



RELIGIOUS
STUDIES
PROGRAM

Fall 2024 Course Descriptions

RELG 1110.001 - Introduction to World Religions

Offered: MWF 11:00-11:50am

Instructor: Michael Candelaria, mcandel@unm.edu

Description Forthcoming.

RELG 1110.002 – Introduction to World Religions

Offered: TR 12:30-1:45pm

Instructor: Daniel Wolne, dsw1@unm.edu

This course is designed to give an introduction to the basic beliefs, practices, and texts of some of the world's major religions. The class will begin with an examination of Hinduism, and then move on to Buddhism, and then include a short section on Chinese religion & philosophy. After looking at these “Eastern” religions, we will examine the “Western” religious tradition, starting with a short section on Judaism, then looking at Christianity, and finally Islam

RELG 1110.004 – Introduction to World Religions

Offered: First Half Term Online

Instructor: Michael Candelaria, mcandel@unm.edu

Description Forthcoming.

RELG 1110.008 – Introduction to World Religions

Offered: Full Term Online

Instructor: William Barnes, whb100@unm.edu

This course is designed to give an introduction to the basic beliefs, practices, and texts of some of the world's major religions. The class will begin with an examination of Hinduism, and then move on to Buddhism, and then Chinese religion & philosophy. After looking at these “Eastern” religions, we will examine the “Western” religious tradition, starting with Judaism, then Christianity, and finally Islam.

Course Requirements: 6 on-line exams will be given for Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese religion, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Each will be worth 14% of the grade. You will have a 24-hour window within which you *must* complete the exam.

RELG 1126.001 – New Testament

Offered: TR 3:00-4:45pm

Instructor: Franklin Yates, fyates@unm.edu

Description Forthcoming.

RELG 1550.001 - Religion, Health & Medicine

Offered: Full Term Online

Instructor: Kelly Van Andel, kvanande@unm.edu

Religion, Health, and Medicine introduces you to how people's religious beliefs and practices influence their perspectives on health and their approaches to medical care and treatment. In units arranged by religion or region (Native American religion, African religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese religion, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), you will learn how religious beliefs and practices relate to rites of passage, sexuality, women's health, diet, mental health, trauma, and end of life issues. In addition to assessing your knowledge of the relationship between religion and perspectives on health and medical care and treatment, course assignments will raise your awareness of how people with different worldviews interact. Course requirements or activities also will teach you how to evaluate your own biases and how to assess the biases and credibility of various sources of information about religion, health, and medicine found on the Internet and elsewhere.

RELG 1550.002 - Religion, Health & Medicine

Offered: Full Term Online

Instructor: Kelly Van Andel, kvanande@unm.edu

Religion, Health, and Medicine introduces you to how people's religious beliefs and practices influence their perspectives on health and their approaches to medical care and treatment. In units arranged by religion or region (Native American religion, African religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese religion, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), you will learn how religious beliefs and practices relate to rites of passage, sexuality, women's health, diet, mental health, trauma, and end of life issues. In addition to assessing your knowledge of the relationship between religion and perspectives on health and medical care and treatment, course assignments will raise your awareness of how people with different worldviews interact. Course requirements or activities also will teach you how to evaluate your own biases and how to assess the biases and credibility of various sources of information about religion, health, and medicine found on the Internet and elsewhere.

RELG 2110.001 – Eastern Religions

Offered: TR 9:30-10:45am

Instructor: Katherine Ulrich, kulrich@unm.edu

Eastern Religions is a thematic introduction to the religious life of peoples of Asia (mainly in India, Southeast Asia, China, Tibet, and Japan, with cameo appearances by Korea, Nepal, Mongolia, and/or Siberia). We examine the deities, practices, discourses, religious

specialists, and subdivisions of the adherents of Asia's major indigenous religious traditions while examining two broad themes. The first is death: we consider practices and beliefs involving bodies, (no) soul(s), and various options for the afterlife (or immortality, in the case of Daoism). The second broad theme for the course is that of pilgrimage, the environment, and sacred space. How do religious beliefs and practices shape people's understandings of, movement to and through, and interactions with the environment around them? The religious traditions covered are Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Shinto, Shamanism, and the folk, popular, or new religions of India, China, and Japan.

