W)
An introduction to the literature, history, institutions and thought contained in the Hebrew Bible and to the methods and principles necessary for the scholarly study of scripture.

2510 – Introduction to the New Testament and its World (W)
An introduction to the literature of the New Testament and the methods and principles guiding its interpretation, with particular attention to its structure, thought, and historical setting.

2600 – Early Christianity (W)
History of Christian practices and teachings from Christian origins through the 5th century, including Eastern Orthodoxy, Syrian Christianity, Roman Catholicism. Themes such as interpretation and creation of Scriptures, worship style, central rituals, debates about right teaching (orthodoxy), mysticism and developing lifestyles both in and apart from the world.
(Same as History 2600).

2610 – Medieval Christianity (W)
History of Christian practices and teachings from the 5th – 15th century, including Byzantine and Western Christianity. Themes such as the influence of the Islamic world on Christianity, popular and elite formulations of theology and ritual activities. (Same as History 2610).

2620 – History of Christianity, 1500-Present (W)
History of Christian practices and teachings from the 15th – 21st century, including global dimensions of Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant and other forms of Christianity. Themes such as right teaching and practice, indigenous-Christian contact, mission and expansion, impact of secular theories, contemporary debates. (Same as History 2620).

2630 – History of Christian Traditions (W)
An overview of the origins and development of Christianities from the first century of the Common Era to the present day. Topic will include competing Christian theologies, colonialism, conversion narratives, globalization, religious violence, and heresy. (Same as History 2630).

2700 – Islam (W)
Examines the historical development of Islamic traditions, noting the manner in which various Islamic groups understand religion, humanity and God.

2900 – Contemporary Religious Thought (W)
Explores issues within contemporary Christian theology that cut across denominational lines such as: the existence of God; secularization, relativism, and humanism; the authority of the Bible; attitudes toward other religions; the moral integrity of Christianity; and the purpose of human existence.

2910 – Religion and Contemporary Social Issues (E)
Considers the religious dimensions of various contemporary social issues, and ways in which religion and society influence each other.

2920 – Images of Good and Evil (E)
Study of religious symbols, stories, and conceptual systems that explore the nature and power of good and evil. Includes examination of both ancient and contemporary religions.

2930 – Religion and Psychological Perspectives (E)
Examines how religion is understood from various psychological perspectives, and how psychological theories reflect religious presuppositions about the nature and purpose of human life.

2939 – Religion and Human Sexuality (W)
Examines different attitudes within the Christian tradition toward sexuality, especially as they pertain to issues such as the meaning and value of bodies, gender identity, marriage, politics,
morality, and pluralism.

2950 – Directed Readings in Religion
Independent readings selected in consultation with supervisory faculty member. May not be repeated. Prerequisite: instructor’s consent.

3000 – History of Religion in America to the Civil War (E)
Surveys major American religious traditions, patterns, and themes from 1492 to the Civil War, especially the role of religion in American social, cultural, and political developments. Prerequisites: sophomore standing or instructor’s consent. (Same as History 3000).

3001 – Topics (General)
Organized study of selected topics that vary by semester and are announced at time of registration.

3005 – Topics (Humanities)
Organized study of selected topics that vary by semester and are announced at time of registration.

3100 – Religious Literacy for the Public and Professions. (E)
This course teaches students to engage and encounter religion in day-to-day life and in the professional workplace. Its primary goal is to examine religious diversity in private and professional contexts from a practical standpoint by examining a variety of case studies.

3200 – Hinduism (A)
Origin and development of central themes of traditional Hinduism from earliest times to modern period. Topics include: the Vedic tradition, rituals and practice, varieties of Yoga, and Meditation, Indian religious thought, and devotional Hinduism. (Same as SAS 3200).

3210 – History of Religion in Post-Civil War America (E)
Surveys major American religious traditions, patterns, and themes from 1865 to the present, especially the role of religion in American social, cultural, and political developments. Prerequisite: sophomore standing or instructor’s consent. (Same as History 3210).

3230 – Buddhism and Environmental Ethics (A)
Global environmental crisis is associated with rapidly expanding human population. Buddhist teachings about the interdependent aspects of existence and interrelatedness of all life may provide critical insights for how humanity can achieve balance and reciprocity with nature. (Same as South Asian Studies S_A_ST 3230).

