RELS 2000-001
Bible and Qur’an
MWF 11:15-12:05/
John Reeves
A comparative exploration of
the way shared characters
and/or narrative scenarios are
depicted in Jewish, Christian,
and Muslim scriptures and in
their respective interpretive
traditions.
-Historical or Textual Analysis

RELS 2000-002
Lost Christianities of the Early Church
MWF 1:25-2:15/David Clausen
Early Christianity embraced
not one set of beliefs but
many. Even the New Testa-
ment reflects a variety of
different views. But what
about the views of Chris-
tians who created texts that
were ultimately not included
in the New Testament?
What did they believe and
why were their beliefs re-
jected by the growing orthodox movement?
-Historical or Textual Analysis

RELS 2000-003
Elementary Biblical Hebrew II
MWF 12:20-1:10/John Reeves
(Cross-Listed with LACS 1202)
This continuation
course is the second
half of an introduction to
biblical Hebrew
encompassing two se-
mers of study. Al-
ough we will continue
to study grammar and
build vocabulary, we
will concentrate this spring on the reading and transla-
tion of some simple narrative and verse selections
drawn from the Bible.
-Textual Analysis

RELS 2000-004
Shintoism
WF 4:00-5:15 /Janna Shedd
The Japanese religion of the kami. This course is a
historical and cultural exploration of Japanese reli-
gious ideas and prac-
tices in the Shinto
tradition. A particular
focus of the course
will be on the relations-
ships of Shinto-related
mythology, art, popu-
lar practices, and in-
teractions with the
natural environment. We will also consider the influ-
ence and interactions between Shinto and other major
cultural influences such as Buddhism, Confucianism,
Daoism, and politics.
-Cultural or Textual Analysis

RELS 2000-005
World Religions in London
W 2:30-5:15/Will Sherman
(Cross-listed with INTL 3000)
Students will travel to London for March break, an
ideal microcosm for the study of religious practices,
symbolism, and spaces of
people in multiple religious
traditions. Site visits will
include several major and
minor Christian churches as
well as a Sikh temple, a Jew-
ish synagogue, an Islamic
mosque, a Hindu temple, and
a Buddhist meditation center.
Students will experience a
Roman Catholic Mass in
Latin, explore a crusader
court, enjoy a lunchtime chamber music concert in
a historic church, and a day trip will allow students to
experience Stonehenge, Salisbury Cathedral, and the
Roman city of Bath. There will be few class meet-
ings during the semester apart from the trip, but stu-
dents will do academic work both before and after.
-Cultural or Historical Analysis

RELS 2000-006
Life in the Middle Ages
MWF 9:05-9:45/ Hugh Goforth
(Cross-listed with HIST 2230)
Discussion of the socio-economic underpinnings of
the medieval world with a focus on the daily
life of and interactions between nobles and com-
moners. Topics include war and chivalry, feudal-
isim and manorialism, law and justice, organized
and folk religion, arts and education, and the rise
of the city
-Cultural or Historical Analysis
RELS 2000-007
Magic in Medieval Europe
MW 2:30-3:45/Hugh Goforth
(Cross-listed with HIST 2231)
Magic is in some ways a modern concept. In the ancient Near East and Europe, what we now call magical practices existed as mundane, unexceptional aspects of shared culture. As Christianity gradually took its place as a dominant cultural force, in medieval Europe, many common—and sometime uncommon—practices, increasingly fell under suspicion as "superstition", ignorance, error, sinful, dangerous and even, eventually, conspiratorial and diabolical. This course examines the processes through which “magic” develops into an increasingly feared and persecuted category.
- Historical Analysis

RELS 2000-008
The Modern Middle East
TR 10:00-11:15/Ella Fratantuono
(Cross-listed with HIST 2216)
An introduction to the history of this important and dynamic region. Focuses on the issues that have defined the Middle East in the recent past and provides students with the historical context needed to understand the region, its peoples, and its conflicts in greater depth.

