

# Department of Religious Studies

## Summer 1 - 2020 Undergraduate Courses

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

### RELS 1200-081

#### World Religions

*Online/Prea Persaud*

A study of the historical origins, central teachings, and devotional practices of the major religious traditions alongside those of smaller and newer religious movements.

- *Cultural Analysis*



### RELS 2000-080

#### The Supernatural in American Culture

*Online/Sean McCloud*

Cross-Listed with AMST 2050-080  
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 other words, the beliefs and practices surrounding the supernatural in American culture have effects 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 2000-083: Spooky Bhuts: Ghosts, demons and Jinn in India

*Online/Ashley Bryan*

An introduction to supernatural entities found on the Indian subcontinent. Throughout this course students will discover that demons, ghosts, and jinn are not mere peripheral religious figures in India, but instead are powerful forces that inform and confront dominant religious orthodoxies.

Topics will include material from ancient texts to modern folklore, and will cover a wide range of

topics including the historical and religious development of ghosts and demons; conceptions of the body and popular beliefs about what transpires after death; ritual practices used to beckon or repulse these entities; and possessions, exorcisms, and communalism.

- *Cultural or Historical Analysis*

### RELS 2000-082: A Journey Through Buddhism

*Online/Janna Shedd*

This class will survey the history, philosophies, and practices of Buddhism across Asia, with special emphasis on the religion’s cultural diversity. Topics will include the life of the historical Buddha; Buddhist theories of no-self and rebirth; applied morality; monastic lifestyles; practices such as meditation and ritual; and Buddhist supernatural beings. We will examine these and other topics in their local cultural contexts so that students will have the opportunity to compare regional differences in Buddhist beliefs and lived traditions.

- *Cultural or Textual Analysis*



#### Liberal Studies Courses

Religious Studies faculty teach the following courses for the General Education Program.

### LBST 2101-R80: Death and The Afterlife

*Online/James Tabor*

From Plato to modern New Age Spirituality—exploring where, how, and when we developed our views of death and afterlife in the West. The course will focus on the major ideas related to the general theme—

concepts like reincarnation, transmigration and/or immortality of the soul, resurrection of the dead, and the nature of the afterlife. We will draw from texts, religious traditions, art, archaeology, and philosophy to get at the complex mix of ideas and concepts that have shaped our modern perceptions—or even our skepticism and atheistic perceptions. You will find your ideas and understanding of the “Divine,” the cosmos, and our human place therein, informed, enriched, and challenged by looking critically at the history of ideas related to this engaging topic.



### LBST 2102-R82: Globalizing Asian Religions

*Online/Janna Shedd*

This course examines changes in practices, beliefs, and presentations of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism in the modern age. We will trace the impact of major historical figures, immigration, shifting

worldviews, and popular culture on these religions as they are lived and imagined both in their home countries and in the West.

# Department of Religious Studies

## Summer 2 - 2020 Undergraduate Courses

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



### RELS 1200-082

#### World Religions

*Online/Prea Persaud*

A study of the historical origins, central teachings, and devotional practices of the major religious

traditions alongside those of smaller and newer religious movements. - *Cultural Analysis*



### RELS 2000-084 Death and the Afterlife in Asian Religions

*Online/Janna Shedd*

This online 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*

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

### LBST 2102-R81: Why Save Earth? Western cultural Perspectives on Climate Change, Ecology, and Nature.

*Online/Sam Davis*

This course will explore the range of secular and religious perspectives concerning human impact on and moral responsibilities towards Earth and its climate. We will discuss present and historical arguments surrounding environmental crises while examining Western cultural, religious, and philosophical ideas about nature, conservation, and ecology that influence them.

### LBST 2102-R83: American Indian Lifeways and Environmental Activism

*Online/Tina Katsanos*

We will examine the various dimensions of American Indian religions: persons; myth and orality; ritual and ceremony; sacred space, time, and objects; tradition and change. Special emphasis is placed on how environmental activism intersects with these various dimensions and provides a unique vehicle for maintaining and transforming American Indian identities.



### RELS 3000-080

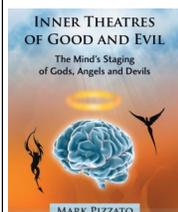
#### Religion and Culture in Bollywood

*Online/Ashley Bryan*

Cross lists with Film 3051-081

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. - *Cultural or Historical Analysis*



### RELS 4000-080 / RELS 5000-080

#### Supernatural Figures in Theatre, Film and the Brain

*Online/Mark Pizzato*

Crosslists with THEA 4001, FILM 3051

This course investigates how certain plays and films reflect the divine and devilish forces that emerge in different human cultures, through the "inner theaters" of our brains. Depictions of gods, angels, and devils will be explored, as well as non-Western gods, representing human desires, fears, and social alternatives. - *Cultural Analysis*

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

### LBST 2102-R84: Intro to Asian Religions

*Online/Janna Shedd*

An introduction to Hinduism, Buddhism, and other selected religions such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Islam. Emphasis on the myths, stories, symbols, rituals, ideas, and ethical practices of these religions in their classical formulations and in their contemporary practices.

### LBST 2301-R80: A Good Life

*Online/Celia Sinclair*

This class will deal with the ways in which "a good life" has been understood in Western thought. What is a good life? How does one go about living it? How is happiness defined and understood? What are the problems we humans must address?.

# Department of Religious Studies

## Summer 2020 Full Term Undergraduate Courses

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



### **RELS 1200-083: World Religions**

*Online/Prea Persaud*

A study of the historical origins, central teachings, and devotional practices of the major religious traditions alongside those of smaller and newer religious movements.

- *Cultural Analysis*



### **LBST 2102-R85: Religious and Cultural Expression in Asian Cinema**

*Online/Ashley Bryan*

In this course religious experiences and perspectives throughout Asia will be analyzed. Topics include but will not be limited to the history of major religious traditions and the complex interplay between religious beliefs and modern culture. Knowledge of any Asian language is not required as all films will have English subtitles.

### **RELS 3400-001: Internships**

*Departmental Approval / Celia Sinclair*

Research and in-service training 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. For more information, contact Celia Sinclair at [cbsincla@uncc.edu](mailto:cbsincla@uncc.edu)