RELIGIOUS STUDIES
(RELIGST)

RELIGST 1. Religion Around the Globe. 4 Units.
This course surveys major religious traditions of the world. Through examination of a variety of materials, including scriptures and other spiritual writings, religious objects and artifacts, and modern documentary and film, we explore Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Daoism as rich historical and living traditions.

RELIGST 105. Religion and War in America. 4 Units.
Scholars have devoted much attention to wars in American history, but have not agreed as to whether religion was a major cause or simply a cover for political, economic, and other motives. We will compare interpretations that leave religion out, with those that take it into account. We will also look at the impact of war on the religious lives of ordinary Americans. We will examine both secondary as well as primary sources, beginning with King Philip’s War in the 17th century, and ending with the "War on Terror" in the present day.

Same as: AMSTUD 105R, CSRE 105, HISTORY 254D, HISTORY 354D

RELIGST 10Q. Literature, Medicine and Empathy. 3 Units.
In recent years, there has been a groundbreaking swell of interest in empathy as a key competency of the emotionally intelligent, and a primary motivator of moral behavior. But what is empathy, exactly? This seminar will seek to find out, exploring the concept through the lens of literature and medicine. nReading novels and exploring the philosophical beginnings of the term empathy, we will learn about the range of ways in which human beings have attempted to know and understand the other. Guided by research studies and our own experience, we will explore the critical question of whether empathy really does lead to altruism. We will consider why it can be so hard for human beings to walk in another's shoes and why we so often fail to do so. Through memoirs of suffering, we will learn about empathy in medicine and about what the latest studies in biology and neuroscience can teach us about how we relate to each other. Lastly, we will explore the dangers and limitations of empathy, reading scholarly circuits and discussing the role of empathy in life and society.

Same as: MED 10Q

RELIGST 114. Yoga Ancient and Modern. 4 Units.
Originating in ancient India, yoga went through many developments over more than 4000 years in India and other parts of Asia. Having migrated to Euro-America in the late nineteenth century, today yoga is everywhere—studios, schools, gyms, malls, resorts, ashrams, retreat centers. It comes in many flavors—austere, with meditative instructors and Sanskrit chants; stylish, in 105-degree heat, with portable-miked instructors loudly motivating students to go through poses with speed and intensity; niche-crafted to meet the needs of busy professionals, pregnant women, senior citizens, or people with back problems. It may appear as a spiritual path or as a heavily marketed commodity. It generates lawsuits as teachers dispute ownership of certain styles, or as some Americans oppose its teaching yoga in public schools. In the first half of the course we will study the history of yoga in India, reading primary texts composed between about 500 BCE and 1600 CE. In the second half we will learn about yoga’s globalization in the last century. Participating in a yoga class is recommended. 2 units of independent study (S-NC) are offered for those who participate in a weekly yoga class and write short reflections on the experience.

RELIGST 115X. Europe in the Middle Ages, 300-1500. 3-5 Units.
This course provides an introduction to Medieval Europe from the fall of Rome to the Renaissance. While the framework of the course is chronological, we’ll concentrate particularly on the structure of medieval society. Rural and urban life, kingship and papal government, wars and plagues provide the context for our examination of the lives of medieval people, what they believed, and how they interacted with other, both within Christendom and beyond it. This course may count as DLCL 123, a course requirement for the Medieval Studies Minor.

Same as: HISTORY 15D, HISTORY 115D

RELIGST 117. Christianity in 21st-century America. 4 Units.
As the largest religion practiced in the United States, Christianity not only shapes the lives of a large number of its citizens but also impinges on public discourse, policies, and debates. This course investigates the ways in which Christianity in America is changing and what these changes bode for its role in the public and private spheres. Issues include shifting demographics lead to declining numbers in ‘mainline’ denominations; the polarization of Christian conservatives and religious ‘nones’; interfait toleration and cooperation alongside interreligious conflict; the rise of ‘spiritual, not religious’ young adults; the effects of immigration; religion and science.

Same as: AMSTUD 117R

RELIGST 11N. The Meaning of Life: Philosophical, Aesthetic, and Religious Perspectives. 3 Units.

RELIGST 123. The Hindu Epics and the Ethics of Dharma. 4 Units.
The two great Hindu Epics, the Mahabharata and Ramayana, offer a sustained reflection on the nature of virtuous living in the face of insoluble ethical dilemmas. Their treatment of the concept of dharma, understood simultaneously as ethical action and the universal order that upholds the cosmos, lies at the heart of both Gandhian non-violent resistance and communalist interreligious conflict. This course will focus on a reading of selections from the Epics in English translation, supplemented with a consideration of how the texts have been interpreted in South Asian literary history and contemporary politics and public life in India.

RELIGST 124. Sufi Islam. 4 Units.
The complex of Islamic intellectual and social perspectives subsumed under the term Sufism. Sufi mystical philosophies and historical and social evolution. Major examples include: Qushayrî, Râbi’a, Junayd, Hallâj, Sulamî, Ibn al-'Arabi, Rûmî, Nizâm al-Dîn Awliyâ’. Social and political roles of Sufi saints and communities. Readings include original prose and poetry in translation, secondary discussions, and ethnography.
RELIGST 126. Protestant Reformation. 3-5 Units.
The emergence of Protestant Christianity in 16th-century Europe. Analysis of writings by evangelical reformers (Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Sattler, Hubmeier, Müntzer) and study of reform movements (Lutheran, Reformed, Anabaptist, Spiritualist) in their medieval context and as expressions of new and influential visions of Christian belief, life, social order.
Same as: HISTORY 126B

RELIGST 129. Milk and Honey, Wine and Blood: Food, Justice, and Ethnic Identity in Jewish Culture. 4 Units.
This course examines Jewish culture and the food practices and traditions that have shaped and continue to shape it. Students learn to prepare a variety of meals while studying about the historical and literary traditions associated with them, such as the dietary 'laws,' and the long history of their interpretation, as well as the cultivation of eating as devotional practice in Jewish mystical traditions. We will explore how regional foods the world over contribute to the formation of distinct Jewish ethnic identities, and how these traditions shape contemporary Jewish food ethics. The course includes guest visits by professional chefs and food writers, and field trips to a local winery.
Same as: JEWISHST 129A

RELIGST 12N. Perspectives on the Good Life. 3-4 Units.
The question is how to approach and evaluate different perspectives on the good life, especially when those perspectives are beautiful, and elusively, presented to us as texts. We will consider both classic and modern writers, from the West and from China; some are explicitly religious, some explicitly secular; some literary, some philosophical. Most of the class will revolve around our talk with each other, interpreting and questioning relatively short texts. The works we will read - by Dante, Dickenson, Zhuangzi, Sklair, and others - are not intended to be representative of traditions, of eras, or of disciplines. They do, however, present a range of viewpoint and of style that will help frame and re-frame our views on the good life. They will illustrate and question the role that great texts can play in a modern ‘art of living.’ Perhaps most important, they will develop and reward the skills of careful reading, attentive listening, and thoughtful discussion. (Note: preparation and participation in discussion are the primary course requirement. Enrollment at 3 units requires a short final paper; a more substantial paper is required for the 4-unit option.

RELIGST 130. Sex and Gender in Judaism and Christianity. 3 Units.
What role do Jewish and Christian traditions play in shaping understandings of gender differences? Is gender always imagined as dual, male and female? This course explores the variety of ways in which Jewish and Christian traditions - often in conversation with and against each other - have shaped gender identities and sexual politics. We will explore the central role that issues around marriage and reproduction played in this conversation. Perhaps surprisingly, early Jews and Christian also espoused deep interest in writing about ‘eunuchs’ and ‘androgyne,’ as they thought about Jewish and Christian ways of being a man or a woman. We will examine the variety of these early conversations, and the contemporary Jewish and Christian discussions of feminist, queer, trans- and intersex based on them.
Same as: FEMGEN 130, JEWISHST 120

RELIGST 131. Sexual Ethics and Religion. 4 Units.
Same as: JEWISHST 121

RELIGST 132C. How Jesus the Jew became God. 4 Units.
Contemporary historical-critical methods in investigating how one might study Jewish and Christian texts of the 1st century CE. Social contexts including economic realities and elite ideological views. What can be known historically about 1st-century Judaism and Jesus’ role in it. How Jewish apocalyptic messianism shaped the birth of Christianity and its trajectory through the 1st century.
RELIGST 13N. Losing My Religion: Secularism and Spirituality in American Lives. 2-4 Units.
In this seminar you will explore theory and practice, sociological data, spiritual writing, and case studies in an effort to gain a more nuanced understanding about how religion, spirituality and secularism attempt to make legible the constellation of concerns, commitments, and behaviors that bridge the moral and the personal, the communal and the national, the sacred, the profane, and the rational. Together we will cultivate critical perspectives on practices and politics, beliefs and belonging that we typically take for granted.
Same as: AMSTUD 117N, EDUC 117N

RELIGST 140. RELIGION AND ETHICS: The Limits of Dialogue. 3 Units.
How do religious traditions address ethical problems? Although ideals of the good seem like a universal goal, religious traditions force us to consider non-universal ways of defining it. From marriage to genetic engineering, from abortion to organ donation, issues of community, faith, and practice continue to complicate our ethical thinking. Exploration of case-studies and concepts, with readings from Kant, Foucault, Butler and others, as well as Jewish and Christian interpretations of the Bible.

RELIGST 144. John Calvin and Christian Faith. 5 Units.
Close reading and analysis of Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion as a classic expression of Christian belief.

RELIGST 148. From Jesus to Paul. 4 Units.
Jesus considered himself God's definitive prophet, but he did not think he was God, and had no intention of founding a new religion. How did this Jewish prophet become the gentle God and the founder of Christianity? The role of Paul.

RELIGST 14N. Demons, Death, and the Damned: The 'Other' and the Otherworldly in America. 3 Units.
This course will examine how beliefs about the "other world" actually shape and are shaped by Americans' this-worldly actions and interactions (i.e. in the demonization of the "other," whether defined religiously, racially, ethnically, or in gendered terms). Students will ask how ideas about demons and death, heaven and hell have reflected the concerns, values, and identities of Americans over time. Students will learn how to read primary sources against secondary literature.

RELIGST 150. The Lotus Sutra: Story of a Buddhist Book. 4 Units.
The Lotus school of Mahayana, and its Indian sources, Chinese formulation, and Japanese developments.

RELIGST 151. Religious Poetry of India. 4 Units.
India has a rich literature of devotional and mystical poetry composed by "poet-saints" in common vernacular tongues. This passionate and contemplative poetry flourished between the 6th and 18th centuries, inspiring religious and social movements that are still vibrant today. It also lives as music, remaining popular and powerful in the form of songs in many styles. We will study this material through the lenses of poetry, religion, performance, and politics.

