

Theology and Religious Studies

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Department Mission Statement

The Department of Theology and Religious Studies is committed to a rigorous presentation of the methods and content of both Christian Theology and Religious Studies as academic disciplines. We view these combined disciplines as an important component within the liberal arts curriculum of a Roman Catholic university in the Jesuit tradition. We strive to engage ourselves and our students in the critical study of theological and religious traditions, praxis, and intellectual inquiry, both historically and in the contemporary world.

In pursuit of this mission, the department recognizes three primary goals:

- Provide students with an understanding of the foundations of Christian faith and its implications for life in society, especially within the Roman Catholic tradition;
- Instill in students a capacity for the examination of theological and religious traditions from a critical distance;
- Foster in students and professional colleagues an appreciation for the diversity that exists within the contemporary, scholarly study of theology and religion and within the department's faculty and their research endeavors.

Theology and Religious Studies in the GEP

All students must successfully complete the Signature Core course, "Faith, Justice and the Catholic Tradition," as well as any one of a number of courses signified as Religious Difference courses.

Signature Core:

THE 154 Faith, Justice and the Catholic Tradition

This course is designed to introduce students to central theological themes (such as the doctrines of Christ, the human person, sin/grace/salvation, and the sacraments) and moral claims (such as the preferential option for the poor, solidarity, and the common good) typical of the Roman Catholic Tradition. Through a critical examination of primary texts, students will investigate the historic

grounds of faith and will learn how and why a concern for social, economic and political justice is rooted not only in the Christian Gospel but also in fundamental Christian doctrines and liturgical practices.

Variable Core:

Religious Difference - 1 course

This course will require students to gain a critical understanding of one or more religious worldviews that differ from the Roman Catholic perspective. Students will engage in either in-depth study of the beliefs and practices of one or more non-Christian religious traditions or take a comparative religions course that in some measure addresses the issue of religious diversity. This course will also address issues related to the construction of religious identity in today's pluralistic world.

Students will be able to:

- Identify some of the general features typical of many religions, such as conceptions of deity, transmission of traditions, religious community, ritual practice, religious experience, and ethical norms.
- Recognize and discuss examples of the impact of historical, socio-political, and cultural contexts on the teachings, sacred texts and/or material culture, and other manifestations over time of at least one non-Christian religious tradition.
- Articulate how some of the categories of the discipline of Religious Studies outlined in the previous points are expressed in at least one non-Christian religion.
- Discuss some of the implications of living in a religiously diverse world.

Some Typical Religious Difference courses include:

THE 211	The Hebrew Bible
THE 336	Jews and Christians: Entwined Histories (when Team-taught)
THE 380	Interreligious Dialogue
THE 384	Jews and Christians: Theologies Compared (when Team-taught)
THE 385	Jewish Jesus As Savior (when Team-taught)
REL 101	Comparative Religion
REL 211	Hebrew Bible
REL 212	Israelite Religion
REL 231	Judaism
REL 241	Islam
REL 261	Hinduism
REL 270	Designated Special Topics in Religious Studies
REL 271	African and Caribbean Religions
REL 338	Jewish & Christian Responses to the Holocaust
REL 351	Indian Buddhism
REL 352	Mahayana Buddhism
REL 356	Death and the Afterlife in Chinese Religions
REL 357	Food Practices and Chinese Religions
REL383	Ancient Greek Religions

Our Majors

The Theology and Religious Studies Department offers two majors which are distinguished by virtue of both their primary content and their methodological approach. Students may choose one of these majors in conjunction with their other studies, or they may double major within the department and get a degree in Theology and Religious Studies.

Theology majors will focus primarily on Christianity. Theology, which literally means the "study of God," was described by Anselm of Canterbury as "faith seeking understanding." It entails methodical study of the faith traditions of a believing community. Christian Theology employs the methods of its sub-fields (e.g., systematic and historical theology, ethics, biblical studies) to explore the bible, Jesus Christ, the church, tradition history, doctrinal development, liturgy, personal and communal morality, and relations with other religions. It is not catechesis, which transmits knowledge about a religion to a believer without critically analyzing the tradition's beliefs. Theology requires a process of grappling with and critically examining particular expressions of faith in order to articulate them in contemporary contexts. In other words, theology seeks to address the "fears, hopes, griefs, and anxieties" (Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 1) of church and world in the present moment. As a discipline, theology converses with the academy, the church, and society. The theology faculty and their students at Saint Joseph's University aim to assist each of these communities in appreciating the meaning and implications of the tenets and practices of Roman Catholic and other Christian traditions, as well as those of other religions.

Religious Studies focuses upon the study of one or more non-Christian religions. Methodologically, Religious Studies is devoted to the study of religion as a fundamental human phenomenon. Its scope is broad, encompassing in principle all forms of religious experience, belief and practice in whatever contexts they are found. Religious Studies is non-confessional in the sense that it is not committed in advance to any religious (or indeed, non-religious) worldview or doctrine. Religious Studies as we understand it neither endorses a naïve objectivism in the study of "facts" divorced from values nor elevates a single theological, philosophical or scientific principle or program to the level of an unassailable norm. Rather, Religious Studies is intentionally eclectic and open-ended, drawing upon the full range of methods available to the academic study of things human, from philosophy or literary theory, for example, to cognitive science and evolutionary psychology. It is united only by its subject matter, religion as a fundamental, albeit contested, dimension of human experience.

Goals and Objectives for Students Majoring in Theology

Goal 1: Students will understand at least two religious traditions beyond an introductory level, including their histories, beliefs, practices and contemporary expressions.

Objective 1.1: Students will articulate the foundations, historical development, and ethical ramifications of the basic content of the Catholic faith using sources and methods appropriate to the discipline of Theology.

Objective 1.2: Students will articulate how the basic content of the Catholic faith relates to that found in other Christian and non-Christian traditions.

Goal 2: Students will understand the implications of religious belief for moral decision making and ethical action in the world;

Objective 2.1: Students will demonstrate the theological basis for the promotion of justice and solidarity with the poor and oppressed.

Goal 3: Students will be able to examine theological and religious traditions from a critical distance;

Objective 3.1: Students will analyze biblical, creedal, liturgical, and theological texts according to their particular literary genres and historical contexts.

Goal 4: Students will appreciate the diversity of method, content, and history that exists within the contemporary academic disciplines of Theology and Religious Studies

Objective 4.1: Students will utilize effective methods of research and argumentation within the multidisciplinary context of the academic study of theology and religion.

Theology Major Program of Study

GEP Common Courses (See Curricula): six Signature courses

GEP University Distribution (See Curricula):

Eight Variable Core courses, three integrative learning courses and three overlay requirements. These latter may or may not require students to take an additional course.

GEP Non-Native Language

No foreign language unique to the department is required. But it is recommended that students consult with their advisors to fulfill the GEP non-native language requirement with a language relevant to their religious or theological interest.

GEP Integrative learning

Any three complementary courses in the College of Arts and Sciences in departments other than Theology and Religious Studies. Students have considerable flexibility in choosing these courses. Students must choose three courses from the following categories, with no more than 2 from any single category:

1. Any additional approved Faith and Reason course.
2. Any approved Diversity, Globalization, or Area Studies course.
3. Any approved Ethics Intensive course.
4. Any approved Faith-Justice course.
5. Any related Historical course.

6. Any related Social Science course.
7. Any related Humanities course.

Students should consult with their advisors to determine what courses are best suited to their own interests in Religious Studies when choosing the courses needed to satisfy the integrated learning requirement.

GEP Electives: any 14-17 courses

Major distribution:

Ten courses distributed as described below. At least eight must be at the 200-level or above. GEP courses will be used to partially satisfy the major concentration. (For examples of specific courses in each area, see the department web site at <http://www.sju.edu/academics/cas/theology/index.html>.)

- 1) Faith, Justice and the Catholic Tradition, Signature Core in the GEP
- 2) Bible, any one course
- 3) History of Christianity, one course or Systematic Theology, any one course
- 4) Ethics, any one course
- 5-6) THE Course, any two additional courses
- 7-8) Non-Christian Religions: two courses.

The two courses in this area must not cover the same religious tradition.

- 9) THE 495 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion
- 10) Theology Elective:
Any one course in THE or REL at the 200 level or above. No one course may be counted more than once for the purposes of the overall student distribution within the major but because of the complexity of content, some courses could be chosen to fulfill the requirements of one of several distributional categories.

Students must consult with their advisors or the department chair to determine the best distribution of a selected course relative to their own interests and needs. Graduating seniors must demonstrate that they have completed at least one significant research paper in theology or religious studies.

