

Religious Studies Certificate Program

Spring 2008 course guide

Last updated: November 12, 2007

Please note: other courses may qualify if they have a substantial focus on religion. Please consult with the Director if you have any questions: religion@hfa.umass.edu

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Please see SPIRE or department websites for course descriptions and times.

CHINESE 155, Chinese Myths and Legends
CLASSICS 224, Greek Mythology
COMP-LIT 122, Spiritual Autobiogrp
COMP-LIT 141, GoodEvil:East-West
JAPANESE 592M, S-Japanese Buddhism and the Literary Arts
JUDAIC 350, Jewish Law & Society
JUDAIC 363, Negotiating Religion and State
PHIL 383, Philosophical Approaches to Religion
SOCIOLOG 321, Sociology of Religion

Amherst College

Relig/Democr/Amer Cult

Course Number: AMST 12-01 or -02

Course Title: Relig/Democr/Amer Cult

Department: American Studies

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description The United States has inscribed the separation of church and state into its constitutional order, and yet Americans have for two centuries been more deeply committed to religious faith and practice than any other people in the Western world. This course endeavors to explore that paradox. Topics addressed include the changing meanings of "the city on a hill"; the varieties of millennial belief and utopian community; the relationship between religion and ethnicity; religious political activism from abolition to prohibition to anti-abortion; and the limits of religious tolerance from movements against Catholics and Mormons to recent warnings of a "clash of civilizations" with Muslim cultures. Limited to 20 students per section. Second semester. Professors Couvares and Sanchez-Eppler.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
AMST-12-01	01	4	Francis Couvares	MWF 11:00AM-11:50AM
AMST-12-02	02	4	Karen Sanchez-Eppler	MWF 11:00AM-11:50AM

Religion: S Asian World

Course Number: ANTH 34-01

Course Title: Religion: S Asian World

Department: Anthropology

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description (Also Asian 60.) Observers have long marveled at the sheer number of separate religious traditions that flourish and interact with each other in South Asia. In this single ethnographic region, the Indian subcontinent, we find Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Christians, Jews, and others as well. Given this extraordinary diversity, South Asia provides an unparalleled opportunity to study interactions between religious systems in a broad range of social and political contexts. This course takes advantage of this circumstance by exploring, in South Asian settings, a variety of theoretical approaches to the study of religion. Among the subjects to be considered are religion and social hierarchy, religion and gender, religious responses to rapid social change, modern religious movements, religion and modern media, religious nationalism, and South Asian religions in diaspora. Although the course focuses on the South Asian region, it is designed to emphasize theoretical issues of current interest to anthropologists and others who study religion from the perspective of social science. While some background in South Asian studies would be helpful, it is not a prerequisite for this course. Limited to 15 students. Second semester. Professor Babb.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
ANTH-34-01	01	4	Lawrence Babb	MW 02:00PM-03:20PM

Modern Icon

Course Number: ARAH 58-01

Course Title: Modern Icon

Department: Art & Art History

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description In 1834 the Inquisition finally ended in Spain; throughout the century, Spain and France witnessed anti-clerical demonstrations and legislation; Marx branded religion "the opiate of the masses." Nietzsche thundered "God is dead." As a cascade of scientific discoveries challenged belief, many avant-garde artists believed that the old symbols were exhausted, and that the old form of religious art (the Crucifixion and so on) was no longer viable. And yet, throughout the 19th, 20th and into the first glimmerings of the 21st century, artists have felt compelled to give form to spiritual ideas. Sometimes their ideas related to traditional faiths, often they were more idiosyncratic, more personal--inflected, say, by the cult of "art for art," or theosophy, or a revolutionary ideology searching for martyrs, or by a dream of abstraction that would purge every last taint of the phenomenal world. This course will explore such varied conceptions of spirituality, and the complex status of religions during a self-consciously modern age through the prism of works (pictorial and often verbal) by Goya, David, Friedrich, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Picasso, Matisse, Mondrian, Kandinsky, Malevich, Dali, Kahlo, alvarez Bravo, Newman, Munoz, and Turrell. Requisite: One course in modern art or consent of the instructor. Limited to 12 students. Second semester. Professor Staller.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
ARAH-58-01	01	4	Natasha Staller	TH 02:00PM-04:20PM