RELIGST 162X. Spirituality and Nonviolent Urban and Social Transformation. 3 Units.
A life of engagement in social transformation is often built on a foundation of spiritual and religious commitments. Case studies of nonviolent social change agents including Rosa Parks in the civil rights movement, César Chávez in the labor movement, and William Sloane Coffin in the peace movement; the religious and spiritual underpinnings of their commitments. Theory and principles of nonviolence. Films and readings. Service learning component includes placements in organizations engaged in social transformation. Service Learning Course (certified by Haas Center).
Same as: CSRE 162A, URBANST 126

RELIGST 165. Modern Jewish Mystics: Devotion in a Secular Age. 4 Units.
The twentieth-century was a time of tremendous upheaval and unspeakable tragedy for the Jewish communities of Europe. But the past hundred years were also a period of great renewal for Jewish spirituality, a renaissance that has continued into the present day. We will explore the mystic writings of figures from the Safed Renaissance, the Hasidic masters, with a particular focus on the works of Martin Buber, Hillel Zeitlin, Abraham Isaac Kook, Abraham Joshua Heschel, and Arthur Green. We will examine their teachings in light of the challenges of the two World Wars, the Holocaust, and the processes of modernity and secularism. Consideration will be made of the unique cultural contexts of modern Israel and contemporary America.
Same as: JEWISHST 125

RELIGST 166. The Divine Feminine in India. 4 Units.
What happens when God is a woman? Is the Goddess a feminist? The Goddess, in her numerous incarnations, is foundational to much of Indian religiosity, whether Hindu, Buddhist, or even Jain-and in turn, without her story, much of the theology and practice of these religions remains incomprehensible. This course examines the principal expressions of the theology and ritual worship of the Goddess in Indian history, from the Vedas to the Hindu Epics, to Indian philosophy, tantric ritual practice and modern global and new age movements in order to understand how the gendering of divinity affects theological speculation, religious experience, and embodied religious identity.
Same as: FEMGEN 166

RELIGST 168. Philosophy of Religion. 3 Units.
Course traces efforts within the Western tradition from Boethius through Anselm, Aquinas, Descartes, Hume, Kant, and Kierkegaard to Camus to establish a rational foundation for theist belief and its consistency or coherence with everyday experience. We will deal extensively with the criticisms that that effort has cast up and then turn to investigate issues that extraordinary or mystical experience raises. We will incorporate a look at Buddhist traditions as well as those in the west to gain insight into these questions. And finally, we will look at the ethics of belief, at our responsibility toward our commitments, and some of the varying positions available to us.

RELIGST 169. Sacred Words: Jewish Thought and the Question of Language. 4 Units.
Jews have long been referred as the people of the book, but they might better be referred to as the people of the word. Drawing upon texts from the Hebrew Bible to the works of modern Hebrew writers like of Hayyim Nahman Bialik and Amoz Oz, this seminar will chart the development of Jewish thinking on language over the past two millennia. We will explore issues such as: the idea of canonization; oral versus written language; the nature and possibility of translation; the origins of language; notions of negative theology; mystical approaches to the word; the rebirth of Hebrew as a spoken and cultural language; and the limits of language after the Holocaust. This course will also bring Jewish thought into dialogue with contemporary philosophical reflections on issues of language. Modern explorations of language will prove an interesting way of deepening our understanding of the Jewish thinkers on one hand, and enriching contemporary intellectual discourse on the other.
Same as: JEWISHST 129

RELIGST 170A. Biblical Hebrew, First Quarter. 2 Units.
Establish a basic familiarity with the grammar and vocabulary of Biblical Hebrew and will begin developing a facility with the language. Students that are enrolled in this course must also enroll in Beginning Hebrew. This course requires no prior knowledge of Hebrew and will begin with learning the alphabet. By the end of the year, students will be able to translate basic biblical texts, will be familiar with common lexica and reference grammars, and will have sufficient foundational knowledge to enable them to continue expanding their knowledge either in a subsequent course or own their own.
Same as: AMELANG 170A, JEWISHST 107A
Religious Studies (RELIGST)

RELIGST 170C. Reading in Biblical Hebrew. 4 Units.
Third of a three quarter sequence. Readings and translation of biblical narratives emphasizing grammar and literary techniques. Prerequisite: AMELANG 170B.

RELIGST 170D. Readings in Talmudic Literature. 1 Unit.
Readings of the talmudic texts. Some knowledge of Hebrew is preferred. The ongoing seminar is designed to study the making of the talmudic sugya (unit of discourse), along with classic commentaries. Students will consider some of the recent developments in the academic study of Talmudic literature, introduced by the instructor. The goal of the ongoing seminar is to provide Stanford students and faculty with the opportunity to engage in regular Talmud study, and to be introduced to a variety of approaches to studying Talmudic texts. Class meets on Fridays, from 12:00-1:15 pm in Hillel (Koret Pavilion Taube Hillel House; Ziff Center for Jewish Life). May be repeat for credit.
Same as: JEWISHST 127D, JEWISHST 227D

RELIGST 170E. Readings in Talmudic Literature Advanced. 1 Unit.
Readings of the talmudic texts. Knowledge of Hebrew is required. The ongoing seminar is designed to study the making of the talmudic sugya (unit of discourse), along with classic commentaries. Students will consider some of the recent developments in the academic study of Talmudic literature, introduced by the instructor. The goal of the ongoing seminar is to provide Stanford students and faculty with the opportunity to engage in regular Talmud study, and to be introduced to a variety of approaches to studying Talmudic texts. Meeting time and location TBA. May be repeated for credit.
Same as: JEWISHST 127E, JEWISHST 227E

RELIGST 171A. Biblical Greek. 3-5 Units.
This is a one term intensive class in Biblical Greek. After quickly learning the basics of the language, we will then dive right into readings from the New Testament and the Septuagint, which is the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. No previous knowledge of Greek required. If demand is high for a second term, an additional quarter will be offered in the Spring.
Same as: CLASSICS 6G, JEWISHST 5

RELIGST 171X. Intensive Biblical Greek. 8 Units.
Equivalent to two quarters of Biblical Greek (CLASSICS 6G, 7G). Students will learn the core of New Testament Greek with the goal of learning to accurately translate and read the New Testament. Students will read one-third of the Gospel of John during the course and will be well-prepared to read the Greek New Testament independently after the course. Focus on knowledge of key vocabulary and grammar needed to read the Greek Bible with ease. No previous knowledge of Greek required. Course does not fulfill the Stanford language requirement.
Same as: CLASSICS 6X, 7X

RELIGST 173. What is Enlightenment? Religion in the Age of Reason. 4 Units.
Many contemporary attitudes towards religion were forged in 17th- and 18th-century Europe in the midst of heated debates over the meaning and value of Christianity in a world ‘come of age’. Liberal calls for justice, toleration, and pluralism in matters religious; secular suspicions about religious superstition, fanaticism, and ideology; skepticism regarding the solubility of ultimate questions of meaning and metaphysics. Seminal readings on religion from Descartes, Pascal, Leibniz, Voltaire, Hume, Mendelssohn and Kant.

RELIGST 173X. Latin 400-1700 CE. 1-2 Unit.
Readings in later Latin, drawing on the vast bodies of texts from the late antique, medieval and early modern periods. Each week students will prepare selections in advance of class meetings; class time will be devoted to translation and discussion. Students taking this course will gain exposure to a wide range of later Latin texts; hone translation skills; and develop an awareness of the grammatical and stylistic features of post-classical Latin. The course is aimed both at classical Latinists seeking to broaden their reading experience and at medievalists and early modernists seeking to consolidate their Latin language skills. May be repeat for credit.
Prior experience in Latin is required, preferably CLASSICS 11L. Equivalent accepted. Anyone unsure whether to take this course is encouraged to contact the instructor in advance.
Same as: CLASSICS 6L, CLASSICS 208L

RELIGST 174. Religious Existentialism-Kierkegaard. 4 Units.
Existentialism is often understood to be a secular or anti-religious philosophy of life, a substitute for Christian ethics in a post-theistic world come of age. Yet this twentieth-century philosophical movement owes many of its concerns and much of its vocabulary to the hyper-Protestant Danish thinker Soren Kierkegaard, and much of the best Christian and Jewish thought in the 20th-century (Bultmann, Buber, Tillich) adopted existentialism as the ‘best philosophy’, for making sense of these traditions in a secular age. This course will examine the origins of existentialist thought in the writings of Kierkegaard and its appropriation by a handful of influential 20th-century religious thinkers.

RELIGST 177N. Love, Power, and Justice: Ethics in Christian Perspective. 3 Units.
From its inception, the Christian faith has, like all religions, implied an ethos as well as a worldview, a morality and way of life as well as a system of beliefs, an ethics as well as a metaphysics. Throughout history, Christian thinkers have articulated, constructed, and refashioned throughout the world’s religious ethics of other major faiths as well as with the various secular moral theories typically discussed in the modern university. We will explore a variety of controversial issues, theological orientations, and types of ethical reasoning in the Christian tradition, treating the latter as one ‘comprehensive doctrine’ (John Rawls) among many; a normative framework (actually a variety of contested religious premises, moral teachings, and philosophical arguments) formally on par with the religious ethics of other major faiths as well as with the various secular moral theories typically discussed in the modern university. We will learn to interpret, reconstruct, criticize, and think intelligently about the coherence and persuasiveness of moral arguments offered by a diverse handful of this religious tradition’s best thinkers and critics, past and present.

RELIGST 180. Gender Relations in Islam. 4 Units.
This course investigates the ways in which gender identities and relationships between men and women have been articulated, constructed, and refashioned throughout the Muslim world. Starting with problematizing the fixed notions of gender and sexuality, we map the attitudes toward these notions through visiting a diverse array of sources from the Qur’an, Sunna, and legal documents to historical and anthropological case studies, literature, and film from South East Asia to Europe and North America. We examine the notions of femininity and masculinity in the Qur’an, family laws, and attitudes toward homosexuality and transgendered populations. We read examples of ambiguous use of language with regards to gender and sexuality in Persian poetry and mystical traditions. We study the dynamic relationship between Islam and Feminism in the Muslim world. Finally, we witness the implications of these attitudes in our case studies and stories, from a divorce court in Iran to a wedding in Sudan.
Same as: FEMGEN 180

RELIGST 181. Heidegger. 5 Units.
A close reading of Heidegger’s Being and Time in light of the new paradigm for reading his work, as well as a study of his long-standing interest in mysticism and the question of the divine.
Same as: PHIL 133S
RELIGST 183. Atheism: Hegel to Heidegger. 5 Units.
The radical changes in ideas of God between Hegel and Heidegger, arguing that their questions about theism and atheism are still pertinent today. Texts from Hegel, Feuerbach, Marx, Nietzsche, and Heidegger: on God, history, and the social dimensions of human nature. N.B.: Class size limited. Apply early at tsehman@stanford.edu.
Same as: PHIL 133T

RELIGST 185. Prophetic Voices of Social Critique. 4 Units.
Judges, Samuel, Amos, and Isaiah depict question power, strong leaders who inevitably fail, the societal inequities and corruption inevitable in prosperity, and the interplay between prophet as representative of God and the human king. How these texts succeed in their scrutiny of human power and societal arrangements through attention to narrative artistry and poetic force, and condemnation of injustice. Includes service-learning component in conjunction with the Haas Center.

RELIGST 18N. Religion and Politics: Comparing Europe to the U.S.. 3-4 Units.
Interdisciplinary and comparative. Historical, political, sociological, and religious studies approaches. The relationship between religion and politics as understood in the U.S. and Europe. How this relationship has become tense both because of the rise of Islam as a public religion in Europe and the rising influence of religious groups in public culture. Different understandings and definitions of the separation of church and state in Western democratic cultures, and differing notions of the public sphere. Case studies to investigate the nature of public conflicts, what issues lead to conflict, and why. Why has the head covering of Muslim women become politicized in Europe? What are the arguments surrounding the Cordoba House, known as the Ground Zero Mosque, and how does this conflict compare to controversies about recent constructions of mosques in Europe? Resources include media, documentaries, and scholarly literature.
Same as: JEWISHST 18N

RELIGST 199. Individual Work. 1-15 Unit.
Prerequisite: consent of instructor and department. May be repeated for credit.