Goals and Objectives for Students Majoring in Religious Studies

Goal 1: Students will understand at least two religious traditions beyond an introductory level, including their histories, beliefs, practices and contemporary expressions.

Objective 1.1: Students will articulate the foundations, historical development, and ethical ramifications of at least one religious tradition other than the Roman Catholic

tradition, using sources and methods appropriate to the discipline of Religious Studies.

Objective 1.2: Students will articulate the foundations, historical development, and ethical ramifications of the basic content of the Catholic faith using sources and methods appropriate to the discipline of Theology.

Goal 2: Students will understand the implications of religious belief for moral decision making and ethical action in the world;

Objective 2.1: Students will apply the tools of religious studies to understanding the nature of religious conflict.

Goal 3: Students will be able to examine theological and religious traditions from a critical distance;

Objective 3.1: Students will understand the historical nature of religious texts and traditions, and the tensions that arise within religious communities as they undergo historical change.

Objective 3.2: Students will recognize and think critically about some of the general features typical of most if not all religions, such as conceptions of deity, forms of religious community, forms of ritual practice, types of religious experience, ethical norms, etc.

Objective 3.3: Students will identify and describe the embeddedness of religion in society and culture, as well as the religious dimensions of social, political and cultural phenomena not conventionally identified as "religious."

Goal 4: Students will appreciate the diversity of method, content, and history that exists within the contemporary academic disciplines of Theology and Religious Studies

Objective 4.1: Students will articulate the difference between religious studies as an academic discipline and theological or confessional approaches to the study of religion.

Objective 4.2: Students will evaluate some of the most influential methods used in the study of religion and apply them in the study of particular cases.

Religious Studies Major Program of Study

GEP Common Courses (See Curricula): Six Signature courses

GEP University Distribution (See Curricula)

Eight variable core courses, three integrative learning courses and three overlay requirements. These latter may or may not require students to take an additional course.

GEP Non-Native Language

No non-native language unique to the department is required. But it is recommended that students consult with their advisors to fulfill the GEP non-native language requirement with a language relevant to their religious or theological interest.

GEP Integrative learning

Students in the Religious Studies major must strengthen their skills in the study of religion by taking three complementary courses in other departments in the College of Arts and Sciences. Students have considerable flexibility in choosing these courses because familiarity with a wide variety of issues, methods, and tools is vital to the academic study of religion. Students must choose three courses from the following categories, with no more than two of these courses may be taken in any one department. These three courses may be drawn from any program and or department that focuses on:

1. Cultural and historical contexts of various religious traditions, such as Ancient Studies, Asian Studies, Classics, Fine Arts, History, Latin American Studies, and Political Science;
2. Methodologies that are applied in the study of religion, such as Biology, Economics, Philosophy, Psychology, and Sociology;
3. Research tools that are employed in the study of religion, such as Computer Science, Mathematics, and Foreign Languages.

Courses used to satisfy the Integrated Learning Requirement may not fulfill a GEP Common Core or Variable Core Requirement. Students should consult with their advisors to determine what courses are best suited to their own interests in Religious Studies when choosing the courses needed to satisfy the integrated learning requirement.

Major distribution:

Ten courses distributed as described below. At least eight must be at the 200-level or above. GEP courses will be used to partially satisfy the major concentration. (For examples of specific courses in each area, see the department web site at: <http://www.sju.edu/academics/cas/theology/index.html>)

1-6) Non-Christian Religions, six courses.

7) THE 154 Faith, Justice and the Catholic Tradition, Signature Core in the GEP

8) Institutional Identity Course: New Testament, History of Christianity, Systematic Theology, or Ethics, one additional course at any level.:

9) REL 495 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion

10) Religious Studies Elective: Any course in THE or REL at the 200 level or above

Among the ten courses above, one must be explicitly comparative in scope (i.e., not tradition specific) and one must concentrate on a South or East Asian religion. Graduating seniors must demonstrate that they have completed at least one significant research paper in Theology or Religious Studies.

Minor In Theology and Religious Studies

A minor in Theology and Religious Studies can be fulfilled by taking any six courses taught within the department. Doing a Theology and Religious Studies minor is relatively easy, and could even be completed using only GEP courses. A third of the minor will be completed by required GEP courses: every student must take THE 154 and a Religious Difference course. Students could then complete the minor by taking their First Year Seminar, Ethics Intensive, Faith and Reason, and Writing Intensive courses within the department. However, students can complete the minor with any six courses, whether GEP courses, electives, or ILC courses for other majors.

Some students might like to focus their Theology and Religious Studies minor on topics they find of particular interest. This, too, is quite easy to do. The following are only some of the potential combination of courses. Feel free to design your own focus.

Focus in Asian Religions

THE 154 - Faith, Justice and the Catholic Tradition

plus any five courses from:

REL 150 Asian Spiritualities

REL 251 Religions of Ancient India

REL 261 Hinduism

REL 312 Spiritual Practices in Comparative Perspective

REL 351 Indian Buddhism

REL 352 Mahayana Buddhism

REL 353 Buddhist Ethics

REL 354 China and the Creation of East Asian Buddhism

REL 356 Death and the Afterlife in Chinese Religions

REL 357 Food Practices and Chinese Religions

REL 358 Yoga: Ancient and Modern Paths to Freedom

Focus in Biblical Studies

THE 154 Faith, Justice, and the Catholic Tradition

plus any five courses from:

REL 150 Genesis: Sex, Lies and Mayhem

THE/REL 211 Hebrew Bible

REL 212 Israelite Religion

THE/REL 221 New Testament

REL 321 Religion and Law in the Ancient World

REL 322 Myth and History in the Bible

THE/REL 323 The Psalms

THE/REL 325 Synoptic Gospels

THE/REL 326 Letters of Paul

REL 332 Past and Present in Israel/Palestine: Digging at Tel Dor (STR)

THE 332 The New Testament and Christian Attitudes toward Jews and Judaism

Focus in Ethics

THE 154 Faith, Justice, and the Catholic Tradition

plus any five courses from

THE 261 Christian Social Ethics

THE 358 Faith, Justice and Jesuit Mission in Bolivia

THE 361 Catholic Social Teaching

THE 366 Christian Medical Ethics

THE 368 Just Health Care in Developing Nations

THE 371 Christianity and Media

THE 372 Technology Ethics

THE 373 Economics Ethics
THE 374 War and Peace
REL 311 Comparative Religious Ethics
REL 353 Buddhist Ethics
REL 363 Ethical Traditions of East Asia

Focus in Systematic Theology

THE 154 Faith, Justice, and the Catholic Tradition
plus any five courses from:

THE 150 Religious Vision in Fiction and Film
THE 335 Gender and Christian Spirituality
THE 340 Atheism and the Case for God
THE 341 Jesus through the Centuries
THE 342 The Uses and Abuses of Jesus in Modernity
THE 343 Theology of Word and Sacrament
THE 344 Theology of the Church
THE 345 Evil As A Theological Problem
THE 346 Theology of Salvation
THE 347 Death and Rebirth
THE 348 Theology and Science
THE 350 The Beauty of God
THE 351 Ignatian Spirituality in the Jesuit Tradition
THE 352 Recent Trends in Roman Catholicism
THE 353 American Catholicism
THE 355 American Religious Thought
THE 356 Liberation and Political Theologies
THE 357 Feminist Theologies
THE 359 Religion, Violence and Terrorism
THE 369 Does God Exist?
THE 376 One True Religion?
THE 377 Beauty and Consciousness at the Movies

Focus in Historical Theology

THE 154 Faith, Justice, and the Catholic Tradition
plus any five courses from:
THE 150 Religious Vision in Fiction and Film
THE 331 Early Christian Thought
THE 332 The New Testament and Christian Attitudes toward Jews and Judaism
THE 333 Knowledge and Love of God in the Middle Ages
THE 334 16th Century Protestant and Catholic Debates
THE 335 Gender and Christian Spirituality
THE 341 Jesus through the Centuries

Focus in History and Material Culture

THE 154 - Faith, Justice, and the Catholic Tradition
plus any five courses from:
REL 271 - African and Caribbean Religions
REL 327 - Religion and Race in Philadelphia
REL 328 - Global Christianities
REL 332 - Past and Present in Israel/Palestine: Digging at Tel Dor (STR)
REL 356 - Death and the Afterlife in Chinese Religions
REL 357 - Food Practices and Chinese Religions

Focus in Islamic, Jewish, and Christian Relations

THE 154 Faith, Justice, and the Catholic Traditions
plus any five courses from (Students should take at least one each in Judaism and Islam and at least one interreligious dialogue course which deals with the

relations of Christianity with at least one of the other traditions.):

REL 231 Judaism
REL 241 Islam
REL 338 Jewish and Christian Responses to the Holocaust
REL 341 The Qur'an and Its Interpreters
REL 342 Women in Muslim Tradition
THE 336 Jews and Christians: Entwined Histories
THE 337 Jews and Christians: Bible Interpretation
THE 380 Interreligious Dialogue
THE 338-339 Abrahamic Peoples Past, Present and Future
THE 384 Jews and Christians: Theologies Compared

Focus in Jewish-Christian Relations

THE 154 Faith, Justice, and the Catholic Tradition
plus any five courses from:
REL 231 Judaism
REL 331 Topics in Ancient Judaism
REL 338 Jewish and Christian Responses to the Holocaust
THE 336 Jews and Christians: Entwined Histories
THE 337 Jews and Christians: Bible Interpretation
THE 380 Interreligious Dialogue
THE 384 Jews and Christians: Theologies Compared

To declare the minor, students should complete the "approval for a minor" form, meet with the Theology and Religious Studies department chair for a signature, and submit the form to the Registrar's Office.

