



# **RELIGIONS AND CULTURES**

**FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE**

**COURSE GUIDE**

**2020-2021**

**CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY**

DEPARTMENT OF  
RELIGIONS AND CULTURES  
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE

COURSE GUIDE

2020-2021

**DEPARTMENT OF  
RELIGIONS AND CULTURES  
UNDERGRADUATE COURSE GUIDE  
2020-2021**

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[www.kemetro.cc.mo.us/longview/socsci/philosophy/religion/symbols.htm](http://www.kemetro.cc.mo.us/longview/socsci/philosophy/religion/symbols.htm)

This course guide has been prepared months in advance of the 2020-2021 academic year and information contained herein is subject to change. Students are advised not to purchase any texts without the approval of the professor concerned.

Due to the renumbering of courses in the Department, students should consult the list of equivalent undergraduate courses in the back of the 2020-2021 undergraduate calendar.

## FACULTY

A list of the full-time faculty follows below. All possess degrees from universities and/or schools of advanced studies that represent the best academic centres for the study of religion in North America. All have published books that have made a contribution to their particular fields of study, have published in learned journals and given papers at learned societies. They have also won a reputation among their students for being good teachers, concerned about the quality of instruction at Concordia University, as well as for being "available" and committed to the development of a more meaningful student life.

### Full-Time Faculty

#### Chair

Carly Daniel-Hughes, Ph.D. (Harvard)

#### Professors

Lynda Clarke, Ph.D. (McGill)

Naftali Cohn, Ph.D. (University of Pennsylvania)

(on sabbatical 2020-2021)

Lorenzo DiTommaso, Ph.D. (McMaster)

Richard Foltz, Ph.D. (Harvard)

(on leave 2019-2021)

Norma Joseph, Ph.D. (Concordia)

Leslie Orr, Ph.D. (McGill)

Norman Ravvin, Ph.D. (Univ. of Toronto)

Ira Robinson, Ph.D. (Harvard) – Chair in Quebec and Canadian Jewish Studies

(on sabbatical 2020-2021)

#### Associate Professors

Marc des Jardins, Ph.D. (McGill)

#### Assistant Professors

Marc Lalonde, Ph.D. (Concordia)

(on sabbatical 2020-2021)

## INTRODUCTION TO THE DEPARTMENT

### *General Objectives*

The Department of Religions and Cultures is dedicated to the academic study of religions and other social and cultural phenomena in so far as they have been influenced or affected by religions. We are interested in the comparative study of many religions. Although we do study how many religious traditions articulate and defend their own self-understandings, we treat these theologies and buddhologies academically and comparatively.

### *Nature of Religious Studies*

The academic study of religion is a multi-disciplinary enterprise. It involves the historical examination of religious movements, the literary analyses of their literatures, philosophical reflections on beliefs and teachings, the social scientific investigations of their rituals, practices, texts, and institutions, the psychological study of their participants and ethical inquiries regarding both their moral writings and social roles.

Correspondingly, the faculty in the department have been trained in a number of academic disciplines including history, sociology, anthropology, literary studies, philosophy, psychology and theology as well as in the study of particular religious traditions.

## KNOWLEDGE OF TWO MAJOR RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

The Department believes that every Major or Honours student in Religion or in Judaic Studies should possess, at time of graduation, a knowledge of at least two major religious traditions. For example, the student who is pursuing a Major in Judaic Studies will take some courses in a religious tradition other than Judaism. This basic principle reinforces the emphasis upon the centrality of the discipline of the History of Religions. A particular religious tradition can best be understood in the context of the general religious history of humankind.

## DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAMMES

The Department of Religions and Cultures offers at the undergraduate level: minors, majors and honours programmes in Religion and in Judaic Studies. The degree requirements for all of these programmes can be found below. We also offer several graduate programmes: an M.A. in Religions and Cultures, an M.A. in Judaic Studies, and a Ph.D. in Religion. For further information on our graduate programmes, please contact the graduate programme assistant at 848-2424 ext.2077.

### *Women and Religion*

As part of the Department of Religions and Cultures' undergraduate curriculum, a concentration in **Women, Gender, and Sexuality** is offered. A variety of special courses are included in the regular program for the BA major in Religions and Cultures. Religions and Cultures majors can focus on this area for either the primary or secondary concentration requirements.

The study of women and religion is a growing field in which the Department of Religions and Cultures of Concordia University has long been a leader. This structured concentration solidifies our commitment to this field and enables us to prepare students in a systematic and consistent fashion. The concentration furthers the work of the department in that it will allow students to pursue course work from a comparative, cross-cultural and multi-tradition perspective. The study of the role of women in the history and practice of religion introduces our students to an exciting and vital area of study.