RELIGST 19N. Everyone Eats: Food, Religion and Culture. 3 Units.
Food is one of the most essential aspects of the human experience. The decisions and choices we make about food define who we have been, who we are now, and who we want to become. In this seminar we will study how food habits have shaped religious traditions, and vice versa, how religious traditions have shaped food ways. Some traditions are centered around food regiments such as the dietary laws, derived from biblical law that shapes Jewish and Christian tradition very differently. Indeed, many religious and ethical thinkers, as well as anthropologists, have interpreted the meanings of the dietary laws very differently. Further, in many religious traditions the killing of animals and consumption of meat is deeply fraught. We will explore the history of food practices and their contemporary impact; the connections between food, religion, and identity; the meanings that religious thinkers and anthropologists have attributed to food habits; as well as the creative translations of religious traditions into contemporary food ethics by various social movements and groups, predominantly in the U.S.
Same as: CSRE 19N, JEWISHST 19N

RELIGST 2. Is Stanford a Religion?. 4 Units.
This course seeks to introduce students to the study of religion by posing a two-part question: What is a religion, and does Stanford qualify as one? Scientific, pragmatic, seemingly secular, Stanford may not seem at all similar to religions like Christianity, Judaism or Buddhism, but a deeper look reveals that it has many of the qualities of religion—origin stories, rituals and ceremonies, sacred spaces and times, visions of the future, even some spirits. By learning some of the theories and methods of the field of religious studies, students will gain a better understanding not just of Stanford culture but of what motivates people to be religious, the roles religion plays in people's lives, and the similarities and differences between religious and secular culture.
RELIGST 218. Islam, Race and Revolution: A Pan-American Approach. 3-5 Units.
Taking a pan-American approach to the study of religious traditions, this upper-level course traces the history of the critical intersection between race, religion and revolution among Muslims from the turn of the nineteenth century until the present day. Moving from the Atlantic Revolutions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, to the United States, to the decolonizing Third World, and then finally to the contemporary Middle East, this class will emphasize that Islam and race together have been used by many groups in order to challenge existing power structures, agitate for change, and more than occasionally, transform the social, cultural and governmental structures comprising their worlds. Moreover, although this class is concentrated upon religious formations in the Americas, students will explore global phenomena throughout the Muslim world in order to examine how global politics contribute to religious formations, solidarities and identities. At the conclusion of this course, students will be expected to write a 10-15 page research paper, and a topic will be chosen in consultation with the instructor. Students will also be expected to write weekly reflection papers, which will serve to facilitate class discussion. Undergraduates register for 200-level for 5 units; Graduate students register for 300-level for 3-5 units.
Same as: AMSTUD 218, CSRE 218, RELIGST 318

RELIGST 21X. Dangerous Ideas. 1 Unit.
Idea matter. Concepts such as race, progress, and evil have inspired social movements, shaped political systems, and dramatically influenced the lives of individuals. Others, like religious tolerance, voting rights, and wilderness preservation play an important role in contemporary debates in the United States. All of these are contested, and they have a real power to change lives, for better and for worse. In this one-unit class we will examine these dangerous ideas. Each week, a faculty member from a different department in the humanities and arts will explore a concept that has shaped human experience across time and space. Some weeks will have short reading assignments, but you are not required to purchase any materials.
Same as: ARTHIST 36, COMPLIT 36A, EALC 36, ENGLISH 71, ETHICSSOC 36X, FRENCH 36, HISTORY 3D, MUSIC 36H, PHIL 36, POLSCI 70, SLAVIC 36

RELIGST 221. The Talmud. 4 Units.
Strategies of interpretation, debate, and law making. Historical contexts. Prerequisite: Hebrew.
Same as: RELIGST 321

RELIGST 221B. What is Talmud?. 5 Units.
In what sense can Talmud be studied as literature? Which voices can be identified? Concepts of author, editor, or redactor. The basic textual units of Talmud: sugya, chapter, and tractate. The sugya as literary genre. The aesthetic of talmudic dialectics. Prerequisite: reading Hebrew with some understanding of biblical Hebrew.
Same as: RELIGST 321B

RELIGST 221D. Readings in Syriac Literature. 2-5 Units.
In recent years, there has been growing interest in the works of Syriac speaking Christians in antiquity and beyond. This course offers an introduction to the Syriac language, including its script, vocabulary and grammar, and a chance to read from a selection of foundational Syriac Christian texts.
Same as: JEWISHST 221D, JEWISHST 321D, RELIGST 321D

RELIGST 222B. Sufism Seminar. 3-5 Units.
Sufism through original texts and specialized scholarship. Prerequisite: ability to read at least one major language of Islamic religious literature (Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu).
Same as: RELIGST 322B

RELIGST 224. Classical Islamic Texts. 3 Units.
The course is based on readings in primary Arabic sources in the key fields of pre-modern Islamic scholarship. The list of readings and topics will depend on the interests of the students. In addition to focusing on the language, contents, and context of the texts covered, the course introduces genre-specific historical research methods. The reading selections may be derived from Qur’anic interpretation (tafsir), the hadith literature, adab, biographical dictionaries, fiqh, ta’rikh, kalam, or Sufism. Reading knowledge of Arabic is required.
Same as: RELIGST 324

RELIGST 226D. Jewish-Christian Relations in Antiquity. 1-2 Unit.
Constructions of identity, community, ethnicity; these reconsiderations frame the investigation of ancient Christian rhetoric and theology contra Iudaeos. This historical project will be set within the larger intellectual and cultural context of a) learned Graeco-Roman traditions of ethnic stereotyping; b) forensic rhetoric; and c) philosophical paideia; and these traditions will be considered within their larger social context of the Mediterranean nncity (I-III). Specifically, various Christian, and especially Latin nntraditions contra Iudaeos (IV-VI) will be studied.
Same as: CLASSGEN 126B

RELIGST 227. The Qur’an. 5 Units.
Early history, themes, structure, chronology, and premodern interpretation. Relative chronology of passages.
Same as: RELIGST 327

RELIGST 230B. Zen Studies. 4 Units.
Readings in recent English-language scholarship on Chan and Zen Buddhism.
Same as: RELIGST 330B

RELIGST 231X. Learning Religion: How People Acquire Religious Commitments. 4 Units.
This course will examine how people learn religion outside of school, and in conversation with popular cultural texts and practices. Taking a broad social-constructivist approach to the variety of ways people learn, this course will explore how people assemble ideas about faith, identity, community, and practice, and how those ideas inform individual, communal and global notions of religion. Much of this work takes place in formal educational environments including missionary and parochial schools, Muslim madrasas or Jewish yeshivot. However, even more takes place outside of school, as people develop skills and strategies in conversation with broader social trends. This course takes an interdisciplinary approach to questions that lie at the intersection of religion, popular culture, and education. May be repeat for credit.
Same as: AMSTUD 231X, EDUC 231, JEWISHST 291X

RELIGST 232. Buddhist Meditation: Ancient and Modern. 3-5 Units.
An exploration of the theory and practice of Buddhist meditation from the time of the Buddha to the modern mindfulness boom, with attention to the wide range of techniques developed and their diverse interpretation.
Same as: RELIGST 332

RELIGST 234X. Church, State, & Schools: Issues in Education & Religion. 4 Units.
This course will examine interactions between religion and education, focusing on both formal and experiential sites in which people and communities explore, articulate, encounter, and perform religious ideas and identities. The class will focus on different religious traditions and their encounters the institutions and structures of education in American culture, both in the United States and as it manifests in American culture transnationally.
Same as: AMSTUD 293, EDUC 293
RELIGST 235. Religion in Modern Society: Secularization and the Sacred. 4 Units.
What is the status of religion in modern life? Is the modern world "secular" in some fundamental, irreversible way and what does this mean? This course will explore these questions through a variety of readings from leading sociologists, philosophers, and anthropologists. Our goal will be to understand in what ways industrialization, political liberalization, the rise of technology, and the success of modern science have been used to support the "secularization" thesis that the modern West rendered religion a thing of the past. A central question to be asked will be: do assessments of the place of religion in modernity necessitate a philosophy of history i.e., a theory not only of historical change, but of the meaning of this change as well? The course will begin by looking at the origins of the theory of secularization from its beginnings in Enlightenment attempts to understand the meaning of history. We will then turn to contemporary debates over the term "secular" against its counterpart, "religious", and the problems with their application to non-Western societies. We will read works by Talal Asad, Saba Mahmood, Max Weber, Charles Taylor, Jürgen Habermas, and Pope Benedict XVI.
Same as: RELIGST 335

RELIGST 239. Luther and the Reform of Western Christianity. 3-5 Units.
Luther's theology, ethics, biblical interpretation, and social reforms and their significance for the remaking of Western Christianity. Readings include Luther's own writings and secondary sources about Luther and his world.
Same as: RELIGST 339

RELIGST 24. Sexuality, Gender, and Religion. 2 Units.
From ancient times to the present, religious texts, authority figures, adherents, and critics have had a great deal to say about sexuality and gender, with powerful impacts in personal, social and political spheres. Today these debates are more wide-ranging and public than ever. In this lecture and discussion series, distinguished scholars from within and beyond Stanford will consider how sexuality and gender become "religious" in Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism.
Same as: FEMGEN 24

RELIGST 244. Explaining Religion. 3-5 Units.
There are broadly two different, and sometimes mutually exclusive, ways of explaining social religious phenomena: idealism and materialism. One gives ideas ultimate causal primacy while the other emphasizes economic, technological, geographical, and demographic factors. This course examines arguments for and against each approach. Topics include rational choice theory, functionalism, Marxism, cultural materialism, and the unconscious. Case studies include Jewish and Indian dietary restrictions, competition between Christian denominations, survival strategies of minority religions, apocalyptic movements, etc. For the final paper, each student will write on a religious tradition of his/her choice.
Same as: RELIGST 344

RELIGST 245. Religion, Reason, and Romanticism. 5 Units.
The late 18th-century European cultural shift from rationalist to romantic modes of thought and sensibility. Debates about religion as catalysts for the new Zeitgeist. Readings include: the Jewish metaphysician, Mendelssohn; the dramatist, Lessing; the philosopher of language and history, Herder; the critical idealist, Kant; and the transcendental idealist, Fichte.

RELIGST 246. Constructing Race and Religion in America. 4-5 Units.
This seminar focuses on the interrelationships between social constructions of race, and social interpretations of religion in America. How have assumptions about race shaped religious worldviews? How have religious beliefs shaped racial attitudes? How have ideas about religion and race contributed to notions of what it means to be "American"? We will look at primary and secondary sources, and at the historical development of ideas and practices over time.
Same as: AFRICAAM 236, AMSTUD 246, CSRE 246, HISTORY 256G, HISTORY 356G, RELIGST 346

RELIGST 248. Chinese Buddhism in World Historical Perspective. 3-5 Units.
Shared cosmologies, trade routes, and political systems. Prerequisite: background in Chinese or Japanese.
Same as: RELIGST 348

RELIGST 248A. Chinese Buddhism Beyond the Great Wall. 3-5 Units.
The thought, practice, and cultural resonance of the sorts of originally Chinese Buddhism that flourished to the north and northwest of China proper during the two to three centuries following the fall of the Tang - i.e., under the Khitan Liao (907-1126) and the Tangut Xiaxia (1032-1227) dynasties - with special emphasis on the later fortunes of the Huayan, Chan, and Mijiao (Esoteric) traditions. Prerequisite: reading knowledge of Chinese.
Same as: RELIGST 348A

RELIGST 25. Mystical Journeys: Beyond Knowing and Reason. 3 Units.
What makes a mystic a mystic? This question has many sides. Why do we call someone a mystic? Is there such a thing as mystical experience? Do experiences make a mystic? Do beliefs? Practices? Many religious traditions have records of visionaries whose lives and writings open windows on the more hidden and aspirational aspects of belief and practice. These writings also take many forms: poems, letters, teachings, and accounts of visions, which we will encounter in the course of the quarter. Readings for the course will cover a cross-section of texts taken from Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, and Native American sources.

