

# RELS - RELIGIOUS STUDIES (RELS)

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## RELS 200 Religions of the World

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Introduction to academic study of religion and some of the world's major religions; emphasis on the nature of religion, diversity of practice across religious traditions, religious appropriation and functions of religion.

## RELS 201/JWST 201 Introduction to Jewish Studies

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Exploration of Jewish history, culture, identity, and art throughout the millennia and in the modern world; focus on material in multiple media and approaches from a variety of disciplines. **Cross Listing:** JWST 201/RELS 201.

## RELS 202 Religion in America

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Survey of major themes in religion in America; examines how religion has influenced and been influenced by American history, culture, economics, politics and social consciousness.

## RELS 209 Religions of the Ancient World

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Religious traditions, ideas and practices of ancient cultures; connections to modern religious traditions.

## RELS 212/HIST 212 Holy War

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Concepts of holy war in Jewish, Christian and Muslim history; language and literature of holy war; motivations for waging holy war; the relationship between war, martyrdom, pilgrimage and sainthood; religious orders engaging in holy war; political aims of holy war; practices of holy war; perspectives of those attacked in holy wars. **Cross Listing:** HIST 212/RELS 212.

## RELS 220 History of Christianity: Origins to the Reformation

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** History of Christian doctrine, ecclesiastical organization, and religious practice, origins through Reformation, with emphasis on religion and society; life and teachings of Jesus; apostolic church; patristic period; Christianization of Roman Empire and northern Europe; monasticism; medieval church; Gregorian reform; heresy; papal monarchy; schism and conciliarism; reformations of the sixteenth century. **Cross Listing:** CLAS 220 and HIST 220.

## RELS 221/HIST 221 History of Islam

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Key themes in Islam and Islamic history; Orientalism; pre-Islamic Arabia; the Qur'an; Sunni-Shi'i sectarian divisions; Islamic law; theology; sciences; mystical traditions; rituals of the Muslim faith; cross-cultural and religious encounters; holy war; ritual practices; fundamentalism; women in Islam; Islam in the West. **Cross Listing:** HIST 221/RELS 221.

## RELS 222/HIST 222 History of Christianity, Reformation to Present

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** History of Christian religion from the era of the Reformation (sixteenth century) to the present, with emphasis on social, cultural, political and economic history in relation to Christian structures and theological movements. **Cross Listing:** HIST 222/RELS 222.

## RELS 251/CLAS 251 Classical Mythology

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Introduction to the most important myths of Greeks and Romans; ancient and modern methods of interpreting myths; the role of myths in ancient literature; readings in English. **Cross Listing:** CLAS 251/RELS 251.

## RELS 257/COMM 257 Communication, Religion and the Arts

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Introduction to artistic, religious communication; survey of communication art and media art practices across religious contexts; consideration of communication aesthetics that mediate religious experience. **Cross Listing:** COMM 257/RELS 257.

## RELS 285 Directed Studies

**Credits 0 to 3. 0 to 3 Other Hours.** Readings and/or assigned projects for specific needs of students minoring in religious studies; directed independent or individual study in an identified area of religious studies. **Prerequisite:** Approval of instructor.

## RELS 289 Special Topics in...

**Credits 1 to 4. 1 to 4 Other Hours.** Selected topics in an identified area of religious studies. May be repeated for credit.

## RELS 291 Research

**Credits 0 to 3. 0 to 3 Other Hours.** Research conducted under the direction of a faculty member in Liberal Arts. **Prerequisites:** Freshman or sophomore classification and approval of instructor.

## RELS 304/HUMA 304 Asian Religions

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Beliefs and practices of Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism and Shinto with particular attention to their philosophical presuppositions. **Cross Listing:** HUMA 304/RELS 304.

## RELS 312 Contemplation in the Modern World

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Interdisciplinary approach to examining contemplative practices: origins in philosophy and religious traditions, goals and techniques of contemplation, contemplation in relation to cultural and social problems or needs.

## RELS 317/ANTH 317 Introduction to Biblical Archaeology

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Application of archaeology in biblical research; basic overview of the material cultures that are the setting for the biblical narratives. **Cross Listing:** ANTH 317/RELS 317.

## RELS 321 Political Islam and Jihad

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Interaction between Islamic movements and politics in various Middle Eastern countries; the meaning and evolution of jihad; the role of Islam as a tool for political and social mobilization. **Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification, or approval of instructor. **Cross Listing:** HUMA 321 and INTA 321.

