**Department of Religious Studies**

### Fall 2020 Undergraduate Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RELS 1201-001</strong></td>
<td>Intro to Religion</td>
<td>TR 10:00-11:15</td>
<td>James Tabor</td>
<td>Religion influences all we think about everything. Whether an individual holds to religious beliefs or not we are all living in historical, cultural, and social worlds that are largely constructed by religious ideas and assumptions. In this course we dig deeply to ask about the kind of &quot;world constructions&quot; that religions represent, examining the origins of our most basic assumptions about the meaning of life, gender and sexuality, moral values, and cultural and social norms. This is an introductory course intended for students of any major or subject area. - Cultural or Historical Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RELS 2000-002</strong></td>
<td>Religion and Food</td>
<td>MWF 10:10-11:00</td>
<td>Pree Persaud</td>
<td>Food has always been an important, although underexplored, element of religion. The study of food can reveal the beliefs, practices, and values a tradition holds dear. This course explores the relationship between religion and food by examining the role food plays in various religious traditions as well as the construction of food as an ethical category. We will read religious myths relating to food, discuss food and ritual, and the way food is used to shape gender and social roles, and the ways in which food is used as a tool or indicator of morality. - Cultural Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RELS 2000-003</strong></td>
<td>Death and the Afterlife in Asian Religions</td>
<td>MWF 12:20-1:10</td>
<td>Janna Shedd</td>
<td>This course is an introduction to religious concepts of death and death-related practices across Asia. Students will explore a wide range of funerary practices; beliefs regarding Otherworlds and rebirth; ghost stories and festivals; and the gods and goddesses of death. Course readings will be assigned 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</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Important Dates

- **August 24**
  - First day of evening classes

- **August 31**
  - Last day to add, drop with no grade

- **September 7**
  - Labor Day
  - University closed

- **September 21**
  - Deadline to apply for Dec 2020 graduation

- **October 12**
  - Spring 2020 schedule available on web

- **October 12 - 13**
  - Student recess
  - No classes

- **October 26**
  - Last day to withdraw from course; grade subject to policy

- **November 2**
  - Registration for spring 2021 begins

- **November 25 - 28**
  - Thanksgiving weekend
  - No classes

- **December 9**
  - Last day of classes

- **December 10**
  - Reading day

- **December 14 - 17**
  - Final examinations

- **December 18 - 19**
  - Commencement
RELPS 2000-004
Magic and Religion
Online / Barbara Thiede
Ancient incantations and adjurations, spells and amulets, magical words, prophecy, divination – in what ways can and do religious practices, ideas and ritual intersect with magic? To answer these questions (or, at least, try to), we'll begin by studying what “religion” and “magic” mean for scholars. Then we’ll explore how magic and religion overlap in both ancient and modern societies – including some of our own time.
- Cultural or Historical Analysis

RELPS 2000-005
Racism and Religion
MWF 11:15-12:05 (HYBRID) / Danielle Boaz
(Cross-listed with AFRS2050-003 & LEGL 3000-002)
From the burning of three historically black churches in Opelousas, Louisiana to the white supremacist attacks on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, to the murder of nine people at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, the last few years have brought countless examples of racially motivated attacks on religious communities. This course will explore the relationship between racism and religion through case studies from the 15th century to the present day. Possible topics include: Christianity and the Atlantic slave trade; the FBI and the Nation of Islam; "Voodoo" and Haitian independence; black church burnings; Black "witches" in 20th century Cuba; the Ku Klux Klan; the racialization of Islam; and Evangelical extremism against African diaspora religions.
- Cultural or Historical Analysis

RELPS 2000-006
Resistance as Religious: From the Maccabees to Standing Rock
MWF 12:20-1:10/Tina Katsanos
This course provides a historical overview of resistance actions and movements rooted in religious identities and ideologies. Special attention is paid to the current environmental resistance movements led by religious and non-religious communities who often operate in partnership. We will also explore the religious nature of secular environmental groups.
- Cultural or Historical Analysis

RELPS 2000-007
New Religious Movements
Online / Jessica Johnson
This course introduces the study of new religious movements in the United States—groups frequently referred to as “sects,” “sects,” and/or “fringe religions.” We examine definitions of “new religion,” how new religions form, persist, and die out, and the reasons that people join new religions.
- Cultural or Historical Analysis

RELPS 2102-001
Introduction to Asian Religions
MWF 1:25-2:15 (HYBRID) / Janna Shedd
(Taoism). We will cover many of the major fundamental concerns, myths, gods, and practices of these religions both in their classical formulations and in their contemporary forms.
- Cultural or Historical Analysis

RELPS 2104-001
Hebrew Scriptures
Online/Barbara Thiede
There is no such thing as "The Bible." But there is a fascinating story behind the creation of ancient biblical literature. In this class, we will look at the linguistic, historical, and archeological evidence that helps scholars understand who wrote biblical literature and why. We explore the writers' sense of humor and political agendas and discover how later readers reinvented biblical texts.
- Textual or Historical Analysis