After completing a minor in Theology and Religious Studies, students will be equipped to:

- Understand the nature and language of academic theological inquiry
- Develop a critical appreciation for the historical development of and chief differences between at least two different religious traditions
- Articulate key ethical implications that arise from the study of theology and religion

Requirements for Collelge Honors

To receive College Honors credit, students undertake two consecutive semesters of course-based research and study that culminates in a senior thesis. For students in the University Honors program, these two courses may be counted toward the eight course Honors requirement. To be eligible for College Honors, a student must have a 3.5 GPA. If you are interested in completing the College Honors project during your senior year, please be in touch with the department chair early in the spring semester of your junior year. All thesis projects must be approved by a project advisor/mentor. Specific requirements for the College Honors thesis may be found under "Honors Program".

Related Programs

Theology and Religious Studies majors are eligible to participate in such related programs as Africana Studies, Ancient Studies, European Studies, Faith-Justice Studies, Gender Studies, Interdisciplinary Health Care Ethics, Latin American Studies, and Medieval-Renaissance-Reformation Studies. Study Abroad programs are also available to them.

Further information may be found in the pertinent sections of this Catalog.

Student Organizations

The Department sponsors a chapter of Theta Alpha Kappa, the national honor society for theology and religious studies. Students also participate in the activities of Campus Ministry and the post-graduate volunteer service programs. Faculty members advise students and alumni on career opportunities, job placements, and on professional and graduate school programs.

Theology Courses

THE 150 First Year Seminar (3 credits)
Subjects vary

THE 154 Faith, Justice and the Catholic Tradition (3 credits)

Courses in this area will lead students to explore tension and cohesion between faith traditions and "reason traditions" in the contemporary world from a variety of disciplinary and thematic approaches. Such courses will be largely epistemological in their focus. Courses in the Faith and Reason area will provide students with appropriate intellectual frameworks that would enable them to analyze and evaluate challenges such as these: the rationality of religious belief; the compatibility of religious belief and various scientific traditions; the challenge of religious diversity; the problem of evil; the apparent irrelevance of religious belief in a liberal society governed by secular reason the easy transition from religious tolerance to religious relativism. These courses will, thus, reflect a foundational commitment of the Roman Catholic tradition: open engagement with difficult questions concerning both reason and religious belief. Signature Core Course for all students.

THE/REL 211 Hebrew Bible (3 credits)

This course will examine the biblical traditions and texts of the Hebrew Scriptures as products of particular historical and cultural communities, and as literary and theological documents. *Religious Difference*

THE/REL 221 New Testament (3 credits)

This course will examine the biblical traditions and texts of the Christian Scriptures as products of particular historical and cultural communities, and as literary and theological documents.

THE 241 Systematic Theology (3 credits)

An investigation into the sources, norms, and key categories of Christian theology from its origins to the present. The ancient sources, contemporary issues, and related political, social and economic contexts will be studied using analytical, autobiographical, and narrative resources. *Formerly Introduction to Christian Thought.*

THE 261 Christian Social Ethics (3 credits)

This course provides a general overview of the forms and teachings of Christian ethics and how they impact the broader society. Specific social forms based upon human rights, theological virtues, conceptions of justice and the

common good will be analyzed through teachings on war, the conquest, race, gender, class and the relationship between church and state. Particular attention will be given to the recent papal encyclicals. *Ethics Intensive.*

THE 270 Special Topics in Theology (3 credits)

Concentrated focus on a selected theme in theology at an advanced level. Topic and content varies from semester to semester. Course may be taken twice for credit as the topic changes. Certifications differ by section.

THE/REL 323 Psalms (3 credits)

The most influential of all Old Testament books on Christian spirituality, the Psalms offer a special glimpse into the religious life of ancient Israel. Placed within their larger historical background, psalms of various types (laments, hymns, royal and wisdom psalms, etc.) will be studied for their literary and religious character. The question of the Psalter's theology as a whole will be addressed as well. *Cross listed with REL 323.*

THE/REL 325 Synoptic Gospels (3 credits)

A study of each Synoptic Gospel in its own unique historical and cultural context with special emphasis on the application of the most recent critical methodology. Students will grapple with the problems of historical distance by applying recent literary and historical methods to questions such as the identification of literary genre, narrative structure, agendas and target audience, rhetorical techniques, and tensions between author's creativity and use of older sources. *Cross listed with REL 325.*

THE/REL 326 Letters of Paul (3 credits)

The aim of this course is to examine the main characteristics of Paul's faith as found in his epistles. The course will establish the broad argument of each of the letters, their historical setting, and their literary and rhetorical character, and demonstrate how these elements work together to express Paul's gospel. *Cross listed with REL 326. Faith and Reason.*

THE 331 Early Christian Thought (3 credits)

An historical and theological investigation of the Christian community during the first four centuries. Among the topics to be considered are the relationship of the early church to classical culture, conflicts over issues of orthodoxy and heresy, and the links between historical context and early Christian doctrinal claims. The course will also investigate the development of the canon of Scripture, Christian leadership structures, the creeds, and early Christian traditions of martyrdom, monasticism, the sacraments and worship.

THE 332 The New Testament and Christian Attitudes toward Jews and Judaism (3 credits)

Although the New Testament conveys God's love in Christ to billions of readers, over the centuries "erroneous and unjust interpretations...relative to the Jewish people" (Pope John Paul II, 1997) promoted hostility and violence. This course explores this recurring "anti-Jewish" dynamic with a special focus on contemporary Catholic teaching on

Gospel interpretation and particularly problematic scriptural passages.

THE 333 Knowledge and Love of God in the Middle Ages (3 credits)

A study of major figures in the history of Latin Christian thought from 400 C.E. to 1500 C.E. with a concentration on theories concerning how we know God and what it means to love both God and neighbor. Emphasis is on the reading of primary sources, both scholastic and monastic, in translation. Course content will require that we consider who God is, who we are in relation to God, Jesus Christ's role in both our knowledge of God and our capacity to love, and the relationship between faith and reason. *Faith and Reason, Writing Intensive (when offered in that format).*

THE 334 16th Century Protestant and Catholic Debates (3 credits)

A study of the theological questions involved in sixteenth-century Christian movements of reform and dissent; a review of the historical issues of the late Middle Ages that gave rise to the Protestant Reformation; emphasis on the formative theologies of Martin Luther and John Calvin with attention also on the Radical and Catholic reformations.