Relig & Soc: Great China

Course Number: HIST 58-01

Course Title: Relig & Soc: Great China

Department: History

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description (AS) (Also Asian 50.) This course will focus on religious beliefs and practices in Chinese communities, past and present, in China and abroad. The goal is to develop comparative perspectives on the varieties of religious activity in Chinese societies by studying them in local and global contexts. Among the issues to be considered are the following: (1) Is there such a thing as "Chinese religion" as distinct from the specific rites and doctrines of Buddhism or Taoism? (2) What has been the role of states in shaping religion in China? What have been the roles of Confucianism, Nationalism, and Communism? (3) How are the activities of local cults related to particular social or political interests? (4) How are the beliefs and practices of household religion and ancestor worship compatible with or contradictory to those of Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam? (5) How do current religious developments in Chinese communities support or oppose what political analysts call "civil society"? Reading, discussion, and individual research projects. Two class meetings per week. Second semester. Professor Dennerline.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
HIST-58-01	01	4	Jerry Dennerline	TTH 10:00AM-11:20AM

Science/Valu/Spirit Trad

Course Number: MELL 12-01

Course Title: Science/Valu/Spirit Trad

Department: Mellon Seminar

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description From Galileo's imprisonment by the Church to the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, establishing the right relationship between science, human values and spiritual convictions has only become more important. The division between knowledge and ethics, science and religion, objective knowledge and subjective experience, reflects a deep divide in our understanding of the human being as debated by scientists, philosophers and theologians. Using contemporary and historical sources, we will explore the complex interaction between science, values and spiritual traditions as they seek to understand reality and resolve ethical dilemmas. We will look for ways to move from dilemma to dialogue and collaboration. Examples of such attempts will include recent collaborative work between cognitive scientists and the Dalai Lama, the feminist critique of science, the scientific studies of the German poet Goethe, and the Hermetic tradition. In addition to readings, films, seminar discussion and analysis, this class will emphasize reflective, experiential and contemplative methods of learning. Limited to 30 students. Second semester. Professor Zajonc.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
MELL-12-01	01	4	Arthur Zajonc	TTH 11:30AM-12:50PM

Religion in Contemp Fiction

Course Number: RELI 15-01

Course Title: Religion in Contemp Fiction

Department: Religion

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description Religion has always been grounded in storytelling. As myth, as folktale, as allegory, as parable, as speculation, the story form allows writer and reader to draw persuasive connections-and distinctions-between internal experience, the social world, the natural world, and a moral or cosmic order. As both religion and culture evolve, story remains fertile ground for setting and contesting their foundations. This course will examine how a range of contemporary novelists speak to and through religion to engage the deep and incendiary matters of our times: cross-cultural tensions; science and health; sex and gender relations; global and local politics; war and the weapons of war; modernity vs. traditionalism; the fate of the earth; and of course the meaning of life and death. Works to be read address a variety of traditions and perspectives, including Roman Catholicism in America, Islam in Egypt, American Protestant fundamentalism, Buddhism and folk religion in Japan, Hindu traditions, Judaism, the Latter-Day Saints, and American neopagans. Coursework will include scholarly material from the traditions themselves, as well as attention to the uses and constraints of ethnography and personal narrative as literary and religious/devotional genres. Second semester. Visiting Lecturer Shapiro.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
RELI-15-01	01	4	Jody Shapiro	TTH 02:00PM-03:20PM

Close Read/Parbl of Jesus

Course Number: RELI 20-01

Course Title: Close Read/Parbl of Jesus

Department: Religion

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description This seminar offers an opportunity for students to engage in the close reading of one or two classic works in the history of Judaism or Christianity. The texts chosen will vary from year to year. In 2007-08 the course will focus on the parables of Jesus. The parables are often seen as the most distinctive feature of Jesus' teaching. We will explore what kind of a literary figure is a parable: is it an extended metaphor, or does it owe something to the mashal pronounced by prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures? Can one "get behind" the parable as articulated by each gospel writer to recover an "original" formulation? We will look not only at parables found in the canonical scripture, but also those found in other early Christian writings. Second semester. Professor Doran.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
RELI-20-01	01	4	Robert Doran	MW 12:30PM-01:50PM

