

Course Learning Outcomes – RLST

RLST 100: Introduction to Religion

- To acquire basic religious literacy in the major traditions of South Asia
- To develop familiarity with basic methods and concepts in religious studies
- To think critically about the task of “representing” religion

RLST 110: Religion, Conflict & Politics

Goals of the course and learning outcomes:

- To examine ways in which political issues have been influenced by religious convictions and beliefs, and ways in which religion and religious tradition have been influenced by political considerations.
- To analyze ways and means by which specific religious interpretations and traditions have developed throughout history, been appropriated for political purposes, and utilized to validate and justify armed conflict, violence, intolerance, and prejudice.
- To become acquainted with the basic principles of the three monotheistic “western” religions and to understand their historical and theological developments as they relate – or more frequently, fail to relate – to each other in the realm(s) of politics, religious tradition and interpretation, and conflict.

RLST 201: Islam

- To acquire basic religious literacy in Islamic traditions
- To acquire a working knowledge of the culture and history of the Islamic world
- To acquire familiarity with basic methods and concepts in religious studies
- To practice informal writing skills and basic research skills

RLST 202: Hindu Traditions

- To acquire basic religious literacy in Hinduism and related traditions
- To acquire a basic working knowledge of South Asian geography and history
- To acquire familiarity with basic methods and concepts in religious studies
- To practice informal writing skills and basic research skills

RLST 203: Buddhist Traditions

Through completion of this course students will be able to:

- Identify and define terms central to the study of Buddhism
- Recognize culture-specific images and art
- Compare cross-cultural beliefs and practices
- Participate knowledgeably in online discussions
- Demonstrate critical and creative thinking in written assignments

RLST 204: Intro to the Hebrew Bible

Goals of the course and learning outcomes:

- To become acquainted with the major themes of the Hebrew Bible.
- To become acquainted with some of the critical scholarly tools used in the interpretation and study of the Hebrew Bible in an academic setting.
- To become acquainted with the historical and cultural background out of which the religion presented in the Hebrew Bible emerged.
- To learn to read, examine, and discuss the Hebrew Bible as an academic text and as a means of examining the development of western religious thought.

RLST 205: Intro to the New Testament

Learning outcomes:

- To become acquainted with the major themes of the New Testament.
- To become acquainted with some of the critical scholarly tools used in the interpretation and study of the New Testament in an academic setting.
- To become acquainted with the historical backgrounds and cultural settings out of which the religion and views presented in the New Testament emerged.
- To learn to read, examine, and discuss the New Testament as an academic text and as a means of examining the development of western religious thought.

RLST 206: Origins of God

Goals of the course and learning outcomes:

- To become acquainted with the ways in which humans have attempted to present, define, depict, and describe the divine and their own relationship to the divine.
- To learn to use texts, visual images, and other evidence to examine human methods of divine representation and expressions of the divine-human relationship.
- To learn to read, examine, and discuss human concepts of the divine as an academic subject.

RLST 207: Myth and Belief

Through completion of this course students will be able to:

- Examine and interpret primary texts
- Participate actively in group presentations
- Compare and contrast ideas/concepts/data across religious traditions
- Demonstrate analytical and creative thinking in written assignments

RLST 217: Religion, Science, and Environment

- To acquire familiarity with basic methods and concepts in religious studies
- To acquire familiarity with basic methods and concepts in science studies and humanistic environmental studies
- To develop skills in reading complicated theoretical and/or historical texts
- To develop core skills in academic essay writing

RLST 220: Interpretation of American Religion

- To acquire basic religious literacy in the diverse religious cultures of North America in transnational perspective

- To develop critical tools for analyzing the relationship of religion to political, cultural, and social institutions
- To acquire familiarity with basic methods and concepts in religious studies
- To practice informal writing skills and basic research skills

RLST 223: Sacrifice, Rite & Ritual

Through completion of this course students will be able to:

- Critically analyze and discuss primary source materials
- Participate knowledgably in group discussions
- Complete original research
- Prepare and deliver research presentation
- Compare and contrast cross-cultural data
- Integrate theory and empirical data

RLST 321: Religion and Gender

Through completion of this course students will be able to:

- Examine and interpret primary texts
- Contribute effectively to group presentations
- Distinguish between various research methods
- Compare and contrast ideas/concepts/data across religious traditions
- Demonstrate critical thinking in written and verbal communication

RLST 325: Religion and Literature

- To develop skills in literary and textual analysis
- To learn key concepts in the study of religion and culture
- To practice skills in academic essay writing

RLST 326: Topics in Religion

- To learn in depth about select topics in religion
- To learn critical methodologies in religious studies, especially how to combine textual, historical, and theoretical methods of cultural analysis
- To develop basic research skills
- To practice skills in writing, discussion, and oral presentation

RLST 330: Ancient Egypt

Learning outcomes:

- To become acquainted with the history, society and religion of ancient Egypt.
- To examine the ancient Egyptian worldview and the Egyptian view of history, culture, and religion.
- To read the texts – historical, social, religious, etc. – produced by this ancient culture in order to understand its perception of itself, its views of the divine, and its religion.

- To learn to analyze the religion, history, art, and literature of ancient Egypt as an expression of a distinct culture and society.

RLST 332: Archaeology and Religion

Goals of the course and learning outcomes:

- To examine the interface between religion and archaeology in order to understand how archaeological interpretation becomes subject to religious belief and/or how religious belief may affect archaeological interpretation.
- To examine the history of this interconnection between religion and archaeology as it developed during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
- To apply knowledge of these interconnections and interactions to specific case studies in archaeology in order to examine and evaluate the scholarly arguments regarding the history of the human past.

RLST 370: Philosophy of Religion

- To gain familiarity with key concepts and methods in critical theory, the philosophy of religion, and theory and method in religious studies
- To learn to read and discuss dense theoretical texts; to paraphrase their arguments accurately; and to consider their purchase on contemporary social, cultural, and political issues
- To practice skills in academic essay writing and discussion

RLST 402: Natural, Unnatural, Supernatural

Goals of the course and learning outcomes:

- To become acquainted with different perspectives regarding the relationship between religion and nature, and how these relationships change and adapt.
- To examine how different traditions view the relationship between God, humans, and nature, and how they have expressed their understanding of that relationship.
- To examine how different religions approach and define nature, and how they attempt to express, represent, and understand the human and divine roles in relation to nature.

RLST 405: Text and Image

- To develop advanced skills in analytic writing, critical reading, and academic discussion
- To practice skills in formal oral presentation
- To hone research skills in the preparation of a substantial final paper
- To develop an advanced proficiency in the study of religion and culture

RLST 407: Violence & Religion

Goals of the course:

- To examine the religious roots of various social and political categories in today's world.
- To examine the means by which these religiously-influenced categories have affected historical and events and human development.

- To understand the background and long history of interpretation behind these categories, the role of religion in establishing and perpetuating these distinctions, and to examine these categories and the means by which they interconnect in the contemporary world.

RLST 410: What is Religion?

- To develop an advanced understanding of theory and method in religious studies, with particular attention to the genealogy of the concept “religion”
- To develop advanced skills in writing about theoretical, philosophical, and anthropological texts
- To develop the ability to “apply” theory to a particular object of analysis
- To practice skills in oral presentation

RLST 494: Seminar

- To examine human perspectives of time, world order, reward/punishment, and the human and divine role and/or responsibility for creating and maintaining these concepts.
- To engage in critical reading and analysis of materials to gain additional knowledge of theoretical and methodological approaches to the academic study of religion
- To undertake collaborative and independent work that involves research and the use of primary and secondary sources that will result in the production of group and final projects focused on the critical analysis of religious thought and perspectives in a secular setting.

RLST 499: Senior Capstone

Goals of the course and learning outcomes:

- To examine human perspectives of time, world order, reward/punishment, and the human and divine role and/or responsibility for creating and maintaining these concepts.
- to engage in critical reading and analysis of materials to gain additional knowledge of theoretical and methodological approaches to the academic study of religion
- To undertake collaborative and independent work that involves research and the use of primary and secondary sources, which will result in the production of group and final projects focused on the critical analysis of religious thought and perspectives in a secular setting.