

# RELS - RELIGIOUS STUDIES

## RELS120 Islamic Civilization (3 Credits)

Introduction to society and culture in the Middle East since the advent of Islam: as a personal and communal faith; as artistic and literary highlights of intellectual and cultural life; and as the interplay between politics and religion under the major Islamic regimes. Cross-listed with HIST120.

**Credit Only Granted for:** HIST120 or RELS120.

## RELS170 Greek and Roman Mythology (3 Credits)

An introduction to the mythology of ancient Greece and Rome. This course is particularly recommended for students planning to major in foreign languages, English, history, the fine arts, or journalism. Taught in English. Cross-listed with CLAS170.

**Credit Only Granted for:** CLAS170 or RELS170.

**Additional Information:** This course cannot be taken for language credit.

## RELS171 Is Judaism a Religion? (3 Credits)

Jewish identity can be framed in terms of ethnicity, culture, and religious practice, but also in terms of more contemporary social constructions including social action, political engagement, and intellectual pursuit. In the context of such diverse social and individual frames, what does it mean to identify Judaism as a religion? Attention to Jewish society in historical and global perspective will provide a backdrop for a particular focus on contemporary Jews in the United States and Israel. Cross-listed with: JWST171.

**Credit Only Granted for:** JWST171, JWST4190 or RELS4190.

**Formerly:** JWST4190, RELS4190.

## RELS219 Special Topics in Religious Studies (3 Credits)

Special topics in Religious Studies

**Repeatable to:** 9 credits if content differs.

## RELS219A Religions of the Ancient Near East (3 Credits)

Introduction to ancient Near Eastern religious systems and mythology, from the third millennium BCE through the fourth century BCE. Particular emphasis on Mesopotamia and ancient Israel. Cross-listed with: JWST225, HIST219I.

**Credit Only Granted for:** JWST225, HIST219I, or RELS219A.

## RELS219C Inventing Traditions: The Making of Rabbinic Judaism (3 Credits)

Introduces the dramatic literary and cultural (as well as political and demographic) innovations that reshaped Judaism in late antiquity. Examines the fundamental works and genres of rabbinic literature and the religious movement that produced them. Special emphasis on the rabbinic uses of "tradition" to enhance authority and legitimacy, and to foster group identity. Cross-listed with: HIST281, JWST230.

**Credit Only Granted for:** HIST281 or JWST230.

## RELS236 Philosophy of Religion (3 Credits)

A philosophical study of some of the main problems of religious thought: the nature of religious experience, the justification of religious belief, the conflicting claims of religion and science, and the relation between religion and morality. Cross-listed with PHIL236.

**Credit Only Granted for:** PHIL236 or RELS236.

## RELS250 Fundamental Concepts of Judaism (3 Credits)

A conceptual introduction to Judaism, analyzing its fundamental concepts from both analytical and historical perspectives. Discussion of "normative" Judaism as well as other conceptions of Judaism. Topics include: God, the Jewish people, authority, ethics, the sacred and the profane, particularism and universalism. Cross-listed with JWST250, PHIL234.

**Credit Only Granted for:** JWST250, PHIL234, or RELS250.

## RELS264 Introduction to the New Testament (3 Credits)

A historical and literary introduction to the New Testament focusing on the context of the authors and the development of earliest Christianity.

## RELS269 Special Topics in Study Abroad II (1-6 Credits)

Special topics course taken as part of an approved study abroad program.

**Repeatable to:** 15 credits if content differs.

## RELS289 New Explorations in Religious Studies (3 Credits)

Investigation of critical and innovative responses in Religious Studies. Although the topic will vary, the course will encourage intellectual exploration by students of fundamental problems and critical methods.

## RELS289D God Wills It! The Crusades in Medieval and Modern Perspectives (3 Credits)

An examination of the identities and convictions both of the Western Europeans who participated in the Crusades and of the Easterners (Muslim, Christian, and Jewish) whom they encountered in the Holy Land. Focuses on the era of the first four great Crusades, from about 1095 to 1215. Consideration of the cultural impact of these movements on both Western Europe and the Middle East. Cross-listed with: HIST133.

**Credit Only Granted for:** HIST133 or RELS289D.

## RELS319 Special Topics in Religious Studies (1-3 Credits)

Special topics in the study of religious history, literature, culture, and thought.

**Repeatable to:** 6 credits if content differs.

## RELS340 Europe in the Making: The Early Medieval West (A.D. 300-1000) (3 Credits)

From one empire to another: Rome to Charlemagne. This period is approached as a crucible in which classical, Christian, and Germanic elements merged, yielding new experimental syntheses. This course will deal with issues of authority, cultural trends, and the formation of group solidarity. Cross-listed with HIST330.

