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## RELIGION, SPIRITUALITY, AND SOCIETY

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### About the Department

For students seeking a socially engaged liberal arts education, the Department of Religion, Spirituality, and Society explores questions of power, knowledge, and identity as they relate to religious traditions. While developing a deeper understanding of oneself as a situated knower, students also explore individual religious traditions in depth, as well as broad themes such as the following: myth, ritual, and symbol; mysticism, magic, and medicine; beginning and end times; ethics, law, and moral philosophy; oppression and liberation; pacifism and violence; animals, bodies, and emotions. Courses are conducted with attention to structures and institutions of class, gender, sexuality, and race in their cultural and historical contexts.

For the major and minor in Religion, Spirituality, and Society, the faculty provides an introduction to the academic discipline of Religion, Spirituality, and Society followed by careful probing of two or more important traditions and a consideration of the methods useful to their study. A major or minor provides opportunities to develop excellent skills in writing, analysis, and argumentation and serves as an exceptional stepping stone to graduate or professional school. Past majors have gone on to excel in the non-profit sector, law school, medical school, doctoral programs, social work, creative writing, marketing and business, among other vocations.

### Learning Objectives in the Religious Studies Major

- To develop an understanding of a range of religious traditions, including Asian and Abrahamic religions
- To develop an understanding of the roles religions play in political, economic, social, cultural, and moral areas of people's lives
- To gain familiarity with a variety of theories, methods, and issues involved in the academic study of religions.

Religion, Spirituality, and Society courses are grouped into the following areas:

#### Area A. Abrahamic Religions

- 201 The History and Literature of the New Testament
- 203 Jesus and the Jesus Tradition
- 204 Religions of the Book
- 205 Introduction to Jewish Studies
- 210 Comparative Christianities
- 211 Islam in America
- 212 Global Islam
- 303 Sexuality and Religion
- 310 Christianity and Law in the West
- 312 The Apocalyptic Imagination
- 321 Sexuality and Christianity: Then and Now
- 342 Sufism
- 350 Mysticism: The Spiritual Search in the Christian Tradition
- 363 Saints, Symbols, and Sacraments: History of Christian Traditions
- CONN 322 Jihad, Islamism, and Colonial Legacies

#### Area B. Asian Religions

- 231 Korean Religions and Culture
- 233 Japanese Religious Traditions
- 234 Chinese Religious Traditions
- 300 Japanimals: Power, Knowledge, and Spirituality at the Intersection of Species
- 328 Religion, the State, and Nationalism in Japan
- 332 Buddhism
- 334 Vedic Religion and Brahmanism
- 335 Classical Hinduism

#### Area C. Cultural and Ethical Studies

- 220 Spirituality and the Self
- 265 What Is Justice?
- 270 Religion, Activism, and Social Justice
- 272 Public Health Ethics
- 292 Basics of Bioethics
- 298 Reproductive Ethics
- 302 Ethics and the Other
- 315 Modern Jewish Thinkers
- 323 Gender and Sexuality in Muslim Societies
- 325 New Religious Movements
- 368 Gender Matters
- CONN 318 Crime and Punishment

#### Area D. Advanced Seminars in Religious Studies

- 410 Religion and Violence
- 420 Law and Religion
- 430 The Politics of Living and Dying
- 440 The Body in Comparative Religions
- 444 God in the Anthropocene
- 450 Technology, Enchantment, and Violence
- 456 Ethics and Postmodernity
- 460 Religious Technologies
- 470 Global Migrations and Lived Religions
- 494 Special Topics

#### Area E. Additional Courses

- 202 Introduction to the Study of World Religions
- 208 Yoga, Psychedelics, and the Ascetic Imperative
- 215 Religion and Queer Politics
- 301 Consciousness and the Bourgeoisie
- 305 Marxism and the Messianic
- 307 Prisons, Gender and Education
- 330 Religious Freedom in the United States
- 495/496 Independent Study
- CONN 344 Magic and Religion

### General Requirements for the Major or Minor

General university degree requirements stipulate that 1) at least four units of the major or three units of the minor be taken in residence at Puget Sound; 2) students earn a GPA of 2.0 in courses taken for the major or the minor; and 3) all courses taken for a major or minor must be taken for graded credit. Any exceptions to these stipulations are indicated in the major and minor degree requirements listed below.

### Requirements for the Major

The major in Religion, Spirituality, and Society is nine courses, one of which is the required REL 340 Imagining Religion.

From Area A: 1 course  
From Area B: 1 course  
From Area C: 1 course  
From Area D: 2 courses  
REL 340, Imagining Religion (usually taken sophomore or junior year)  
From Areas A through E: 3 additional elective courses in Religion, Spirituality, and Society, at least one at the 300 level or above

## Notes

1. REL 495/496 counts as an elective toward the major, and not as an advanced seminar.
2. One ancillary course may be applied toward the major as an elective, with the permission of the chair. Examples of ancillary courses include: CLSC 321, 330, CONN 332, ENGL 353, HIST 311, HIST 393, STS 370.
3. Only grades of C (2.00) or higher count toward the major or minor.

## Requirements for the Minor

The minor in Religion, Spirituality, and Society is five courses:

One course each from Area A, B, and C; and two additional Religion, Spirituality, and Society courses, at least one course must be above the 200 level.

## Note

Only grades of C (2.00) or higher count towards the major or minor.