Muhammad and the Qur'an

Course Number: RELI 24-01

Course Title: Muhammad and the Qur'an

Department: Religion

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description This course will examine Islam's twin scriptures: the Qur'an, seen by Muslims as the literal word of God, and the accounts of sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad known as hadith, which serve as a guide for Muslim thought and practice as well as for the interpretation of the Qur'an. We will begin by reading the Qur'an and exploring its major concepts and themes. We will then turn to hadith, starting with a study first of their emergence and proliferation in the first centuries of Islamic history, and then the efforts of hadith scholars to winnow them down to a smaller body of authentic traditions. After first asking what these texts say to us, we will turn to the more important question of what they have said to Muslims over the centuries by reading works of Qur'anic exegesis and looking at how the Qur'an and hadith are invoked by Muslims in religious discourses. Second semester. Visiting Professor Garden.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
RELI-24-01	01	4	Kenneth Garden	MW 12:30PM-01:50PM

The Body/Ancient Judaism

Course Number: RELI 37-01

Course Title: The Body/Ancient Judaism

Department: Religion

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description The body is a template; the body encodes; the body is a statement of rebellion or convention, of individual attitude or of identity shared by a group. Dressed in one way or another or undressed, pierced or tattooed, shaggy or smooth, fed one way or another, sexually active or celibate, the body, viewed in parts or as a whole, may serve human beings as consummate and convenient expression of world-view. In this course we will explore ancient Israelite and early Jewish representations of the body juxtaposing ancient materials and modern theoretical and descriptive works. Specific topics include treatment of and attitudes towards the dead, hair customs, views of bodily purity, biblical euphemisms for sex, food prohibitions, circumcision, and God's body. Second semester. Professor Niditch.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
RELI-37-01	01	4	Susan Niditch	TTH 11:30AM-12:50PM

Prophecy/Wisdom/Apocalyp

Course Number: RELI 40-01

Course Title: Prophecy/Wisdom/Apocalyp

Department: Religion

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description We will read from the work of the great exilic prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah, examine the so-called "wisdom" traditions in the Old Testament and the Apocrypha exemplified by Ruth, Esther, Job, Ecclesiastes, Proverbs,

Susanna, Tobit, and Judith, and, finally, explore the phenomenon of Jewish apocalyptic in works such as Daniel, the Dead Sea Scrolls, 4 Ezra, and 2 Baruch. Through these writings we will trace the development of Judaism from the sixth century B.C. to the first century of the Common Era. Second semester. Professor Niditch.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
RELI-40-01	01	4	Susan Niditch	TTH 10:00AM-11:20AM

Christianity-Early Years

Course Number: RELI 45-01

Course Title: Christianity-Early Years

Department: Religion

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description This course deals with issues which arose in the first five centuries of the Christian Church. We will examine first how Christians defined themselves vis-a-vis the Greek intellectual environment, and also Christian separation from and growing intolerance towards Judaism. Secondly, we will investigate Christians' relationship to the Roman state both before and after their privileged position under Constantine and his successors. Thirdly, the factors at play in the debates over the divinity and humanity of Jesus will be examined. Finally, we will look at the rise and function of the holy man in late antique society as well as the relationship of this charismatic figure to the institutional leaders of the Christian Church. Note will be taken that if it is primarily an issue of the holy man, what happened to the realization of the claim that "in Christ there is neither male nor female"? What too of the claim that "in Christ there is neither free nor slave"? Second semester. Professor Doran.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
RELI-45-01	01	4	Robert Doran	MWF 10:00AM-10:50AM

Revival & Reform in Islam

Course Number: RELI 54-01

Course Title: Revival & Reform in Islam

Department: Religion

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description Many discussions of the current wave of Islamic "fundamentalism" accept its proponents' claims that the fundamentals of the religion can be indisputably identified and restored. However, the long and diverse history of Islamic renewal and revival itself suggests otherwise. Calls for the revival of Islam are as old as the tradition itself, but though these calls have been consistent, understandings of what revival entails have varied significantly over time. In this course we will read the revivalist writings of several Muslim thinkers, examining both the substance of their agenda and the rhetoric they use to make their vision compelling. These primary texts will be supplemented with theoretical readings on tradition and change, as well as historical background reading to put these thinkers in context. Second semester. Visiting Professor Garden.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
RELI-54-01	01	4	Kenneth Garden	MW 02:00PM-03:20PM