RELIGST 250. Classics of Indian Buddhism. 4 Units.
Texts in English translation including Discourses (sutras), philosophical treatises, commentaries, didactic epistles, hymns, biographies, and narratives.

RELIGST 251. Readings in Indian Buddhist Texts. 3-5 Units.
(Graduate students register for 351.) Introduction to Buddhist literature through reading original texts in Sanskrit. Prerequisite: Sanskrit. Undergraduates register for 200-level for 5 units. Graduate students register for 300-level for 3-5 units.
Same as: RELIGST 351

RELIGST 252. Hearts and Diamonds: The Lives of Buddhist Sacred Texts. 4 Units.
An exploration of two key Mahayana Buddhist scriptures (the Heart & Diamond Sutras) and their histories, looking at what they say and how they have been used, from the first millennium to the present day.

RELIGST 252A. The Story of a Buddhist Megascripture: Readings in the Avatamsaka. 3-5 Units.
In this course we will explore the massive Mahayana Buddhist scriptural compilation known as the Avatamsaka Sutra (more correctly: Buddhavatamsaka Sutra). We will investigate the development of the text in India, study its contents, and consider its later reception in East Asia. Since much of the course will be devoted to reading sections of the Buddhavatamsaka, a reading knowledge of Chinese is required.
Same as: RELIGST 352A

RELIGST 253. Recent Research on Japanese Buddhism. 3-5 Units.
Readings in recent English-language scholarship on Japanese Buddhism. Prerequisite: Solid foundation in either Buddhist studies or East Asian Studies. May be repeated for credit.
Same as: RELIGST 353

RELIGST 254. Recent Contributions to Buddhist Studies. 3-5 Units.
This reading intensive course will examine nine areas in recent work in Buddhist studies, including ethnography, archaeology, monasticism, the study of "experience," and gender. May be repeated for credit.
Same as: RELIGST 354
RELIGST 255. Religion and Power in the Making of Modern South Asia. 3-5 Units.
This course examines the diverse ways that religious traditions have been involved in the brokering of power in South Asia from the late seventeenth century to the present day. We will examine the intersection of religion and power in different arenas, including historical memory, religious festivals, language politics, and violent actions. At the core of our inquiry is how religion is invoked in political contexts (and vice-versa), public displays of religiosity, and the complex dynamics of religion and the state. Among other issues, we will particularly engage with questions of religious identity, knowledge, and violence. Undergraduates must enroll in RELIGST 255 for 5 units. Graduate students must enroll RELIGST 355 for 3-5 units. HISTORY 297F must be taken for 4-5 units.
Same as: HISTORY 297F, RELIGST 355

RELIGST 258. Japanese Buddhist Texts. 3-5 Units.
Readings in medieval Japanese Buddhist materials. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: background in Japanese or Chinese.
Same as: RELIGST 358

RELIGST 26. The Bible and its Interpreters. 4 Units.
Introduction to major stories, figures, and themes of the Christian Bible and their retellings in theological writing, art, literature, film, and music throughout the ages.

RELIGST 260. Buddhism & Modernity. 3-5 Units.
Is Buddhism a philosophy? A mind science? An ancient mystical path? A modern construct? This seminar will evaluate a variety of answers to these questions by exploring how Buddhism has been understood in the modern era. Our primary source materials will range from Orientalist poetry to Zen essays to Insight Meditation manuals to 21st-century films. We will examine how these works shape Buddhism, consider their pre-modern influences, and turn to recent scholarship to discuss how romantic, imperialist, anti-modern, nationalist, therapeutic, and scientific frames depict one of today's most popular religions.
This course is cross-listed as RELIGST 260/360. Undergraduates must enroll in RELIGST 260 for 5 units. Graduate students must enroll RELIGST 360 for 3-5 units.
Same as: RELIGST 360

RELIGST 261A. Belief. 5 Units.
The post-Chritain (or post-modern) age has given rise to new forms of faith, ranging from secular humanism and cultural atheism to rediscovery of the transcendent in the cosmos and quantum mechanics. However, unlike the era of "Christendom," belief is no longer necessarily hinged to faith. This course explores the origins of this phenomenon in Thomas Aquinas, and then newer philosophical approaches to understanding belief, ranging from Charles Taylor and Talal Asad and their theories of the secular, to Catherine Bell and the role of practice in believing. Finally, we turn to the work of three contemporary theorists of religious belief: Gianni Vattimo, Jean-Luc Marion, and Richard Kearney, who endeavor to cast believing outside established theological categories, yet still speak of "god."
Same as: in a post-Christian Age

RELIGST 262. Sex and the Early Church. 4 Units.
Sex and the Early Church examines the ways first through sixth-century Christians addressed questions regarding human sexuality. We will pay particular attention to the relationship between sexuality and issues of gender, culture, power, and resistance. We will read a Roman gynecological manual, an ancient dating guide, the world's first harlequin romance novels, ancient pornography, early Christian martyrdom accounts, stories of female and male saints, instructions for how to best battle demons, visionary accounts, and monastic rules. These will be supplemented by modern scholarship in classics, early Christian studies, gender studies, queer studies, and the history of sexuality. The purpose of our exploration is not simply to better understand ancient views of gender and sexuality. Rather, this investigation of a society whose sexual system often seems so surprising aims to denaturalize many of our own assumptions concerning gender and sexuality. In the process, we will also examine the ways these first centuries of what eventually became the world's largest religious tradition has profoundly affected the sexual norms of our own time. The seminar assumes no prior knowledge of Judaism, Christianity, the bible, or ancient history.
Same as: CLASSICS 262, FEMGEN 262, RELIGST 362

RELIGST 263. Judaism and the Body. 4 Units.
Representations and discourses of the body in Jewish culture; theories of body and ritual. Case studies of circumcision, menstrual impurity, and intersexuality. Readings include classical texts in Jewish tradition and current discussions of these textual traditions.

RELIGST 264. Hindu Tantra. 4 Units.
What is Tantra? Tantric forms of ritual and philosophy have been integral to the practice of Hinduism for most of its history. Tantra has provided initiates with a spiritual technology for embodying the divine and transcending the cycle of rebirth; on a social and political level, Tantra has mediated the institutions of Hindu kingship and appealed to a diverse population of initiates. This course covers a number of influential and well-documented Hindu tantric traditions, exploring several prominent features of Tantric religion as they develop historically, including: tantric ritual practice (core technologies of the subtle body, mantras, male, female, etc., along with the more notorious elements of sex and transgression), theology and philosophical speculation, as well as Tantra's relationship to the outside world and state power.
Same as: RELIGST 364

RELIGST 265. Creating the Universe: Buddhist Science, Ritual and Art. 5 Units.
Much of Buddhist ritual and art can usefully be thought of as technology--physical pieces that, when arranged systematically, make a given practice effective. This class is about the Buddhist scientific perspectives underlying the production of such ritual and art in Tibet, Nepal, and India. The course is organized around cosmological and biological topics such as physical models of the universe, the types of beings that dwell in the world, and the cycles of life and death. Within these topics, we will investigate the relationships between sacred texts, ritual practices, and visual arts as the material culture of religion.
Same as: RELIGST 365

RELIGST 266. Plotinus and Augustine. 3-5 Units.
Professor's permission required to register. A reading course focused on the influence of Plotinus Enneas on Augustine's Confessions, early dialogues, and sections on reason and memory in the De trinitate. Proficiency in Greek and Latin will be helpful but is not required. Professor's prior permission required, interested students should contact the professor about course schedule: tsheehan@stanford.edu. Undergraduates register for 200-level for 5 units. Graduate students register for 300-level for 3-5 units.
Same as: PHIL 229, PHIL 329, RELIGST 369

RELIGST 270. Comparative Religious Ethics. 4 Units.
The difference that the word religious makes in religious ethics and how it affects issues of genre. Theoretical analyses with examples from W. and E. Asia. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.
Same as: RELIGST 370
RELIGST 271A. Dante’s Spiritual Vision. 4-5 Units.
Poetry, ethics, and theology in Dante’s Divine Comedy. Supplementary readings from classical authors such as St. Thomas Aquinas, and from modern writers, such as Jorge Borges. Fulfills capstone seminar requirement for the Philosophy and Literature tracks. Students may take 271A without taking 271B. Consent of the instructor required.

RELIGST 271B. Dante’s Spiritual Vision. 4-5 Units.
Poetry, ethics, and theology in Dante’s Divine Comedy. Supplementary readings from classical authors such as St. Thomas, and from modern writers, such as Jorge Borges. Fulfills capstone seminar requirement for the Philosophy and Literature tracks. Prerequisite: 271A.

RELIGST 272. Kant on Religion. 3-5 Units.
Critical examination of Kant’s principle writings on religion against the background of his general theoretical and practical philosophy and guided by the hypothesis that his philosophy of religion continues to offer significant insights and resources to contemporary theories of religion. Recent reassessments of Kant on religion in the secondary literature will also be read and discussed.
Same as: RELIGST 372

RELIGST 273. Historicism and Its Problems: Ernst Troeltsch, the Study of Religion, and the Crisis of Historicism. 3-5 Units.
Examination of the early twentieth-century historians of religion, philosopher of culture, sociologist of religion, Christian theologian, and philosopher of history, Ernst Troeltsch, within the context of the late nineteenth-century “crisis of historicism,” i.e., the historicization and relativization of religious, ethical, social, and political norms. Attention to seminal theorists of history (Herder, Kant, Ranke, Hegel, Nietzsche) in the post-Enlightenment German intellectual tradition and the attempts of Christian and Jewish thinkers in the Weimar era (Barth, Gogarten, Rosenweig, L. Strauss) to “overcome” the crisis wrought by a radically historical approach to human culture.
Same as: RELIGST 373

RELIGST 274. From Kant to Kierkegaard. 3-5 Units.
(Graduate students register for 374. Undergrads register for 274 for 5 units.) The philosophy of religion emerged from the European Enlightenment as a new genre of reflection on religion distinct from both dogmatic theology and rationalist dreams of a “natural” religion of reason. Neither beholden to pre-critical tradition, nor dismissive of what Thomas Nagel has termed “the religious attitude,” this new, ostensibly secular, genre of religious thought sought to rethink the meaning of Christianity at a time of immense philosophical ferment. The main currents of religious thought in Germany from Kant’s critical philosophy to Kierkegaard’s revolt against Hegelianism. Emphasis on the theories of religion, the epistemological status of religious discourse, the role of history (especially the figure of Jesus), and the problem of alienation/reconciliation in seminal modern thinkers: Kant, Schleiermacher, Hegel, and Kierkegaard.
Same as: RELIGST 374