## Course Offerings

Unless otherwise specified, each course carries 1 unit of credit and is offered at least once each academic year. Please see "Frequency of Course Offerings" on page 18.

**Seminars in Scholarly Inquiry.** See *Seminars in Scholarly Inquiry in the Core Curriculum section of this Bulletin for course descriptions.*

**SSI1/SSI2 102 Rhetoric and Religion**

**SSI2 129 Religion on the Border: Boundaries of Religion and Politics**

**SSI1/SSI2 150 Exploring Bioethics Today**

**SSI1 155 Are Prisons Necessary?**

**SSI2 162 Mary and 'Aisha: Feminism and Religion**

**SSI1 178 Muslim Fictions**

**SSI1 180 Global Bioethics**

## Other courses offered by Religion, Spirituality, and Society Department faculty.

See *Connections in the Core Curriculum section of this Bulletin for course descriptions (page 34).*

**CONN 318 Crime and Punishment**

Satisfies the Connections core requirement.

**CONN 322 Jihad, Islamism, and Colonial Legacies**

Satisfies the Connections core requirement.

**CONN 344 Magic and Religion**

Satisfies the Connections core requirement.

**HUM 368 A Precious Barbarism: Enlightenment, Ideology, and Colonialism**

Satisfies the Connections core requirement. Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, Power graduation requirement.

**REL 301 Consciousness and the Bourgeoisie**

Satisfies the Connections core requirement.

## Religion (REL)

**201 The History and Literature of the New Testament** All the writings of the New Testament are studied, in order to understand both the critical scholarly questions of date, authorship, purpose, and the impact of these writings and their authors on the emerging Christian community. *Offered frequently.*

**202 Introduction to the Study of World Religions** This course provides an introduction to the vocabulary, methods, and theoretical assumptions of the academic study of religion. By examining several diverse religious communities and traditions—including Lakota Sioux, Southern Pentecostal, Nation of Islam, and Zen Buddhist—we examine patterns, themes, and issues that scholars commonly encounter across world religions. We also examine how specific communities give voice to themes found within the larger world religion from which they emerge. In each case, particular attention is paid to the role of religion in social justice and salvation movements, and in the formation of individual and group identities. In addition, this course provides a setting in which to practice and develop critical thinking skills through reading, writing, reflection, and discussion. Students should come away from the course with a greater understanding of critical issues facing religious communities historically and in the world today, with a greater appreciation of the diversity of world religions within the United States, and with a grounding in influential scholarly approaches to the study of religion. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, Power graduation requirement. Offered frequently.*

**203 Jesus and the Jesus Traditions** The figure of Jesus has sparked theological debates, artistic expressions, government decrees, religious persecutions, pietistic revivals, and social and moral attitudes, affecting the lives of countless generations. This course addresses an over-arching question throughout the semester: How does an educated person in today's society evaluate such conflicting responses? The course draws on current historical and narrative approaches to understand the 'images' of Jesus in their respective literary, social, and historical contexts. It addresses some of the following questions. What did Jesus mean to the first interpreters? How did the early Christian communities view Jesus? What do the texts reveal about early Christian attitudes towards outsiders (government, different religious groups, social/moral attitudes)? How has Jesus been perceived in Christian tradition (art, literature, theology, ecclesiology) and in the development of western civilization (e.g., literature, the arts, politics, public schools)? The goal is not to give final and definitive answers. Rather, the course seeks 1) to encourage questions regarding the themes, purpose, and significance of the texts; 2) to provide methodological tools to aid such questions; 3) to place these questions and answers amidst the questions and answers of others; and 4) to understand the Jesus traditions both ancient and contemporary in light of their own social, cultural, and literary contexts. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered occasionally.*

**204 Religions of the Book** This course surveys the major monotheistic traditions of the world—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—from their origins to the present day. The course fosters an appreciation of the distinctiveness and inner coherence of each of these traditions as well as to discern facets of unity among the three. Religious expression assumes many forms and is considered in traditional theological and philosophical texts as well as in political systems and the arts. The class is conducted as a combination of lecture and discussion. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered every semester.*

**205 Introduction to Jewish Studies** This course introduces students to some important themes, histories, and ideas in the study of Judaism. It poses the question, "What does it mean to be Jewish?" And it provides

multiple, contested answers. It begins with modern American Judaism. In the first weeks, we will study the forms of Jewish religiosity, culture, and art that arose in 20th century America. Then, we will take a giant leap back to study the Hebrew Bible, the Rabbinic traditions, and medieval Jewish philosophy and mysticism. We will pay special attention to themes of sexuality and gender, food, and ritual, particularly as they relate to identity formation. We will study the relationships between Jews and religious others. As we move into the early modern and modern periods, we will focus on the lived experience of Jews in Europe. Then, we will study the rise of nineteenth and early twentieth century Zionism, anti-Semitism, Nazism, and the Shoah (Holocaust). Before we end, our penultimate stop will be texts on the creation of the State of Israel and theology in the wake of the Shoah. Finally, we will return to America, where we will study the histories and cultures of African American Jews. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered frequently.*

**208 Yoga, Psychedelics and the Ascetic Imperative** This course investigates and attempts to distinguish, identify, and understand the different modes and aspects of yoga, meditation, and ascetic disciplines in a variety of cultural contexts. The class examines the broad influence of the ascetic imperative in culture and criticism—in myth, literature, philosophy, religion, and psychology. Primary texts include Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, Plato's Symposium, and Athanasius's Life of Anthony. Major interpretive authors studied include Nietzsche, Weber, Freud, and Foucault. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered frequently.*