Relig in Atlantic World

Course Number: RELI 58-01

Course Title: Relig in Atlantic World

Department: Religion

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description (Also Black Studies 28.) An examination of the religious history of the Atlantic world, from the beginning of the Atlantic slave trade to the Anglo-American withdrawal from that trade. Emphasis will be placed on the encounter of African and European religions. How did the religion(s) of Africans and the religion(s) of Europeans differ and how were they alike at the time of their meeting in the Atlantic world? How did they change in response to one another along the west coast of Africa, and in the Caribbean and the Americas? Attention will be given to both West African and Kongo-Angola religious traditions, to both Catholicism and Protestantism, to both elite and popular religious patterns, and to the role of Islam in Africa and the New World. Two class meetings per week. Second semester. Professor Wills.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
RELI-58-01	01	4	David Wills	MW 02:00PM-03:20PM

Nature of Religion

Course Number: RELI 64-01

Course Title: Nature of Religion

Department: Religion

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description What does religious studies study? How do its investigations proceed? Can a religion only be truly understood from within, by those who share its beliefs and values? Or, on the contrary, is only the person who stands "outside" religion equipped to study and truly understand it? Is there a generic "something" that we can properly call "religion" at all, or is the concept of religion, which emerged from European Enlightenment, inapplicable to other cultural contexts? This course will explore several of the most influential efforts to develop theories of religion and methods for its study. We will consider psychological, sociological, anthropological, and phenomenological theories of religion, along with recent challenges to such theories from thinkers associated with feminist, post-modern and post-colonial perspectives. One class meeting per week. Second semester. Visiting Lecturer Reeder.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
RELI-64-01	01	4	John Reeder	M 03:30PM-05:30PM

Asian Studies Colloquium

Course Number: RELI 71-01

Course Title: Asian Studies Colloquium

Department: Religion

Campus: Amherst College

Course Description (Also Asian 31.) This course studies Buddhist literature and literary aesthetics from South Asia, China, Tibet, Japan. We will consider several genres including biographies of the Buddha, hagiographies, sutras, epics, folk tales, poetry, short stories, plays, and novels. We will explore how literature may be uniquely empowered to generate and reflect certain sensibilities and to make certain truths known. We will also be focusing on what the texts mean for the people who write, hear, read, and preserve them and how these meanings occur over time. By examining how literary ideals inflect religious, ethical, and political values (and vice versa), we will be attentive to how literary communities and institutions work. Students in the course will experiment with writing and appreciating poetry by participating in a "Haiku Slam." Second semester. Professors Heim and Zamperini.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
RELI-71-01	01	4	Maria Heim, Paola Zamperini	TTH 10:00AM-11:20AM

Hampshire College

Intro to Chinese Religions

Course Number: HACU 0222-1

Course Title: Intro to Chinese Religions

Department: Humanities Arts Cultural Stu

Campus: Hampshire College

Course Description Instead of presupposing religions as neatly defined and self-contained wholes, this course examines the religions of China in a variety of historical and cultural relationships. Along with the study of "Three Teachings" (Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism), it will introduce Chinese cosmology, the veneration of ancestors, religious festivals, the view of the afterlife and sacred mountains. We will also question readily used scholarly categories of Chinese religions such as elite vs. popular religions, monastic vs. lay practices, "sinified" vs. "pure" Buddhism and Daoist philosophy vs. Daoist religion.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
294428	1	4.00	Bong Joo Emily Dickinson Hall 5	02:00PM-03:20PM T,TH

