

Religious Studies

Department of Classics

Religious Studies
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Overview

†This area of study is available as a special major through the College of Arts and Sciences and must be approved by the Special Majors Committee. It is not a separately registered degree program. Refer to the Special Majors section in this catalog for more information.

With the cooperation of faculty in various departments and with an extended adjunct faculty, the Department of Classics offers courses in religious studies. The goals of the program are to (1) analyze religion as a human phenomenon, (2) provide the student with the intellectual tools necessary for the academic investigation of religion and religious texts, and (3) allow the student a degree of specialized study in a specialized area of religion or religious history. The approach is academic and is based upon objective, critical methods.

RSP 113: Myth and Religion in the Ancient World

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Provides an introduction to the mythology of the Greeks and Romans. In addition to considering the myths themselves, we study how they have been employed by ancient through contemporary cultures as reflected in areas ranging from religious and social practice to works of art and architecture.

RSP 210: Introduction to the Old Testament

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Introduces the traditions of the Hebrews throughout the patriarchal narrative of Genesis; the law corpus in Exodus; and the early history in Judges, Samuel, and Kings. Studies texts in the context of history and literature of the ancient Near East.

RSP 211: Introduction to Catholicism

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Introduces the history, beliefs, and practices of Catholic Christianity. Examines issues in contemporary Catholicism and its relationship to American society.

RSP 213: World Religions

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Introduces the world's religious systems and their cultural bases, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto,

Judaism, and modern religious substitutes.

RSP 218: Jesus: His Life and History

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Investigates the life and history of Jesus. As we explore the facts, opinions, and meaning attendant to the Historical Jesus, we examine the difficulties of such an intellectual and historical inquiry, review the controversies consequent to this famous scholarly pursuit, and assess our own position and thinking.

RSP 220: Christian Spirituality

Credits: 3
Semester(s): Fall
Type: SEM

Classic thinkers of Christianity, examines spirituality and spiritual formation. Analysis of the writings of devotional, mystic, and intellectual writers from five periods of Christian history, covering approximately 30 major contributors.

RSP 223: Western Church History

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Examines the development of the Christian church in western European history from Pentecost to the start of the Enlightenment. Covers material in three major divisions of time: the ancient church (to A.D. 600), the medieval church (600-1517), and the Reformation church (1517-1700). Emphasizes the important leaders and issues of each era.

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RSP 224: American Church History

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Surveys the Christian church's background and development in American history from the first establishment to the present era. Emphasizes major individuals associated with the American church, and covers material in four major divisions: the colonial era (1607-1789), the national era (1790-1860), the federal era (1861-1919), and the modern era (1920-present).

RSP 231: Paul and the Early Church

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Considers Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (1st Corinthians) and early church struggles for orthodoxy.

RSP 242: New Testament Literature and Thought

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Selected topics chosen from the New Testament: the incarnation's significance, sacrifice, resurrection, apocalyptic expectation, and so forth.

RSP 244: Workshop in New Testament

Credits: 3
Type: SEM

Examines the first-century Christian church's development in Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, and Rome. Also explores non-Pauline New Testament literature and pseudo-epigraphic works, such as the Book of Enoch, letters of Ignatius, Gospel of Thomas, Shepherd of Hermes, and the Apologetics.

RSP 245: Gospel of Luke and Acts

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Engages in a comprehensive study of Luke's gospel-its literary structure, characteristics, primary sources, and content followed by an intensive investigation of his account of the spread of Jesus's gospel by the early disciples in Acts, primarily Peter and Paul.

RSP 246: Gospel of John and Apocalypse

Credits: 3
Type: SEM

Undertakes a comprehensive study of the fourth gospel, including its authorship, time, and situation of composition; and its unique theological perspective. By way of comparison and contrast, the course examines the book of Apocalypse or Revelations.

RSP 260: Introduction to Christian Ethics

Credits: 3

Type: LEC

Considers specific ethical issues in light of the message of Jesus, the Christian concept of love, how ethical decisions are made, and the role of Jesus in ethics.

RSP 282: Christianity in Western Culture

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Explores the interplay and cross-fertilization of European cultures and the various branches of the Christian religion; examines these in a historical and contemporary context.

RSP 288: Old Testament Prophets

Credits: 3
Type: SEM

Using Biblical texts, studies the prophetic vision of the Old Testament and relates it to the realities of life of Israel's people personally, as well as socially and politically.