**210 Comparative Christianities** This course provides an introduction to Christianity, or rather, 'Christianities.' To understand the diversity within Christianity, the course compares and contrasts various historical and contemporary traditions in Christianity: Gnosticism, the Eastern Orthodox Church, medieval Western Latin Christianity, Protestantism in the sixteenth century, African-American Christianities, Pentecostalism, liberation theology, and Christian fundamentalism in the United States. Students come to realize that there is no one single, monolithic 'Christianity,' but instead a variety of Christianities which vary geographically, historically, and culturally. The course also examines the way in which gender, race, and class affect religious perspectives upon the human experience. It concludes by examining two social issues which Christians today debate, homosexuality and the ordination of women. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered occasionally.*

**211 Islam in America** This course surveys Muslim life and religious movements connected to Islam in North America, tracing the history of Islam on the continent from the Atlantic slave trade to the post-9/11 era. It investigates the many ways in which Islam, as both a religion and an idea, has appeared on the American horizon and in the American imagination. Through course exams, assignments, and papers, students are able to appreciate and reflect concretely in their writing on the cultural and socio-economic differences that have shaped American Muslim views on religion and identity. They do so by citing historic cases, autobiographical testimonies, and current observable practices. Through the briefs and presentations they produce, they also take part in a major semester-long group project in which issues of belonging and community are mapped out in real spaces. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered frequently.*

**212 Global Islam** This course takes historical and thematic approaches to studying the complex phenomenon (or phenomena) of Islam. Students in this course seek to understand the development of Islam over time—from the earliest communities in seventh century Arabia through the present day. The course will ask questions about the meaning of prophesy, scripture, and ritual. Additionally, the course will focus on the towering

achievements of Islamic thought, including law, literature, and philosophy. Students will study all of these phenomena in their diverse lived contexts, from West Africa to Northwest China. The role of women and of gendered difference are not incidental to this course, or relegated to a specific unit, but are central to how we will think through Islamic history. The latter half of the course will ask how the dramatic events of colonialism altered (or did not alter) the meanings, perceptions, and practices of Islam. Beyond written texts, the course will explore some of the sights and sounds that comprise Muslim life worlds. Through these issues and materials, students will get a small but well-placed window onto the manifold meanings of Islam in the lives of its practitioners. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered frequently.*

**215 Religion and Queer Politics** What has been the role of religion in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) politics? This course challenges the dominant picture of entrenched opposition between queer lives and religious traditions, and it investigates the complexity and variety of queer and religious engagement during the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. This course covers the historical emergence of sexual and gender identity communities in the United States and the attendant formations of established religious teachings as backdrop and critical context for both opposing and supportive religious involvement LGBT politics. The course examines anti-queer religious responses but also spends significant time covering queer-inclusive religious advocacy, including liberal religious involvement in gay liberation, the formation of queer inclusive churches and synagogues and new spiritual communities such as the Radical Faeries, and religious involvement in political causes from AIDS/HIV activism, hate crimes legislation, and same-sex marriage. *Crosslisted as GQS/REL 215. Cross-listed as GQS/REL 215. Offered occasionally.*

**220 Spirituality and the Self** What does Beyonce's Lemonade share in common with St. Augustine's Confessions? What does Harry Potter teach about spiritual self-mastery? This class investigates contemporary narratives and practices of personal transformation in conversation with themes from classical writings about spiritual experience, highlighting how today's efforts to transform the self borrow from longstanding religious themes. This course helps students develop critical perspectives for analyzing religious and spiritual influences within contemporary culture, including cultural products and practices that seem not to be religious. At the same time, students also reflect personally on how their own routines and aspirations—from media consumption practices to working out—might be seen and analyzed with those same critical tools from the study of religion. Texts include selections from J.K. Rowling; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, Julian of Norwich's Revelations of Divine Love; Martin Buber, I and Thou; The Autobiography of Malcolm X; B.K.S. Iyengar, Light on Life, James Baldwin, The Fire Next Time, and others. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered occasionally.*

**231 Korean Religions and Culture** This course examines Korean religions and culture through anthropological, sociological, and historical analysis. It surveys major religious traditions of Korea (i.e. shamanism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity) and several new religious movements including Tonghak, Unification Church, and North Korea's Juche. The course examines impacts of Korean religions on social, political, and economic change in contemporary Korea society. The class explores a variety of religious elements that are deeply embedded in contemporary Korean culture through an examination of Korean film. Topics covered include Korean food and religion, evangelical Protestantism and gender, family ritual, geomancy, the democratic movement, Korean music, the Korean wave, traditional Korean medicine, Korean diaspora, and Korean religious views on afterlife. Course materials include Korean films,

television shows, and other visual materials. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Cannot be audited. Offered frequently.*

**233 Japanese Religious Traditions** This course explores the major expressions of religion in Japanese culture and history, including both popular and elite forms of religious practice and thought. Because Japan is home to a range of religious traditions, the course explores the various forms that have appeared there not only of Buddhism and Shinto, but also of Taoism, Confucianism, and even Christianity. A primary goal of this course is to develop both an empathetic understanding of Japanese religion and a critical appraisal of its expression in particular historical and cultural contexts. Throughout the course ample time is devoted to the role of aesthetics in Japanese religion (in film, literature, art, and ritual) as well as to the various ways that religion and the Japanese state have interacted over time. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered frequently.*