Mystics and Texts

Course Number: HACU 0289-1

Course Title: Mystics and Texts

Department: Humanities Arts Cultural Stu

Campus: Hampshire College

Course Description No issue in the comparative history of religion dramatizes the challenges of cross-cultural study of religious phenomena more than what is referred to as "the problem of mysticism." Is the mystic a kind of lone ranger of the soul whose

experience reveals and confirms the transcendental unity of all religions, or are the experiences of mystics entirely predetermined by a the mystics' respective contexts of history, tradition, language, and culture? What is the relation between the mystic's "interior" experiences and what he or she writes about them? In this course we will undertake a comparative study of "mystical" and scriptural texts representing Neoplatonic, Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist traditions within the framework of modern and contemporary critical contributions to the history, psychology, and philosophy of mysticism. Among the mystics and texts considered are: Plotinus, The Cloud of Unknowing, Julian of Norwich, Teresa of Avila, selected Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, Mirabai, Ramakrishna, Milarepa, and Dogen. Prerequisite: at least one course in the study of religion or philosophy.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
294458	1	4.00	Alan Hodder Franklin Patterson Hall 106	12:30PM-01:50PM T,TH

Buddhism During Colonial Period

Course Number: HACU 0323-1

Course Title: Buddhism During Colonia Period

Department: Humanities Arts Cultural Stu

Campus: Hampshire College

Course Description Did you know that the popular image of Buddhism in the West has its roots in Asian reinterpretation of and Western fascination with Buddhism during the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century? Before its introduction to the West, particularly to the US, Buddhism became "prepackaged" as a rational, humanistic, ritual-free religion of direct Enlightenment experience as the result of Asian encounter with the West. This course will explore the history of Westerners' discovery of Buddhism as well as modernizing efforts made in various parts of Asia during the colonial period. Emphasis will be on the cases of Sri Lankan, Japanese and Tibetan Buddhism. In addition, the rhetoric of scientifically compatible Buddhism, the influence of German philosophy and Christian missionaries, Buddhism's rise to the World Religions and the "secondary" Orientalism among Asians will be closely examined. This course is designed to appeal to students interested in modern Asian history, Buddhism, and/or religion and modernity.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
294681	1	4.00	Bong Joo Franklin Patterson Hall 105	02:30PM-05:20PM W

Mount Holyoke College

Teilhard Controversies

Course Number: INDPT 177-01

Course Title: Teilhard Controversies

Department: Interdepartmental

Campus: Mount Holyoke College

Course Description Geologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin attempted an ambitious synthesis of science and religion. Teilhard's work has recently come under renewed scrutiny because of the need to understand the linkages among evolutionary theory, religious doctrine, and environmental stewardship. Intense discussions of these matters have influenced the political landscape in the United States and interpretations of science at the Vatican. This course poses two main questions. First, what evidence does Teilhard use to construct his synthesis? Second, does his theoretical scheme make any sense, and if so, does it shed light on the Evolution versus Intelligent Design controversy?

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
63965	01	4.00	Mark Mc Menamin	01:15PM-04:05PM M

Intro to New Testament

Course Number: RELIG 204-01

Course Title: Intro to New Testament

Department: Religion

Campus: Mount Holyoke College

Course Description This course investigates the social and historical context of first and early second-century Christianity, examines New Testament and select non-canonical documents, and introduces participants to the principal methods of New Testament studies. Students will read the twenty-seven works that make up most modern collections of the New Testament, a number of early Christian documents that did not make the final cut, and several ancient non-Christian sources. Examples of recent New Testament scholarship will provide historical background for better understanding of Christian writings and will present different methods for approaching and interpreting ancient texts.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
63991	01	4.00	Larry Lyke	08:35AM-09:50AM M,W

Religious Ethics

Course Number: RELIG 210-01

Course Title: Religious Ethics

Department: Religion

Campus: Mount Holyoke College

Course Description This course explores the ethical implications of religious convictions, particularly implications relevant to personal decisions. It introduces ethical principles through an examination of scriptural sources, a selection of major moral thinkers, and illustrative moral dilemmas. Among the concerns of the course are the components and motives of personal decision, the values and liabilities of fixed norms and principles, and the nature of personal responsibility.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
63992	01	4.00	Jane Crosthwaite	01:15PM-02:30PM T,TH

Engendering Judaism

Course Number: RELIG 222-01
Course Title: Engendering Judaism
Department: Religion
Campus: Mount Holyoke College