THE 335 Gender and Christian Spirituality (3 credits)

An examination of some of the spiritual classics written by both the men and women of the Christian faith. Emphasis on reading and study of primary texts, largely medieval, with an eye to any discernible differences between men as spiritual authors and women as spiritual authors. Course will also examine the given perceptions of gender, spirituality and eroticism. *Diversity and Writing Intensive (when offered in that format).*

THE 336 Jews and Christians: Entwined Histories (3 credits)

Why has the relationship between Christians and Jews been frequently hostile? How have the two communities influenced each other, for good and for ill? Is there a relationship between the Nazi genocide and historical church teaching? Has there been improvement in the two traditions' relationship in recent decades? What are today's pressing challenges? This course will examine all these questions. *Diversity, Religious Difference.*

THE 337 Jews and Christians: Bible Interpretation (3 credits)

Although Jews and Christians share many of the same scriptural books, their respective collections are differently organized and named. Christians refer to their collection as the "Old Testament," while Jews call their texts the "Tanakh" (an acronym for the Hebrew words for Teaching, Prophets, and Writings). Despite, or because of this commonality, Christians and Jews have often battled over these scriptures' meanings. This course explores the ways that Jews and Christians have interpreted key texts, separately and together, over two millennia of learning from and disputing with each other. It also examines why the Bible has been a source of conflict between the two

groups, with a focus on certain key passages, and why that is currently changing – as evidenced in recent official Catholic instructions. *Religious Difference.*

THE 338-339 The Abrahamic Peoples: Past, Present and Future (3 credits)

The three monotheistic religions all originated in the Middle East. In their origins and spread to other parts of the world, their interactions formed a complex tapestry of theologies, rituals, texts and histories. This two-semester course surveys the origins, practices, beliefs, and interactions among the Muslim, Christians, and Jewish peoples. Both semesters are taught by a Jewish, a Christian, and a Muslim professor, all three of whom will be present for each class session. Fall semester, the class will explore the early beginnings of all three traditions up to the year 1492. Spring semester brings their stories from 1492 to the present. Certain overarching themes, topics, or questions will be considered in each era to illustrate the interlacing similarities and differences among the three communities in the past, in today's world, and with a view to future possibilities. Offered over two consecutive semesters for six credits, although students may choose to take only Fall or Spring semester for 3 credits. *Religious Difference.*

THE 340 Atheism and the Case for God (3 credits)

Over the past decade several best-selling authors have been dubbed "The New Atheists" for their concerted attacks on religion, which many readers find fresh and compelling. But the more important and enduring cultural phenomenon is the secularism that has increasingly dominated modernity since the Age of Enlightenment, when, for the first time in the history of civilization, religious belief and practice became significant options rather than cultural givens. This course deals with the question of whether secularism arose as a reaction to religion, or as one of religion's greatest success stories. Much of the analysis is historical: When and how did the secular movement originate? What notion of "God" did it reject? Has natural science disproven religion, and is secularism properly understood as concurrent with scientific achievement? *Faith and Reason.*

THE 341 Jesus through the Centuries (3 credits)

An inquiry into Western Christianity's understandings of the meaning and significance of Jesus Christ, including New Testament Christologies, the controversies of the 4th and 5th century councils, medieval atonement theories, post-Enlightenment problems and reformulations, and contemporary liberation Christologies. Students will be encouraged to develop their own Christological position as an integral part of the course. *Faith and Reason. Writing Intensive (when offered in that format).*

THE 343 Theology of Word and Sacrament (3 credits)

The course explores the Christian's experience of God speaking and acting in the world and the Christian's response of listening and praising God in the Christian community. The interrelationship of the words and actions of God and His people are examined.

contemporary dialogue between science *and theology*.
Faith and Reason

THE 344 Theology of the Church (3 credits)

The spirit of the Church as Christian community, the people of God who witness to the Christian mission between the resurrection of Christ and his Parousia. The foundations of the church in the Scriptures, modern interpretations of its composition, relationship to the world, and goals. Readings from Vatican II and contemporary theologians.

THE 345 Evil as a Theological Problem (3 credits)

An examination of the profound challenge both to religious understandings of a meaningful and ordered existence and to theological claims regarding an omnipotent, beneficent deity rendered by the occurrence of evil and the suffering that accompanies it. The course will contextualize particular manifestations of evil and investigate how evil is identified, explained, challenged and interpreted through texts in theology and popular culture, with particular attention to its modern and contemporary manifestations. *Faith and Reason*.

THE 346 Theology of Salvation (3 credits)

In this course, redemption is presented in its two simultaneous dimensions – the unique and salvific role of Christ in the plan of Salvation, as well as the role of individual persons in response to Christ. This two-fold nature of salvation results in the paradoxical formulation of redemption as both an accomplished event as well as an unfinished, developing relationship. The mysteries of the Incarnation will be investigated as the already, complete aspect of redemption, while an inquiry into human morality and moral values will address the developing, relational dimension of redemption. *Faith and Reason*.

THE 347 Death and Rebirth (3 credits)

The course deals with the systematic theological topic of eschatology, the study of the "last thing" (eschaton), which is God or the Reign of God; and the "last things" (eschata), which are death, individual judgment, heaven, hell, purgatory, the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection of the body, general judgment, and the consummation of all things in the perfection of the Kingdom of God. The course includes a survey of traditional, (especially biblical) approaches to eschatology, but its methodology will proceed largely "from below" as an exercise in "hope seeking understanding." Thus, the course will include an ecumenical perspective, and community service in the form of care for the dying (especially hospice). Students will be expected to make critical judgments concerning cultural practices relating to care of the dying, treatment of the dead, and the acceptance of death as an event of life.

THE 348 Theology and Science (3 credits)

An exploration of the Galileo Case, Evolution and contemporary Big Bang Cosmology shows how the relationship between theology and science has developed to the present day. The scientific, methodological and theological issues will be critically evaluated for their significance today. Students will thus be provided with the basic tools for understanding and participating in the

THE 350 The Beauty of God (3 credits)

This course explores how beauty serves as a way to God. In the history of all three major monotheistic faith traditions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), it was believed that God identified himself through various divine names. Focusing primarily, though not exclusively, on the Judeo-Christian tradition, this course examines beauty as one of these divine names. Consequently, the mode of theology that will ground this exploration is what has recently come to be called theological aesthetics. As a mode of theology, or a theo-logic, theological aesthetics draws from the principles of human reason as the art of thinking well (hence as a logic) and the event of divine revelation. Insofar as it unites theology with beauty, a theological aesthetic not only draws from the grammar, language, and thinking associated with beauty and art, but attempts to tie these more deeply to both human reason and divine revelation. Taking its cue from aesthetic experience, this course is divided into three basic parts: part 1 is the encounter with the object of interest, namely God's existence; part 2 examines the subjective aspects of the encounter, namely, the socio-cultural dimensions of how we come to understand God, "religion," faith, etc.; and part 3 examines the results inspired by the encounter, namely, the reception of divine beauty in revelation, music, responding to evil and human suffering, and mysticism. *Faith and Reason*

THE 351 Ignatian Spirituality in the Jesuit Tradition (3 credits)

An examination of and reflection on the religious vision of Ignatius of Loyola and its embodiment in the life of the Society of Jesus, including a reading of the Spiritual Exercises. An overview of the major movements and influential persons in Jesuit history, a study of Jesuit spirituality and theology, and a consideration of the role of the Jesuits in broader church life.

THE 352 Recent Trends in Roman Catholicism (3 credits)

This course will deal with the documents of Vatican II, current understandings of the sacraments of the Catholic Church, the movements towards unification among the Christian churches, recent suggestions for the exercise of the papacy in the future, and the modern emphasis on social justice as part of Catholic life and practice.

THE 353 American Catholicism (3 credits)

This course deals with the diverse dynamics within the life of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States with a main focus on the 19th and 20th centuries. It will study the theological development of this indigenous Catholic tradition and situate it within its broader historical and cultural context.

THE 355 American Religious Thought (3 credits)

An historical survey of the traditions of American religious thought with special regard for the 19th and 20th

centuries; a critical examination of representative religious thinkers and theologians; a study of the role of religion in American life and society. *Faith and Reason*

THE 356 Liberation and Political Theologies (3 credits)

An inquiry into the critique and vision brought to theology by the perspective of the poor and oppressed in the 20th century via the paradigm known as liberation and political theology. An extensive examination of the context and methods of Latin American liberation theology followed by an examination of European political theology and African-American liberation theology. Other topics for consideration may include the work of Hispanic, Asian, African, and North American feminist liberation theologians. *Faith and Reason, Writing Intensive (when offered in that format).*

THE 357 Feminist Theologies (3 credits)

An inquiry into the sources, contexts, methods, and symbols of Christian theology from the perspective of women in the process of human liberation. The roles of women in church and society, the history of the women's movement in North America, and the experiences and theological perspectives offered by feminists of differing racial, ethnic and socio-economic background will be examined. Feminist reflections within other religious traditions may also be considered. *Faith and Reason, Writing Intensive (when offered in that format).*

THE 358 Faith, Justice and Jesuit Mission in Bolivia (3 credits)

This course will challenge students to reflect theologically on the historic grounds of the Christian faith and how and why, for many throughout Christian history, a concern for social, economic, and political justice is rooted in the Christian Gospel. It will also familiarize students with the historical, social, religious, economic, political, educational and cultural context of contemporary Bolivia; teach students how to stand outside their own epistemological system and more fully understand the reality of the cultural "other;" and assist students to integrate this knowledge into a complex understanding of the demands of faith and the work of justice within the specific context of contemporary • Bolivia. The class will spend 10 days over Spring Break in Bolivia visiting the mission sites of the Jesuit organization Fe y Alegria. *Ethics Intensive, Non-Western Studies.*

THE 359 Religion, Violence and Terrorism (3 credits)

Religiously motivated violence constitutes one of the most important socio/economic/political factors in the twenty-first century. This course will probe both the roots and the recent manifestations of violence and terrorism in the name of religious convictions and traditions. Through rigorous investigation of both primary and secondary literature, this course will provide a thorough presentation of the theological roots of religious violence, as well as its contemporary manifestations. The course will unfold in three parts: 1) the roots of religious violence: scripture, sacrifice and ancient conquest; 2) cosmic struggle: the

violence of apocalypticism then and now and 3) contemporary manifestations: sexism and racism; recent religious wars and genocides; and terrorism. *Globalization.*

THE 360 Religious Vision in Fiction and film (3 credits)

This course introduces fiction and films that are driven by religious sensibilities and theological insights. Issues rising throughout the course include deity, sin, forgiveness, grace, redemption, virtue, and community. Student expectations entail critical analysis and theological reflection, as well as a very basic grasp of the phenomenon of human religiosity.