**234 Chinese Religious Traditions** This course provides an introduction to the wide range of religious beliefs and practices that have emerged over the course of Chinese history. Topics covered include not only the classic traditions Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism, but also such broader examples of religious expression as oracle bone inscriptions, medieval ghost stories, and contemporary practices in longevity. Throughout the course students explore how those in China have understood the world religiously, and how scholars have interpreted the diverse world of Chinese religion. Some of the questions include: What has it meant to be a human in China? What other spirits, ghosts, and divinities inhabit the Chinese religious world? What is included and what is excluded when we use the term 'religion,' or even 'China'? How do cultural, historical, and political changes affect religious experience, or a person's understanding of 'ultimate reality'? A primary goal of the course is to develop a broad understanding both of Chinese religious history and of contemporary issues involving religion in China. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered frequently.*

**265 What is Justice?** This course provides students with tools of ethical analysis so that they can think critically about pressing contemporary moral issues through the lens of justice. The course focuses on ethical methods from world Christianity and western philosophy. The course introduces both ethical theories and justice theories, and examines multicultural perspectives of the long-standing religious, theological, and philosophical understanding of justice. It analyzes how social justice concepts have been applied in different cultural contexts, including non-western communities. Students examine different models of justice and their implications for contemporary moral issues (e.g. racism, healthcare, social welfare, capital punishment, human rights, immigration, refugees, property rights, and the environment). The class includes interactive lectures on justice theories and students actively participate in discussions on selected case studies. Course readings may include excerpts from Aristotle, Aquinas, Mill, Locke, Calvin, Kant, Rawls, Sandel, Nussbaum, Singer, Cone, Williams, Hauerwas, and Ahn. *Crosslisted as AFAM/REL 265. Cross-listed as AFAM/REL 265. Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, Power graduation requirement. Offered every year.*

**270 Religion, Activism and Social Justice** How does social change happen? Religious groups were central to many instances of transformative social activism like the Civil Rights movement, Feminism and Occupy Wall Street. This course addresses how religious beliefs, identities, affiliations, and practices shape social activism and justice in the United States and the world. The class examines the multiple ways that religion intersects with power and resistance with particular attention to how religion acts as a resource and identity for enacting both reformative and radical social change. The course uses history, fiction, sociology

and theory to examine religion in both conservative and progressive movements including Immigrant rights, Prison Abolition, the Civil Rights movement, white supremacy past and present, suffrage and voting rights, reproductive rights, #MeToo and Black Lives Matter. Students will have the opportunity to do oral histories of people involved in religious activism and study a movement or group in depth. *Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, Power graduation requirement. Cannot be audited. Offered occasionally.*

**272 Public Health Ethics** This course is an introduction to public health ethics in health policy and bioethics. It explores a broad spectrum of legal and public health contexts to demonstrate how religious and cultural factors affect health. Students analyze religion and culture as social determinants of health in various case studies. Case studies range from tobacco control laws to public health in religious communities. Course topics include vaccination, HIV/AIDS, sex education, racism and health, recreational use of marijuana, health of refugees, genetically modified organisms, drug pricing, gene patenting, PTSD, food policy, tobacco control, alternative medicine, and experiences with spirituality and healing. The class design utilizes a participatory, student-centered approach to classroom learning. Course materials include religious literature, legal cases, and public health literature. *Crosslisted as REL/BIOE 272 Cross-listed as BIOE/REL 272. Cannot be audited.*

**292 Basics of Bioethics** This course is an examination of Western philosophical and religious understandings of moral issues brought on by advances in health care, science and technology. In this course, students will learn the Principles approach to bioethics, as well as other ethical approaches to the difficult moral issues raised by contemporary medical science and its clinical applications. To that end, case analysis will be used extensively in this course. The course is designed to help facilitate connections for students between medical/scientific advances, ethics, religious values, and American public policy about technology and health care. Each class session will alternate between theoretical and medical/scientific considerations, and the concreteness of bioethical case analyses. *Cross-listed as BIOE/REL 292. Prerequisite: Students may not receive credit for both BIOE/REL 292 and BIOE/PHIL 292. Offered every year.*

**298 Reproductive Ethics** This course examines various religious, cultural, legal, feminist, and ethical issues surrounding reproduction and assisted reproductive technologies. It analyzes tensions related to curtailing or enhancing fertility in the United States. The course surveys how religious beliefs, cultural contexts, and laws have influenced patients' reproductive decisions, clinicians' medical decisions, and the reproductive healthcare system. Moral issues surveyed in this course include reproductive rights, contraception, abortion, prenatal diagnosis, assisted reproduction, surrogacy, genetic engineering in assisted reproduction, and the delivery of reproductive healthcare. Students actively participate in discussion, debate, and role-playing based on assigned readings. Readings include religious texts, bioethics literature, feminist literature, film, and legal cases. *Prerequisite: Open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Permission of instructor required for first-year students. Cannot be audited.*