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
63993	01	4.00	Lawrence Fine	11:00AM-12:15PM T,TH

Religion and Violence

Course Number: RELIG 225-01
Course Title: Religion and Violence
Department: Religion
Campus: Mount Holyoke College

Course Description This course will investigate pervasive connections between religion and violence as they are theorized in classical texts such as Benedict de Spinoza's Theologico-Political Treatise and David Hume's Natural History of Religion . It will then examine scholarly responses to contemporary religious violence, through texts such as Mark Juergensmeyer's Terror in the Mind of God and Bruce Lincoln's Holy Terrors: Thinking About Religion After September 11 . The aim of this course is not to discern a universal feature that predisposes religion to violent action but instead to create conditions for responsible action in the face of persisting religious violence.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
63994	01	4.00	James Atchley	11:00AM-12:15PM T,TH

On Human Freedom

Course Number: RELIG 228-01
Course Title: On Human Freedom
Department: Religion
Campus: Mount Holyoke College

Course Description This course offers a critical investigation of selected materials taken from Eastern, Western, and Third World religious and cultural texts and customs in order to appreciate their respective views on human freedom. Particular attention is given to the varied definitions and meanings of freedom; the master/slave relationship as a universal paradigm for reflecting on freedom; some moral and ethical implications associated with the idea of freedom; and the connections among freedom, will, and human identity.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
63995	01	4.00	John Grayson	08:35AM-09:50AM T,TH

Women & Buddhism

Course Number: RELIG 241-01
Course Title: Women & Buddhism
Department: Religion
Campus: Mount Holyoke College

Course Description The course examines Buddhist representations of women and women's representations of Buddhism. We will study materials by and about Buddhist women from Thailand, India, China, Tibet, Japan, and the U.S. Some of the questions we will ask are: How are women portrayed in Buddhist literature? How do they portray themselves? How have Buddhist women responded to sexism in their communities? How have Buddhist women contributed to the development of new Buddhist institutions?

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
63996	01	4.00	Susanne Mrozik	02:40PM-03:55PM M,W

Ethics/Interprsnl Rel/Judaism

Course Number: RELIG 275-01
Course Title: Ethics/Interprsnl Rel/Judaism
Department: Religion
Campus: Mount Holyoke College

Course Description As in other religious traditions, interpersonal relations are central to Judaism. Drawing upon both classical and modern textual sources, this course explores such themes as responsibility, compassion, humility, and honesty in interpersonal affairs. It also considers notions of love, friendship, and teacher-disciple relations, both between individuals and in the context of religious community.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
63997	01	4.00	Lawrence Fine	02:40PM-03:55PM T,TH

Theology of Love

Course Number: RELIG 313-01
Course Title: Theology of Love
Department: Religion
Campus: Mount Holyoke College

Course Description While the Song of Songs strikes the modern reader as remarkably moving and graphic love poetry, Jews and Christians have traditionally understood it to be about the love between God and human beings. This course explores the song's literary beauty and poetics, as well as later rabbinic and Christian theological interpretations.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
63999	01	4.00	Larry Lyke	11:00AM-12:15PM M,W

Modern Theology

Course Number: RELIG 322-01

Course Title: Modern Theology

Department: Religion

Campus: Mount Holyoke College

Course Description This course is a study of representative theologians in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries who have made significant contributions to religious thinking in the West. Thinkers include Kierkegaard, Schleiermacher, Bultmann, Barth, Tillich, and others. Emphasis is on the nineteenth century.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
64001	01	4.00	John Grayson	01:15PM-02:30PM T,TH

Sem: the Shakers

Course Number: RELIG 332-01

Course Title: Sem: the Shakers

Department: Religion

Campus: Mount Holyoke College

Course Description This course will examine the historical and cultural creation of the Shaker society, the religious vision of an alternative society whose birth and development paralleled that of the new American nation. By contrast and by imitation, the separate Shaker route thus offers an intriguing critique of American society and its values and an unusual laboratory for examining a religious community based on a dual godhead.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
64002	01	4.00	Jane Crosthwaite	11:00AM-12:15PM T,TH