3240 – Buddhism of South & Southeast Asia (A)
Examines the origins of Buddhism in India, the narratives of the life of the Buddha, the development of early Buddhist schools, the extension of Buddhism into Central and Southeast Asia, and the current practice of Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia. (Same as SAS 3240).
3250 – Buddhism of East Asia (A)
This course will trace the transmission of Buddhism from the Indian subcontinent to China, and from there to Korea and Japan. We will examine the historical development of East Asian forms of Buddhism, deal with key issues of Buddhist thought and practice, and look at the role of Buddhism in modern East Asian societies. Prerequisites: 1100, or 2110, or 2310, or 3240 or instructor's consent.

3260 – Hindu Goddesses (A)
This course examines the vast range of Hindu Goddesses and their worship in South Asia. It includes information about goddess origins, mythology, symbolism, and attendant ritual practices. In order to approach this topic, background information about the history of Hinduism, major religious narratives, devotional practices, and iconographic representations of the divine are discussed. The course introduces the approaches of various scholars to Hindu Goddess worship within the context of religion, social relations, and gender roles, and explores ways in which South Asian women experience and negotiate feminine power in contemporary socio-cultural contexts.

REL_ST 3270: Yoga and Meditation in the Modern World
This course explores the practice of Yoga and meditation, both as an ancient tradition of India and as an example of the globalization of religion. It will examine how the ancient Hindu religious tradition of Yoga was reinvented against the backdrop of India's colonial experience. Then it will look at a variety of emerging and transforming varieties of Hindu inspired yoga and meditation that spread globally in the context of increasing transnational interaction. To better appreciate both the traditional and the modern aspects of yoga and meditation, a secular meditation practice is included as an instructional and experiential component of this class.
Credit Hours: 4

REL_ST 3280: Chinese Popular Religion
Starting with a consideration of conceptual issues (what is 'popular religion'?), the course will give a survey of the beliefs and practices of Chinese popular religion, including ancestor worship, territorial cults, spirit-mediumism, divination, and popular sects.

3300 – The Prophets (W)
Study of the prophetic writings of the Hebrew Scriptures, with consideration of the origin and nature of Israelite prophecy. Includes the narratives of the period of prophetic activity and study of the classical prophets. Prerequisite: RS 2500 or instructor's consent.

3310 – The Problem of Evil: Theodicy in the Ancient Near East (W)
Detailed interpretation of the Psalms, Proverbs, and related writings of the broad wisdom tradition, with critical attention to the literary style and structure of the writings.

REL_ST 3360: Cults and New Religious Movements
While religious traditions constantly change, and new religions emerge in every historical time period, the new religious movements of the past century (many of which are often referred to negatively as "cults") present a particular challenge to contemporary cultures and societies. We
will begin with a theoretical overview of new religious movements (NRM$s$) and will proceed gradually to discuss in detail the religion of the Peoples Temple and its charismatic leader and founder, Jim Jones. Recommended: An introductory course in any of the following disciplines/area studies: Religious Studies, Psychology, Communication Studies (emphasis on Media and Society/Media Theory); or Sociology.

3380 – Native American Religions (I)
Investigation of religious lives of the native peoples of the Americas through cultural contact with modernity. Perspectives based on historical anthropological and native texts. (Same as ANTHRO 3380).

Examination of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke as single works and as literarily related compositions. Interpretation focuses on the literary form of passages and the theological and ethical themes expressed. Prerequisite: RS2510 or instructor's consent.

3410 – Cities and Letters of Paul: An Archaeological Investigation (W)
Reconstruction of the life and letters of the Apostle Paul; examination of his thought in relation to Jesus of Nazareth and to earliest Christianity.

3420 – Jesus in Myth, Tradition and History (W)
This course will explore the identity and character of Jesus of Nazareth as depicted in various early Christian canonical and non-canonical sources and, using a variety of scholarly techniques, ascertain what information in those sources can be considered to describe accurately the real, historical Jesus.

3430 – Revelation and Apocalyptic Literature (W)
A study of Jewish and Christian apocalyptic literature with an emphasis on the Revelation to St. John. Prerequisite: RS2510 or instructor’s consent.

3445 – The Body in Western Christianity (W)
This course is a survey of Western Christian Perspectives for the human body ranging from the Early Church Fathers to trends in contemporary American culture.

3451 – Religion in Science Fiction (W)
Investigation of religious themes in science fiction novels, short stories and film. Themes include the nature of the sacred, the limits of human knowledge, understanding and experiencing transcendence, revelation and apocalypse.

3455 – Robots and Religion: Reflections on Self, Soul, and Humanity (W)
This course explores ancient and modern texts about robots, androids, and other artificial and virtual humans in order to analyze cultural and religious notions of what it means to be human. Course readings include ancient Indian, Tibetan, and Chinese robot stories in translation, medieval Jewish legends about golems, as well as contemporary Western science fiction.