THE 361 Catholic Social Teaching (3 credits)

The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with the tradition of Catholic social teaching with a view to developing skills for critical reading and integrated appropriation of these documents. Beginning with *Rerum novarum* (1891), we will examine the most important papal, conciliar, and episcopal social teaching texts up to the present time, identifying foundational principles, tracing central theological, ethical, and ecclesial concerns, and locating each document in its proper historical context. *Ethics Intensive.*

THE 362 Faith and Justice: Scripture and Social Values (3 credits)

How and why a concern for social, economic, and political justice is rooted in and demanded by the Christian gospel, and what this has to say about the nature and mission of the church. An overview of the social teaching of the Catholic Church in the past century with emphasis on the thought of the most recent popes. Consideration of certain social justice issues: war and peace, crime and punishment, world hunger, racism, human rights, and the international economic order.

THE 363 Ignatius and the City: Jesuit Urban Missiology (3 credits)

This course reviews the theology and spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola and how his early followers in the Society of Jesus established a particular missiology. Study of the network of ministries created by the first generation of Jesuits in Rome will be the first part of the course with particular emphasis on the urban context. An examination of how that missiology has been used in and around the City of Philadelphia in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries will also be included in the course.

THE 364 In Pursuit of Love: Sexual Ethics Today (3 credits)

This course explores some basic questions: What is love, and what does it mean for Christians to try to live as God-like lovers in all that they do, and specifically in living as sexual beings? If love is considered a necessary context for genital involvement, what specific characteristics must this love have in order to render its genital expression morally acceptable? How do we distinguish morally appropriate genital activity from that which is not? These questions are addressed within the general theological framework of

Christianity that recognizes human sexuality as a multi-faceted reality involving our bodies, minds and hearts. In dealing with the moral questions and arguments surrounding premarital sexual activity, contraception, same-sex genital acts, masturbation and abortion, how can we resolve the possible tension that may arise between the promptings of our personal conscience and the official moral teachings regarding sexuality that are put forth by the Catholic Church, other Christian churches and some major religions of the world? *Ethics Intensive*.

THE 365 Marriage, Same Sex Unions and Divorce: Examining the Ethical Issues (3 credits)

The Judeo-Christian tradition regards marriage as a divinely instituted reality designed, not only to enhance the humanity of men and women and to establish a stable environment for the nurturing of children, but to serve also as a reminder and embodiment of God's loving relationship with His people. This course lays bare the tension between the biblical and theological texts highlighting the sacred status of marriage and the many secular aspects of contemporary society that portray marriage as "just a piece of paper" or as little more than a legal fiction. This tension shapes discussions of the psychological, social and ethical dimensions of love, marriage, and sexuality. People who marry today do so in the face of numerous questions and challenges: the "hook-up" culture, accepted, even expected, cohabitation, the extended meaning of "family," recognition of same-sex civil unions and/or marriages, undefined gender roles, and high divorce rates that are supported, perhaps even encouraged, largely by "no-fault" divorce laws. These issues are addressed, along with the ethical arguments surrounding various kinds of reproductive technology and family-planning methods. In addition, the course explains the Catholic Church's laws regarding the "impediments" or obstacles to a valid marriage, and the granting of annulments, and delves, finally, into the social, ethical and theological controversies surrounding divorce and remarriage, with particular attention given to their effects on children. *Ethics Intensive*.

THE 366 Christian Medical Ethics (3 credits)

With the technological inauguration of the age of new medicine we have at our disposal more means than norms for intervention in the life, health, and death processes of human existence. Even more crucial is the question: "Should we do everything that is within our capacity to do?" Consideration will be given to the contribution of Christian ethicists in their reflection on the issues involved in abortion, reproductive engineering (AIH, AID, IVF, cloning, etc.), care of the dying, euthanasia, medical experimentation, organ transplantation, and the rights of patients. *Ethics Intensive*.

THE 367 Suffering and Death: Biblical, Systematic and Ethical Perspectives (3 credits)

Dramatic advances in medical information and technology increase daily and these advances are being implemented almost immediately. As a result, people who have succumbed to their illnesses only a few years ago can now have their lives extended by being treated aggressively.

This treatment does prolong the lives of many people, but in the process it also causes people to endure much pain and suffering. As a result many Christians are focusing on the age old question of "why do innocent openly have to suffer?" Various answers have been given to this question by society: Dr. Kevorkian's "death machine," Oregon's "Death With Dignity Act," direct abortion of defective fetuses, and even infanticide. It has been said that "only the suffering human person knows that he/she is suffering and wonders why; and he/she suffers in a humanly speaking still deeper way if he/she does not find a satisfactory answer." This course will examine the meaning of personal suffering, as well as the Christian response to the suffering of others from biblical and systematic perspectives. Students will then apply these insights to two specific medical ethics issues—physician-assisted suicide and medical treatments for handicapped newborns. *Ethics Intensive*

THE 368 Just Health Care in Developing Nations (3 credits)

An investigation of adequate health care as a fundamental human right. The course will proceed from the premise that socially induced needs are a result of historical development of material and social conditions, coupled with a social consensus that some things are necessary for happiness, social life, or some other goal. It will consider the inability of many societies to supply adequate health care as an issue of basic personal dignity, a claim against society, and as a matter of justice. The course will examine the issue of just health care for all peoples from both public health and ethical perspectives. *Ethics Intensive, Globalization*.

THE 369 Does God Exist? (3 credits)

"Is there a God?" is the first and foremost question for many. In this course, students will explore a variety of theories regarding the question of whether or not a singular (monotheistic) God exists. The arguments that address this age-old question will be evaluated epistemologically, that is, through the lens of what kind of knowledge is being considered and how this knowledge is attained. In grappling with the topic, the course will also consider such related questions as the following: What is there a great nothingness and silence from the heavens? What is the meaning of life? Can we attain true happiness and fulfillment in this life? If God exists, why is there so much evil, violence and hunger in the world? Does life end at death or is it just changed? *Faith and Reason*.

THE 370 Special Topics in Theology (3 credits)

Concentrated focus on a selected theme in theology or religion at an advanced level. Topic and content varies from semester to semester. Course may be taken twice for credit as the topic changes. Other certifications differ by section.

THE 371 Christianity and Media (3 credits)

This course offers an opportunity to explore the relationships between Christianity and the wide variety of modes of communication that we refer to as "media." In

the course, students will engage in two basic tasks. First, students will engage in the descriptive task of identifying the current state of the media with respect to religion. How are religions and religious issues portrayed in various media? How do Christians understand and use media for their various purposes? Second, the class will engage in the normative task of judging the social and moral worth of the various modes of communication using the resources of the discipline of Christian social ethics. Does the current media landscape support human flourishing and the just society? If so, what should be done to ensure that this continues? If not, how might it be shaped so that it supports such development? *Ethics Intensive*

THE 372 Technology Ethics (3 credits)

This course will engage in critical reflection on technology, its role in human lives, and its impact on society. The course will examine various theories of the nature of technology. It will also investigate particular resources available within the discipline of Christian social ethics that are central to understanding and evaluating the moral worth of various technologies, such as common good, justice, human dignity, development, and solidarity. These conceptual tools will then be used to explore the ethical implications of technology. The assessment of a variety of particular cases of both commonplace and emerging technologies (e.g., civil engineering, cellular telecommunications, social media, surveillance, digital divide, data security, product manufacturing and disposal, intellectual property, body modification, and the post-human movement). *Ethics Intensive*.

