



SPRING 2023 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

REL 100-01, 02: Introduction to World Religions**[MAC Global and Intercultural]****ONLINE - ASYN****David McDuffie**

This course introduces major religious traditions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. We will begin with a brief survey of theoretical approaches to the study of religion. Topics of study will include each tradition's historical origins, conceptions of the sacred, rituals and practices, and contemporary trends.

REL 101-01, 02: Introduction to Religious Studies**[MAC CritThink Hum and Fine Art]****01: First 7-Week Session, ONLINE - ASYN****02: Second 7-Week Session, ONLINE - ASYN****Gregory Grieve**

This course inquires into religion through consideration of forms, patterns, categories, symbols, and practices which characterize various religious experiences.

REL 109-01: Religion and Contemporary Culture**[MAC Global and Intercultural]****ONLINE - ASYN****John Borchert**

Understandings of religion as shaped by contemporary social institutions, the arts, politics, and philosophy.

"In fact, if I went back to college today, I think I would probably major in comparative religion because that's how integrated [religion] is in everything that we are working on and deciding and thinking about in life today."

--John Kerry

SPRING 2023 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

REL 113-01, 02: Supernatural Encounters
[MAC Foundations]

01: TR 2:00 PM - 3:15 PM, John Borchert

02: TR 2:00 PM - 3:15 PM, Rohit Singh

Concepts of the “supernatural ” have shaped religious imaginaries of cultures/societies throughout history. To gain insights into historical/cultural contexts of these concepts, this course surveys beliefs/practices associated with supernatural beings and forces. The scope of this survey will include, but not be limited to Eastern, Western, and Indigenous Religions.

FMS 117-01: Paranormal Encounters
[MAC Foundations]

TR 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM

Rohit Singh

Concepts of the “supernatural ” have shaped religious imaginaries of cultures/societies throughout history. To gain insights into historical/cultural contexts of these concepts, this course surveys beliefs/practices associated with supernatural beings and forces. The scope of this survey will include, but not be limited to Eastern, Western, and Indigenous Religions.

FMS 135: Video Games and Death
[MAC Foundations]

TR 12:30 PM - 1:45 PM

John Borchert

Death has always been a part of video games: a way of dividing up playtime, effort, and accomplishment. This course examines a range of relationships between video gaming and death – from what dying repeatedly in games can tell us about play, failure, and overcoming adversity to how games help us grieve and make sense of death in our everyday lives. Through a combination of reading about and playing games, this course offers a theoretical and hands-on approach to studying video gaming as an academic pursuit and what that can teach us about death and dying.

SPRING 2023 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

REL 215-01: Judaism
[MAC Global and Intercultural]
MW 2:00 PM - 3:15 PM, ONLINE
Ellen Haskell

Introductory study of Judaism, its history, texts, life, and thought.

REL 221-01: Introduction to Buddhism
[MAC Global and Intercultural]
TR 12:30 PM - 1:45 PM
Rohit Singh

Introduction to the origin, development, and impact of Buddhism in Asian cultures. Focus on religious doctrines, forms of community, religious practices, techniques, art and iconography, and the implications of the Buddhist perspective for the contemporary world in both Asia and the West.

REL 225-01: Islam
[MAC Global and Intercultural]
MWF 11:00 AM - 11:50 AM
Alyssa Gabbay

The importance of Islam in the politico-religious life of the 21st century can scarcely be overestimated. Yet for many, the roots, practices and tenets of this nearly 1,400-year-old religion are shrouded in mystery. This course provides an introduction to the origins and history of Islam, including the genesis and development of its sacred scripture and monumental institutions of law, theology, and Sufism. It covers challenges posed by sectarianism, modernity and encounters with the West, as well as contemporary Muslim practice and the status of women in Islamic societies. Students will gain an appreciation for the rich diversity of thought and practice characterizing Islam as well as the shared rituals and history uniting its more than one billion adherents. ([Counts toward the Islamic Studies Minor](#))

SPRING 2023 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

REL 226-01: Approaches to the Qur'an
[CIC College Writing]
TR 11:00AM - 12:15 PM
Alyssa Gabbay

Considered the Word of God by Muslims, the Qur'an is the scriptural foundation of Islam and the source of spiritual inspiration as well as legal, social, and moral teachings. This course will introduce the Qur'an as both sacred object and historical artifact and will explore the significance it occupies in the Islamic tradition. Among the Qur'anic themes to be considered are apocalypticism and the afterlife, stories of earlier prophets, and images of Jesus and Mary.

REL 233-01: Witches, Spirits, and Metaphysicalism
[MAC Diversity and Equity, CIC College Writing]
TR 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM
Dana Logan

This course focuses on the traditions of paganism, the occult, and metaphysicalism in the US. We will learn about New England witches, Black conjure, spiritualist seances, and the flowering of New Age and Neopaganism in the twentieth century. We will also consider how these traditions relate to institutional religion. Diverse religious traditions and thinkers that have played a significant role in the history of the United States from Native American beginnings to the present.

REL 249-01: Religion and Public Health
[MAC Health and Wellness, CIC]
MWF 10:00 AM - 10:50 AM
David McDuffie

This course examines both the compatibility and conflict between religious perspectives and the scientific foundations of public health. Emphasis will be focused on the cultural influence of religion on individual and community attitudes toward health care practices and how these influence achieving and maintaining public health goals.

SPRING 2023 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

**REL 250-01, 02: Religious Traditions and Care of the Earth
[MAC Diversity and Equity]**

01: First 7-Week Session, ONLINE - ASYN

02: Second 7-Week Session, ONLINE - ASYN

David McDuffie

Examination of the thought, ethics, and practice of major religious traditions and worldviews with regards to the care of the earth. Emphasis on non-Western, indigenous, and ecofeminist traditions.

**REL 312-01: Judaism and the Construction of Gender
[CIC College Writing]**

MW 3:30 PM - 4:45 PM, ONLINE - SYNC

Ellen Haskell

Jewish understandings of gender from ancient to modern times, with focus on law and tradition, roles in the Jewish community, family, sexuality, and Jewish theology.

**REL 334-01: American Cults
[CIC College Writing]**

TR 12:30 PM - 1:45 PM

Dana Logan

This course will explore the history of schismatic religious groups, anti-cult hysteria, and controlling religious authority in American history by focusing on Jonestown, Waco, and NXIVM. This course asks who gets to call a religion a cult, and whether the term is a useful category for cultural analysis.

SPRING 2023 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

370-01: Religions of Iran: The Persian Epic of Kings

[CIC College Writing]

TR 2:00 PM - 3:15 PM

Alyssa Gabbay

From Zoroastrianism to Shi'ism to the Babi and Baha'i faiths, Iran is home to a wealth of religions and a tradition of pluralism that stretches back thousands of years. In this class, we will explore religion and culture in Iran through The Shahnameh, or Book of Kings, a momentous epic completed in about 1010. We will seek to understand the formative role that this text has played in shaping Iranian identity, and, in particular, giving birth to an "Iranian Islam." (Counts as an elective for the Islamic Studies minor.)

REL 410-01: Senior Seminar

[CIC College Writing]

TR 2:30 PM - 3:45 PM

Dana Logan

Colloquium on a unifying theme or major recent work in Religious Studies. Topic will vary with instructor.

MEET THE FACULTY



ASHLEE ANDREWS



JOHN BORCHERT



GREG GRIEVE



ELLEN HASKELL



DEREK KRUEGER



DANA LOGAN



ANDREW MBUVI



DAVID MCDUFFIE



ROHIT SINGH



ALYSSA GABBAY



CHES KENNEDY



EUGENE ROGERS