3500 – Judaism in the Time of Jesus (W)
This course is an introduction to the origin and development of Judaism from the time of the destruction of the first Jerusalem temple (587 BCE) to the Bar Kochba revolt (132-135 CE).

3530 – Rabbinic Judaism: Perspective and Literature (W)
Overview of the Jewish oral tradition during the Rabbinic era. The information covered in this course will focus upon the vast literature created during the Mishnaic and Talmudic periods and the emerging new styles and directions of Jewish religious thought.

3540 – Jewish-Christian Relations (W)
Explores historical and contemporary relations between Christians and Jews, and the transformations in Christian thought and practice resulting from awareness of Christianity’s role in the Shoah and from post-Shoah dialogues between Jews and Christians.

3600 – Spirituality (W)
Comparative investigation of selected mystical writings from Western religious traditions; consideration of contemporary psychological, philosophical, and phenomenological interpretations of mystical experience.

3700 – Modern Religious Thought (W)
Examination of the theological systems of major Christian thinkers and movements of the 19th and 20th centuries in relation to religious traditions and cultural challenges.

3710 – Reality of God (W)
Explores the meaning of the “loss of God” (Tillich) and various 20th century attempts to reaffirm the reality of God.

3740 – Religion and Film (E)
Addresses issues of interpretation and analysis in the convergence of religion and film. Addresses three areas under this broad rubric: 1) film representations of established religions; 2) film and the construction of social values; 3) film as contemporary “myth”. Treating films as social texts, we will ask what such representations of ourselves to ourselves suggest about culture in general.

3750 – Women and Religion (E)
A study of the wealth of religious activity that women have created and enacted. Investigates women’s roles and rituals in large-scale and local religions, including ancient Goddess religions, Vodou, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Native American groups. (Cross-listed with Women Studies 3750).

3760 – Geography of the World’s Religions (E)
Explores the significance of place in the origin, diffusion, distribution and practice of religions, emphasizing imprints of religion on the cultural landscape and connections between culture, politics, economics, and religion. Prerequisite; 1000/2000 level Geography course; junior standing or instructor’s consent. (Same as Geography (GEOG) 3760).

3800 – Religion in America Today (E)
Explores in depth a few selected issues currently shaping or being shaped by religion in the United States. Specific topics will be chosen from events conflicts, developments, or news items within the last five years. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

3820 – Religion and Law in America (W)
This class explores how the U.S. legal system is navigating an increasing diversity of religious traditions. Course examines the place of religious values and the ongoing tension between religion and law in the legal system of the U.S. through a variety of controversial topics.

3990 Majors Seminar
The purpose of this seminar is to encourage Religious Studies majors to form a community of inquiry focused on the subject of religion and public life, to become familiar with the scholarly methods used by researchers in Religious Studies and the contributions they make to understanding religion and public life, and to learn about the professional or continuing educational opportunities for Religious Studies majors after completing the BA degree. Required class for Rel St majors.

4001/4005 – Topics
Organized study of selected topics that vary by semester and are announced at time of registration. Prerequisite: junior standing or instructor’s consent.

4100/7100 – Advanced Theories and Methods (E)
The course investigates the history of the modern academic study of religion, closely exploring influential theories and methods that have shaped scholarly perspectives. May include approaches such as structuralism, phenomenology, Durkheimian and Weberian sociology, Marxism, feminism, thick description, psychoanalysis, and others. Limited to Religious Studies majors and MA students.

4110/7110 – Myth and Religious Symbolism (I)
Emphasizes the comparison of one theme; e.g., a divine figure (Trickster, High God), memory and forgetting, creation, fertility, origins of death, etc.

4120/7120 – Studies in Ritual (I)
Exploration of particular themes of religious expression in seasonal, calendric and life-cycle rituals and in personal and public ceremonies. Includes comparisons of indigenous communities and modern society.

4130 – Haunting and Healing (W)
This course explores beliefs and practices relating to supernatural beings and powers in American culture. We apply a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches to illuminate the diversity of meanings, functions, and contexts of ghosts, spirits, and supernatural healing in the popular culture of the United States, as well as in specific regional, ethnic, and faith communities.

4150/7150 – Religion, Spirituality and the Brain (E)
Explores neuropsychology of religion, spirituality, transcendence, and mystical experience.
Covers development in neuroscience about how the brain works in a variety of religious and spiritual contexts, including prayer meditation, and altered states of consciousness.

4200/7800 – Survey of West African and African Diasporic Religions (I)
Explores traditional African religions and African Islam prior to the slave trade. Also, will examine the Christianity of African American slaves.