RELIGST 275. Kierkegaard. 3-5 Units.
(Graduate students register for 375.) Close reading of Kierkegaard’s magnum opus, Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments, in its early 19th-century context.
Same as: RELIGST 375

RELIGST 277. The Later Heidegger: Art, Poetry, Language. 3 Units.
Lectures and seminar discussions of the problematic of the later Heidegger (1930 - 1976) in the light of his entire project. Readings from “On the Origin of the Work of Art” and Elucidations of Holderlin’s Poetry. Same as: PHIL 234B, RELIGST 377

RELIGST 278. Heidegger: Confronting the Ultimate. 3-5 Units.
Heidegger’s work on meaning, the self, and the sacred. Texts include Being and Time, courses and opuscula up to 1933, the Letter on Humanism, and Contributions of Philosophy.
Same as: RELIGST 378

RELIGST 279. After God: Why religion at all?. 4 Units.
God is dead, but where does religion come from? The end of the quest for God in twentieth century philosophy. Robert Bellah’s Religion in Human Evolution plus seminal works of Heidegger, including Being and Time, ‘What Is Metaphysics?’ Nietzsche’s Saying ‘God is Dead.’ ‘N.B.: Class size limited. Apply early at tsheehan@stanford.edu.
Same as: RELIGST 379

RELIGST 279A. Heidegger on human being and God. 4 Units.
This lecture-seminar first raises the question of essential characteristics of human being, such as temporality, mortality, hermeneutics and the relation to meaning, and then, via readings from Karl Rahner, asks whether human being is open to a possible relation to a supernatural divinity.
Same as: RELIGST 379A

RELIGST 279X. American Jewish History: Learning to be Jewish in America. 2-4 Units.
This course will be a seminar in American Jewish History through the lens of education. It will address both the relationship between Jews and American educational systems, as well as the history of Jewish education in America. Plotting the course along these two axes will provide a productive matrix for a focused examination of the American Jewish experience. History students must take course for at least 3 units.
Same as: AMSTUD 279X, EDUC 279, HISTORY 288D, JEWISHST 297X

RELIGST 280. Schleiermacher: Reconstructing Religion. 3-5 Units.
Idealist philosopher, Moravian Pietist, early German Romantic, co-founder of the University of Berlin, head preacher at Trinity Church, translator of Plato’s works, Hegel’s opponent, pioneer in modern hermeneutics, father of modern theology. Schleiermacher’s controversial reconception of religion and theology in its philosophical context.
Same as: RELIGST 380

RELIGST 281. Asian Religions in America; Asian American Religions. 4 Units.
This course will analyze both the reception in America of Asian religions (i.e. of Buddhism in the 19th century), and the development in America of Asian American religious traditions.
Same as: AMSTUD 281, ASIANST 281, RELIGST 381

RELIGST 282. King Solomon and the Search for Wisdom. 4 Units.
What is wisdom according to the Bible? The course addresses this question by surveying various biblical and post-biblical texts associated with King Solomon. Other topics include the on-going debate over the historical existence of a Solomonic kingdom, the origins and history of the Jerusalem Temple, and Solomon’s role in Jewish, Christian and Islamic tradition.
Same as: RELIGST 382

RELIGST 283. Religion and Literature. 4 Units.
A wide-ranging exploration of religious themes in literary works. Readings will include prose and poetry stemming from various world regions, time periods, and religious traditions.

RELIGST 283A. Heidegger, Hölderlin, and the Gods. 3-5 Units.
The radical transformations in Western notions of God between the death of Hegel and the birth of historical materialism, arguing that questions about theism and atheism, humanism, and history formulated in the period 1831-50 are still pertinent. Texts from Hegel, the young Hegelians, Feuerbach, and Marx on issues of God, history, and the social dimensions of human nature.
Same as: RELIGST 383A

RELIGST 290. Majors Seminar. 5 Units.
Required of all majors and combined majors. The study of religion reflects upon itself. Representative modern and contemporary attempts to “theorize” and thereby understand, the phenomena of religion in anthropology, psychology, sociology, cultural studies, and philosophy.
WIM.
RELIGST 297. Senior Essay/Honors Essay Research. 3-5 Units.
Guided by faculty adviser. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: consent of instructor and department.

RELIGST 298. Senior Colloquium. 5 Units.
For Religious Studies majors writing the senior essay or honors thesis. Students present work in progress, and read and respond to others. Approaches to research and writing in the humanities.

RELIGST 300. Theory in the Study of Religion. 4 Units.
This course explores how religious belief, ritual, and tradition, interact with, embed, or respond to aspects of social reality or human nature, such as economics, institutions, law, art, values, and psychology. The course examines a number of approaches to the study of religion, including sociological and anthropological ones. The course is intended for Religious Studies MA students and graduate students from other departments.

RELIGST 302. Islamic Studies Proseminar. 1-5 Unit.
Research methods and materials for the study of Islam. May be repeated for credit.

RELIGST 302A. Monsters, Ghosts and Other Fantastic Beings: The Supernatural and the Mysterious in Japanese Culture. 4 Units.
Examine the development of strange and fantastic creatures in Japan. Mysterious creatures in folklore, literature, art, manga and movies. Through them see how the concept of the strange or mysterious have evolved and how they inform Japanese modernity.

RELIGST 303. Myth, Place, and Ritual in the Study of Religion. 3-5 Units.
Sources include: ethnographic texts and theoretical writings; the approaches of Charles Long, Jonathan Z. Smith, Victor Turner, Michael D. Jackson, and Wendy Doniger; and lived experiences as recounted in Judith Sherman's Say the Name: A Survivor's Tale in Prose and Poetry, Jackson's At Home in the World, Marie Cardinal's The Words to Say It, and John Phillip Santos' Places Left Unfinished at the Time of Creation.

RELIGST 304A. Theories and Methods. 4 Units.
Required of graduate students in Religious Studies. Approaches to the study of religion. Prerequisite: consent of instructor. May be repeat for credit.

RELIGST 304B. Theories and Methods. 4 Units.
Required of graduate students in Religious Studies. Approaches to the study of religion. Prerequisite: consent of instructor. May be repeat for credit.

RELIGST 308. Medieval Japanese Buddhism. 3-5 Units.
Japanese religion and culture, including Buddhism, Shinto, popular religion, and new religions, through the medium of film.

RELIGST 31. The Religious Life of Things. 3-5 Units.
Temples, prayer beads, icons, robes, books, relics, candles and incense, scarves and hats, sacred food and holy water; objects of all sorts play a prominent role in all religions, evoking a wide range of emotional responses, from reverence, solace and even ecstasy, to fear, hostility and violence. What is it about these things that makes them so powerful? Is it beliefs and doctrines that inspire particular attitudes towards certain objects, or is it the other way around? Many see a tension or even contradiction between religion and material pursuits and argue that the true religious life is a life without things. But is such a life even possible? This course adopts a comparative approach, drawing on a variety of traditions to examine the place of images, food, clothing, ritual objects, architecture and relics in religious thought and practice. Materials for the course include scholarship, scripture, images and at least one museum visit.

RELIGST 312. Buddhist Studies Proseminar. 1-5 Unit.
Research methods and materials for the study of Buddhism. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: reading knowledge of Chinese or Japanese.

RELIGST 313. Graduate Seminar in Chinese Buddhist Texts. 3-5 Units.
Graduate Seminar in Chinese Buddhist Texts: An in-depth reading of Zongmi's Chan yuan zhuquan jidu ("Preface to the Collected Writings on the Source of Chan") (T#2015). Written in 832, the "Preface" is Zongmi's most ambitious and well-known work. It seeks to delineate the historical and doctrinal origins of the Chan tradition. In doing so, it is the first work to formulate the paradigm of a multi-branched genealogical tree that becomes the template in terms of which the subsequent Chan tradition described itself. It also tries to harmonize Chan (the practice of meditation) with the canonical teachings (dogmatic study) by adapting a Huayan philosophical framework to correlate different Chan traditions with different Chinese Buddhist doctrinal schools. In addition, it is particularly noteworthy for its analysis of the so-called sudden/gradual controversy, in which Zongmi develops an overarching scheme in which the different contending positions can all be seen to fit. The text is an excellent vehicle for giving students a grounding in both Tang-dynasty Chan history and teachings as well as the teachings of the main philosophical schools of Chinese Buddhism. The seminar will focus on a close reading of selected sections from Zongmi's text, especially those bearing on his strategies for harmonizing Chan and doctrinal teachings as well as his analysis of the sudden/gradual controversy. In doing so it will pay special attention to problems of translation. Meetings will be held in Buddhist Studies Library, located in Bldg 70 (Main Campus Quad).

RELIGST 313X. The Education of American Jews. 4 Units.
This course will take an interdisciplinary approach to the question of how American Jews negotiate the desire to retain a unique ethnic sensibility without excluding themselves from American culture more broadly. Students will examine the various ways in which people debate, deliberate, and determine what it means to be an "American Jew." This includes an investigation of how American Jewish relationships to formal and informal educational encounters through school, popular culture, religious ritual, and politics.

RELIGST 314. Seminar in Buddhist Historiography. 3-5 Units.
The focus of this course is on approaches to the past from within Buddhist traditions rather than modern academic writing on Buddhist history. We will briefly examine research on religious conceptions of the past in other religions before turning to the full range of Buddhist historiography, including writings from India, Ceylon, China, Tibet and Japan. The first half of the class will be dedicated to reading and discussing scholarly work, and the second half of the course will develop projects based on students' interests, culminating in presentations and a research paper.

RELIGST 315A. Chinese Buddhism. 3-5 Units.
This course provides an overview of the major themes and historical developments in 2000 years of Buddhist history in China, from its early transmission from India to contemporary developments in the PRC, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Themes include monasticism, doctrine, popular devotion, state policy and the encounter with modernity.

RELIGST 316. Tantric Buddhism. 3-5 Units.
This course explores many of the key issues in the study of tantric Buddhism, including aspects of its historical development, ritual ideology, visual and material culture, notions of identity and embodiment, and variations across different times and cultures. Focusing on the traditions of India, Nepal, and Tibet, students will read primary texts in translation, debate secondary literature, view artworks in museum galleries, and develop final projects based on their research interests. Course readings are in English.
RELIGST 318. Islam, Race and Revolution: A Pan-American Approach. 3-5 Units.
Taking a pan-American approach to the study of religious traditions, this upper-level course traces the history of the critical intersection between race, religion and revolution among Muslims from the turn of the nineteenth century until the present day. Moving from the Atlantic Revolutions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, to the United States, to the decolonizing Third World, and then finally to the contemporary Middle East, this class will emphasize that Islam and race together have been used by many groups in order to challenge existing power structures, agitate for change, and more than occasionally, transform the social, cultural and governmental structures comprising their worlds. Moreover, although this class is concentrated upon religious formations in the Americas, students will explore global events throughout the Muslim world in order to examine how global politics contribute to religious formations, solidarities and identities. At the conclusion of this course, students will be expected to write a 10-15 page research paper, and a topic will be chosen in consultation with the instructor. Students will also be expected to write weekly reflection papers, which will serve to facilitate class discussion. Undergraduates register for 200-level for 5 units. Graduate students register for 300-level for 3-5 units.
Same as: AMSTUD 218, CSRE 218, RELIGST 218

RELIGST 319. Readings in Hindu Texts. 3-5 Units.
Readings in Hindu texts in Sanskrit. Texts will be selected based on student interest. Prerequisite: Sanskrit.

