

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Courses in religious studies are a vital part of a liberal arts education. The field involves the objective study of religious belief, literature and practice around the world. Opportunity is given for serious and objective study of these aspects in relation to major religions of past and present cultures. Special attention is given to the historical bases of world religions as well as to their effect upon present-day societies, in both the East and West. Courses are offered in several world religions, biblical studies, religious thought, and religion and culture.

Courses are open to all students without regard to personal views or affiliations. No attempt is made to promote a particular view. Emphasis is placed on the academic study of religion rather than the practice of a particular form of religion. Many of the undergraduate courses enable students to satisfy humanities requirements and also provide an excellent background for many types of graduate and professional programs.

Courses

REL 1103 Introduction to World Religions (HI)

Description: Major world religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam with a view to understanding the general nature of religion and its various dimensions.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities, International Dimension

REL 2013 The Old Testament and its Study (H)

Description: A study of the Old Testament with emphasis upon content, historical background, the history of its study and the critical analysis and interpretation of selected passages. Previously offered as REL 3013.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 2023 The New Testament and Its Study (H)

Description: A study of the writings of the New Testament in their historical contexts and the methods used in their study. Emphasis interpreting selected New Testament passages. Previously offered as REL 3023.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 2113 Religion in Film (H)

Description: This course will examine how religious beliefs, practices, experiences and communities have been portrayed in film. Students will explore how film has used allegory, symbolism and other tropes to represent different religious traditions and their systems of beliefs.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 2413 Religion and the Body: Sports, Medicine and Sexuality (H)

Description: This course will explore the role of religious beliefs and practices as they relate to sports, medicine and sexuality. Topics will include the cultural influence of religion on sports, religiously-informed debates within the field of medicine, and conceptions of sexuality and gender from the perspective of various Eastern and Western religious traditions. More generally, this course will explore how different world religions view the human body.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 3113 Asian Religions (HI)

Description: This course will examine the diverse histories, beliefs, and practices of major Asian religious traditions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Shintoism, Shamanism, and modern-day religions.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities, International Dimension

REL 3213 Judaism: History, Culture and Beliefs (H)

Description: This course will explore the development of Judaism beginning with its roots in Ancient Israelite religion, the early biblical tradition, and moving through Assyrian and Babylonian conquests, Diaspora, Hellenistic occupation, Roman occupation, Byzantium, the Middle Ages, the Holocaust, the establishment of the state of Israel, up to present day.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 3223 Jesus: Teachings, History and Interpretation (H)

Prerequisites: REL 2023.

