## Religious Studies (RELS)

### RELS 110  The Old Testament  3.0 SH  [GEB]
Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures as history, as literature, and as a statement of faith. God’s covenant with Israel forms a unifying motif, seen against the background of the ancient Near East. A brief overview of the New Testament is also included.

### RELS 120  The New Testament  3.0 SH  [GEB]
An introductory overview of the historical context, literary genres, and theological and ethical messages of the New Testament, with focus on its contemporary relevance, the identity of Jesus, and what it means to be his follower. A brief overview of the Old Testament is also included.

### RELS 130  World Religions  3.0 SH  [GEH]
An introduction to the world’s religious traditions, including the three Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity, Islam), Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, and other traditions at the discretion of the instructor. This course provides an opportunity to learn about the diversity of religious practice in the world and prepares students for a world impacted by religion at every level.

### RELS 140  Religion in Unexpected Places  3.0 SH  [GEH]
The course will ask students to consider how individual religious convictions can impact self and society. Students will identify the creative, ethical, and theological thinking of varied texts and consider how a moral imagination can help them to focus both their own religious beliefs and practices and empower them to be agents of change. **Class Level Restriction:** Freshman and Sophomore only.

### RELS 215  The Hebrew Prophets  3.0 SH  [GEH]
Prophecy as a quest for leadership and as insight into social and moral conditions in Israel before, during, and after the exile.

### RELS 218  Wisdom Literature and Psalms  3.0 SH  [GEH]
Close reading of Psalms, Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes, with reference to wisdom traditions of the ancient Near East.

### RELS 222  The Bible and the Environment  3.0 SH  [GEH]
This course critically examines and interprets relevant biblical texts within the context of the current ecological crisis with the intent of articulating a biblical case that responds to the challenge to live faithfully and responsibly as stewards of the Earth and its resources.

### RELS 224  Christian Gospels  3.0 SH  [GEH]
An examination of the origins and development of Christian gospels in and outside the New Testament canon, as historical, literary, and theological products of the early Church, and of their contemporary interpretations.

### RELS 227  Paul the Apostle  3.0 SH  [GEH]
An exploration of the life, letters, thought and impact of the prolific and controversial apostle. The book of Acts, Paul’s letters and those attributed to him, are examined in order to better understand both the man and the message.

### RELS 230  Faith and Film  3.0 SH  [GEH]
Students will develop evaluative and critical skills for use in their encounter with the medium of film. These skills will be applied both to films with explicitly religious and spiritual themes, as well as to films in which such themes are more hidden and implicit. Students view, discuss, review, and research a variety of popular films.

### RELS 231  History of Christianity  3.0 SH  [GEH]
An exploration of the Christian churches from their beginnings in the apostolic period to their most recent expressions in the twenty-first century. The course considers how Christianity has shaped societies and how societies have shaped Christianity. Major movements, leading figures, theological developments, and religious trends will be examined to better understand the global spectrum of Christian expressions.
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RELS 240 Introduction to Islam 3.0 SH [GEH]
The study of Islam as a religion, focusing on the Quran, the prophet Muhammad, ritual, commentary, dissent, and important religious themes and developments during three periods: Middle (650-850 CE); Mature (850-1500 CE); and Modern (1600-present).

RELS 260 Religion in America 3.0 SH [GEH]
An historical survey of religious groups and movements that shaped and were shaped by the American experience.

RELS 265 Comparative Religious Ecology 3.0 SH [GEH]
This course addresses how various religious traditions understand the relationship between humanity, ecology, and the divine. Monotheistic, dharmic (such as Buddhism), and indigenous traditions will be addressed. The course also covers religiously informed environmental movements.

RELS 270 Gender & Religion 3.0 SH [GEH]
This course examines underlying assumptions about gender roles in the context of scripture and religious practice. It explores historical, cultural, and religious expectations about men's and women's attitudes and interests, and how those appear in scriptures and in various religious traditions. The title will be extended to describe the current topic. May be taken two times provided the topics differ.

RELS 275 Christian Science Movement 3.0 SH [GEH]
This course allows students to engage in in-depth study of specific aspects of the history and/or cultural practice of Christian Science at various times and places. May be repeated once provided the topics differ.

RELS 300 Biblical Interpretation 3.0 SH [ ]
An analysis and practicum of the methods scholars and others have used to interpret biblical literature, from antiquity to the present.
Prerequisite: RELS 110 or RELS 120.
Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.

RELS 304 Topics in Biblical Studies 1.0-3.0 SH [ ]
A seminar on a topic in biblical studies at the advanced level. The content varies, and the title will be extended to describe the current topic. May be offered for variable credit from one to three semester hours. May be repeated up to a total of nine semester hours provided the topics differ.
Prerequisite: RELS 110 or RELS 120.
Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.

RELS 307 Spiritual Autobiographies 3.0 SH [GEH]
In this course we will explore classic and contemporary spiritual autobiographies and learn about the practices of faith that sustained and challenged diverse religious people. Students study texts from different cultures and historical periods, discovering how historical and cultural context shapes faith. Through critical examination of the texts, students will reflect on their own spiritual journeys and identities.
Class Level Restriction: Sophomore and Junior and Senior only.

RELS 310 Topics in Religious Studies 1.0-3.0 SH [ ]
A seminar on a topic in religious studies at the advanced level. The content varies, and the title will be extended to describe the current topic. Topic areas include comparative religions, history of religions, philosophy and ethics of religions, and religion in society. May be repeated up to a total of nine semester hours provided the topics differ.
Prerequisite: at least one RELS course.

RELS 320 Biblical Sites and (Con)texts 3.0 SH [GEH]
An examination of biblical sites in light of pertinent biblical texts as well as their ancient and contemporary contexts. This course includes critical analyses of land in the Bible and of biblical sites in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Secondarily, this course addresses the role of these concepts in conflicts in the land of the Bible from antiquity to the present.

RELS 332 The Life of Mary Baker Eddy 3.0 SH [GEH]
An historical survey of the life and times of Mary Baker Eddy, from her childhood through her work as Discoverer, Founder, and Leader of Christian Science.
RELS 365  God and the Holocaust  3.0 SH  [GEH]
This course helps students understand the historical background, context, events, and aftermath of the
Holocaust. We will also be addressing the implications and repercussions of the Holocaust on religious
practice and theology. Finally, the course is intended to encourage students independently to develop
their own prayerful response to examples of violence and evil.
Class Level Restriction: Sophomore and Junior and Senior only.

RELS 370  Jews, Christians, & Muslims  3.0 SH  [GEH]
Judaism, Christianity, and Islam sometimes interact harmoniously, but at other periods have fought
bitterly. This course compares these religions theologically, legally, and culturally; traces the history of
the interactions among these religions; and also examines contemporary relations between these three
religions.

RELS 390  Seminar in Religious Studies  3.0 SH  [ ]
This course provides students with an understanding of the methodological tools used in the study
of religion; it also gives students the opportunity to reflect upon which of those methods will be most
helpful to them in undertaking a specific research project in which religion is a significant category of
analysis.
Prerequisite: RELS 110 or RELS 120 and two RELS courses numbered 200 or above.
Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.

RELS 401  Capstone Project  1.0-3.0 SH  [ ]
A selected topic, area, or problem providing opportunity for survey, investigation, research, creative
activity, or approved travel-study. May be offered for variable credit from one to three semester hours.
May be taken three times up to a total of six semester hours. May be offered on an independent
contract basis.
Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.