RELIGST 320. Religion and Literature. 4 Units.
Grad seminar in religion and literature—description to follow.

RELIGST 321. The Talmud. 4 Units.
Strategies of interpretation, debate, and law making. Historical contexts. Prerequisite: Hebrew.
Same as: RELIGST 221

RELIGST 321B. What is Talmud? 5 Units.
In what sense can Talmud be studied as literature? Which voices can be identified? Concepts of author, editor, or reductor. The basic textual units of Talmud: sugya, chapter, and tractate. The sugya as literary genre. The aesthetic of talmudic dialectics. Prerequisite: reading Hebrew with some understanding of biblical Hebrew.
Same as: RELIGST 221B

RELIGST 321D. Readings in Syriac Literature. 2-5 Units.
In recent years, there has been growing interest in the works of Syriac speaking Christians in antiquity and beyond. This course offers an introduction to the Syriac language, including its script, vocabulary and grammar, and a chance to read from a selection of foundational Syriac Christian texts.
Same as: JEWISHST 221D, JEWISHST 321D, RELIGST 221D

RELIGST 322B. Sufism Seminar. 3-5 Units.
Sufism through original texts and specialized scholarship. Prerequisite: ability to read at least one major language of Islamic religious literature (Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu).
Same as: RELIGST 222B

RELIGST 324. Classical Islamic Texts. 3 Units.
The course is based on readings in primary Arabic sources in the key fields of pre-modern Islamic scholarship. The list of readings and topics will depend on the interests of the students. In addition to focusing on the language, contents, and context of the texts covered, the course introduces genre-specific historical research methods. The reading selections may be derived from Qur’anic interpretation (tafsir), the hadith literature, adab, biographical dictionaries, fiqh, ta’rikh, kalam, or Sufism. Reading knowledge of Arabic is required.
Same as: RELIGST 224

RELIGST 325. Early Christianity in Syria, Iran, and Iraq. 4 Units.
In the first millennium, Christianity thrived throughout the Middle East. Because Roman Catholic and Protestant churches later declared many of these Christians to be heretics, their stories have often been excluded from the history of Christianity. This course challenges the assumption of Christianity as a “Western” religion and asks how our understanding of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages changes when we broaden our geography beyond “the West.” Our seminar will focus on the early and medieval Syriac churches and we will concentrate on reading (in translation) early Syriac texts including stories of a transvestite nun, a letter allegedly written by Jesus, ancient Christian hymns, the story of a demon-possessed monastery, and the first Christian writings on Islam.

RELIGST 327. The Qur’an. 5 Units.
Early history, themes, structure, chronology, and premorden interpretation. Relative chronology of passages.
Same as: RELIGST 227

RELIGST 328S. The Study of the Midrash. 1-2 Unit.
Two-week block seminar; four sessions. Talmudic philology; development and transmission of the Talmudic text and manuscripts. Relationship between Midrash and Mishnah and between Mishnah and Tosefta; development of talmudic sugiot; relationship between the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmud.

RELIGST 329X. Advanced Paleography. 5 Units.
This course will train students in the transcription and editing of original Medieval and Early Modern textual materials from c. 1000 to 1600, written principally in Latin and English (but other European languages are possible, too). Students will hone their archival skills, learning how to describe, read and present a range of manuscripts and single-leaf documents, before turning their hand to critical interpretation and editing. Students, who must already have experience of working with early archival materials, will focus on the full publication of one individual fragment or document as formal assessment.
Same as: CLASSICS 216, HISTORY 315
RELIGST 325. Buddhism in America. 3 Units.
This course examines the transmission, growth, and transformation of Buddhism in America from the nineteenth century to the present day. We will treat American Buddhism as a distinct regional variety of Buddhism with its own history, characteristics, and debates. Through select readings, films, discussions, and research, students will explore the main events and issues that have shaped the American encounter with Buddhism. We will learn the history of Buddhism in the United States, major traditions of American Buddhism, and contemporary issues and debates. Topics covered will include Orientalism, gender, race, science and meditation, and Buddhism in classrooms and prisons.
Same as: ASNAMST 32, CSRE 32H
RELIGST 330B. Zen Studies. 4 Units.
Readings in recent English-language scholarship on Chan and Zen Buddhism.
Same as: RELIGST 230B
RELIGST 332. Buddhist Meditation: Ancient and Modern. 3-5 Units.
An exploration of the theory and practice of Buddhist meditation from the time of the Buddha to the modern mindfulness boom, with attention to the wide range of techniques developed and their diverse interpretation.
Same as: RELIGST 232
RELIGST 332X. Religion and Modernity. 5 Units.
What role has the category of religion played in the development of the modern state, both colonial and national? How have central concepts of liberal political thought, such as freedom, progress, and history, depended on certain normative ideas of religion? Through various genealogical, historical, and ethnographic inquiries, this course examines how the category of religion has both subtended and disturbed formations of colonial and post-colonial modernity.
Same as: ANTHRO 347
RELIGST 333X. Workshop in Religion and Education. 1 Unit.
This 1-unit workshop will explore the intersection of religion and education across a variety of learning environments and demographics. It invites an ongoing conversation of the relationships between schools, congregations, religious bodies, learners, seekers, philanthropy, and public education. Advanced students and visiting scholars will have an opportunity to present their work for discussion. May be repeat for credit.
Same as: EDUC 412
RELIGST 335. Religion in Modern Society: Secularization and the Sacred. 4 Units.
What is the status of religion in modern life? Is the modern world "secular" in some fundamental, irreversible way and what does this mean? This course will explore these questions through variety of readings from leading sociologists, philosophers, and anthropologists. Our goal will be to understand in what ways industrialization, political liberalization, the rise of technology, and the success of modern science have been used to support the "secularization" thesis that the modern West rendered religion a thing of the past. A central question to be asked will be: do assessments of the place of religion in modernity necessitate a philosophy of history i.e., a theory not only of historical change, but of the meaning of this change as well? The course will begin by looking at the origins of the theory of secularization from its beginnings in Enlightenment attempts to understand the meaning of history. We will then turn to contemporary debates over the term "secular" against its counterpart, "religious", and the problems with their application to non-Western societies. We will read works by Talal Asad, Saba Mahmood, Max Weber, Charles Taylor, Jürgen Habermas, and Pope Benedict XVI.
Same as: RELIGST 235
RELIGST 339. Luther and the Reform of Western Christianity. 3-5 Units.
Luther’s theology, ethics, biblical interpretation, and social reforms and their significance for the remaking of Western Christianity. Readings include Luther’s own writings and secondary sources about Luther and his world.
Same as: RELIGST 239
RELIGST 340. Contemporary Religious Reflection. 3-5 Units.
Focus is on normative and prescriptive proposals by recent and contemporary philosophers and theologians, as opposed to the domination of Religious Studies by textual, historical, cultural, and other largely descriptive and interpretive approaches. Do such normative and prescriptive proposals belong in the academy? Has Religious Studies exercised its theological nimbus only to find contemporary religious reflection reappearing elsewhere in the university?
RELIGST 341. Comparative Perspectives on Classical Chinese Texts. 4-5 Units.
Classical Chinese texts, in prose and poetry, interpreted through comparative perspectives drawn from both inside and outside China. Consent of the instructor required.
RELIGST 344. Explaining Religion. 3-5 Units.
There are broadly two different, and sometimes mutually exclusive, ways of explaining social religious phenomena: idealism and materialism. One gives ideas ultimate causal primacy while the other emphasizes economic, technological, geographical, and demographic factors. This course examines arguments for and against each approach. Topics include rational choice theory, functionalism, Marxism, cultural materialism, and the unconscious. Case studies include Jewish and Indian dietary restrictions, competition between Christian denominations, survival strategies of minority religions, apocalyptic movements, etc. For the final paper, each student will write on a religious tradition of his/her choice.
Same as: RELIGST 244
RELIGST 345. Christianity Seminar. 3-5 Units.
Topics in the study of Christianity for doctoral students. Recent scholarship and approaches to research.
RELIGST 346. Constructing Race and Religion in America. 4-5 Units.
This seminar focuses on the interrelationships between social constructions of race, and social interpretations of religion in America. How have assumptions about race shaped religious worldviews? How have religious beliefs shaped racial attitudes? How have ideas about religion and race contributed to notions of what it means to be "American"? We will look at primary and secondary sources, and at the historical development of ideas and practices over time.
Same as: AFRICAAM 236, AMSTUD 246, CSRE 246, HISTORY 256G, HISTORY 356G, RELIGST 246
RELIGST 347. Chinese Buddhist Texts. 3-5 Units.
Chinese Buddhist texts from the Han Dynasty onwards, including sutra translations, prefaces, colophons, story collections and biographies. Prerequisite: reading competence in Chinese.
RELIGST 348. Chinese Buddhism in World Historical Perspective. 3-5 Units.
Shared cosmologies, trade routes, and political systems. Prerequisite: background in Chinese or Japanese.
Same as: RELIGST 248
RELIGST 348A. Chinese Buddhism Beyond the Great Wall. 3-5 Units.
The thought, practice, and cultural resonance of the sorts of originally Chinese Buddhism that flourished to the north and northwest of China proper during the two to three centuries following the fall of the Tang - i.e., under the Khitan Liao (907-1125) and the Tangut Xixia (1032-1227) dynasties - with special emphasis on the later fortunes of the Huayan, Chan, and Mijiao (Esoteric) traditions. Prerequisite: reading knowledge of Chinese.
Same as: RELIGST 248A
RELIGST 348B. Readings in the Corpus of Dharmaraksa. 3-5 Units.

The corpus of translation texts ascribed to Dharmaraksa (fl. ca. 265-308) represents an important milestone in the development of the Chinese Buddhist translation literature. In this course, students will read selections from Dharmaraksa’s works, focusing on traces of the translation process, problems of interpretation, and what the texts reveal about the world in which they were composed. Ability to read classical Chinese is required. Some knowledge of Sanskrit and/or Gandhari is desirable, but not necessary.

RELIGST 349. Meditation and Mythology in Chinese Buddhism. 3-5 Units.

Readings in Chinese texts and English scholarly literature on issues such as specific techniques and hagiographical imagery in Chinese Buddhist traditions of self-cultivation. Prerequisite: background in Chinese or Japanese.

RELIGST 350. Modern Western Religious Thought Proseminar. 1-5 Unit.

Selected topics in recent and contemporary religious thought. May be repeated for credit.

RELIGST 351. Readings in Indian Buddhist Texts. 3-5 Units.

(Graduate students register for 351.) Introduction to Buddhist literature through reading original texts in Sanskrit. Prerequisite: Sanskrit. Undergraduates register for 200-level for 5 units. Graduate students register for 300-level for 3-5 units.

Same as: RELIGST 251

RELIGST 352A. The Story of a Buddhist Megascripture: Readings in the Avatamsaka. 3-5 Units.

In this course we will explore the massive Mahayana Buddhist scriptural compilation known as the Avatamsaka Sutra (more correctly: Buddhavatamsaka Sutra). We will investigate the development of the text in India, study its contents, and consider its later reception in East Asia. Since much of the course will be devoted to reading sections of the Buddhavatamsaka, a reading knowledge of Chinese is required.

Same as: RELIGST 252A

RELIGST 353. Recent Research on Japanese Buddhism. 3-5 Units.