THE 373 Economic Ethics (3 credits)

This course will examine the historical, social and philosophical conditions that gave rise to economics as a distinct discipline. Both the theory and practice of economics will be subjected to an ethical analysis drawing upon biblical and theological sources, particularly emphasizing Catholic teaching. Different economic systems will be compared and different forms of economic life and teaching within the Christian church will be discussed. *Ethics Intensive, Globalization*.

THE 374 War and Peace (3 credits)

Throughout Christian tradition, theologians have argued for and against Christian participation in war. This course will examine these arguments through reading relevant biblical, theological, historical and philosophical materials. We may explore how the various arguments have been represented (or misrepresented) in popular culture through film. *Ethics Intensive*

THE 376 One True Religion? (3 credits)

This course examines Christian responses to two important questions: Can the world's many religions, which have different beliefs and different practices, all be true, or must only one be true? If, as Christianity has claimed throughout its history, salvation is possible only through the mediation of Jesus the Christ, does this mean that anyone who is not

Christian is not "saved," or is consigned to hell? Among the topics explored: classical and contemporary theories of truth; the relationship of truth and salvation; Christian theories of exclusivism, inclusivism, pluralism, and particularism. *Faith and Reason*

THE 377 Beauty and Consciousness at the Movies (3 credits)

This course is designed to enable students to examine the relationship between faith and reason in the context of beauty and consciousness. It will do this in two ways. First, with the goal to acquiring a relative mastery, it will offer students an opportunity to engage and explore certain themes pertaining to beauty and consciousness that are relevant to major figures within the Christian theological tradition. Second, it will enable students to demonstrate their relative mastery over these themes by bringing them into conversation with contemporary presentations of those themes as they appear in cinematic form. *Faith and Reason*

THE 379 Economics, Politics and the Ethics of Solidarity in Poland (3 credits)

Historian Timothy Garton Ash's description of Poland's Solidarity as "the most infectiously hopeful movement in the history of modern Europe" attests to its lasting significance. This ten million strong movement, comprised of people from diverse walks of life with disparate worldviews, played a crucial role in toppling Communism in Central and Eastern Europe, without shedding blood. This course will examine the ethical foundations and normative goals of the Polish nonviolent revolution Solidarnosc during its height in the 1980's. It will also consider the degree to which the values and principles of Solidarity (i.e. the ethic of solidarity) have influenced the constructing a democratic, capitalist country during Poland's transition after 1989. In addition, it will highlight the historic role of Roman Catholicism in the struggle for freedom and dignity under Communism and the church's impact on the shape of Polish society after 1989. While the course focuses on the Polish context, debates about the relevance and possibility of an ethic of solidarity in contemporary democratic, capitalist societies will also be considered. *Ethics Intensive*.

THE 380 Interreligious Dialogue (3 credits)

This course will involve both study and immersion: study of the history and theology of dialogue chiefly but not exclusively in Catholic Christian circles; immersion by writing and by regular involvement with local temples, mosques, synagogues, meditation centers, etc. Lecture with discussion and meditation. Reflection and research papers, focusing on one's own interior dialogue as well as exterior dialogue. *Religious Difference*.

THE 382 Religion, Society and God (3 credits)

This course is an inquiry into the theological and philosophical nature of religion. What is the origin and development of religious traditions? Are there characteristics which are universal and how does theology

and philosophy view them? The course will look at diverse modes of religious experience and conceptions of God, human existence and community. The philosophical and theological perspectives on the meaning of belief, symbolism and ritual in the spiritual quest for the transcendent. *Faith and Reason*

THE 384 Jews and Christians: Theologies Compared (3 credits)

The course studies fundamental religious questions as understood from various Jewish and Christian perspectives. Christian and Jewish students will gain an understanding of the other religious community while also deepening their understanding of their own. Other students will encounter the two traditions through a comparative lens. Topics to be discussed include the experience of God; the Bible; how Christians and Jews understand their relationship to God and the world; worship and prayer; and the destiny of the created universe. *Religious Difference*.

THE 385 Jewish Jesus as Savior (3 credits)

In the wake of the groundbreaking conciliar declaration, *Nostra Aetate*, the Catholic Church now authoritatively teaches that "Jesus was an always remained a Jew," and that the Jewish people remain in an eternal covenant with God. These teachings challenge Christians to creatively re-imagine Jesus' Jewish life and also how they think about Christ as the Savior of all humanity. This course considers relevant New Testaments texts, research into the Jewishness of Jesus, the development of the Church's Christological tradition, the rise and demise of anti-Jewish theologies, and new theological approaches being proposed today. *Religious Difference*.

THE 392 Directed Readings in Theology (3 credits)

A study of significant themes or issues in Theology or Religious Studies under the direction of faculty in the department. Frequent consultations and written reports are required. Prior written permission of the instructor and approval from the chair is required. Normally this course is restricted to theology majors and minors. *Does not fulfill the Theology/Religious studies GEP*.

THE 493-494 Independent Research Studies in Theology (3 credits)

Independent research and writing under the direction of faculty in the department. Prior written permission of the instructor and approval from the chair are required. Course may be taken twice for credit as the topic of research changes. This course is restricted to senior theology majors and minors. *Does not fulfill the Theology/Religious studies GEP*.

THE 495 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion (3 credits)

A survey of a wide array of theories and methods employed in the modern study of religion, such as psychological, sociological, anthropological, phenomenological, feminist, socio-biological, and other approaches. Both classic and recent theoretical models will be discussed, with special interest in current

methodological developments in the academic study of religion. Emphasis will be placed on direct engagement with the writings of the major theorists themselves. Open to junior and senior theology majors and minors and other junior and senior students by permission of the Chair. *Does not fulfill the Theology/Religious Studies GEP*.

Religious Studies Courses

REL 101 Comparative Religion (3 credits)

An Introduction to the comparative study of religion which examines the historical evolution of religions, nature and diversity of religious experience, the concept of a religious world and the diverse types of religious worldviews, the role of myth and ritual in the maintenance of religious worlds, the problem of religious change and the concept of transcendence. *Religious Difference*.

REL 150 First Year Seminar (3 credits)

Subjects vary

REL/THE 211 The Hebrew Bible (3 credits)

This course will examine the biblical traditions and texts of the Hebrew Scriptures as products of particular historical and cultural communities, and as literary and theological documents. *Religious Difference*.

REL 212 Israelite Religion (3 credits)

Combining the evidence of biblical texts and ancient Near Eastern texts, this course analyzes the historical and social context of religion in ancient Israel. Special topics include the worship of different deities; the priesthood and the system of sacrifices in the Temple; the relationship between politics and religion, and some specific religious practices maintained by kings David, Solomon and their successors (such as prophecy, holy war and child sacrifice); popular religious practices (such as devotion to the dead and magic); and the origins and development of monotheism, the concept of the messiah and other ideas central to the origins of Judaism and Christianity. *Religious Difference*.

REL/THE 221 Introduction to the New Testament (3 credits)

This course will examine the biblical traditions and texts of the Christian Scriptures as products of particular historical and cultural communities, and as literary and theological documents. *Cross-listed with THE 221*.

REL 231 Judaism (3 credits)

A comprehensive survey of the development of Judaism from its pre-exilic roots to the present, to include the evolution of its theology, ethics, and traditions. The impact of the modern world upon traditional Judaism; major movements within Judaism today and their beliefs about God, Torah, and Israel. *Religious Difference*.

