Department of Religious Studies

2018 Summer 1 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 1101-080: Introduction to Religious Studies - Past Objects, Present Identifies
*Online/Julie Hawks*

History is innately tied to the way a community understands itself. Individuals and communities define themselves through objects that they interact with on a daily basis. Students in this course will explore ways in which social groups (religions and nations) commemorate the past in ways that shape collective memory and identity. Topics may include memorials, monuments, landscapes, temples and shrines, food, reenactments, and pilgrimages.

- 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 other 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 affects American culture. Specifically, this course addresses how Judaism, Islam, 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 Textual Analysis

RELS 2000-081: Disability and Religion
*Online/Zannah Kimbrel*

(Cross-Listed with ANTH 2090 & WGST 2050)

What causes disability? Demon possession? Divine punishment for past transgressions? Or something else all together? And why do we feel the need to know? 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 2000-082: Terrorism and Peace-Building in Abrahamic Religions
*Online/Chelsea Carskaddon*

In this introductory course, we explore the ways in which religion is connected with violence as well as the role of terrorism in religion—specifically within the Abrahamic religions. We try to understand the motivations of terrorists to better understand how/if their rationale is, in fact, an act of religious belief. Through it all, we question the need or the essentiality of violence within Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. Finally, we discuss the ways in which these Abrahamic religions strive for peace between one another, or if peace is even achievable.

- Cultural or Historical Analysis

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

This course is intended to introduce students to several religions of Asia: Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism and Shinto. 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 Judaism, Islam, 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

RELS 4000-001/5000-001: Plays and Films About Gods, Angels and Devils
*MTR 2:00-4:30/Mark Pizzato*

(Cross-Listed with THEA 4001)

- Cultural Analysis

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

**LBST 2101-R81: Death and Afterlife**
*Online/James Tabor*

**LBST 2102-R81: Globalizing Asian Religions**
*Online/Janna Shedd*

For more information visit www.religiousstudies.uncc.edu
Department of Religious Studies

2018 Summer 2 Undergraduate Courses

RELS 1200-080: World Religions
Online/Ashley Bryan
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 or Historical Analysis

RELS 2000-080: World Religion 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, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. 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 2000-081: Casseroles and Communion
Online/Zannah Kimbrel
Food is an essential part of human life, and as a result it plays a large role in many of the religions of the world. This course will investigate a diverse cross-section of religions, using food as a focal point. We will look at diverse topics, spanning from prohibitions originating from textual sources, as well as contemporary cultural practices that include specific foods, feasts, or fasts.
- Cultural or Textual Analysis

RELS 2000-082: Introduction to 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 Historical Analysis

RELS 2104-080: Hebrew Scripture/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 archaeological 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’ sense 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!
- Historical or Textual Analysis

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

LBST 2101-R81: Encountering the "Other" in Film, Stage, and Music
Online/Chelsea Carskaddon

LBST 2102-R81: Global Connections
Online/Tina Katsanos

LBST 2102-R82: Global Connections
Online/Janna Shedd

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.

For more information visit www.religiousstudies.uncc.edu