## RELS 326/SOCI 326 Sociology of Religion

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Institution of religion and religious-related behavior; relationship between dynamic and structural religion and contemporary society. **Prerequisite:** SOCI 205. **Cross Listing:** SOCI 326/RELS 326.

## RELS 331/PHIL 331 Philosophy of Religion

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Philosophical problems of western religion such as the existence of God, the problem of evil, types of theism, rational, empirical, and mystical approaches to God. **Cross Listing:** PHIL 331/RELS 331.

## RELS 340/ANTH 340 Folklore and the Supernatural

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Traditional expressions of the supernatural such as superstition, belief tale and divination classified as folklore genres and their relationships to the cultures in which they develop; theories drawn from anthropology, folklore and related social sciences.

**Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

**Cross Listing:** ANTH 340/RELS 340.

## RELS 347/HIST 347 Rise of Islam, 600-1258

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Late-Antiquity; Pre-Islamic Arabia; the rise of Islam and a historical survey of the development of the Islamicate civilizations from c. 600 to the Mongol Conquests c. 1258 with an emphasis on politics, religion, society and culture. **Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor. **Cross Listing:** HIST 347/RELS 347.

## RELS 350 Religions, Utopias, and Happiness

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Thematic exploration of the science of happiness; exploration and critique of self-help culture; consideration of religious contributions to happiness; evaluation of individual and collective notions of happiness. **Prerequisites:** Junior or senior classification.

## RELS 356 Ritual and Expression in Ancient Religions

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Expressive practices such as rituals, re-enactments, processions and dance in ancient religious traditions.

**Prerequisites:** Junior or senior classification.

## RELS 360/ENGL 365 The Bible as Literature

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Narrative, structural, and thematic study of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures in English translation. **Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification. **Cross Listing:** ENGL 365/RELS 360.

## RELS 365/HIST 365 Religion in Early America

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Religion in North America from colonial beginnings to eve of Civil War; relations between European Christianity, Native Americans and African Americans; religious pluralism, reform movements, social and political change. **Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification. **Cross Listing:** HIST 365/RELS 365.

## RELS 366/HIST 366 Religion in Modern America

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Religion in America from the Civil War to contemporary period; relationship of religion and racial formation, capitalism, gender, sexuality, immigration; religious pluralism; evangelicalism; role of religious politics and social movements.

**Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification. **Cross Listing:** HIST 366/RELS 366.

## RELS 367 Christianity and American Identity

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Examination of interaction of religious ideas, especially Christian, with claims and conceptions of American identity and vice-versa; themes include American founding, civil religion and Americanization. **Prerequisites:** Junior or senior classification, or approval of instructor.

## RELS 390 Researching Religion

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Methods and approaches to inquiries in the study of religion; historical and contemporary topics and issues in the study of religion; analysis of artifacts, documents and primary sources; current scholarship in the study of religion.

## RELS 392/ENGL 392 Studies in Literature, Religion and Culture

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Exploration of literature treating significant religious topics in the context of cultural setting; features current faculty research on such topics as Tolkien and the making of myth, C.S. Lewis, texts and cultures of the Middle East and Victorian women writers and religion. May be repeated one time for credit. **Prerequisites:** 3 credits of literature at 200-level or above; junior or senior classification. **Cross Listing:** ENGL 392/RELS 392.

## RELS 403/ANTH 403 Anthropology of Religion

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Cross-cultural, theoretical analysis of religion as a cultural phenomenon; exploring the relationships between religion, culture, society and the individual; also taught at Galveston campus.

**Cross Listing:** ANTH 403/RELS 403.

## RELS 418 Intellectual History from the Ancient Near East to the Early Middle Ages

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Political, social, cultural and religious histories of significant figures, groups, schools of thought and movements in western Afro-Eurasia from the Assyrian Empire to the later Roman Empire; developments in political theory, literature, sociology, arts, architecture, music, philosophy, law, sciences and education.

**Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification. **Cross Listing:** CLAS 418 and HIST 418.

## RELS 419/HIST 419 Intellectual History, 500 to 1600

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Political, social, cultural and religious histories of significant figures, groups, schools of thought and movements in western Afro-Eurasia from the rise of Islam to the Renaissance; developments in political theory, literature, sociology, arts, architecture, music, philosophy, law, sciences and education. **Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification. **Cross Listing:** HIST 419/RELS 419.