**300 Japanimals: Power, Knowledge, and Spirituality at the Intersection of Species** What do the lamb of God and White Buffalo Woman have in common? For one thing, they illustrate the sometimes-blurry intersection of humans, animals, and the divine; for another, they illustrate the powerful role played by animals in the religious imagination. As the French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss once remarked, "animals are good to think." As others have pointed out, they're also good to eat, ride, look at, hunt, train for battle, make things

out of, and keep as companions. In religion, animals have additionally served as sacrificial offerings, totems, signifiers of purity and pollution, and foreshadows of the apocalypse. In this class students begin to trace the vast interplay between human and non-human animals in the history of religion. Drawing from the emerging field of Critical Animal Studies, Japanimals weaves together rigorous critical theoretical inquiry with case studies drawn broadly from the history of religions, with a particular focus on case studies from Japan. Students emerge from this course able to articulate how different religious traditions have viewed animals, how religions have influenced modern conceptions of animals, and how religious traditions may (or may not) provide resources for addressing contemporary challenges facing human and non-human animals. *Prerequisite: One course in Religion or permission of the instructor. Offered every other year.*

**301 Consciousness and the Bourgeoisie** See Connections in the Core Curriculum section of this *Bulletin* for course description.

**302 Ethics and the Other** This course provides an opportunity for students to examine the contours of an ethical framework of responsibility by exploring contemporary moral and religious narratives about the “other” from a multicultural perspective. Students learn to apply various ethical theories to particular issues and dilemmas, such as race-class-gender, violence, sexuality, and issues of “difference.” *Offered occasionally.*

**303 Sexuality and Religion** This course explores the intertwined histories of religion and sexuality in the twentieth- and twenty-first century United States, with attention to transnational contexts and global politics. These two categories—religion and sexuality—are often portrayed as oppositional forces, with sexual progress pitted against religious resistance. This course reappraises this relationship of opposition through a series of historical case studies, which highlight the plurality of religious investments in changing constructions and practices of sexuality. *Cannot be audited. Offered occasionally.*

**305 Marxism and the Messianic** The seminar focuses on the thought of Walter Benjamin, including a selection of texts commonly referred to as Benjamin’s “messianic” or “theological” writings. Benjamin’s life, work, and influence represent a remarkable nexus of aesthetic theory, cultural critique, Western Marxism, and Jewish mysticism. The course is especially aimed at laying bare the messianic structure of his thought as most clearly demonstrated in his early essays “Critique of Violence” and “The Task of the Translator,” both published during his lifetime in 1921 and 1923. Themes include: a-theology, messianic time, utopia, apocalypse, redemption, political-theology, dialectical image, profane life, “bare life,” nihilism, violence, transcendence, and the destructive character. *Offered occasionally.*

**307 Prisons, Gender and Education** This is an experiential learning class that combines academic content with weekly participation in the college program at the Washington Corrections Center for Women as part of the Freedom Education Project Puget Sound (FEPPS), a signature initiative of the University of Puget Sound. Students will spend time in study halls, classes, and other activities at the prison and connect with students there who are working toward their AA and BA degrees. The class will cover the religious origins of the prison and religious life inside, race and mass incarceration, theories of crime and punishment, pedagogy and power in teaching in prison, and the history and ethics of higher education in prison. All readings and discussion pay particular attention to how gender impacts the experience of people in the prison, which is the main prison in Washington state designated for women and

holds over 900 people. *Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, Power graduation requirement. Offered frequently.*

**310 Christianity and Law in the West** Many of the distinctive features of the modern Western legal tradition can be traced to medieval Europe and its religious beliefs and practices. International law, law on the European continent, and law in nations following the Anglo-American tradition have been deeply colored by the assumptions and arguments of medieval canon law, the law regulating the Latin Catholic Church. This course discusses legal developments in Europe during the medieval period. Topics covered include sin and crime, natural law, and law governing marriage and sexual norms. The course examines how canonical norms and ideas influenced secular law in the Middle Ages and how they have continued to shape Western law and legal theory up to the present. *REL 204, 210, or 363 or HIST 102, 302, or 303 would be helpful preparation. Offered occasionally.*

**312 The Apocalyptic Imagination** From zombies to climate change to the rapture, apocalyptic narratives of how the world ends and what comes after have stimulated literary and religious imaginations for over 2000 years. Often, apocalyptic stories tell us more about the conditions, social fears, and anxieties in which they are produced than about any anticipated future. This course explores religious, literary, pop cultural, technological, environmental, and catastrophic narratives and beliefs about the apocalypse. The course addresses why apocalyptic narratives are so enduring in American culture, and why apocalyptic movements so often employ violence to usher in the end. It will also pay close attention to how gender, race, sexuality, and fears about reproduction are often central to apocalyptic ideas—whether religious, environmental, or political. *Offered occasionally.*

**315 Modern Jewish Thinkers** This course acquaints students with major Jewish thinkers in the modern and contemporary periods. The course begins by asking what makes a thinker Jewish? What makes a Jewish thinker modern? After a brief overview of major themes in Jewish ethics, students begin their exploration with a study of Baruch Spinoza’s rationalist challenge to Judaism that results in the quintessential modern question, who is a Jew? Students then turn to Jewish responses to the Enlightenment, emancipation, nationalism, and new forms of antisemitism. These responses include a variety of Zionists, socialist Jews, existentialists such as Martin Buber, and mystics and social activists such as Abraham Joshua Heschel. The course then studies post-Holocaust Jewish ethicists, Jewish feminists, and contending views on Jewish liberation. *Offered occasionally.*