RELG 2110.003 – Eastern Religions

Offered: Full Term Online

Instructor: Vibha Shetiya, vs2015@unm.edu

This is a 3 credit hour survey course on Eastern Religions, with a focus on the religions of India, China and Japan. These include Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism, Confucianism, Daoism, Shinto and Zoroastrianism. Charvaka, a religion no longer in existence, will also be briefly discussed. As part of this course, we will study the scriptures which will include a brief examination of primary texts, as well as how religion is practiced in everyday life through art, film and culture.

RELG 2120.003 - Western Religions

Offered: Full Term Online

Instructor: Charles Becknell, cbeck@unm.edu

This course introduces students to the teachings, historical developments, and way of life (practices and modes of experience) of three major Western religious traditions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Along with describing the essential features of these religions, we will explore how these traditions have answered some of the most fundamental human questions— Why are we here? What is the nature of the universe? How should we live? In a world that has become increasingly aware of its cultural diversity and richness, one way to gain access to that diversity and value is by exploring these Western religions' religious consciousness and practice.

RELG 303.001 – Black Liberation and Religion

Offered: Full Term Online

Instructor: Charles Becknell, cbeck@unm.edu

This course is a timely exploration of the origins of Black religion as a movement against the oppressive forces of white supremacy and racism in America. It examines Black Liberation Theology and Womanist Theology as tools for investigating, explaining, and critiquing people's religious thought and practice, aiming to define a religion that is distinct from the white setting of Christianity in America. By understanding this religious movement, students can gain insights into the ongoing struggle for social justice and equality.

RELG 312.001 – Intro to Islam

Offered: Second Half Semester, TR 12:30-3:00pm

Instructor: Mozafar Banihashemi, mozafar@unm.edu

Description Forthcoming.

RELG 321.001 – Apocalypse in Ancient World**Offered: TR 11:00-12:15pm****Instructor:** Luke Gorton, lagorton@unm.edu

Apocalypse is a fascinating genre which is famous for its strange images, cryptic messages, and predictions of future events. In *Apocalypse in the Ancient World*, we will examine the development of the genre of apocalypse, starting in Second Temple Judaism and moving on into early Christianity. After discussing the cultural and literary topoi of the apocalypse, we will read a number of apocalypses, including the two included in the Bible (Daniel and Revelation) as well as other well-known apocalypses such as the Book of Enoch. We will study the symbolism, message, and meaning of each to ascertain what they meant to their original readers and what they might mean today. After tracing the development of the genre through early Christianity, we will conclude the course by examining the ongoing legacy of apocalypticism in our world today.

RELG 347.001 – Death & Rebirth in Asian Religions**Offered: TR 11:00-12:15****Instructor:** Katherine Ulrich, kulrich@unm.edu

This course examines discourses and practices having to do with dying, death, funerals, karma, and rebirth in Asian religions. Drawing on case studies from India, Southeast Asia, Tibet, China, and Japan, we will examine three broad topics: (1) defining death, what constitutes “good” versus “bad” deaths, and the spiritual and ethical implications of suicide, abortion, and euthanasia; (2) spiritual practices and rituals associated with death—funeral and memorial rituals, cremation and burial rites, and practices for dealing with the restless dead (ghosts, vampires, et al.); and (3) what happens next: rebirth, escape from rebirth, or immortality.

