REL 5000-001: From Catastrophe to Cash: The Marketing of the Holocaust
MW 4:00-5:15/Barbara Thiede
Tourists sign up for tours to concentration camps and mass gravesites. Filmaker and moviegoers now choose from a variety of Holocaust-themed films or memes. Children’s literature on the Holocaust has emerged as a field in its own right, supporting the curricula planned, presented, discussed and published. Memorial sites include the requisite museum shops on the property once marked by barracks and gas chambers. This course will explore the marketing of the Holocaust in modern culture. From archetypical scenes of dead and skeletal bodies to fictional revenge narratives: In what ways has modern western capitalist culture permitted, supported, and encouraged profit-making, merchandizing, and marketing of mass murder?

REL 5000-002: Dead Sea Scrolls and Early Christianity
TR 1:00-2:15/James Tabor
What are the significant similarities and differences between the various kinds of Messianic expectations one finds in the Dead Sea Scrolls and those of the Jesus movement and earliest Christianity? Social, political, and cultural differences will also be examined in the light of both texts and material/archaeological evidence. Finally, how do these movements within late 2nd Temple Judaism contribute to the emergence of orthodox emergent forms of Judaism and Christianity.

REL 5000-003: Material Cultures of Religion
Thursday 2:30-5:15/Alex Kaloyanides
This seminar examines the religious lives of things. We will read and discuss prominent scholarship on the study of religion and material culture, and students will develop original research projects around a religious object or set of objects of their choosing. Many readings will focus on the role objects play in Asian religious communities, but we will also be considering material cultures from a wider range of religious traditions.

REL 5000-004: Foucault
TR 11:30-12:45/Gordon Hull
(Cross-Listed with PHIL 5050)
From the early 1960s until his death in 1984, Michel Foucault was one of the most innovative and influential figures in French philosophy. Known most fundamentally for the thesis that our most basic categories of thought are inescapably the products of their social and institutional environments, Foucault wrote about such topics as the emergence of a clinical understanding of insanity, the change in punishment theory from the dungeon to intensive surveillance; the emergence of power as a force for fostering life and managing populations; the emergence of “sexuality” as a marker of identity; and the transformation of economic thought from classical, laissez faire liberalism to the intensely interventionist theory of today’s neoliberalism. Not surprisingly, given the range of his thought, Foucault’s influence today extends into such diverse fields as philosophy, sociology, criminal justice, literary theory, and queer and feminist theory. In this course, we will read a number of Foucault’s most important works, with attention both to the questions they enable us to ask and to prominent criticisms of his work.

REL 5000-090: The Devil
Monday 5:30-8:15/Eric Hoenes
A cross-cultural investigation of the ultimate personification of evil and moral corruption—namely, the Devil. This class examines how radical evil came to be personified in Christianity, as well as how the Devil has been invoked in religious texts, political imaginaries, and ritual practices in the modern world.

REL 6101-001: Approaches to the Study of Religion
Wednesday 5:30-8:15/Sean McCloud
(Cross-Listed with MALS 6101)
What is religion? How does it work in individual lives and social groups? How does one study religion from an academic—versus a devotee or debunker—point of view? This class serves as the introductory course for the Master of Arts in Religious Studies program. We survey a broad number of multidisciplinary theories and methods for use in the study of religion. Throughout the semester, we will read closely and critically, discussing and debating each scholar’s work. The goal of the class is to develop your critical thinking, reading, and writing skills and give you a good working knowledge of some methods and theories in and beyond religious studies. Whether voiced or not, we all have ways of interpreting and explaining religion. As graduate students in religious studies, it is crucial that you not only know something about the history of methods in the field, but become conscious of your own approaches to the subject. The format will entail seminar-style discussions with frequent written assignments and occasional presentations.

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