Description: This course will examine the teaching of Jesus, the historical context of the first century, and how Jesus' life and teachings have been interpreted through history.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 3243 Origins of the Christian Church (H)**Prerequisites:** REL 2023.**Description:** This course will examine the letters of Paul in their historical context, focusing especially on the early Christian communities that were their audience, and how these letters helped shape beliefs and practices before Constantine made Christianity the official religion of Rome.**Credit hours:** 3**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3**Levels:** Undergraduate**Schedule types:** Lecture**Department/School:** Dean of Arts & Science**General Education and other Course Attributes:** Humanities**REL 3313 Islam: History, Culture and Beliefs (HI)****Description:** This course will examine the history, culture and beliefs of Islam, from its seventh century origins to modern times.**Credit hours:** 3**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3**Levels:** Undergraduate**Schedule types:** Lecture**Department/School:** Dean of Arts & Science**General Education and other Course Attributes:** Humanities, International Dimension**REL 3413 The Bible and Contemporary Social Issues (H)****Description:** This course addresses contemporary social issues through critical engagement with Christian textual and practical traditions. We will critically analyze how various biblical passages influence public discourse, political activity, and personal moral choices on current issues.**Credit hours:** 3**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3**Levels:** Undergraduate**Schedule types:** Lecture**Department/School:** Dean of Arts & Science**General Education and other Course Attributes:** Humanities**REL 3423 Classic Christian Writings (H)****Description:** A study of the primary source material from representative Christian authors scattered throughout two thousand years of church history, focusing on understanding the backgrounds from which the writings emerged, and grasping the writers' key ideas. Course previously offered as REL 4413.**Credit hours:** 3**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3**Levels:** Undergraduate**Schedule types:** Lecture**Department/School:** Dean of Arts & Science**General Education and other Course Attributes:** Humanities**REL 3513 Religious Experience (H)****Description:** This course will explore the nature of religious experience and what role it plays within different traditions. Modes of religious experience to be explored range from meditation and prayer to conversion experiences and mystical states of consciousness.**Credit hours:** 3**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3**Levels:** Undergraduate**Schedule types:** Lecture**Department/School:** Dean of Arts & Science**General Education and other Course Attributes:** Humanities**REL 3523 Gender and Religion Across Cultures (H)****Description:** This course explores the interconnectedness of gender, religion, and culture both locally and globally. We will critically analyze how religious ideas, events, texts and traditions inform individual identities, gender discourse, gender roles, as well as issues of power, privilege and oppression within different religious communities around the world. Same course as GWST 3523 and GEOG 3523.**Credit hours:** 3**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3**Levels:** Undergraduate**Schedule types:** Lecture**Department/School:** Dean of Arts & Science**General Education and other Course Attributes:** Humanities**REL 3543 Religion, Race and Social Justice (DH)****Description:** This course examines the role of religion in the history and understanding of race, as well as how religion has been leveraged in relation to challenges of social justice.**Credit hours:** 3**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3**Levels:** Undergraduate**Schedule types:** Lecture**Department/School:** Dean of Arts & Science**General Education and other Course Attributes:** Diversity, Humanities**REL 3573 The Religions of Native Americans (DH)****Prerequisites:** REL 1103.**Description:** Selected tribal worldviews, belief systems and religious ceremonies as depicted in oral traditions, songs, and literature. Emphasis on Northern and Southern Plains Indians.**Credit hours:** 3**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3**Levels:** Undergraduate**Schedule types:** Lecture**Department/School:** Dean of Arts & Science**General Education and other Course Attributes:** Diversity, Humanities**REL 3613 Global Christianity (HI)****Description:** This course examines the varied expressions of the Christian tradition across the world, including Africa, Asia, Europe, the Pacific, the Caribbean, and the Americas. While there are points of continuity within and across Christian communities, we focus our attention on its contemporary international diversity, as communities across the globe interpret and practice the Christian faith as shaped by their varied geographical, historical, social, political, economic and cultural contexts.**Credit hours:** 3**Contact hours:** Lecture: 3 Contact: 3**Levels:** Undergraduate**Schedule types:** Lecture**Department/School:** Dean of Arts & Science**General Education and other Course Attributes:** Humanities, International Dimension

REL 3623 Magic, Witchcraft, and the Occult (H)

Description: This course will examine the historical and cultural contexts that have shaped various portrayals of magic and witchcraft. We will consider how the supernatural worldviews underlying these portrayals related to both more traditional religious worldviews as well as the ways in which representations of the supernatural serve as vehicles for a culture's hopes and fears.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 3643 Cults, Conspiracies, and Contemporary Religious Movements (H)

Description: This course will examine recent religiously-themed cults and conspiracy theories as well as various new Christian and Non-Christian religious movements in North America, focusing on those that tend to be seen as outside mainline traditions.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 3713 Religion, Culture and Society

Prerequisites: REL 1103, ANTH 2353, SOC 1113.

Description: An introduction to the scientific study of religion. Religious activity in both tribal and technological societies studied in the light of contemporary interpretations of culture and of social behavior. Same course as SOC 3713.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

REL 3743 Religious Perspectives on Food and Agriculture (H)

Description: The goal of this course is to understand the interconnected history of agriculture, food, and religion. We will explore related ancient religions and mythologies, the pastoral roots of many world religions, dietary rules in different religions, as well as contemporary ethical issues as seen through the lens of religion.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 4033 Religion in Early America (H)

Description: A study of religious life and its history in early America, beginning with its earliest European settlers, Native Americans, and continuing through the 1800s. Same course as HIST 4633.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 4050 Studies in Religion

Description: Independent studies, seminars and courses on selected topics in religion. Offered for variable credit, 1-6 credit hours, maximum of 9 credit hours.