## RELS 420 Nature, Sustainability and Religion

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Interaction between religion and the environment; examination of religious traditions and their concepts of the natural world; emphasis on cultural contexts and environmental sustainability. **Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification.

## RELS 425/HIST 425 The Sacred and Profane in History

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Case studies of the sacred in varied times and regions; holy persons; holy places; holy objects; language and literature of the sacred; competing concepts of the holy within society; gender and the holy; institutions promoting holy people and places; the impact of social, political, cultural and intellectual developments on the relationship between the sacred and the profane. **Prerequisites:** Junior or senior classification. **Cross Listing:** HIST 425/RELS 425.

## RELS 430/AFST 430 African American Muslim Culture

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Exploration of popular culture and its impact on African American Muslims' intersectional identity formation and faith tradition through films, documentaries, readings, and lectures on and about Muslims emanating from enslaved narratives and the colonial period to the contemporary era. **Prerequisites:** Junior or senior classification, or approval of instructor. **Cross Listing:** AFST 430/RELS 430.

## RELS 436/ANTH 436 Ancient Egypt I

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Archaeology and history of ancient Egypt from earliest times to the end of the New Kingdom period. **Prerequisites:** Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor. **Cross Listing:** ANTH 436/RELS 436.

## RELS 438/ANTH 438 Ancient Egypt II

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Archaeology and history of ancient Egypt from the end of the New Kingdom to the end of the Graeco-Roman period. **Prerequisites:** Completion of ANTH 436/RELS 436 or RELS 436/ANTH 436 recommended but not required; junior or senior classification or approval of instructor. **Cross Listing:** ANTH 438/RELS 438.

## RELS 464/PHIL 464 Modern Jewish Thought and Philosophy

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** An overview of modern Jewish thought and philosophy spanning Jewish European thinkers from the 18th century to the 20th century. **Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor. **Cross Listing:** PHIL 464/RELS 464.

## RELS 465/PHIL 465 Ethics After the Holocaust

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Analysis of the Holocaust as a challenge to previous ethical theories; ethical theories developed in response to the Holocaust. **Prerequisites:** Junior or senior classification, or approval of instructor. **Cross Listing:** PHIL 465/RELS 465.

## RELS 471/HISP 471 Hispanic Religions

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Exploration of the history and practice of Hispanic religion, including spirit possession, evil eye, consumption of sacred substances, healing traditions, ex-votos, relics, prophecy, omens, monsters, astrology, witchcraft, the Inquisition, festivals, pilgrimage, mystics and religious contributions of diverse ethnic groups. **Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor. **Cross Listing:** HISP 471/RELS 471.

## RELS 474/HISP 474 Diversity Lessons from Medieval Spain

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Crucible of cultures—Christian, Jewish, and Muslim—that was medieval Spain and modern implications of that experience in diversity. **Prerequisites:** ENGL 104 and junior or senior classification. **Cross Listing:** HISP 474/RELS 474.

## RELS 480/COMM 480 Religious Communication

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** The role of religious communication as manifested in speeches, sermons, debates, campaigns, and social movements throughout history. **Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor. **Cross Listing:** COMM 480/RELS 480.

## RELS 481 Advanced Seminar in Religious Studies

**Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.** Intensive reading, study and discussion of topics in religious studies; interdisciplinary methods. May be taken four times for credit. **Prerequisites:** Junior or senior classification, or approval of instructor.

## RELS 484 Internship

**Credits 0 to 4. 0 to 4 Other Hours.** Directed internship in a public or private organization to provide students with applied experience; opportunity to observe first hand issues and problems covered in religious studies courses; designed to enhance and clarify the student's career objectives. May be taken for credit up to six hours. **Prerequisites:** Approval of instructor.

## RELS 485 Directed Studies

**Credits 0 to 6. 0 to 6 Other Hours.** Readings and/or assigned projects for specific needs of students minoring in religious studies; directed independent or individual study in an identified area of religious studies. **Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification; approval of instructor.

## RELS 489 Special Topics in...

**Credits 1 to 4. 1 to 4 Lecture Hours.** Selected topics in an identified area of religious studies. May be repeated for credit. **Prerequisite:** Junior or senior classification, or approval of instructor.

## **RELS 491 Research**

**Credits 0 to 3. 0 to 3 Other Hours.** Research conducted under the direction of a faculty member in Liberal Arts. May be taken 3 times for credit. **Prerequisites:** Junior or senior classification and approval of instructor.