**Credit Only Granted for:** HIST330 or RELS340.

## RELS341 Europe in the High Middle Ages: 1000-1500 (3 Credits)

Medieval civilization in the 11th through 15th centuries. Emphasis on cultural and political developments of the high Middle Ages with study of the principal sources of medieval thought and learning, art and architecture, and political theory prior to the Renaissance. Cross-listed with HIST331.

**Credit Only Granted for:** HIST331 or RELS341.

## RELS342 Renaissance Europe (3 Credits)

Intellectual developments in Italy and Northern Europe from 1300 to 1550 and their influence on the arts and religion; social and economic trends, including the rise of the commercial economy in cities; the family and the role of women in society; expansion of Europe overseas and the beginnings of colonization; emergence of the state and consequent changes in political theory.

**Prerequisite:** HIST112 or HIST111; or permission of instructor. Also offered as: HIST332.

**Credit Only Granted for:** HIST332 or RELS342.

**RELS343 The European Reformations (3 Credits)**

Examination of developments in European religion between 1450 and 1700; the late-medieval Church and its critics; rise of Protestant thought in Germany and its spread throughout Europe; reform efforts in the Catholic Church; religious wars and violence and their impact on state and society; consequences of religious reform in society and its impact on the family and women.

**Prerequisite:** HIST111; or permission of instructor. Cross-listed with HIST333.

**Credit Only Granted for:** HIST333 or RELS343.

**RELS346 History of Religion in America (3 Credits)**

A history of religion, religious movements, and churches in America from the early Colonial period to the present, with special attention to the relation between church and society.

**Prerequisite:** HIST200, HIST201, HIST210, HIST211, HIST213, HIST254, or HIST255; or permission of instructor. Cross-listed with HIST306.

**Credit Only Granted for:** HIST306 or RELS346.

**RELS369 Special Topics in Study Abroad III (1-6 Credits)**

Special topics course taken as part of an approved study abroad program.

**Repeatable to:** 15 credits if content differs.

**RELS370 Ancient Greek Religion: Gods, Myths, Temples (3 Credits)**

Survey of Greek religious ideas and practices as they evolve from the Bronze Age to the early Christian period. Cross-listed with CLAS330.

**Credit Only Granted for:** CLAS330 or RELS370.

**RELS400 Methods and Theories in the Study of Religion (3 Credits)**

An exploration of scholarly approaches to the study of religion. The modern history of the secular study of religion, social dynamics, textual formations, and ritual practices. Jointly offered with RELS600.

**Credit Only Granted for:** RELS400, RELS419T, RELS600, or RELS619T.

**Formerly:** RELS419T.

**RELS408 Capstone Seminar for Religions of the Ancient Middle East (3 Credits)**

A capstone seminar for majors in Religions of the Ancient Middle East, designed to provide the intellectual framework for a substantial, interdisciplinary research project. Course topics will be thematic and students will be encouraged to explore comparative or interdisciplinary approaches.

**Repeatable to:** 6 credits if content differs.

**RELS419 Advanced Topics in Religious Studies (3 Credits)**

The contemporary study of religion in which topics may address specific religious traditions, regional or historical developments, or methodological and theoretical issues.

**Recommended:** RELS216.

**Repeatable to:** 9 credits if content differs.

**RELS429 Advanced Topics in Religious History (3 Credits)**

Advanced study of religious history in a particular setting, with attention to particular themes, texts, events, or communities.

**Recommended:** RELS216 or RELS289.

**Repeatable to:** 9 credits if content differs.

**RELS430 Dead Sea Scrolls (3 Credits)**

A study of the Dead Sea Scrolls in their ancient and modern settings, and in terms of contemporary scholarly interpretations of their meaning. Interpretations of the historical significance of these documents, their connections to ancient Jewish sectarian movements, and their implications for our understanding of Judaism, Christianity, and the history of the Bible.

**Prerequisite:** Must have completed one JWST course or one RELS course; or permission of ARHU-Meyerhoff Program & Center for Jewish Studies. Cross-listed with JWST430.

**Credit Only Granted for:** JWST430 or RELS430.

**RELS439 Advanced Topics in Religious Thought (3 Credits)**

Advanced study of religious thought in a particular setting, with attention to particular themes, texts, events, or communities.

**Recommended:** RELS216 or RELS289.

**Repeatable to:** 9 credits if content differs.

**RELS488 Honors Thesis Research in Religions of the Ancient Middle East (3 Credits)**

Guided research on a thesis under the supervision of a faculty mentor.

**Repeatable to:** 6 credits if content differs.

**RELS499 Independent Study in Religious Studies (1-3 Credits)**

An advanced independent research project for qualified students, supervised by a faculty member, on a topic not ordinarily covered in available courses.

**Prerequisite:** Permission of ARHU-Meyerhoff Program & Center for Jewish Studies.

**Repeatable to:** 6 credits if content differs.