4210/7810 – African American Religion (W)
Historical and thematic examination of African American religious traditions and practices. Addresses intersections of religious expression with race, identity, culture, and society. (Same as Black Studies 4210).

4280/7280 – Archaeology of Religion (E)
This course examines how anthropologists conceptualize religious behavior, and how archaeologist use material remains to examine past religious behavior, rituals, religious practitioners, cosmological constructs, worldview and ideology in the Americas. Prerequisite: Anthropology (ANTHRO) 2020 and/or Religious Studies (REL_ST) 2100.

4300/7700 – Religious Narratives of South Asia (A)
Study of major narratives of India and their interpretation in literature and art. Topics include: Vedic and Epic mythology, stories of Krishna, myths and images of Shiva, and forms of the Goddess (same as SAS 4300). Prerequisite: RS2110, 3200, or 3240, or instructor’s consent.

4310/7710 – Confucian Tradition: Past and Present (A)
Investigates Confucianism as the dominant religio-philosophical tradition of China and its impact on Korea and Japan. We will study basic Confucian canonical texts, follow the traditions, historical development, look at its interactions with other religions, and discuss its continuing relevance of the Confucian tradition in modern East Asia.

4320/7720 – Introduction to Daoism (A)
An introduction to the Daoist religious tradition, beginning with its background in earlier forms of philosophy, ritual, and belief. We will follow the development of various Daoist schools and movements over the centuries and examine key aspects of their beliefs and practices, both historical and contemporary.

4380/7380 – Anthropological Theories of Religion (E)
Course provides a critical evaluation of anthropological explanations of various forms of traditional religious behavior such as magic, shamanism, divination, ritual, mythology, and witchcraft. The anthropological explanations examined range from nineteenth century classics to the current approaches of today. Prerequisites: Anthropology (ANTHRO) 2030, ANTHRO/RELIGIOUS Studies (REL_ST) 2100, or instructor’s consent.

4400/7510 – Catholic Intellectual Tradition (W)
Students will read the great thinkers of the Catholic Church such as Augustine, Abelard, Bernard of Clairvaux, Aquinas, Bonaventure, Nicholas of Cusa, Pascal, Newman, Maritain, Rahner, Johnson & Tracy. The theme examined may vary from year to year.
4410/7520 – Major Religious Thinkers (W)
Concentrated study of one or more selected theologians, such as Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Buber, Tillich, and McFague. Varies by year.

4418/7418 – Religion Reporting and Writing (E)
Advanced seminar in religion reporting and writing. Examines the role of religion journalism in faith, public life, and cultures. Prerequisite: Journ 4450, professional writing experience, and consent of the instructor.

4500/7500 – Greek and Roman Literature (W)
Survey of religious developments among the Greeks and Romans. Prerequisite: sophomore standing and CL HUM 1060 – AR H A 1110 or History 1520.

4550 – Historical Jesus (W)
This course examines theory, method, and conclusion in recent Jesus scholarship. Attention is also paid to the historical and cultural contexts in which Jesus research becomes prominent. Prerequisite: RS2510 or instructor’s consent.

4630/7630 – Sanskrit I (A)
This intensive course will cover the essentials of Sanskrit grammar in one semester and prepare students for further readings in Hindu and Buddhist literature. (Same as SAS 4350).

4640/7640 – Sanskrit II (A)
This course is intended as a “sampler” of Sanskrit literature. We will read Sanskrit texts in the original. The objectives of the course are 1) expanding the students’ knowledge of the Sanskrit language, 2) To acquaint the students with a broad range of textual genres in Sanskrit literature, and 3) To acquaint the students with some central ideas of Hindu and Buddhist philosophy.

4750/7750 – Women, Religion and Culture (E)
An advanced study of the role of women in religion, focusing on the methods of determining the significance of gender in religious life, sacred texts, symbols, rituals and/or beliefs. Traditions studied include Christianity, Islam, contemporary pagan communities, and Native American tradition. (Same as Women’s and Gender Studies (WGST) 4750).

4960 – Directed Readings in Religion Studies
Independent readings selected in consultation with supervisory faculty member. May be repeated up to 6 hours. Prerequisite: instructor’s consent.

4990 – Senior Seminar in Religious Studies
A seminar in which Religious Studies majors use methods of understanding and comparing religions by focusing on times and places of significant contact among peoples of different religions.
Cover Design: Woodcut of Chinese door gods.
On Chinese New Year, door god pictures are pasted on the front doors of people's homes to guard the house against evil influences for the duration of the year.