RELS 2002-001
Introduction to Asian Religions
WF 2:30-3:45/Janna Shedd
This course is an introduction to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Shintoism. Emphasis on the myths, stories, symbols, rituals, ideas, and ethical practices of these religions in their classical formulations and in their contemporary practices.
- Cultural or Textual Analysis

RELS 2105-001
New Testament and Christian Origins
MWF 12:20-1:10/David Clausen
Our earliest sources for the origins of the Christian faith are to be found in the 27 books of the New Testament. When were they written? Who wrote them? We will conduct historical and textual investigations of the gospels, Acts, and the letters of Paul and other writings in order to understand the multiple beliefs, activities, and literary creations of the early church.
- Historical or Textual Analysis

RELS 2104-UOL
Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament
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 will learn about the ancient Israelites to help us understand the texts they produced and we will explore the writers’ senses of humor and political agendas. Students will explore how later readers re-imagined biblical narratives and created whole new characters that never existed in the Hebrew!
- Textual Analysis

RELS 2102-001
Christianity
TR 4:00-5:15/Eric Hoenes
What is Christianity? Who is a Christian? 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.
- Cultural or Historical Analysis

RELS 2103-001
Islam/History of Muslim Societies
TR 10:00-11:15/Kathryn Johnson
(Cross-Listed with HIST 2215)
An introduction to the practices and doctrines shared by the world’s 1.6 billion Muslims and the history of Muslim societies. Subjects explored include the development of the Sunni and Shi’i traditions, modern Islamist reform movements, and Islam in the United States.
- Historical or Textual Analysis

RELS 2104-001
Introduction to Hinduism
MWF 11:15-12:05/Prea Persaud
This course introduces students to the wide variety of Hindu beliefs and practices in both India and in the Hindu diaspora. In addition to learning about the texts, rituals, and philosophy of Hinduism, we will discuss the problems of defining Hinduism, the impact of colonialism, the international appeal of yoga and Ayurvedic medicine, the rise of Hindu nationalism, and gurus movements which exist on the fringe of Hinduism and "spiritualism."
- Cultural Analysis
RELS 2600-001
Orientation to the Study of Religion
T 2:30-5:15/Alex Kaloyanides
This course examines the animating theoretical and methodological questions in the academic study of religion. We will consider the emergence and history of the field as well as prominent themes such as myth, experience, and culture. This course pays close attention to the particular research, reading, and writing practices that shape the field.
-Oral and writing intensive

RELS 3000-001
Preachers, Prophets, and Scribes: Language in Religious Life
TR 11:30-12:45/Eric Hoenes
(Cross-Listed with ANTH 3020 & ENGL 3050)
In both its oral and written forms, language plays a key part in people’s religious experiences. This course will introduce students to methods for analyzing language and communication in religious life. Topics covered include: the nature of ritual language; charisma and the institutionalization of religious authority; language socialization and its relationship to belief; the power of words in prayer and magic; and literacy practices surrounding sacred texts.
- Cultural Analysis

RELS 3000-002
Rituals of Race and Racism in America
Hybrid MWF 12:20-1:10/Julia Moore
(Cross-Listed with AFRS 3000 & HIST 3000)
Designed to introduce students to critically think about the intersection of racism and religion in cultural spaces, this course addresses the historical and religious legacies of Christianity and racial constructions of white and non-white peoples in American society.
-Cultural or Historical Analysis

RELS 3000-003
Asians in the Americas
TR 4:00-5:15/Prea Persaud
This course looks at the migration history of Asians in the Americas, the development of their religious communities and hyphenated identities, and the construction and maintenance of the “other” in the Americas.
-Cultural or Historical Analysis

RELS 3000-005
The End of the World as We Know It
TR 11:30-12:45/James Tabor
A historical examination of the idea of the “end of the world” as it developed within forms of ancient Judaism and earliest Christianity and has continued to manifest itself in modern times among both Christian and Jewish groups in the West. The course will focus in particular on how the Bible has been used and interpreted prophetically to chart the future, what happens when prophetic expectations fail, and how do individuals and apocalyptic groups deal with such disappointments. The social psychology of living in the “end times” is a key component of the course, particularly how gender roles and ethnicity are transformed and centers of power are undermined and redefined.
-Historical or Cultural Analysis