RELPS 2105-001
Introduction to the New Testament
MWF 11:15-12:05/David Clausen
Our earliest written sources about the Christ-faith are contained in the 27 books of the New Testament. We will conduct historical and textual investigations of the gospels, Acts, and the letters of Paul and others in order to reveal the various ways in which they understood the Christ-event. We will consider such questions as: Why are the gospels so similar in some respects and yet so different in others? What are the obstacles for rediscovering the historical Jesus? What was Paul’s real message and why was it so often challenged?
- Textual or Historical Analysis
Judaism
MW 4:00-5:15 /Barbara Thiede
Jews have defined and redefined what it means to be Jewish for thousands of years. In this course, we will explore the history of the Jewish people in mostly, though not exclusively, European and American contexts, learning how they experienced the world as a tiny and vulnerable nation, as prosperous and thriving minority communities, and as the threatened (and threatening) “other.”
- Historical or Textual Analysis

Christianity
MW 4:00-5:15 / Eric Hoones
What is Christianity? How has the idea of what being Christian means changed over time and across cultures? This course will survey the global development of the Christian tradition from antiquity to the present, paying special attention to the diversity of Christian communities’ beliefs and practices. - Historical or Cultural Analysis

Buddhism in South & Southeast Asia
TR 2:30-3:45/Alex Kaloyanides
This course examines Buddhist traditions of South and Southeast Asia. We will cover material from ancient India through contemporary Southeast Asia with special attention to reading classical Buddhist texts and studying the development of the Theravada tradition and its religious, political, artistic, and economic contexts.
-Historical or Textual Analysis

Religion & American Politics
Online / Jessica Johnson
This course studies historical and contemporary notions of “religious freedom” and conflicts over the separation of church and state in the United States. We examine how conservative evangelical Christians have constructed their relationship to national identity through various policy battles and cultural debates in the areas of law, education, government, and family.
- Cultural or Historical Analysis

Material Culture of Ancient Israel, Palestine and Jordan
MWF 9:05-9:55 / Simon Gibson
(Cross-listed with HIST 3001-A01)
An overview of human development in the southern Levant (Israel, Palestine and Jordan) from prehistoric times to late Antiquity. Topics will include archaeological sites, landscapes, building materials and procedures, ceramic finds, and other artifacts. We will examine modern archaeological excavation techniques, as well as the development of urbanism, the phenomenon of tells, and other aspects of material culture. Historical textual sources and the results of up-to-date archaeological excavations will also be addressed. The goal of the course is to provide the student with an overall historical and archaeological view of the people who inhabited the southern Levant from prehistoric times and until the advent of Islam.
-Textual or Historical Analysis

Burned Over: Religion, Reform and Violence in America, 1800-1865
MWF 10:10-11:00/Gabriel Klehr
(Cross-listed with HIST 3000-A01 & AMST 3050-005)
This class will explore the turbulent interactions among religion, politics and the economy from the Second Great Awakening to the Civil War. The American religious world was shattered by the Second Great Awakening. In its aftermath, some became convinced that God wanted believers to remake society in preparation for the coming millennium. Others pursued more radical visions, advocating violence as the only answer to the religious turmoil they saw around them. Others argued that a closer bond between politics and religion would knit American society together. We will look at figures as diverse as Brigham Young, Nat Turner, and Abraham Lincoln to examine how Americans attempted to understand their religious and secular worlds.
-Historical or Textual Analysis
RELS 3000-004
Legacy of the Holocaust
Online/Judy LaPietra
(Cross-listed with HGHR 3050-004 & INTL 3002-004)
The historical meaning and significance of the Holocaust will be explored, with particular emphasis on oral testimony. Through readings and discussions, we will analyze and discuss the behavior and perspectives of victims, bystanders, and perpetrators—and also our own perspectives, as students of the Holocaust. After reading what historians have written about the Nazi genocide, student teams will research the USC Shoah Foundation Institute’s collection of survivor testimonies.
- Textual or Historical Analysis

RELS 3001-001
The Devil (W)
TR 4:00-5:15 / Eric Hoenes
This course is a cross-cultural examination of the ultimate personification of evil and moral corruption—the Devil. We will interrogate how the idea of radical evil became personified in Christianity, and analyze various ways that the Devil is represented in religious texts, political imaginaries, and ritual practices around the world. This is a writing intensive course.
- Cultural Analysis

RELS 3016-001
Paul
MWF 12:20-1:15 / David Clausen
Paul, self-proclaimed “apostle to the Gentiles,” was and remains a most controversial figure in Christianity. The “latest perspective” on Paul seeks to understand this gifted, first-century missionary and theologian not as the creator of a new religion but as a devout Jew who felt divinely chosen to bring the Gentiles to a right standing with the God of Israel before the return of the Messiah Jesus. We will explore Paul’s life and mission, writings and rhetoric, challenges and legacy. Along the way we will become familiar with the world of Paul: the customs, cultures, politics, and locations which provide the background for understanding his life and times.
- Textual or Historical Analysis