**321 Sexuality & Christianity: Then and Now** This course approaches the subject of sexuality in the Christian tradition by focusing on three broad periods—early Christianity, the Middle Ages, and today. Within each era, students investigate questions of virginity, chastity, marriage, and non-normative sexualities (such as homosexuality). Students enlist a diverse selection of primary and secondary sources—both theoretical and historical. Through this fascinating exploration of Christianity and sexuality, students witness a dizzying variety of ways that sexualities have been lived, accepted, utilized, and interpreted. Furthermore, students develop a richer understanding of what sexuality has meant to Christianity over the ages and why it matters so much. *Offered occasionally.*

**323 Gender and Sexuality in Muslim Societies** This course examines multiple configurations of and debates about gender and sexuality in Muslim societies. Topics covered include gender in the Qur’an, sex in Sufi poetry, Islamic laws on sexuality and gendered difference, masculinity, non-binary genders, and queerness in disparate Muslim contexts. The course will also explore links between some feminisms and im-

perialism, the ways that colonialism has shaped gendered discourses, and the ties between Islamophobia, homophobia, and foreign interventionism. Students will be immersed in art, ethnographic accounts, legal literature, theology, and film about these topics. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, Power graduation requirement. Offered frequently.*

**325 New Religious Movements** What makes a religious movement new? Why do we use this designation for some movements and not others? This course will examine a series of new religious movements that have emerged within the last 150 years: The Native American Church, Scientology, the Nation of Islam, the Raelians, Neo-Pagan Witchcraft, Scientology, Rajneesh, the Branch Davidians, Falun Gong, Jonestown, UFO movements, and Heaven's Gate. In the process, we will examine the relationship between NRMs and consumer society and new technologies. We will also focus on how gender, sexuality and race shape the beliefs and practices within NRMs. In the course of our discussion, we will ask: why is it that religion has not in fact waned as a global force but instead become even more powerful? Why do some religious movements become linked to political violence and terrorism? As we will see, however, the so-called "New" is perhaps not so very new after all, but in many ways simply the latest expression of a long tradition of religious belief in the United States.

**328 Religion, the State, and Nationalism in Japan** This course examines relationships between religious traditions, the "state," and nationalism in Japanese history. Through careful study of primary and secondary sources, the course explores early symbiosis between religious rites and governance; the role of Shinto and Buddhism in legitimating systems of government centered on the emperor or warrior elites; religious components in modern Japanese imperialism; challenges to the separation of religion and the state in post-war Japan; civil religion; and cultural nationalism. *Offered occasionally.*

**330 Religious Freedom in the United States** Should American religious history be told as story of increasing diversity and freedom? This course surveys the changing meanings of religious freedom in the United States from the early nation to the present day. Students consider key primary sources—founding documents, court cases, political cartoons, accusations, and apologetics—and weigh these alongside the arguments of scholars in religious studies. These include historian William Hutchinson, who argues that pluralism in the United States is an ongoing legacy of the nation's founders, as well as law professor Winifred Fallers Sullivan, who contends that the structures intended to protect religious expression have made religious freedom a practical impossibility. Students develop their own arguments in this debate through a research project that analyzes a historical or contemporary controversy over religious freedom. *Offered occasionally.*

**332 Buddhism** A study of the origin and development of Buddhism. Special emphasis is given to the history of Buddhist thought, the evolution of the primary schools of Buddhism, and the question of cultural influence on Buddhist expansion. Sources for study are drawn from Indian, Tibetan, Chinese, and Japanese texts in translation. *Offered frequently.*

**334 Vedic Religion and Brahmanism** This course examines the origin and development of religion in South Asian antiquity. Study focuses on the mythology and symbology of the Vedic textual corpus, the rise of ritual ideologies, and the meaning and influence of the yogic vision. In addition to Vedic texts, the course may include study of mythic epics (Mahabharata and Ramayana) and non-Vedic myths that appear in the Puranas. *Prerequisite: Credit will not be granted to students who have completed REL 331. Offered occasionally.*

**335 Classical Hinduism** A study of the various systems of myth, ritual, symbol, and thought that have significantly contributed to the development of Hinduism after the Vedic period. The approach of the course is primarily textual, examining a wide range of scriptural sources from the Hindu traditions. *Prerequisite: REL 334 recommended. Credit will not be granted to students who have received credit for REL 331. Offered frequently.*

**340 Imagining Religion: Scholars, Theories, and Cases in the Study of Religion** This course examines and engages influential theories and approaches to the study of religion developed by scholars with diverse intellectual views. Through theoretical readings and case studies, students receive a broad grounding in classical and contemporary theories of religion, including comparative psychoanalytic, anthropological, feminist, and postmodern approaches. In addition to locating religious studies within wider intellectual movements, the course is designed to help students articulate the values and assumptions they bring to their own studies of religion. *Offered fall semester.*

**342 Sufism** For some Muslims, Sufism (Islamic mysticism) is the defining essence of Islam, without which one is left with only a meaningless shell for a religion. For other Muslims, Sufism stands as the satanic antithesis to God's singular, eternal truth. What then is Sufism? And why does it elicit such fervent reactions from its champions and detractors alike? This course proposes to answer these very questions. After an introductory look at various definitions and manifestations of Sufism today and in the past, students begin with an historical survey of the earliest precedents and intellectual currents in the development of Sufism. Students continue with a study of Sufi poetry, terminology, institutions, and rituals. Additionally, students look at key Sufi personalities, both men and women. The final part of the course examines modern Islamic intellectual trends and their effects on debates and discussions within the study and practice of Sufism in the twentieth century. The course returns in the end to contemporary Sufism and the diverse forms that it assumes across the globe today. *Offered occasionally.*