Topic: Islam in the 21st Cen

Course Number: RELIG 345-01

Course Title: Topic: Islam in the 21st Cen

Department: Religion

Campus: Mount Holyoke College

Course Description This course will explore the history of the most important ideas and trends in contemporary Islamic thought, beginning with their roots in the great classics of the Islamic tradition by Ibn Khaldun, al-Ghazali, and Ibn Taymiyya. Close reading of the most important modern Muslim thinkers, including Muhammad Abduh, Muhamad Iqbal, Sayyid Qutb, Ali Shariati, Fazlur Rahman, and Mohammed Arkoun.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
64003	01	4.00	Daniel Brown	07:00PM-09:00PM M

Smith College

Colloquia: Thematic Studies in Religion: Women's Mystics Theology of Love

Course Number: REL 110-01-COL

Course Title: Colloquia: Thematic Studies in Religion: Women's Mystics Theology of Love

Department: Religion

Campus: Smith College

Course Description Directed discussion of themes and approaches to the study of religion. Recommended for upper-level as well as first-year students. This course studies the mystical writings of Hildegard of Bingen, Hadewijch, Julian of Norwich, and Teresa of Avila, and their relevance to contemporary spirituality. Focus on their life journeys in terms of love, creativity, healing, and spiritual leadership. Occasional films and music.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
36185-S08	01	4	Elizabeth Carr	MW 09:00-10:20

Colloquia: Thematic Studies in Religion: Politics of Enlightenment

Course Number: REL 110-02-COL

Course Title: Colloquia: Thematic Studies in Religion: Politics of Enlightenment

Department: Religion

Campus: Smith College

Course Description Directed discussion of themes and approaches to the study of religion. Recommended for upper-level as well as first-year students. Doctrinal and thematic survey of Buddhist attitudes to the religious person in a social, political world; overview of doctrinal statements and focus on issues such as women in Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism in exile, the monks' war in Vietnam, and Western Buddhism.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
36989-S08	02	4	Jamie Hubbard	MW 01:10-02:30

Colloquia: Thematic Studies in Religion: Religion, Nature, and the Environment

Course Number: REL 110-03-COL

Course Title: Colloquia: Thematic Studies in Religion: Religion, Nature, and the Environment

Department: Religion

Campus: Smith College

Course Description Directed discussion of themes and approaches to the study of religion. Recommended for upper-level as well as first-year students. This course explores religious attitudes towards nature and the environment. Beginning with an overview of the environmental movement and the current environmental crisis, the course examines traditional and modern writings on the environment by Native Americans, Buddhists, and Christians, as well as considering the religious elements (both implicit and explicit) in contemporary environmentalism. Enrollment limited to 20. (E)

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
37604-S08	03	4		MW 02:40-04:00

Colloquium: Approaches to the Study of Religion

Course Number: REL 200-01-COL

Course Title: Colloquium: Approaches to the Study of Religion

Department: Religion

Campus: Smith College

Course Description An introduction to various approaches that have characterized the modern and postmodern critical study of religion. The course explores the development of the field as a whole and its interdisciplinary nature. The first part of the course focuses on approaches found in disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, psychology and phenomenology. The second part examines the application of these approaches to the study of particular religious phenomena.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
36196-S08	01	4	Peter Gregory; Joel Kaminsky	TTh 10:30-11:50

Prophecy in Ancient Israel

Course Number: REL 213-01-LEC

Course Title: Prophecy in Ancient Israel

Department: Religion

Campus: Smith College

Course Description A survey of the institution of prophecy and the individuals who functioned as prophets in the Hebrew Bible. Emphasis on the following issues: What types of people became prophets? What did prophets speak about? What role did prophets play in society? Did prophets deliver different, or even conflicting messages? Can one tell a true from a false prophet?