RELS 3122-001
Esoteric Religion: Thinking About Angels & Demons
TR 11:30-12:45 / John Reeves
The religions of the Near East are replete with stories and traditions featuring an indeterminate number of supernal entities which do not formally count as ‘deities,’ but which nevertheless exhibit knowledge and behavior which is unmistakably ‘deity-like.’ These entities are typically catalogued under the seemingly self-explanatory labels ‘angel’ and ‘demon.’ In this course we will engage in the close reading of a large number of narrative and ritual texts which feature such characters in an attempt to gain a better understanding of the variegated roles they play in pre-modern Jewish, Christian, Islamic, and other religious contexts. Careful attention will also be given to the cultural issues surrounding the generation and promulgation of competing character profiles within the scriptures of these kindred religions.
- Historical or Textual Analysis

RELS 3137-001
Religion in the African American Experience
Wednesday 2:30-5:15 (HYBRID) / Julia Moore
(Cross-listed with AFRS 3050-001 & HIST 3000-A03)
Designed to introduce students to the multiplicity of African American religious traditions, this course explores the religions of Voodoo, Santeria, Christianity, the Nation of Islam, and African American Judaism. Issues of race, class, gender, identity, and violence will be points of discussion in light of black religious life.
- Historical or Cultural Analysis

RELS 3150-001
African American Church / Civil Rights
Tuesday 2:30-5:15 (HYBRID) / Julia Moore
(Cross-listed with AFRS 3050-002 & HIST 3000-A04)
Designed to introduce students to the historical beginnings of the local black church and the birth of African American Christianity. The activism of local black churches during the Modern Civil Rights Movement will be central points of investigation.
- Historical or Cultural Analysis

RELS 3400-001
Applied Research / Fieldwork
By approval / Celia Sinclair
Internships in business or community-based organizations. Specific content based on contract between student, supervising professor and cooperating organization. Fulfills the [C], [H], or [T] requirement. Approximately 120 contact hours for the semester. Contact Celia Sinclair at cbsincla@uncc.edu for more information
RELS 4000-001
Archeology of Early Christianity
TR 1:00-2:15 / James Tabor
Cross-listed with RELS 5000, ANTH 4050 & ANTH 5050
This course focuses on the material/archaeological evidence associated with the Jesus movement and what light it might shed on our understanding of emerging Christianity in the first two centuries. The emphasis will be on recent discoveries although the history of the “archaeology of earliest Christianity” will be reviewed and evaluated. The goal of the course is to attempt to reread our textual evidence in the light of such non-textual material remains. - Historical or Textual Analysis

RELS 4000-090
Malignant Fraternities
Monday 5:30-8:15 / Barbara Thiede
Cross-listed with RELS 5000, WGST 4050 & 5050
The Hebrew Bible was written by men and for men; working out the terms of masculinity and establishing how male hegemony valorizes the outcome is essential to the biblical project. In this course, we will explore how male friendship and male homosociality – and their potential homoerotic expression – are engendered and sustained by the use of women’s bodies. We will also examine how the performance of masculinity is both defined and undermined by biblical writers. - Historical or Textual Analysis

RELS 4000-001
Churches and Temples as Neuro-Performance Spaces
TR 4:00-5:15 / Mark Pizzato
(Cross-listed with THEA4001, AAHP3704, HONR3700)
This course explores how the architecture, artworks, and performances in religious spaces reflect specific traditions and the inner theatre of the visitor’s brain. -Historical or Textual Analysis

Liberal Studies Courses
Religious Studies faculty teach the following courses for the General Education Program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LBST 2101Q-335</td>
<td>Western Civilizations-Ordering the World</td>
<td>MW 11:15-12:05 / Joanne Maguire</td>
<td>Joanne Maguire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBST 2102-336</td>
<td>Global Connections-Asian Religion &amp; Culture in Global Media</td>
<td>TR 11:30-12:45 / Janna Shedd</td>
<td>Janna Shedd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBST 2102-337</td>
<td>Global Connections-Asian Religion &amp; Culture in Global Media</td>
<td>TR 10:00-11:00 / Janna Shedd</td>
<td>Janna Shedd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBST 2102-338</td>
<td>Global Connections-Witchcraft and Hauntings</td>
<td>TR 11:30-12:45 / Letha Victor</td>
<td>Letha Victor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBST 2212Q-335</td>
<td>Literature &amp; Culture-Sexing Shakespeare</td>
<td>TR 1:00-1:50 / Kent Brintnall</td>
<td>Kent Brintnall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBST 2301-339</td>
<td>Critical Thinking and Communication: Sugar Slaves</td>
<td>MWF 1:25-2:15 / Prea Persaud</td>
<td>Prea Persaud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information visit religiousstudies.uncc.edu

Department Chair
Joanne Maguire
Joanne.Maguire@uncc.edu

Director of Undergraduate Studies
Celia Sinclair
cbsincla@uncc.edu

Director of Graduate Studies
Kent Brintnall
Kent.Brintnall@uncc.edu

Fall 2020 Undergraduate Courses