Readings in recent English-language scholarship on Japanese Buddhism. Undergraduates must enroll for 5 units; graduate students can enroll for 3-5 units. Prerequisite: Solid foundation in either Buddhist studies or East Asian Studies (5 units for 253, 3-5 units for 353) May be repeated for credit.

Same as: RELIGST 253

RELIGST 354. Recent Contributions to Buddhist Studies. 3-5 Units.

This reading intensive course will examine nine areas in recent work in Buddhist studies, including ethnography, archaeology, monasticism, the study of “experience,” and gender. May be repeated for credit.

Same as: RELIGST 254

RELIGST 355. Religion and Power in the Making of Modern South Asia. 3-5 Units.

This course examines the diverse ways that religious traditions have been involved in the brokering of power in South Asia from the late seventeenth century to the present day. We will examine the intersection of religion and power in different arenas, including historical memory, religious festivals, language politics, and violent actions. At the core of our inquiry is how religion is invoked in political contexts (and vice-versa), public displays of religiosity, and the complex dynamics of religion and the state. Among other issues, we will particularly engage with questions of religious identity, knowledge, and violence. Undergraduates must enroll in RELIGST 255 for 5 units. Graduate students must enroll RELIGST 355 for 3-5 units. HISTORY297F must be taken for 4-5 units.

Same as: HISTORY 297F, RELIGST 255

RELIGST 358. Japanese Buddhist Texts. 3-5 Units.

Readings in medieval Japanese Buddhist materials. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: background in Japanese or Chinese.

Same as: RELIGST 258

RELIGST 359. Readings in Buddhist Studies. 3-5 Units.


RELIGST 36. Philosophy of Religion. 3 Units.

(Formerly RELIGST 62S) Explores fundamental questions about the existence of God, free will and determinism, faith and reason, through traditional philosophical texts. Course is divided into four sections: first asks what is religion; second surveys the western philosophical tradition from Boethius through Descartes, Hume, Kant, and Kierkegaard regarding the foundation for theists beliefs; third investigates questions mystical experience raises through both western and Buddhist materials; and fourth takes up the ethics of belief, what we have a right to believe, through the Clifford and James debate and the opposing stances of Camus and Pascal.

Same as: PHIL 77S

RELIGST 360. Buddhism & Modernity. 3-5 Units.

Is Buddhism a philosophy? A mind science? An ancient mystical path? A modern construct? This seminar will evaluate a variety of answers to these questions by exploring how Buddhism has been understood in the modern era. Our primary source materials will range from Orientalist poetry to Zen essays to Insight Meditation manuals to 21st-century films. We will examine how these works shape Buddhism, consider their pre-modern influences, and turn to recent scholarship to discuss how romantic, imperialist, anti-modern, nationalist, therapeutic, and scientific frames depict one of today’s most popular religions.

This course is cross-listed as RELIGST 260/360. Undergraduates must enroll in RELIGST 260 for 5 units. Graduate students must enroll RELIGST 360 for 3-5 units.

Same as: RELIGST 260

RELIGST 362. Sex and the Early Church. 4 Units.

Sex and the Early Church examines the ways first- through sixth-century Christians addressed questions regarding human sexuality. We will pay particular attention to the relationship between sexuality and issues of gender, culture, power, and resistance. We will read a Roman gynecological manual, an ancient dating guide, the world’s first harlequin romance novels, ancient pornography, early Christian martyrdom accounts, stories of female and male saints, instructions for how to best battle demons, visionary accounts, and monastic rules. These will be supplemented by modern scholarship in classics, early Christian studies, gender studies, queer studies, and the history of sexuality. The purpose of our exploration is not simply to better understand ancient views of gender and sexuality. Rather, this investigation of a society whose sexual system often seems so surprising aims to denaturalize many of our own assumptions concerning gender and sexuality. In the process, we will also examine the ways these first centuries of what eventually became the world’s largest religious tradition has profoundly affected the sexual norms of our own time. The seminar assumes no prior knowledge of Judaism, Christianity, the bible, or ancient history.

Same as: CLASSICS 262, FEMGEN 262, RELIGST 262

RELIGST 364. Hindu Tantra. 4 Units.

What is Tantra? Tantric forms of ritual and philosophy have been integral to the practice of Hinduism for most of its history. Tantra has provided initiates with a spiritual technology for embodying the divine and transcending the cycle of rebirth; on a social and political level, Tantra has mediated the institutions of Hindu kingship and appealed to a diverse population of initiates. This course covers a number of influential and well-documented Hindu tantric traditions, exploring several prominent features of Tantric religion as they develop historically, including: tantric ritual practice (core technologies of the subtle body, mantra, ma, alas, etc., along with the more notorious elements of sex and transgression), theology and philosophical speculation, as well as Tantra’s relationship to the outside world and state power.

Same as: RELIGST 264
RELIGST 365. Creating the Universe: Buddhist Science, Ritual and Art. 5 Units.

Much of Buddhist ritual and art can usefully be thought of as technology–physical pieces that, when arranged systematically, make a given practice effective. This class is about the Buddhist scientific perspectives underlying the production of such ritual and art in Tibet, Nepal, and India. The course is organized around cosmological and biological topics such as physical models of the universe, the types of beings that dwell in the world, and the cycles of life and death. Within these topics, we will investigate the relationships between sacred texts, ritual practices, and visual arts as the material culture of religion.

Same as: RELIGST 265

RELIGST 367. Seminar in Religion and Material Culture. 3-5 Units.

The first part of the course will examine approaches to the role of material culture in religion, including scholarship on icons, sacred space, clothing and food. In the second part of the course, students will develop research projects in their area of specialization.

RELIGST 368. Language, Scripture, and Community in Indian Religions. 4 Units.

Scripture has meant many things across religions and cultures: absolute truth, divine revelation, a manual for correct practice, a site of political contestation. In an age of rising religious fundamentalism around the globe, it is timelier than ever to reflect on the concept of divine revelation and how, as an artifact of language, scripture can generate religious meaning and move people to act with conviction. Does Śiva only speak Sanskrit, the language of the Gods? Or is scripture the natural, spontaneous utterances of wandering poets who speak the language of the people? In this course, we will examine the category of scriptural revelation as articulated in South Asian religions, and how scriptural texts are recited and embodied, focusing in particular on how particular religious communities come to be defined by the language in which their scriptures were composed.

RELIGST 369. Plotinus and Augustine. 3-5 Units.

Professor's permission required to register. A reading course focused on the influence of Plotinus Enneads on Augustine's Confessions, early dialogues, and sections on reason and memory in the De trinitate. Proficiency in Greek and Latin will be helpful but is not required.

Professor's prior permission required, interested students should contact the professor about course schedule: tsheehan@stanford.edu.

Undergraduates register for 200-level for 5 units. Graduate students register for 300-level for 3-5 units.

Same as: PHIL 229, PHIL 329, RELIGST 269

RELIGST 370. Comparative Religious Ethics. 4 Units.

The difference that the word religious makes in religious ethics and how it affects issues of genre. Theoretical analyses with examples from W. E. Asia. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

Same as: RELIGST 270

RELIGST 371. Writing Religious History. 4-5 Units.

This course offers graduate students a sustained opportunity to think about the craft of writing religious history. We will work together on issues ranging from structuring sentences, to revising an article, to conceptualizing a dissertation. Students will be encouraged to establish a daily writing habit and to formulate clear and searchable research strategies. Readings will include exemplars of different kinds of writing in the field. Students will write and workshop several brief (3-5 page) papers applying different approaches. The final project will be a revision of an article-length paper.

RELIGST 372. Kant on Religion. 3-5 Units.

Critical examination of Kant's principle writings on religion against the background of his general theoretical and practical philosophy and guided by the hypothesis that his philosophy of religion continues to offer significant insights and resources to contemporary theories of religion. Recent reassessments of Kant on religion in the secondary literature will also be read and discussed.

Same as: RELIGST 272

RELIGST 373. Historicism and Its Problems: Ernst Troeltsch, the Study of Religion, and the Crisis of Historicism. 3-5 Units.

Examination of the early twentieth-century historian of religion, philosopher of culture, sociologist of religion, Christian theologian, and philosopher of history Ernst Troeltsch, within the context of the late nineteenth-century "crisis of historicism," i.e., the historicization and relativization of religious, ethical, social, and political norms. Attention to seminal theorists of history (Herder, Kant, Ranke, Hegel, Nietzsche) in the post-Enlightenment German intellectual tradition and the attempts of Christian and Jewish thinkers in the Weimar era (Barth, Gogarten, Rosenzweig, L. Strauss) to "overcome" the crisis wrought by a radically historical approach to human culture.

Same as: RELIGST 273

RELIGST 374. From Kant to Kierkegaard. 3-5 Units.

(Graduate students register for 374. Undergrads register for 274 for 5 units.) The philosophy of religion emerged from the European Enlightenment as a new genre of reflection on religion distinct from both dogmatic theology and rationalist dreams of a "natural" religion of reason. Neither beholden to pre-critical tradition, nor dismissive of what Thomas Nagel has termed "the religious attitude," this new, ostensibly secular, genre of religious thought sought to rethink the meaning of Christianity at a time of immense philosophical ferment. The main currents of religious thought in Germany from Kant's critical philosophy to Kierkegaard's revolt against Hegelianism. Emphasis on the theories of religion, the epistemological status of religious discourse, the role of history (especially the figure of Jesus), and the problem of alienation/reconciliation in seminal modern thinkers: Kant, Schleiermacher, Hegel, and Kierkegaard.

Same as: RELIGST 274

RELIGST 374F. Science, Religion, and Democracy. 3-5 Units.

How should conflicts between citizens with science-based and religion-based beliefs be handled in modern liberal democracies? Are religion-based beliefs as suitable for discussion within the public sphere as science-based beliefs? Are there still important conflicts between science and religion, e.g., Darwinian evolution versus creationism or intelligent design? How have philosophy and recent theology been engaged with such conflicts and how should they be engaged now? What are the political ramifications? This is a graduate-level seminar; undergraduates must obtain permission of the instructors.

Same as: ETHICSOC 374R, PHIL 374F

RELIGST 375. Kierkegaard. 3-5 Units.

(Graduate students register for 375.) Close reading of Kierkegaard's magnum opus, Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments, in its early 19th-century context.

Same as: RELIGST 275

RELIGST 377. The Later Heidegger: Art, Poetry, Language. 3 Units.

Lectures and seminar discussions of the problematic of the latter Heidegger (1930 - 1976) in the light of his entire project. Readings from "On the Origin of the Work of Art" and Elucidations of Holderlin's Poetry.

Same as: PHIL 234B, RELIGST 277

RELIGST 378. Heidegger: Confronting the Ultimate. 3-5 Units.

Heidegger's work on meaning, the self, and the sacred. Texts include Being and Time, courses and opuscula up to 1933, the Letter on Humanism, and Contributions of Philosophy.

Same as: RELIGST 278

RELIGST 379. After God: Why Religion at all?. 4 Units.

God is dead, but where does religion come from? The end of the quest for God in twentieth century philosophy. Robert Bellah's Religion in Human Evolution plus seminal works of Heidegger, including Being and Time, 'What Is Metaphysics? 'Nietzsche's Saying 'God is Dead:' N.B.: Class size limited. Apply early at tsheehan@stanford.edu.

