

Religious Studies

Overview

The religious studies major provides opportunities for securing a broad background in the liberal arts while at the same time allowing for a focus on a thematic concern or a particular religious tradition. It views religion from a global perspective and combines aspects of the humanities and the social sciences.

The major is open to anyone interested in the symbolic and mythic dimensions of world cultures, the ethical aspects of human societies, and existential issues. It is *not* restricted to those who have a religious background or are pursuing a religious vocation. Members of the major will be challenged to view religion multiculturally and from critical as well as appreciative perspectives.

Graduates in the program have gone on to careers in law, journalism, medicine, international business, counseling, and religious vocations. Others have entered graduate schools in history, sociology, anthropology, international policy, and religious studies.

The program requires both a general understanding of the study of religion as well as a particular emphasis on one specific tradition or thematic concern. The general requirement involves courses that present the methodological approaches to the study of religion such as sociology of religion and psychology of religion and courses that examine thematic issues and cross-cultural phenomena such as myth, ritual, transformative experience, and comparative ethics. The religious traditions that may be included as major fields of emphasis or as supplementary courses include the Jewish, Islamic, Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist traditions, as well as the religious cultures of China, Japan, Africa, and Native American communities.

Most of the courses available for the program are religion-related courses taught within such departments as history, sociology, and near eastern studies. As a supplement to these courses, the program offers a small number of courses sponsored by religious studies, including thematic topics of religion and the introductory courses (one of which surveys the world's religious traditions, and the other of which introduces the study of religious phenomena thematically).

The group major in religious studies is administered through the Division of Undergraduate and Interdisciplinary Studies. Students are referred to that office for all administrative matters.

Undergraduate Program

Religious Studies (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2014-15/undergraduate/degree-programs/religious-studies>) : BA, Minor

Graduate Program

There is no graduate program in Religious Studies.

Religious Studies

RELIGST 24 Freshman Seminar 1 Unit

The Freshman Seminar Program has been designed to provide new students with the opportunity to explore an intellectual topic with a faculty member in a small seminar setting. Freshman seminars are offered in all campus departments and topics vary from department to department and semester to semester. Enrollment limited to fifteen freshmen.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit as topic varies. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1 hour of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered. Final exam required.

RELIGST 90A Introductory Topics in Religious Studies 4 Units
Selected introductory topics in the study of religion.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit as topic varies. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

RELIGST 90B Introductory Topics in Religious Studies 4 Units
Selected introductory topics in the study of religion.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

RELIGST C90B Introductory Topics in Religious Studies 4 Units
Selected introductory topics in the study of religion.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit as topic varies. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Dalmia

Also listed as: S,SEASN C51

RELIGST C103 Religion of Ancient Egypt 3 Units
A survey of the religious beliefs of the ancient Egyptians, based primarily upon the written sources.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: 18 or consent of instructor

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: NE STUD C103

RELIGST C104 Babylonian Religion 3 Units
A survey of Babylonian religious beliefs and practices based on indigenous texts and monuments.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: NE STUD C104

RELIGST C108 Scandinavian Myth and Religion 4 Units
Religious beliefs and practices during the Viking Age in Scandinavia and their manifestations in later recordings. Readings and discussion in English.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: SCANDIN C160

RELIGST C109 Celtic Mythology and Oral Tradition 4 Units
The course will introduce students to the pre-Christian beliefs of the Celtic and Indo-European worlds, to the historical narratives in which such beliefs are embedded, and to the methodology of investigating ancient and medieval belief systems.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: CELTIC C168

RELIGST C118 Western Mysticism: Religion, Art, and Literature 4 Units
The course will focus on examples of mystical thought from the traditions of Christian and Jewish mysticism since the Middle Ages. In addition to the introduction of the students to basic texts and concepts we will discuss the effects of mystical thought on art and literature from the Middle Ages up to today.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Largier

Also listed as: GERMAN C113

RELIGST C119 The English Bible As Literature 4 Units
Introduction to the English Bible treated as a literary work.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: ENGLISH C107

RELIGST C124 The Renaissance and the Reformation 4 Units
European history from the fourteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century. Political, social, and economic developments during this transitional period will be examined, together with the rise of Renaissance culture, and the religious upheavals of the sixteenth century.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture and 2 hours of discussion per week

8 weeks - 6 hours of lecture and 1.5 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Formerly known as: 157