**350 Mysticism: The Spiritual Search in the Christian Tradition** Mysticism describes a variety of ways in which humans endeavor to encounter the divine directly. The Christian tradition has a long history of mystical encounters, which are founded in the Hebrew Scriptures and in Paul's experience on the road to Damascus. As a text-based religion, Christianity has a complicated relationship with mysticism, since mysticism tends to focus on the directly experiential rather than the textual. And, even as they claimed that such experiences transcended language and expression, mystics often sought to express their experiences. This course examines the ways in which a mystical tradition developed in Christianity, and in which particular metaphors and images came to hold sway. In doing so, it pays attention to the wider social and political context in which the authors wrote and lived, and asks whether these mystics, particularly women, were able to acquire authority and charisma outside of the Church hierarchy. The course thus examines the ways in which mystics occupied an ambivalent space in Western Christianity. The clerical hierarchy has historically sought to limit charisma and prophecy. Mystics thus both threatened the official hierarchy, which sought to limit charisma, but also, sometimes, reinforced the status quo. Questions about power, the body, textuality, charisma, social structures, and authority will be central to our investigation of the Christian mystical tradition. *Offered occasionally.*

**363 Saints, Symbols, and Sacraments: History of Christian Traditions** This course surveys the major developments in Christian history from its origins up to the current day. In the first half of the course, the focus is on patterns of Christian thought including insti-

tutional changes and social context up to 1500 CE. Although this is largely a story of the clerical hierarchy in the Latin West, wherever possible the course emphasizes the role of lay persons, women and Eastern Christianity. In the second half of the course, the focus is on the challenges to Christianity posed by modernity including the Protestant movement, the Enlightenment, the New World, and the liberation movement among women, minorities, and third world peoples. Readings are from both primary and secondary sources. *Prerequisite: REL 200, 201, or 204. Offered occasionally.*

**368 Gender Matters** An in-depth study of feminist theory, theology, and ethics, and the role such theories have played in western social and religious thought. Among the issues explored are justice, violence, the body, sexuality, knowledge, power. Prior work in religion, gender studies, comparative sociology, philosophy, or feminist political theory is helpful, as well as a facility with writing. *Offered frequently.*

**410 Religion and Violence** Do religions originate in myths of violence, and then re-enact them, as in the Eucharist? How do sacred texts enshrine and commemorate violence? How do religions motivate, justify or reinforce violence? What role does ritual play in re-enacting violence? What roles do eschatological expectations play in violence? How has the postcolonial world grappled with the questions of religious violence? This class explores historical case studies in the relationship between religion and violence, such as the Christian doctrine of just war and the Crusades, the history and practice of Islamic ideas of jihad, or Hindu nationalistic violence. We also consider the question of self-inflicted violence and suffering, as performed in religious rituals. Students read theoretical works and examine case studies; students are encouraged to elaborate their own understanding of the nature of religion and violence. *Prerequisite: Two courses in Religion and permission of the instructor. Offered occasionally.*

**420 Law and Religion** Notwithstanding the many attempts around the world to separate them, the spheres of law and religion repeatedly overlap in their histories and will continue to intersect into the foreseeable future. Both spheres reflect the deepest of humanistic concerns; both serve as arenas for contesting and projecting the authority of individuals, institutions, and texts within all human contexts. Law and religion chart the contours of our personal, social, and civilizational identities along with the relationships between these identities and their relation to the other, both in its sentient and non-sentient forms. This seminar examines the intersection of law and religion within a broad sampling of historical and contemporary contexts. It does so with the goal of identifying the questions and debates that account for these intersections. The first half of the course surveys the most influential legal systems that are grounded in what is known conventionally as a religious tradition. The second part of the course turns its attention to what is known conventionally as secular models of law to discern how such models define religion and locate themselves in relation to it. *Offered occasionally.*

**430 The Politics of Living and Dying** How are living and dying understood in contemporary critical theory and religious studies? In what ways are the lives and deaths of humans and nonhumans governed by economic logics? Whose lives are privileged over others and with what consequences? How are certain bodies made killable and others grievable? How are precarity and vulnerability related to fear and violence? How do we live and die well, and who has this privilege? This seminar interrogates these and other questions with attention to race, gender, species, ability, and other sites of perceived difference. This course asks students to theorize real-world moments of living and dying—of ‘making live’ and ‘letting die’—to understand the deeply political nature of life and death as differential moments on a continuum of being. Students

can expect to explore pressing contemporary issues such as mass incarceration, solitary confinement and ‘civil death,’ slavery and commodifying life; end-of-life care and euthanasia; and the role of the visual in torture at Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib. *Prerequisite: Two courses in Religion. Offered occasionally.*

