200: Introduction to Hinduism / Rocklin, MW 11:00-12:20 p.m.

This course introduces students to the diversity of traditions relating to gods and goddesses that have emerged in South Asia and that have been collected under the name Hinduism. This course will familiarize students with key terms, themes, and issues—such as karma, dharma, bhakti, caste, the epic traditions, colonialism, and religious nationalism—that have arisen, been argued over, and reimagined by Indians in a variety of times and places in the Subcontinent. The course will conclude with the question of the formation of Hinduism in the modern period as a coherent and unified world religion. The class will be particularly attuned to questions of the negotiation of identities, contestations over religious boundaries, and the construction of authority.

230: Introduction to Judaism/ Wimpfheimer, MWF 10:00-10:50 a.m.

This course attempts to answer the questions, "What is Judaism?" and "Who is a Jew?" by surveying the broad arc of Jewish history, reviewing the practices and beliefs that have defined and continue to define Judaism as a religion, sampling the vast treasure of Jewish literatures and analyzing the unique social conditions that have made the cultural experience of Jewishness so significant. The class will employ an historical structure to trace the evolutions of Jewish literature, religion and culture through the ages.

265: American Religion / Orsi, TTH 9:30-10:50 a.m.

This course examines major developments, movements, controversies, and figures in American religious history from the end of the Civil War, as the nation struggled to make sense of the carnage of war and to apportion responsibility, to the 1930s, when economic crisis strained social bonds and intimate relations and challenged Americans to rethink the nature of public responsibility. US religion from the Civil War to the economic crisis of the 1930; topics include urban religion; religion and changing technologies; African American religion; religion and politics; the religion of immigrants and migrants.
319: Buddhism and Gender / Jacoby, T 2:00-4:30 p.m.

This course will explore historical, textual, and social questions relevant to gender and the status of women in the Buddhist worlds of India, Tibet, and the West from the time of Buddhism's origins to the present day. Course topics include the masculine image of the Buddha, the roles of women in early Indian Buddhism, gender and the body in Mahayana Buddhism, the status of Buddhist nuns, the roles of women and the feminine in Vajrayana Buddhism, Buddhism and sexuality, and Buddhist women’s autobiography. Course readings will include primary sources such as Buddhist canonical sources and narrative literature as well as ethnographic and anthropological studies about gender and Buddhism.

332: Modern Jewish Thought / Sufrin, T 3:00-5:30 p.m.

This course examines significant developments in Jewish philosophy and theology from the Enlightenment through the late 20th century. We will consider several thinkers and their understandings of philosophical ideas such as authority, knowledge, and selfhood in relationship to their reinterpretations of Jewish concepts including God, revelation, and the Jewish people. Readings from Spinoza, Mendelssohn, Cohen, Rosenzweig, Buber, Levinas.

339-20: Gender and Judaism / Sufrin, TTH 11:00-12:20 p.m

From its most traditional to its most liberal forms, contemporary Judaism has been deeply influenced by feminism and its call to pay attention to the way gender and sex shape—and are shaped by—religious experiences and ideas. In this course, we will use gender as a lens for analyzing ritual, theology, and the Bible and other sacred texts. We will also consider how attention to gender sheds light on the lives of Jewish men and women of the past and present.
This course introduces Sufism, the ‘mystical’ tradition of Islam. After critically examining the concept of ‘mysticism’ within Religious Studies, we will examine the historical origins of Sufism, its emergence from and relationship to foundational discourses within Islam, its engagement with the Qur’an, and the figure of the Prophet Muhammad in Sufi piety. We will then investigate notions of ‘sainthood’ in Islam, the roles of Sufism in popular Muslim piety, the centrality of the body and bodily disciplines in Sufi practice, conceptions of gender in Sufism, as well as the critique and defense of Sufism in modern reformist thought. We will conclude with critical reflections on how ‘Sufism’ is conceptualized and deployed in American political discourse.

This is a case study based seminar that explores sites of eco-racism and complex struggles for eco-justice in Native American communities. Course material focuses on Native American perspectives on environmental justice. Case studies will include sites of mining, deforestation, water pollution, nuclear waste, and other toxic waste dumping. Issues of genocide, survival, self-determination, and links between environmental degradation and the impact on religio-cultural practices will be discussed. Students will be asked to conduct original research and to produce a case study of their own as the seminar's final project.

Our course marks another step toward defining "Religion and Film," a slippery hybrid that one moment encompasses Carl-Theo. Dreyer's The Passion of Joan of Arc and Andrei Tarkovsky's Stalker and another turns toward the contemporary anguish of Calvary, Of Gods and Men, and Gone Girl. In the US, Mel Gibson's The Passion of the Christ swept its swooning faithful into the arms of a ravenous box office but neither honored faith or practice nor activated film's singular power to explore emotional devastation, societal dystopia, or cosmic mystery. Bresson, the Dardennes, and Eastwood, however, dissect topics too hot for mainstream cinema to handle, painting, further, with an aesthetic that complicates spectator response. To spotlight the targeted directors’ engagement with art, equity, and ethics, moreover, we will explore recent films from Iran, Germany, France, Turkey, and France that offer a similarly fresh perspective on the ways Religion and Film intersect. Required: knowledge of film language.
This is a lecture and discussion class that will explore how a variety of religions approach the issues and problems of bioethics. We will present a general argument for your consideration: that the arguments and the practices from faith traditions offer significant contributions that underlie our arguments in bioethics. We will use a case-based method to study how different faith traditions describe and defend differences in moral choices in contemporary bioethics. We will examine both classic cases that have shaped our understanding of the field of bioethics and cases that are newly emerging. Through them, we will ask how religious traditions both collide and cohere over such topics as embryo research, health care reform, terminal illness, and issues in genomic research.