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
37515-S08	01	4	Joel Kaminsky	TTh 01:00-02:20

Introduction to the Bible II

Course Number: REL 215-01-LEC

Course Title: Introduction to the Bible II

Department: Religion

Campus: Smith College

Course Description The New Testament writings in the context of the historical development of the early Christian movement. Particular attention to the literary forms of the synoptic gospels and Pauline epistles, and to the ways in which these texts reflect the diversity of early Christian traditions.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
36991-S08	01	4	L. Scott Brand	TTh 01:00-02:20

Sages, Strangers and Women: An Introduction to Rabbinic Literature

Course Number: REL 222-01-LEC

Course Title: Sages, Strangers and Women: An Introduction to Rabbinic Literature

Department: Religion

Campus: Smith College

Course Description An exploration of rabbinic culture and texts that shaped Judaism for centuries to come. Rabbinic modes of grappling with Biblical law, and issues

of gender and ethnicity, through the lives and thought of key figures, and as expressed in the major genres of rabbinic literature -- Mishnah, Tosefta, Midrash, the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds. (E)

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
37517-S08	01	4	Michal Bar-Asher	Th 03:00-05:30

Jewish Civilization: Text and Tradition

Course Number: REL 225-01-LEC

Course Title: Jewish Civilization: Text and Tradition

Department: Religion

Campus: Smith College

Course Description Same as JUD 225. A grand sweep of core narratives and beliefs that have animated Jews and Judaism from antiquity to the present. Readings from the classical library of Jewish culture (such as Bible, Talmud, midrash, Passover Haggadah, mystical and philosophical works, Hasidic tales) and from modern Jewish literature, thought, and popular culture. Focuses on dynamics of religious, cultural, and national reinvention at specific moments and places in Jewish history. How do more recent expressions of Jewishness seek inspiration and authority from their engagement with text and tradition?

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
37518-S08	01	4	Justin Cammy	MW 02:40-04:00

Contemporary Christianity: Crisis and Reflection

Course Number: REL 234-01-LEC

Course Title: Contemporary Christianity: Crisis and Reflection

Department: Religion

Campus: Smith College

Course Description Readings of prominent Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox thinkers of the 20th and early 21st centuries. Their diverse responses to influential modern and postmodern social, political, and philosophical trends including ?modernism,? Marxism, World War II and the Holocaust, feminism, pluralism, globalism, and 9-11. Particular attention to liberation theologies. Occasional films.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
37520-S08	01	4	Vera Shevzov	TTh 10:30-11:50

Eastern Christianity

Course Number: REL 236-01-LEC

Course Title: Eastern Christianity

Department: Religion

Campus: Smith College

Course Description An introduction to the history, theology, and spirituality of Eastern Orthodoxy, with a special emphasis on the Byzantine, Syriac, and Russian traditions. Points of tension with Catholicism and Protestantism; rise of national churches; icons and rituals; desert fathers and mothers and the development of the culture of the

spiritual elder. Readings from ancient and contemporary theological, mystical, liturgical, and polemical texts. Occasional films and slides.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
37521-S08	01	4	Vera Shevzov	TTh 01:00-02:20

Religious History of India: Medieval and Modern Periods

Course Number: REL 276-01-LEC

Course Title: Religious History of India: Medieval and Modern Periods

Department: Religion

Campus: Smith College

Course Description An introduction to the ideas and practices of South Asian Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, and Jews, with emphasis on how these religious identities are constructed and contested. Materials to be considered will include philosophical writings, ritual texts, devotional poetry, comic books, legal treatises, newspaper clippings, personal memoirs, as well as ethnographic and popular films.

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
37522-S08	01	4	Andrew Rotman	MWF 11:00-12:10

Seminar: Problems in Buddhist Thought: The Flowering of Chinese Buddhism

Course Number: REL 360-01-SEM

Course Title: Seminar: Problems in Buddhist Thought: The Flowering of Chinese Buddhism

Department: Religion

Campus: Smith College

Course Description Topics course. The major traditions of thought and practice that came to characterize Chinese Buddhism developed during the eighth through twelfth centuries: Chan (Zen), Huayen, Tiantai, and Pure Land. The seminar will explore how the doctrinal innovations in Huayen and Tiantai were related to unique forms of practice that emerged in Chan and Pure Land.

Course Notes Topic: The Flowering of Chinese Buddhism. Instructor Permission. Not open to first-years, sophomores

Reg #	Section	Credits	Instructors	Meeting Times
37529-S08	01	4	Peter Gregory	TTh 03:00-04:50