REL 241 Islam (3 credits)

An introduction to the historical development of Islam together with its basic beliefs and practices, from the time of Muhammad to the modern period. The prophet Muhammad, the Qur'an and Hadith, the Shari'ah, Kalam, Shiism, Sufism, and Islamic modernism will be examined. *Non-Western Studies, Religious Difference.*

REL 261 Hinduism (3 credits)

A survey of the Hindu religious traditions on the Indian subcontinent with a focus on the period from the Epic (c. 200 BCE-200 CE) until modern times. The major forms of Hindu belief and practice will be covered: Vaishnavism, Shaivism, traditions of the Goddess, and popular village traditions. *Non-Western Studies, Religious Difference.*

REL 270 Special Topics in Religious Studies (3 credits)

Concentrated focus on a selected theme in theology or religion at an advanced level. Topic and content varies from semester to semester. *Course may be taken twice for credit as the topic changes, but only one course at the second level will satisfy the Theology GER, pending approval.*

REL 271 African and Caribbean Religions (3 credits)

An examination of selected indigenous African religious traditions in their native contexts and/or religious traditions of indigenous African origin that have developed in the Caribbean and related contexts outside of Africa. Topics may vary, but representative samples may include a focus on individual systems (such as Haitian Vodou) or phenomena found in a number of systems (such as rites of passage). *Religious Difference.*

REL 311 Comparative Religious Ethics (3 credits)

Comparative religious ethics is a field of study that explores what different religious traditions say (and have said) about important ethical and moral questions, past and present. This course aims to provide students with the tools and knowledge to understand, comparatively analyze, and evaluate the ethical teachings and moral prescriptions of the religious traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Students will examine the similarities and differences between the ways in which each of these religious traditions form and inform the ethical and moral aspects of the lives of their adherents. Prior knowledge of Judaism, Christianity, and/or Islam is preferred but not required. Students with no knowledge of one or more of these traditions will be assigned extra readings for the first few weeks of class. *Religious Difference, Ethics Intensive.*

REL 312 Spiritual Practices in Comparative Perspective (3 credits)

Throughout the world's religious traditions we find a variety of spiritual disciplines pursued by individuals in the hope of transforming an existence experienced as sinful, delusory, fragmented or otherwise unsatisfactory into one that is graced, enlightened, whole. The specific methods employed vary widely, as do their specific goals. Nevertheless, when viewed from a comparative perspective many of these practices share elements in common. This

course will examine a number of such spiritual disciplines, drawn from the traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Greco-Roman Hellenism, and Christianity. Attention will be given to issues of their historical development, diversity of form, points of similarity and contemporary relevance. *Religious Difference*

REL 321 Religion and Law in the Ancient World (3 credits)

This course looks at the world's earliest known law: the law of ancient Sumer, Babylon, Egypt, and other ancient Near Eastern societies. The course goes on to examine the relationship between these legal systems and the legal texts of ancient Israel and Judah found in the Hebrew Bible, as well as other issues related to the study of biblical law. Finally, the course considers the legacy of ancient Near Eastern law and its impact on the development of modern legal institutions and systems. *Religious Difference.*

REL 322 Myth and History in the Bible (3 credits)

This course examines a range of narratives from the Bible and considers how they functioned in the ancient communities from which they come. It looks at the role of myth and the nature of history writing in the ancient world and explores ways to identify both genres in biblical texts. It also examines current debates over what should count as history in the Bible and the impact of archaeological and extra-biblical literary evidence on these debates. The course will focus primarily on narratives from the Hebrew Bible (e.g., creation myths, ancestral and royal legends, political-historical narratives), though some stories from the New Testament may be considered as well. *Religious Difference. Faith and Reason.*

REL/THE 323 Psalms (3 credits)

The most influential of all Old Testament books on Christian spirituality, the Psalms offer a special glimpse into the religious life of ancient Israel. Placed within their larger historical background, psalms of various types (laments, hymns, royal and wisdom psalms, etc.) will be studied for their literary and religious character. The question of the Psalter's theology as a whole will be addressed as well.

REL/THE 325 Synoptic Gospels (3 credits)

This course will progress in two movements. It first will investigate the historical background of the growth of the gospel tradition. It then will read the Gospels as viable literary texts, making use of the most recent advances in the literary critical study of Matthew, Mark, and Luke-Acts. In this way, the course will focus upon the theological uniqueness of each book, as well as tracing their interrelatedness.

REL/THE 326 Letters of Paul (3 credits)

The aim of this course is to examine the main characteristics of Paul's faith as found in his epistles. The course will establish the broad argument of each of the letters, their historical setting, and their literary and rhetorical character, and demonstrate how these elements work together to express Paul's gospel. *Faith and Reason.*

REL 327 Religion and Race in Philadelphia (3 credits)

This course examines the co-constitution of religious beliefs, racial identities, and regional cultures from an historical perspective primarily in the urban Northeast. We will examine how transatlantic and transnational African and European religious traditions (real, imagined, historical, invented) shaped that history. Because this is a religious studies course, we will think about religions as institutions that profoundly influence individual's epistemologies and actions, as well as the communities, societies, and nations, in which they are located. We will understand race as a social construction that emerged in recent centuries in concert with religious (and scientific) ideas about human origins and anthropologies. Most importantly, we will see how these two constructs - "race" and "religion" - developed and evolved in a particular region of the United States to make visible place-based distinctions and geo-cultural histories. A complicated, multi-scalar picture will emerge of the varied ways in which beliefs, identities, and places influence and are implicated by one another. *Diversity, Writing Intensive (when offered in that format).*

REL 328 Global Christianities (3 credits)

Africa is home to the largest population of many Christian denominations in the world and home of the fastest growing concentration of Christians in the world. This course will examine the variety of Christianities in Africa in their global context and explore how Christianity there is influencing and being influenced by Christianity worldwide. Students will learn to problematize, to complicate, and to relentlessly question prevailing religious and cultural ideas about the other, where those ideas originate, how they are constructed and maintained, and who that maintenance and construction serves. *Religious Difference, Globalization.*

REL 331 Topics in Ancient Judaism (3 credits)

Study of a selected topic in Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman periods. Sample topics include collections of texts, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls or works of Josephus; regions or cities, such as Judaism in Egypt or Jerusalem; a series of events, such as the Maccabean Revolt; an individual or group, such as the Herodian dynasty; or a theme, such as Judean interactions with imperial powers. Course may be taken more than once for credit as topic changes.

REL 332 Past and Present in Israel/Palestine: Digging at Tel Dor (3 credits)

This study tour combines excavating the archeological site of Tel Dor, Israel with travel in the country before, during, and after the excavation season. By participating on a dig, students gain first-hand knowledge of both historical and modern day Israel and the rich history that gives rise to the complexities of the modern Middle East. Digging brings the social, economic, political, intellectual, and religious history of the site "to life" through uncovering and then analyzing the ancient remains—the architecture with associated vestiges of daily life. Students will be part of every step of the archeological process from digging, processing, and analyzing to recording and storage. To witness the full range of historical periods presented in lectures, we will visit the archeological sites of Caesarea,

Megiddo, Sepphoris, Beth Shean, Belvoir, Masada and Qumran, spanning the Canaanite through the Crusader periods (20th c. BC – 12th c. AD: the Early, Middle and Late Bronze and Iron Ages, and the Persian Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, First Moslem, and Crusader Periods). Before, during and after the excavation season the group will tour the cities of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Nazareth, focusing on the historical interaction of Christians, Jews, and Muslims. *Religious Difference, Study Tour.*

REL 333 Jerusalem: History and Holiness (3 credits)

The city of Jerusalem has had a nearly unsurpassed historical and religious prominence for three millennia, right up through the present. In this course we will explore Jerusalem from multiple, complementary perspectives. We will consider the history of the city as well as religious developments within the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions. We will begin with biblical Jerusalem and then move forward in time, highlighting periods, events, and ideas that have lasting influence through close studies and discussions of selected topics. We will draw on theoretical approaches to the study of sacred space using tools from the field of comparative religion. *Religious Difference*

REL 338 Jewish and Christian Responses to the Holocaust (3 credits)

The Jewish Holocaust represents the classic negative event of our age, a manifestation of evil transcending the human imagination. This course will examine how Jews and Christians have responded to this event and why it caused changes in both Jewish and Christian self-understandings. The course will introduce students to the personages, issues and events of the Holocaust, before turning to religious and moral issues such as suffering and guilt. *Religious Difference*

REL 341 The Quran and Its Interpreters (3 credits)

This course will explore a basic source of Islamic faith and practice, the Quran and its interpretation. We will examine compilation of the Quran, its major themes, and samples from its reception history, both classical and modern. We shall investigate how this 1400-years old text has been interpreted in many different ways, by analyzing legal, theological, mystical, existential, feminist and critical perspectives on it. We shall also make occasional comparisons with the bible and its interpretation. The course will enable the student to have better insight not only on the Quran, but also on the process of interpretation of sacred texts. *Religious Difference, Non-Western Studies.*

REL 342 Women in Muslim Tradition (3 credits)

This course will seek to comprehend and explain some of the major aspects of the life and culture of Muslim women. Women are and have always been an integral part of the Muslim society, contrary to what might be generally portrayed and perceived. Far from being a monolithic culture or society, the Muslim world comprises many diverse cultural tendencies, which makes it difficult to generalize. Thus in order to study Muslim women and their status, role and situation, we will touch upon the difference

historical, political, and economic forces that have shaped the culture of the Muslim world as a whole. We will be exploring the religious and social issues that have been central during the modern transformation of Muslims societies and will touch upon how Muslim women are portrayed in the media and the ramification of such portrayal. *Religious Difference, Non-Western Studies*.