RELS 3000-007
God and Sex in Hebrew Bible
TR 1:00-2:15/Barbara Thiede
(Cross-Listed with WGST 3050)
From discussion of sexual boundaries, narratives of sexual abuse and sexual violence, tales of an apparent erotic Eden, all can be found in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible. This course will discuss sexuality and gender in biblical literature and culture. Our topics will include God’s own sexual relationships to prohibited, apparently prohibited and permitted sexual relationships among humans and more.
-Textual Analysis

RELS 3000-008
Magic, Science, and Faith: Ethnographic Approaches to Religion and Healing
Mondays 2:30-5:15/Letha Victor
(Cross-Listed with ANTH 3020)
This course introduces students to encounters between religion and medicine, both broadly defined. Reading primarily ethnographic sources, students will examine the ways that anthropological methods can be employed to make sense of medicine, magic, illness, spiritual affliction, and healing across diverse social, cultural, and political contexts.
- Cultural Analysis

RELS 3000-009
India, Religion, and Bollywood
TR TR 11:30-12:45/Ashley Bryan
(Cross-Listed with FILM 3051)
This course will examine how “Bollywood” – the world’s largest cinema industry – portrays and reveals key aspects of religious traditions found on the Indian subcontinent. Religious experiences and perspectives with regards to communalism, caste politics, gender constructs, and family structures are just some of the topics that will be analyzed. Knowledge of any South Asian language is not required as all films will have English subtitles.
-Historical or Textual Analysis
**RELS 3000-010**

*History and Archeology of Jerusalem*

*MWF 11:15-12:05 / Simon Gibson*

(Cross-Listed with HIST 3002)

This course will explore the urban development and cultural diversification of a city associated with the three main religions of the world: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Selected topics will include nineteenth-century research and modern archaeological work, as well as an appreciation of the overall architecture of the city, the key monuments, and its material culture. Pertinent historical textual sources and the results of up-to-date archaeological excavations in the city will also be addressed. We will examine location, topography, water sources & building materials. The history of archaeological work in the city will be provided from the outset, beginning with the exploration work of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The goal of the course is to provide the student with an overall historical and archaeological view of one of the most exciting cities in the world.

- *Historical Analysis*

**RELS 3000-A03**

*Burned Over: Religion, Reform and Violence in America 1800-1865*

*TR 1:00-2:15 / Gabriel Klehr*

(Cross-Listed with HIST 3000 & AMST 3050)

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 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 Analysis*

**RELS 3000-090**

*Legacy of the Holocaust*

*T 5:30-8:15 / Judy LaPietra*

(Cross-Listed with HGHR 3050)

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.

- *Historical Analysis*

**RELS 3001-001**

*New Technologies and Research in the Humanities (Writing Intensive)*

*TR 1:00-2:15 / Kathryn Johnson*

This class will focus on issues related to the integration of new technologies into research in the humanities. Students will be able to further explore the subject by participating as researchers in our ongoing human trafficking project during the semester. Writing Intensive.

- *Cultural Analysis*

**RELS 3113-001**

*Jesus*

*TR 2:30-3:45 / James Tabor*

What can we know about the historical figure, Jesus of Nazareth? Who was he in his own time and social context, what did he teach, why was he killed? We will focus on all the evidence including our N.T. gospels, gospels outside the N.T., other ancient texts, as well as recent archaeological discoveries.

- *Historical or Textual Analysis*

**RELS 3210-001**

*Religion and Popular Culture*

*R 2:30-5:15 / Sean McCloud*

(Cross-Listed with AMST 3050)

An examination of the interactions and intertwining of religion and popular culture. Topics may include, but are not limited to, popular literature, domestic rituals, material and visual cultures, space and place, fan cultures, media, and folklore. Emphasis on how religion and popular culture shape and are shaped by issues of identity, community, nostalgia, memory, commercialism, capitalism, power, and meaning.