RELG 347.002 – T: Sex and Religion**Offered: Full Term Online****Instructor:** Hilary Lipka, hlipka@unm.edu

Sex and religion are intimately and intricately linked. Even in secular societies, the ways that reproduction, gender roles, desire, love, and sexual identity are viewed are directly impacted by religion. In this course, we will explore the relationship between sex and religion, and the interplay between sex, sexuality, and the construction of religious identities. First, we will examine the teachings, practices, and attitudes related to sex and sexuality in several of the world's major religious traditions. Topics we will explore within each religious tradition include gender roles and expectations, which behaviors are considered sexual and how those behaviors are viewed, rituals and traditions related to the sexual life cycle, and the intersection between sexuality, spirituality, and mysticism. We will then consider the ways in which the dynamic between sex and religion is playing out in contemporary cultures, and how current cultural and political debates, both within the U.S. and globally, over issues such as contraception, abortion, same-sex marriage, and trans rights are shaped by this dynamic.

RELG 347.003 – T: Mysticism: East & West**Offered: Full Term Online****Instructor:** Daniel Wolne, dsw1@unm.edu

This course is designed to give an introductory look at mystical texts from a variety of religious

traditions, and to expose students to the contemporary philosophical and psychological questions that arise in the study of those types of texts. The course will start with an examination of some definitions of mysticism, then moves on to look at specific themes that can be found in these texts. The second part of the class will involve asking critical questions about the nature of mystical experience (are all mystics saying basically the same thing?; can mysticism be reduced to brain states?; can psychedelic drugs bring about mystical experiences?), with an eye towards careful academic reflection on these matters.

RELG 347.005 – AI and the Human

Offered: MWF 1:00-1:50pm

Instructor: Michael Candelaria, mcandel@unm.edu

Description Forthcoming.

RELG 347.005 – Catholicism in America

Offered: TR 9:30-10:45

Instructor: Kathleen Holscher, kholscher@unm.edu

This course introduces students to Roman Catholicism in the United States. Catholics have lived in New Mexico and other places making up the present-day United States since the sixteenth century. Beginning in the nineteenth century, the U.S. Catholic population increased, as the US annexed Mexican territory, and waves of immigrants arrived from Europe and, later, the rest of the world. Over time, American Catholics developed special ways of living their religious lives. They have turned to their faith to help with the challenges of being an immigrant or a racialized or colonized subject. They have worked to find common ground between religious identity rooted in local community, on one hand, and a global church with a far-off leader, on the other. They have struggled to balance loyalty to their Church with loyalty to nation. They have faced suspicion from Americans provoked by the strangeness of Catholic ritual, and worried that Catholicism was not democratic enough for US soil. By the mid-twentieth century, Catholicism began to shape American politics in important ways. Today Catholicism is the nation's largest Christian denomination, even as the U.S. Catholic community faces crises, including declining church attendance and revelations of clerical sexual abuse of minors. Students will gain knowledge of historical people, ideas and events that have made the U.S. Church what it is today. They will come away understanding how religious and national interests interact with one another, and how diverse factors, including race, colonialism, gender, migration, and citizenship, intersect with people's religious lives.

RELG 350.001 – Religion and Literature

Offered: Full Term Online

Instructor: Kelly Van Andel, kvanande@unm.edu

Religion and Literature explores the role that myths, stories, and literature play in religion and secular culture and society. Texts include excerpts from Genesis, the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the *Upanishads* and the origin myths of the Navajos as well as the full texts of "Yellow Woman," *Confessions of a Pagan Nun, Dawn*, "White Tigers," and *Island*. There are weekly check-in and reading quizzes, class discussions, and a final project.

RELG 441.001 – Religion in American History

Offered: Full Term Online

Instructor: Charles Becknell, cbeck@unm.edu

This course is a comprehensive journey through the history and development of religion in the United States from the 17th to the 21st centuries. It examines how religion has both responded to and influenced North American culture and identity. Rather than presenting a one-sided narrative of the Anglo-Saxon Protestant majority, this course adopts a multi-faith perspective to appreciate the diversity of our religious landscape. It also critically assesses the shared common heritage that underpins these diverse religious traditions, offering a balanced and nuanced understanding of American religious history.