Credit hours: 1-6

Contact hours: Contact: 1-6 Other: 1-6

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Independent Study

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

REL 4113 The World of Islam: Cultural Perspectives (HI)

Description: The cultural heritage of the world of Islam explored through its expression in the art, architecture, and literature of the Muslim peoples.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities, International Dimension

REL 4213 Understanding Global Islam (HI)

Description: A study of the history of Islam starting from Prophet Muhammad to the spread of the Islamic Empire. How Islam moved from Arabia to the world. Introduction to the Islamic divisions, where they are now, why they are similar and different in terms of laws, schools, countries, literature, sciences, Arabic script, the Shia, the Sunna, and different Islamic countries' practices. Also, debatable issues on Muslim women in American and other countries and why those are different from others.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities, International Dimension

REL 4223 Religion and Conflict in the Middle East (HI)

Description: This course will explore the religions of the Middle East, focusing on how they have shaped the region's recent history.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities, International Dimension

REL 4330 Seminar in Biblical Studies

Prerequisites: Two courses in Biblical studies.

Description: Selected topics in the academic study of the Bible. Offered for fixed credit, 3 credit hours, maximum of 9 credit hours.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Contact: 3 Other: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Independent Study

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

REL 4423 Death and the Afterlife (H)

Description: This course will explore and critically analyze the varying perspectives on death and the afterlife as seen across world religions.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 4513 Literary Art in the Bible

Description: This course will explore literary devices (foreshadowing, allegory, symbolism, etc) and how they are implemented in biblical texts. The Bible will be the primary focus, but comparative texts will be used to build an understanding and recognition of literary devices. We will examine the texts and their history on their own terms, rather than promote a particular religious or non-religious viewpoint. Same course as ENGL 4513.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

REL 4613 Women in the Bible (H)

Description: This course will examine the stories about and portrayals of women in the Bible. We will explore what the biblical authors have to say about women within their cultural contexts and how these portrayals have shaped how women are seen in Western society. By analyzing the portrayals of women in antiquity, the course will also provide conceptual tools to help students examine how gender has been understood in Western society. Same course as GWST 4613.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 4753 Muslim-Christian Relations (H)

Description: Exploration of commonalities and differences between Christianity and Islam, and the history of cooperation and conflict between Muslims and Christians, from Arabia in Muhammad's time to worldwide in the twenty-first century. Themes include mutual understanding and misunderstanding, conversion, rulers and subjects, discrimination, and dialogue. Same course as HIST 4753.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

REL 4923 Visions of Apocalypse: Portrayals of the End-Time in World Religions (H)

Description: This course will examine the various portrayals of the Apocalypse from many religious and folklore traditions around the world. This course will also explore various contemporary portrayals of the Apocalypse ranging from malevolent emergent artificial intelligence to the zombie virus.

Credit hours: 3

Contact hours: Lecture: 3 Contact: 3

Levels: Undergraduate

Schedule types: Lecture

Department/School: Dean of Arts & Science

General Education and other Course Attributes: Humanities

Minors

- Religious Studies (REL), Minor (<http://catalog.okstate.edu/arts-sciences/religious-studies/religious-studies-minor/>)

Faculty

Richard J. Boles, Ph.D.—Interim Director of Program and Associate Professor

Assistant Professor: Jin Young Kim, Ph.D.

Teaching Associate Professor: Justin Rice, M.A.

Teaching Assistant Professors: Matthew Pereira, Ph.D.; Glen Fairen, Ph.D.; and Dani Dempsey, Ph.D.

Teaching Instructor: Jessica Doyle, M.A.

Visiting Assistant Professor: Ryan Armstrong, Ph.D.

Lecturer: Adam Soltani, M.A.