- *Cultural or Textual Analysis*

**RELS 3230-001**

*Race, Religion, and Murder*

*Hybrid (MWF 11:15-2:05) / Julia Moore*

(Cross-Listed with HIST 3000 & AFRS 3050)

This course addresses how Judeo-Christian, Islamic, and Asian traditions have been used to justify and even condone acts of violence against women, children, and peoples of color.

- *Cultural or Historical Analysis*

**RELS 4000-091**

*Conversion, Deconversion, and Change*

*Tuesday 3:30-8:15 / Sean McCloud*

(Cross-Listed with RELS 5000, AMST 4050 & MALS 6000)

This course combines a selection of first-person accounts and academic theories to explore the subject of religious change. What does it mean to “convert” to a religion? What are a few of the myriad ways one might understand personal religious narratives? How have social theorists tried to account for both religious change and stasis?

- *Cultural/Textual Analysis*
RELS 4000-002
Religiosity and (Post) Colonial Encounters in Africa
TR 1:00-2:15/Letha Victor
(Cross-Listed with RELS 5000, ANTH 5090, ANTH 4020, AFRS 4050, AFRS 5000)
This seminar course offers a historically and ethnographically-situated overview of contemporary issues in African religiosity. Topics will include missionization; religion in pan-African nationalism and decolonization movements; debates over monotheism and Traditional African Religion; the shifting parameters of Christianity and Islam; sorcery, witchcraft, conspiracy; divination and mediumship; human encounters with ghosts and spirits; medicine and healing; and more.
-Historical or Cultural Analysis

RELS 4000-003
Devilish Strange: The Figure of the Jew in Western Traditions
TR 2:30-3:45/Barbara Thiede
(Cross-Listed with RELS 5000)
For philosophers and clergy, playwrights and politicians, the Jew has been a subject serving multiple ideological and polemical purposes. Why did cultures around the world adopt the figure of the Jew to address theological, social, political, and economic concerns that have, in actuality, little to do with nothing to do with Jews or Judaism? This course will address how the figure of the Jew took (and takes) shape in the western world.
-Historical Analysis

RELS 4600
Senior Seminar
Monday 4:00-6:45/Joanne Maguire
Senior Seminar is the capstone course for religious studies majors. What is it that you do in religious studies? What is “religion” and how does one identify a “religious” object, event, or practice? What is the difference between the training one receives in religious studies and the training offered in seminaries or divinity schools? Through a critical evaluation of recently published books in the field of “religious studies,” we will map and articulate possible answers to the questions above.
-Oral and writing intensive

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

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<tr>
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<th>Instructor(s)</th>
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<td>Western History &amp; Culture: Western Cultural and Historical Awareness</td>
<td>Online/Julia Moore</td>
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<td>LBST 2102-335</td>
<td>Global Connections-Globalizing Asian Religions</td>
<td>Online/Janna Shedd</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>LBST 2102-337</td>
<td>Global Connections-Middle East</td>
<td>TR 4:00-5:15/Kathryn Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBST 2102-338</td>
<td>Global Connections-Middle East</td>
<td>Wednesday 2:30-5:15/Kathryn Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBST 2102-339</td>
<td>Global Connections-Religious and Cultural Expressions in Asian Cinema</td>
<td>TR 1:00-2:15/Ashley Bryan</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBST 2301-339</td>
<td>Critical Thinking and Communication: A Good Life, What Is It?</td>
<td>Monday 4:00-6:45/Celia Sinclair</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBST 2301-342</td>
<td>Critical Thinking and Communication: Sugar Slaves: Indentureship in Mauritius, South Africa, and the Caribbean</td>
<td>MWF 10:10-11:00/Prea Persaud</td>
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<td>LBST 2301-343</td>
<td>Critical Thinking and Communication: Sugar Slaves: Indentureship in Mauritius, South Africa, and the Caribbean</td>
<td>TR 8:30-9:45/Prea Persaud</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBST 2301-337</td>
<td>Critical Thinking and Communication: Sustainability and The Ecological Citizen</td>
<td>TR 1:00-12:15/Tina Katsanos</td>
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For more information visit religiousstudies.uncc.edu

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