Same as: RELIGST 279
RELIGST 379A. Heidegger on human being and God. 4 Units.
This lecture-seminar first raises the question of essential characteristics of human being, such as temporality, mortality, hermeneutics and the relation to meaning, and then, via readings from Karl Rahner, asks whether human being is open to a possible relation to a supernatural divinity.
Same as: RELIGST 279A

RELIGST 380. Schleiermacher: Reconstructing Religion. 3-5 Units.
Idealist philosopher, Moravian pietist, early German Romantic, co-founder of the University of Berlin, head preacher at Trinity Church, translator of Plato’s works, Hegel’s opponent, pioneer in modern hermeneutics, father of modern theology. Schleiermacher’s controversial reconstruction of religion and theology in its philosophical context.
Same as: RELIGST 280

RELIGST 381. Asian Religions in America; Asian American Religions. 4 Units.
This course will analyze both the reception in America of Asian religions (i.e. of Buddhism in the 19th century), and the development in America of Asian American religious traditions.
Same as: AMSTUD 281, ASNAMST 281, RELIGST 281

RELIGST 382. King Solomon and the Search for Wisdom. 4 Units.
What is wisdom according to the Bible? The course addresses this question by surveying various biblical and post-biblical texts associated with King Solomon. Other topics include the on-going debate over the historical existence of a Solomonic kingdom, the origins and history of the Jerusalem Temple, and Solomon’s role in Jewish, Christian and Islamic tradition.
Same as: RELIGST 282

RELIGST 383A. Heidegger, Hölderlin, and the Gods. 3-5 Units.
The radical transformations in Western notions of God between the death of Hegel and the birth of historical materialism, arguing that questions about theism and atheism, humanism, and history formulated in the period 1831-50 are still pertinent. Texts from Hegel, the young Hegelians, Feuerbach, and Marx on issues of God, history, and the social dimensions of human nature.
Same as: RELIGST 283A

Independent study in Christianity. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

RELIGST 385. Research in Buddhist Studies. 1-15 Unit.
Independent study in Buddhism. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

RELIGST 387. Research in Jewish Studies. 1-15 Unit.
Independent study in Jewish Studies. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

RELIGST 388. Research in Modern Religious Thought, Ethics, and Philosophy. 1-15 Unit.
Independent study in Modern Religious Thought, Ethics, and Philosophy. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

RELIGST 389. Individual Work for Graduate Students. 1-15 Unit.
May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

RELIGST 390. Teaching Internship. 3-5 Units.
Required supervised internship for PhDs.

RELIGST 391. Teaching Religious Studies. 3 Units.
Workshop/seminar for doctoral students in Religious Studies and adjacent fields designed to cultivate methods for teaching Religious Studies in an academic setting.

RELIGST 392. Paper in the Field. 1-15 Unit.
Prerequisite: consent of graduate director. May be repeated for credit.

RELIGST 395. Master of Arts Thesis. 2-9 Units.

RELIGST 399. Recent Works in Religious Studies. 1-2 Unit.
Readings in secondary literature for Religious Studies doctoral students. May be repeated for credit.

RELIGST 50. Exploring Buddhism. 5 Units.
A comprehensive historical survey of the Buddhist tradition, from its beginnings to the 21st century, covering principal teachings and practices, institutional and social forms, and artistic and iconographical expressions. (Formerly RELIGST 14.).

RELIGST 53. Exploring Jewish Spirituality. 4 Units.
It was once accepted as fact that Judaism is a purely rational religion devoid of any authentic mystical tradition. But the past century of scholarship has reversed this claim, demonstrating that the spiritual life has been integral to Judaism’s vital heart since ancient times. This yearning for a direct immediate experience of God’s Presence, a longing to grasp the mysteries of the human soul and know the inner dynamics of the Divine realm, has taken on many different forms across the centuries. This course will introduce students to the major texts and core ideas of Jewish mysticism and spirituality, tracking their development from the Hebrew Bible to the present day. Close attention will be paid to the sources’ historical context, and we will also engage with broader methodological questions regarding the academic study of religion and the comparative approach to mysticism.
Same as: JEWISHST 53

RELIGST 55. Exploring Zen Buddhism. 4 Units.
This course is an introduction to Chan/Zen Buddhism. We will study the historical and doctrinal development of this tradition in China and Japan and examine various facets of Zen, such as the philosophy, practices, rituals, culture, and institution. For this aim, we will read and discuss classical Zen texts in translation and important secondary literature. This course will further feature a fieldtrip to a local Zen center.

RELIGST 56. Exploring Chinese Religions. 4 Units.
An overview of major themes and historical developments in 5000 years of Chinese religion. In this course, we will try as much as possible to appreciate Chinese religion from the Chinese perspective, paying particular attention to original texts in translation in an attempt to discern the logic of Chinese religion and the role it has played in the course of Chinese history. To a greater extent perhaps than any other civilization, Chinese have left behind a continuous body of written documents and other artifacts relating to religion stretching over thousands of years, providing a wealth of material for studying the place of religion in history and society.

RELIGST 61. Exploring Islam. 4 Units.
This course introduces some of the most important features of the Islamic religious tradition. It explores the different ways in which Muslims have interpreted and practiced their religion. The main subjects of discussion — including the life of the Prophet Muhammad, the Qur’an, law, ritual, mysticism, theology, politics, and art — will be considered with reference to their proper historical contexts. Some of the topics covered include abortion, gender, rebellion and violence, and the visual vocabulary of paintings. Students will be exposed to important theories and methods in the academic study of religion. No prior knowledge is required.

RELIGST 65. Exploring Global Christianity. 4 Units.
Explore the world’s largest religion as a multicultural, global faith, with attention to Christianity’s origins, spread and impact around the world up to the present. Special attention to recent shifting demographics leading to declining numbers in mainline Christian denominations in North America and Europe and the rapid expansion of Christianity in Africa, Asia, and South America; the explosion of international Pentecostalism and other new Christianities; Christianity, global politics, and the global economy; Christian-Muslim relations and conflicts.
RELIGST 6N. Religion in Anime and Manga. 3 Units.
Religious themes and topos are ubiquitous in Japanese anime and manga. In this course, we will examine how religions are represented in these new media and study the role of religions in contemporary Japan. By doing this, students will also learn fundamental concepts of Buddhism and Shinto.

RELIGST 71. Jews and Christians: Conflict and Coexistence. 3 Units.
The relationship between Judaism and Christianity has had a long and controversial history. Christianity originated as a dissident Jewish sect but eventually evolved into an independent religion, with only tenuous ties to its Jewish past and present. Since the Holocaust, Jews and Christians have begun the serious work of forging more meaningful relationships with each other. This course explores the most significant moments that have shaped the relationship between Judaism and Christianity and examines some of the theological complexities imbedded in these traditions, while searching constructive ways of situating oneself amidst such complexities.
Same as: JEWISHST 71

RELIGST 801. TGR Project. 0 Units.
(Staff).

RELIGST 802. TGR Dissertation. 0 Units.
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RELIGST 81. Exploring Indian Religions. 4 Units.
This course provides an overview of Indian religious traditions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, and Sikhism. We will spend approximately half the course on Hindu thought and traditions from the Vedic period until the present day, emphasizing the diverse forms of this religion in different times and places. The second half of the course will be devoted to religions that emerged in South Asia (e.g., Jainism) and those that came to find a home and particular forms of expression on the subcontinent (e.g., Islam). Throughout students will read selections from a range of theological texts, epics, and literature that have permeated many aspects of daily religious life in India. We will also emphasize ritual activities, visual experiences in temples, and networks of pilgrimage places that dot the subcontinent. We will often pair primary sources (in translation) with later interpretations and impacts of those texts in modern South Asia. We will also survey the modern incarnations of particular Indian religious traditions throughout South Asia and the diaspora. By the conclusion of this course, students will be conversant with the texts, beliefs, and practices of the major Indian religions in their cultural and historical contexts and also have a working knowledge of basic categories important for the study of religion more broadly.

RELIGST 82. Approaches to the Study of Religion: Exploring Christianity. 4 Units.
Historical and contemporary Christianity from four viewpoints: ritual and prayer; sacred texts and creeds; ethics and life; and community governance.

RELIGST 86. Exploring the New Testament. 4 Units.
To explore the historical context of the earliest Christians, students will read most of the New Testament as well as many documents that didn't make the final cut. Non-Christian texts, Roman art, and surviving archeological remains will better situate Christianity within the ancient world. Students will read from the Dead Sea Scrolls, explore Gnostic gospels, hear of a five-year-old Jesus throwing temper tantrums while killing (and later resurrecting) his classmates, peruse ancient romance novels, explore the adventures of fallen angels who sired giants (and taught humans about cosmetics), tour heaven and hell, encounter the garden of Eden story told from the perspective of the snake, and learn how the world will end. The seminar assumes no prior knowledge of Judaism, Christianity, the bible, or ancient history. It is designed for students who are part of faith traditions that consider the bible to be sacred, as well as those who are not. The only prerequisite is an interest in exploring books, groups, and ideas that eventually lost the battles of history and to keep asking the question "why." In critically examining these ancient narratives and the communities that wrote them, you will learn about the content and history of the Bible, better appreciate the diversity of early Judaism and Christianity, understand the historical context of these religions, and explore the politics behind what did and did not make it into the bible.
Same as: CLASSICS 9N, JEWISHST 9N

RELIGST 801. TGR Project. 0 Units.
(Staff).

RELIGST 802. TGR Dissertation. 0 Units.
.

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Same as: CLASSICS 43, JEWISHST 86

RELIGST 8N. Gardens and Sacred Space in Japan. 3 Units.
This seminar will explore gardens and sacred spaces in Japan. We will study the development of Japanese garden design from the earliest records to contemporary Japan. We will especially focus on the religious, aesthetic, and social dimensions of gardens and sacred spaces. This seminar features a fieldtrip to a Japanese garden in the area, in order to study how Japanese garden design was adapted in North America.

RELIGST 91. Exploring American Religious History. 4 Units.
This course will trace how contemporary beliefs and practices connect to historical trends in the American religious landscape.
Same as: AMSTUD 91, CSRE 91, HISTORY 260K

RELIGST 9N. What Didn't Make it into the Bible. 3 Units.
Over two billion people alive today consider the Bible to be sacred scripture. But how did the books that made it into the bible get there in the first place? Who decided what was to be part of the bible and what wasn't? How would history look differently if a given book didn't make the final cut and another one did? Hundreds of ancient Jewish and Christian texts are not included in the Bible. ¿What Didn't Make It in the Bible¿ focuses on these excluded writings. We will explore the Dead Sea Scrolls, Gnostic gospels, hear of a five-year-old Jesus throwing temper tantrums while killing (and later resurrecting) his classmates, peruse ancient romance novels, explore the adventures of fallen angels who sired giants (and taught humans about cosmetics), tour heaven and hell, encounter the garden of Eden story told from the perspective of the snake, and learn how the world will end. The seminar assumes no prior knowledge of Judaism, Christianity, the bible, or ancient history. It is designed for students who are part of faith traditions that consider the bible to be sacred, as well as those who are not. The only prerequisite is an interest in exploring books, groups, and ideas that eventually lost the battles of history and to keep asking the question "why." In critically examining these ancient narratives and the communities that wrote them, you will learn about the content and history of the Bible, better appreciate the diversity of early Judaism and Christianity, understand the historical context of these religions, and explore the politics behind what did and did not make it into the bible.
Same as: CLASSICS 9N, JEWISHST 9N