**440 The Body in Comparative Religions** While the field of religious studies frequently focuses on belief and the intellectual development of religious traditions, this course shifts its focus to the body and its importance for the study of religion. The class examines the role of the body as a vehicle through which individuals experience “the sacred,” and as a site upon which communities inscribe, assert, and contest religious values. Taking a comparative approach toward cases drawn from Buddhism, Christianity, and indigenous traditions, the class explores such themes as the perfectible body, the body in pain, bodily relics, the body in ritual, and transcending the body altogether. Finally, by drawing on classical and contemporary theorists, students work to develop their own frameworks through which to understand and interpret the crucial role of the body in the history of religions. *Prerequisite: Two courses in Religion and permission of the instructor. Offered occasionally.*

**444 God in the Anthropocene** This course explores the relationships between conceptions of humanity, non-human nature, and religion from the vantage point of our era of climate change and environmental destruction. Proceeding from the insight that this era troubles easy notions of human separateness and superiority, students in the course ask how communities of religious practitioners and theorists understand this moment and seek to reorient human life amongst the earthlings. “Anthropocene” is a term that refers to the geological epoch marked by human domination of Earth. The term has been critiqued from a variety of scientific and non-scientific perspectives. Some have pointed out that the generic notion of “humanity” conceals the fact that not all people are equally responsible for the current crisis. Others have suggested that the term perpetuates the notion that humans are all powerful, even god-like, in their control of the environment. This course takes up these critiques, first, from the perspective of pre-modern religious texts that already destabilized the separation between humans and non-human nature. Then, it looks to how some modern theories of politics rested on theological notions of human dominion over the earth. Finally, students analyze how knowledges about environmental degradation have led people to reengage their traditions and practices towards new forms of survival and becoming. *Prerequisite: Two courses in Religious Studies or permission of the instructor. Cannot be audited. Offered occasionally.*

**450 Technology, Enchantment, and Violence** The modern human is fully immersed in a seemingly immanent technological world. Although the instrumentalization of technology in forms of state and non-state violence in the modern era—including war, colonialization, concentration camps, detention centers, IEDs, and so on—cannot be denied or underestimated, the psychic violence and ontological deformation of the human through the technology of the quotidian remains undertheorized. The event, results and veiled contradictions of this quotidian technological capture remain largely mystified, unseen, and unexamined. The seminar will investigate aspects of advanced technology’s impact on the modern and post-modern human, including the tendency toward the neutralization and depoliticization of society predicted and theorized by the political philosopher Carl Schmitt in the early twentieth century. Our investigation concludes with the question of possible modes of the ontotheological redemption of the human in a world of total technological instrumentalization. Key authors in our study include Carl Schmitt, Theodore Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Hannah Arendt, Frantz Fanon, Giorgio Agamben, Achille Mbembe, and Byung-Chul Han. *Prerequisite: Two courses in Religion and permission of the instructor. Offered occasionally.*

**456 Ethics and Postmodernity** This advanced seminar for Religion majors takes up the question of what place (if any) religious and social ethics has in postmodern culture. In other words, what characterizes postmodernity and what has been its effects on the discipline of ethics? Are there any prospects for a common morality given the realities of post-structuralist deconstruction? How will one determine the appropriateness of an ethic for postmodern culture? *Prerequisite: Priority given to upper-level (senior) Religion majors. Open to other students with permission of instructor. Offered occasionally.*

**460 Religious Technologies** This advanced seminar theorizes the intersections of religion and technology as a critical site for exploring broad topics in religious studies. The course will take various approaches to relations among religion, technique, and knowledge production: we examine rhetorical constructions of the religious and the technological; explore religious influences on invention and scientific progress; analyze spiritual ideals and contemporary machines; and theorize ways that religious practices and traditions operate as techniques and specialized knowledges. Course topics will include steam-propelled engines and electromagnetism, physical regimens and body modification, cartography and cyberspace, confession and self-help. With attention to interdisciplinary method, students will also work on a specific project throughout the semester that proceeds through topic selection, question formulation, research, analysis, and argumentation to produce a final research paper. *Prerequisite: Two courses in Religion and permission of the instructor. Offered occasionally.*

**470 Global Migrations and Lived Religions** This course examines migrations and lived religion in the era of globalization from multiple disciplinary perspectives (e.g. sociological, anthropological, ethical, historical, and theological) in both local and global locations (e.g. Seattle, Asia, Latin America). It explores lived experiences of religious beliefs and practices in the context of migrations (including immigration, internal migration, rural-urban migration). This course focuses on the “hybrid” religious forms in the postcolonial world in the interactions between religion and ethnicity, race, class, and gender. Students will analyze various religious practices in terms of the role of material culture, the engagement of community, lived ethics, and the embodied religious experience. The course materials include a range of case studies that show lived experiences of immigrant communities and indigenous communities in non-Western religious traditions. In the first half of the semester, students will learn theories and case studies. In the second half of the semester, students will apply theory, conduct their own research, analyze a case, and make an argument in speaking and writing. *Prerequisite: Two courses in Religious Studies or permission of the instructor. Offered occasionally.*

**494 Special Topics** This seminar is organized around themes and topics that are of special interest to the study of religion. The seminar is offered on an occasional basis and the topic is determined in advance by the instructor. *Prerequisite: Two courses in Religion and permission of the instructor. May be repeated for credit. Offered occasionally.*

**495/496 Independent Study** Variable credit up to 1.00 unit. Independent study is available to those students who wish to continue their learning in an area after completing the regularly offered courses in that area. *May be repeated for credit up to 4.00 units. Cannot be audited. Cannot be taken Credit/No Credit.*