This class will also explore how the discipline of bioethics has emerged to reflect upon such dilemmas, with particular attention to the role that theology and religious studies have played in such reflection. We will look at both how the practice of theologians historically has shaped the field of bioethics and at how religion's claims, methodology, and praxis have continued to shape and inflect bioethics. We will examine the issue of epistemic stance, of truth claims, and of how normative policies are created amid serious controversy. We will explore the nature of the relationship between religion and public policy and study how religious traditions and moral philosophy shape our view of these issues.

This course explores the increasingly influential integral view of existence. This view recognizes the sequential emergence of values-based stages in human cultural development. It acknowledges how this emergence directly accompanies the development of life forms, all the way back to the big bang. We shall visit this through contemporary giants of moral philosophy and scholars across the spectrum of today's world. We shall examine the long tradition of moral thinking from pre-history, through the axial age of classical religions’ formation, through modern questions until today, where a new spirituality is breaking through. We shall examine game theory to see how cooperation grows as evolution occurs, and history of religion to see how the idea of God has evolved. We shall find ways to appreciate every individual at every level, every religion for its uniqueness and every political entity for its contribution to the whole. We shall end with a renewed love for creation and determination to help its dynamic movement into novelty.
379: Religion and Violence/ Schwartz, MW 9:30- 10:50 a.m.

As Christopher Hitchens makes abundantly clear in his infamous work *God is Not Great*, “religion poisons everything.” According to Hitchens, religion destroys rationality, represses sexuality, erodes scientific reasoning, and distorts understandings of the cosmos. Above all, religion kills.

This course directly confronts this shared assumption of the so-called New Atheists by interrogating the concept of “religious violence.” Designed as a seminar in comparative religion, it offers students an opportunity to explore the innumerable intersections of religion and violence. Students will begin to rethink definitions of religion and violence as they read major theoretical works in the field. What is religion? What do we mean when we say “violence”? What is “religious violence”? How is religion violent? How is violence religious? In what ways, and why, does religion condone or condemn violence? We will discuss a range of both historical and contemporary case studies, from ritual sacrifice, martyrdom, and holy war to colonial encounters, domestic abuse, and the War on Terrorism.

382: Global Catholicism/ Molina, T 3:00- 6:00 p.m.

Becoming Sinners: What is "conversion" and how does it function in colonial contexts? What does it mean to try to convince someone that he or she is a sinner in need of redemption? This course is built upon the premise that often Europeans -- both missionaries and the governments that sponsored them -- sought to effect a fundamental change in consciousness beyond merely coercing natives to claim a belief in the Christian god. We will explore the myriad ways in which European colonizers enticed, cajoled and sometimes demanded an alteration in native consciousness through an examination of transformations in cultural practices, from formal ritual to one's everyday practices, culinary habits, expression of emotion, etc.

Chronologically, the first half of the course will explore the interactions between missionaries, governments, and colonized, beginning with the first European overseas empires (Spain and Portugal in the 15th through 18th centuries). The second half of the course will draw from case studies from Africa and from Micronesia during the era of modern colonialism (19th and 20th centuries). The purpose of the course is not only to understand the narrative history of European attempts at “spiritual conquest” but also to explore Christian concepts of "self" and "other" that were operative in each time period. Drawing upon anthropological theories pertaining to culture, communication, and ritual, we will keep an eye trained to the unique historical experiences of actors in each context, but also aim to understand more generalized patterns of conversion to Christianity in colonial contexts across time.
471: Religion and Modernity/ PoliSci 490-21 Orsi and Hurd, TH 12:00-3:00 p.m.

This course examines the ways that particular construals of "religion" have been fundamental to the formation and authorization of "modernity" and the consequences of this for both politics and religions. Topics include religion and the rise of modern nation-states; the making of a world of religious others in early modernity; religion, missions, and colonial education; the politics of religious freedom; and the formation of a necessary modern disciplinary vocabulary of religious exclusion (e.g., "superstition," "syncretism," "folk religion."). The seminar moves back and forth across disciplinary boundaries to explore these questions, drawing on political science, religious studies, law, anthropology, history, and sociology of religion.

472: Wealth and Poverty/ Zoloth, M 3:00-6:00 p.m.

This seminar will look at texts of hospitality from different periods in the history of Jewish, Christian and Muslim thought, with a attention to the problem of the stranger and the duties toward her. Drawing on Scriptural, Talmudic and post-modern philosophic arguments, we will explore the competing moral appeals of hospitality and protection. Of note in the seminar will be reflection on current narratives of exile, estrangement and hospitality.

481-2: Theory and Method/ Jacoby, F 11:30-1:50 p.m.

20th Century and Contemporary Approaches: An examination of major works in theory of religious studies, comparative religion, and history of religions in light of recent critiques.