Department of Religious Studies

1st Summer Undergraduate Courses

NOTE: The courses below are fully online. Online courses require students to be independent learners. Students need to be strongly motivated to independently work through online materials and meet weekly assignment deadlines. Students will need reliable Internet access to complete work through the course Canvas site.

RELS 1200-080: World Religions
Online/Marcy Goldstein
A study of the historical origins, central teachings, and devotional practices of the major religious traditions - Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam - alongside those of smaller and newer religious movements.
- Cultural or Historical Analysis

RELS 2000-080: The Supernatural and American Culture
Online/Sean McCloud
(Cross-Listed with AMST 2050)
Despite claims that modernity is a realm of disenchantment, contemporary American culture continues to be haunted by ghosts, possessed by demons, and visited by alien others. In this course, we examine some of the multiple appearances and meanings of the supernatural in American culture. In this course, we will not be interested in assessing the "reality" of any supernatural entities. Instead, we will focus intensely on trying to unveil the "work" that such entities do in cultural, political, individual, and social spheres. In others words, the beliefs and practices surrounding the supernatural in American culture have affects for both individuals and groups of people. In this class we will read scholarship which examines how the supernatural both reflects and works to shape the cultural field and those who interact within it.
- Cultural or Textual Analysis

RELS 2000-081: Dead Sea Scrolls and Early Christianity
Online/Franklin Trammell
An introduction to the Dead Sea Scrolls and the light they shed on the Jewish context out of which early Christianity emerges. We will read major texts from the Scrolls along with selected early Christian writings, look at messianic expectation in light of the Scrolls, compare Jesus with the Teacher of the Dead Sea sect, and compare the self-understanding, eschatology, pneumatology, and soteriology of the Dead Sea sect with that of the early Christians. The major focus will be on what we can know about the nature of early Christianity and its first century Jewish setting since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

- Historical or Textual Analysis

RELS 2000-082: World Religions through Film
Online/Julie Hawks
This course is an introduction to world religions through film. Students will explore the material culture, practices, and sacred stories of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, as well as Yoruba, Native American, and Shinto traditions. This course deals with some of the essential differences and similarities which exist among each religious tradition and points to the uniqueness of each of them.

- Cultural Analysis

RELS 2000-083: Disability and Religion
Online/Zannah Kimbrel
(Cross-Listed with ANTH 2090)
What causes disability? Demon possession? Divine punishment for past transgressions? Or something else all together? This course will look at different religious, cultural, and historical conceptions of disability. The class will also investigate contrasting theoretical approaches to the study of disability.
- Cultural Analysis

RELS 2102-080: Introduction to Asian Religions
Online/Janna Shedd

This course is intended to introduce students to several religions of Asia: Jainism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, and Sikhism. The goal of this course is only to familiarize students with some of the main ideas, myths, visual symbols, ethics, and historical developments of these religions of these religions. By the end of the course, students will be able to identify some major religious figures, symbols, and regional variations by sight; explain core concepts of each religion; and be able to attempt informed interpretations or predictions of current and mythic events based on knowledge of the histories and cosmologies of each religion. Course "readings" will be assigned bi-weekly and will include a variety of materials including films, images, myths, textbook chapters, and instructor-produced introductions and explanations of topics.
- Cultural or Textual Analysis

RELS 3230-080: Race, Religion, and Murder
Online/Julia Robinson Moore
(*Cross-Listed with AFRS 3050)*

Race, Religion and Murder is designed to introduce students to the intersection of race, religion, and violence in American culture. Specifically, this course addresses how Jewish, Muslim, and Christian traditions have been used to justify and even condone acts of violence against women, children and peoples of color. Key components of this course require students to critically analyze films and religious narratives that expose issues of racism, islamophobia, and violence.
- Cultural or Historical Analysis

For more information visit www.religiousstudies.uncc.edu