Also listed as: HISTORY C157

RELIGST C132 Jewish Civilization I: The Biblical Period 4 Units
This is the first course in a four-course sequence in the history of Jewish culture and civilization. It covers the biblical period and the period up to the destruction of the second temple. This course will explore the current state of our knowledge, including the legacy of ancient Near Eastern myth and religion, the history of Israelite religion, the literary features of biblical narrative, and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: NE STUD C135

RELIGST C133 Judaism in Late Antiquity 4 Units

This class will examine the emergence and development of classical Judaism, its piety, institutions, thought, and literature.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: NE STUD C133/UGIS C153

RELIGST C135 Jewish Civilization: Modern Period 4 Units

This is the fourth course in a four-course sequence in the history of Jewish culture and civilization. It explores the major themes in Jewish history from 1750 to the present, with special attention paid to the transformation of Jewish communal and individual identity in the modern world. Topics to be treated include the breakdown of traditional society, enlightenment and emancipation, assimilation, Hasidism, racial anti-Semitism, colonialism, Zionism, and contemporary Jewish life in Europe, North America, and Israel. The multicultural nature of Jewish history will be highlighted throughout the course through the treatment of non-European Jewish narratives alongside the more familiar Ashkenazi perspective.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: HISTORY C175B/UGIS C155

RELIGST C161 Religion in Early India 4 Units

Designed as a two-semester sequence, these courses are an introduction to the religions that have their origin on the Indian subcontinent--Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and tribal religions--as well as those that originated in other regions such as Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism. Organizing this material chronologically rather than teaching it by separate religious traditions facilitates comparisons and promotes an understanding not only of the differences among these religions but also some of their commonalities in philosophy, theology, and praxis.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: S ASIAN C127

RELIGST C162 Religion in South India 3 Units

The development and practice of religion in South India. Emphasis will be on sources translated directly from Indian languages. Subjects covered include: the indigenous religion, the effect of Brahmanical religion, movements, and the practice of Hinduism in modern South India.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: G. Hart

Also listed as: S ASIAN C141

RELIGST C165 Hindu Mythology 4 Units

Literary and religious aspects of Hindu myths. Reading of selected mythological texts in translation.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Goldman

Formerly known as: 140

Also listed as: S ASIAN C140

RELIGST C166 India's Great Epics: The Mahabharata and the Ramayana 4 Units

The course entails substantial selected readings from the great Sanskrit epic poems--the Mahabharata and the Ramayana in translation, selected readings from the corpus of secondary literature on Indian epic studies as well as lectures on salient issues in both. Discussion will focus on a variety of historical and theoretical approaches to the study of the poems and their extraordinary influence on Indian culture. Readings will be supplemented with selected showings of popular cinematic and television versions of the epics.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: 5A, 127, 140, or consent of instructor

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Goldman

Also listed as: S ASIAN C142

RELIGST 173AC Gandhi and the Civil Rights Movement in America 3 Units

This course surveys the impact of Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence and justice in American Civil Rights struggles. Through narratives, images from African American, itinerant Gandhian, and ethnic critics of race practice in American culture, we examine how Gandhian satyagraha shaped emergent civil resistance movements, as also the global appeal to nonviolent democracy. ACES component comprises internship with civil liberties partners that monitor local implementations of human rights treaties.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Bilimoria

Also listed as: AFRICAM 173AC

RELIGST C182 Sociology of Religion 4 Units

The course will locate the place of religious consciousness in human action and then survey comparatively and historically the role that religion has played in human society. Will include a general theory of the nature of religious experience, religious symbolism, and the basis of religious community.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: 1, 3, 3AC or consent of instructor

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 2 hours of discussion per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

8 weeks - 6 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: SOCIOL C112

RELIGST 190 Topics in the Study of Religion 4 Units
Selected topics or problems in the study of religion.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture per week

8 weeks - 6 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

RELIGST H195A Honors Course 3 Units

Course may take one or two semesters at the option of the instructor and student with credit to be earned upon completion of a successful thesis. Successful completion of the course will normally, but not necessarily, mean the awarding of honors.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam not required.

RELIGST H195B Honors Course 3 Units

Course may take one or two semesters at the option of the instructor and student with credit to be earned upon completion of a successful thesis. Successful completion of the course will normally, but not necessarily, mean the awarding of honors.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam not required.

RELIGST 198 Directed Group Study 1 - 4 Units
Tutorial instruction in areas not covered by regularly scheduled courses.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of directed group study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Offered for pass/not pass grade only. Final exam not required.

RELIGST 199 Supervised Independent Study 1 - 4 Units

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 1-5 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Religious Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Offered for pass/not pass grade only. Final exam not required.