REL 343 Reason, Science and Faith in Islam (3 credits)

This course has three major parts. In the first part, we shall look at primary sources of Islam tradition, that of Qur'an and hadith, which will give us a starting point as we turn to the ways in which miracles have been discussed in the tradition. In the second part, we shall look at two classical Muslim thinkers, Ghazali and Ibn Rushd, who differed on miracles as well as on the relation between reason and faith. Analyzing their disagreement will offer us critical insights about common sense, science, rationality and dynamics of Quranic interpretation. In the third part, we shall look at contemporary interpretation of miracles as well as the relation between faith and reason by looking at a crucial Muslim thinker, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, as well as some of the other approaches to science in modern era. In this part we shall also engage with the epistemological and scientific implications of Islamic understandings of miracles with the help of two Western thinkers, David Hume and Charles S. Peirce. In the final portion of the course, students will present their research on the issue of the relation between reason, science and faith in Muslim context. *Religious Difference, Faith and Reason*

REL 351 Indian Buddhism (3 credits)

The development of the Buddhist religion from the time of its founder, Siddhartha Gautama, until its decline in India in the 12th century. The basic teachings of the Buddha, the early Buddhist community or Sangha, the elaboration of the Abhidharma, the rise of Mahayana Buddhism and the development of Tantra will be covered. *Religious Difference*.

REL 352 Mahayana Buddhism (3 credits)

The rise of Mahayana Buddhism in India and its spread to Central Asia, China, Korea, Japan and Tibet. The basic teachings of Mahayana Buddhism will be covered, along with the Madhyamaka and Yogacara schools of Mahayana Buddhist thought. Select schools of East Asian Buddhism, such as Ch'an (Zen) and Pure Land will also be covered. *Religious Difference, Non-Western Studies*.

REL 354 China and the Creation of East Asian Buddhism (3 credits)

While Buddhism originated in India, today it exists primarily outside its South Asian homeland, in Southeast, North and East Asia. Brought to China by missionaries, fundamentally new forms of Buddhism arose in China. One of these, known as Chan, and better known to many under its Japanese name, Zen, has become a household word in the West. Others, such as Tiantai, while less known in the West, played a crucial role in the development of East Asian Buddhism as a whole. This course will focus on some of the uniquely Chinese forms of Buddhism that sought

faithfully to transmit the teachings of the Buddha to the peoples of Asia, in ways appropriate to Asian cultures. *Religious Difference, Non-Western Studies*.

REL 355 Immortals, Ancestors, Ghosts and Gods: Superhumans in Chinese Religions (3 credits)

This course examines four religions of China—Confucianism, Daoism, Chinese "folk" or popular religion, and Buddhism—in their historical and contemporary contexts. As its title suggests, the class is built around an exploration of the important role that superhumans such as demons, dragons, buddhas, and ghosts play in each of these traditions. Taking as our starting point the Ming period (1368-1644) popular novel, *Monkey*, in this class we will examine a wide range of primary and secondary sources including paintings, websites, poetry, scripture, articles of clothing, miracle stories, newspapers, statuary, and ritual implements. By combining an historical overview of the topic with a hands-on exploration of the manner in which practices and beliefs related to superhumans remains relevant in China today, the class aims to deepen students' appreciation of the ways religion continues to shape world events, national policy, daily life, and cultural production within and beyond the region. *Religious Difference, Non-Western Studies*.

REL 356 Death and the Afterlife in Chinese Religions (3 credits)

How do people die? Where does a "good death" take place? What constitutes homicide? Suicide? Righteous violence? How can the living manipulate the experiences of the already dead? What relationship do these parties share? In this course on death and the afterlife in Chinese religions we will pursue answers to these types of questions through the examination of diverse primary and secondary source materials. During the semester we will study the practices and beliefs surrounding death and the afterlife associated with four religious traditions: Confucianism, Daoism, Chinese "folk" or "popular" religion, and Buddhism. The class aims to enhance students' appreciation of the diversity that exists between and within these religions. At the end of the semester, the successful student will not only be able to describe beliefs and practices related to death and the afterlife in these traditions but will also be able to explain how these are shaped by the social, economic, and political contexts of their propagation. *Religious Difference, Non-Western Studies*

REL 357 Food Practices and Chinese Religions (3 credits)

This course examines the practices and beliefs surrounding food associated with five Chinese religious traditions: Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Chinese "folk" or "popular" religion, and Islam. The topics we will cover include religious prescriptions and prohibitions related to food, connections between food-practices and hierarchy, and the roles that food plays in creating and sustaining relationships between, for instance, the living and dead or humans and nonhumans. In addition to studying a variety of texts and objects, we will learn about religious observances related to food cultivation, storage,

distribution, preparation, and consumption from guest speakers and through field trips to Philadelphia area sites including a restaurant and a temple. *Religious Difference, Non-Western Studies*.

REL 358 Yoga: Ancient and Modern Paths to Freedom (3 credits)

In this course we will explore the fascinating world of yoga as it has evolved in South Asia (the Indian subcontinent), where it has for millennia been associated with a pronounced South Asian interest in both "world renunciation," and "Axial Age" value that has significantly shaped the worldviews of at least three religions of South Asian origin: Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, as well as in the acquisition of power, both "worldly" and "supernatural." We will also examine how yoga traditions were transformed by India's encounter with the West both during colonial times and during the second half of the 20th century. Issues of particular concern, as we trace these developments, will be the historical and cultural contexts of yoga in South Asia, the relationship between yoga practice and South Asian religious beliefs, in particular traditions of religious renunciation, the role of South Asian constructions of concepts of the role of "body" and "mind" in spiritual practice (and the relationships of health, spirituality and religion), the role of yoga as a symbol of the "spiritual East" in the contexts of colonialism and post-colonial nationalism in India as well as its commodification in the contemporary global environment. We will also be examining yoga's "journey to the West" and its status in contemporary American life by examining the genesis of "modern postural yoga," the form of yoga with which most people are familiar (the form of yoga that focuses on the performance of various yoga postures or asanas, such as triangle pose, head stand, etc.) While the focus will be on the specific traditions labeled "yoga," the course will also serve as an introduction of the religious of South Asia, since historically yoga and all its varieties has been embedded in specific South Asian religious worldviews. While some attention will be given to Buddhist forms of yoga, the principal focus will be on the traditions associated with the Vedic and Hindu religious traditions, and their modern transformations. *Religious Difference, Non-Western Studies*.

REL 370 Special Topics in Religious Studies (3 credits)

Concentrated focus on a selected theme in theology or religion at an advanced level. Topic and content varies from semester to semester. Course may be taken twice for credit as the topic changes. Other Certifications vary by section.

REL 382 Women and Religion in the Ancient World (3 credits)

Investigation of issues related to women and gender through case studies from selected religions in periods from the Paleolithic to Late Antiquity. Primary sources will illustrate problems such as gender identity, difference, sameness, subordination, privilege, cultural dynamics, marginalization, oppression, resistance, and the role of women in biological, social and cultural change. Examples may include materials from the complex of Israelite,

ancient Jewish, and early Christian religions, but appreciation for diversity will be encouraged by giving significant attention to religions outside of these traditions. Emphasis will be placed on developing epistemological, theoretical, and methodological awareness and critical understanding of the implications for the broader study of religion, gender, and human diversity. *Religious Difference, Diversity*.

REL 383 Ancient Greek Religions (3 credits)

This course will be an introduction to the world of thought and practice that contemporary scholars call ancient Greek religion. The main materials of the course will be drawn from the ancient Greeks themselves—from poets, artists, playwrights, and mythographers. Emphasis will be placed on the myths and festivals that formed the fabric of ancient Greek religious practice and outlook. Ancient perspectives on cosmos (universe), polis (city and its society), psyche (self) and theos (gods) will be explored. *Religious Difference, Ancient Studies*.

REL 392 Directed Readings in Religion (3 credits)

A study of significant themes or issues in Theology or Religious Studies under the direction of faculty in the department. Frequent consultations and written reports are required. Prior written permission of the instructor and approval from the chair is required. Normally this course is restricted to theology majors and minors. *Does not fulfill the Theology/Religious Studies GEP*.

REL 395 Approaches to the Study of Religion (3 credits)

A selected survey of the variety of theories and methodological approaches employed in the modern academic study of religion. Approaches to be examined in class include the psychological, sociological, anthropological, archeological, theological, feminist, and socio-biological. Classic thinkers may be included, but most of the course will focus on authors who represent recent developments, such as the new evolutionary approaches to religion. Course work will emphasize direct engagement with the writings of the major theorists