*Degree Requirements*

**60 B.A. Honours in Religions and Cultures:**

- 12 In a language related to thesis; or in a related discipline such as: Anthropology, Classics, English Literature, History, Philosophy, Sociology, Women's Studies.
- 6 Chosen from RELI 209<sup>3</sup>, 210<sup>3</sup>, 214<sup>3</sup>, 215<sup>3</sup>
- 21 From area of primary concentration (see areas of concentration below)
- 6 From area of secondary concentration (see areas of concentration below)
- 6 RELI elective credits at 300 or 400 level
- 3 RELI 409<sup>3</sup>
- 6 RELI 410<sup>6</sup>

**42 B.A. Major in Religions and Cultures**

- 6 Chosen from RELI 209<sup>3</sup>, 210<sup>3</sup>, 214<sup>3</sup> or 215<sup>3</sup>
- 18 From area of primary concentration (see areas of concentration below)
- 6 From area of secondary concentration (see areas of concentration below)
- 9 RELI elective credits at 300 or 400 level
- 3 RELI 409<sup>3</sup>

**24 Minor in Religions and Cultures**

- 6 Chosen from RELI 209<sup>3</sup>, 210<sup>3</sup>, 214<sup>3</sup> or 215<sup>3</sup>
- 18 RELI elective credits chosen in consultation with Departmental advisor, excluding RELI 209, 210, 214, and 215

**60 B.A. Honours in Judaic Studies**

- 9 Chosen from: HEBR 210<sup>6</sup>, HEBR 241<sup>3</sup>, HEBR 242<sup>3</sup>, RELI 401<sup>3</sup>  
Students who demonstrate fluency in Hebrew by a written examination may substitute RELI courses at the 300 and 400 level approved by the departmental advisor.
- 3 Chosen from RELI 209<sup>3</sup>, 210<sup>3</sup>, 214<sup>3</sup>, 215<sup>3</sup>
- 12 Chosen from RELI 220<sup>3</sup>, 301<sup>3</sup>, 326<sup>3</sup>, 327<sup>3</sup>, 328<sup>3</sup>
- 27 Electives chosen from courses in Judaism at the 200, 300, or 400 level. It is recommended that students take at least one 400-level course. Up to 12 credits may be substituted with courses in a related tradition and 12 credits with courses in a related language such as Hebrew, Aramaic, or Yiddish, for a maximum of 15 credits combined
- 3 RELI 409<sup>3</sup>
- 6 RELI 410<sup>6</sup>

**42 B.A. Major in Judaic Studies**

- 9 Hebrew language, typically chosen from: HEBR 210<sup>6</sup>, HEBR 241<sup>3</sup>, HEBR 242<sup>3</sup>, RELI 401<sup>3</sup>  
Students who demonstrate fluency in Hebrew may substitute religion courses at the 300 or 400 level approved by the undergraduate advisor.
- 3 Chosen from RELI 209<sup>3</sup>, 210<sup>3</sup>, 214<sup>3</sup>, 215<sup>3</sup>
- 12 RELI 220<sup>3</sup>, 301<sup>3</sup>, 326<sup>3</sup>, 328<sup>3</sup>

- 15 Electives chosen from courses in Judaism at the 200, 300, or 400 level. It is recommended that students take at least one 400-level course. Up to six credits may be substituted with courses in related traditions and related languages such as Hebrew, Aramaic, or Yiddish.
- 3 RELI 409<sup>3</sup>

**24 Minor in Judaic Studies**

- 3 Chosen from RELI 209<sup>3</sup>, 210<sup>3</sup>, 214<sup>3</sup> a 215<sup>3</sup>
- 9 Chosen from RELI 220<sup>3</sup>, 301<sup>3</sup>, 326<sup>3</sup>, 327<sup>3</sup>, 328<sup>3</sup>
- 12 Electives chosen from courses in Judaism at the 200, 300, or 400 level. Up to six credits may be substituted with courses in related traditions and related languages such as Hebrew, Aramaic, or Yiddish

**24 Minor in Iranian Studies**

- 12 Chosen from RELI 227<sup>3</sup>, 305<sup>3</sup>, 306<sup>3</sup>, 313<sup>3</sup>, 317<sup>3</sup>, 318<sup>3</sup>
- 12 Chosen from any courses related to Iran in various departments at Concordia approved by the undergraduate advisor, including those not already taken at the first level of requirement. Examples of courses offered at various times include Pahlavi and other ancient Iranian languages, Modern Persian, Iranian Mythology, Manichaeism, Avesta, and Classical Persian Music. Students may also request credit for Iran-related courses taught at other Quebec universities.

*Areas of Concentration*

**A - Asian Religions (18 credits)** - chosen from any of the following:

- 6 Chosen from RELI 224<sup>3</sup>, 225<sup>3</sup>, 226<sup>3</sup>, 360<sup>3</sup>, 361<sup>3</sup>, 362<sup>3</sup>
- 12 Chosen from any courses on the subject of Asian religions, including Islam. This may include courses not already taken from the first level of requirement. It is recommended that students take at least one 400-level course.

*NOTE: With permission of the advisor, Major in Religions and Cultures concentrating in Asian religions may count up to six credits of a related language study, such as Chinese or Sanskrit. Honours students concentrating in Asian religions may also count an additional six credits of a related language study toward their program.*

**B - Christianity (18 credits)**

- 6 RELI 223<sup>3</sup>, RELI 302<sup>3</sup>
- 12 Chosen from any courses on the subject of Christianity. It is recommended that students take at least one 400-level course.

*NOTE: Majors in Religions and Cultures students concentrating in Christianity may count up to six credits of a related language study, such as Greek, Latin, or Coptic. Honours students concentrating in Christianity may also count an additional six credits of a related language study toward their program.*

**C - Judaism (18 credits)**

- 9 Chosen from RELI 220<sup>3</sup>, 301<sup>3</sup>, 326<sup>3</sup>, 327<sup>3</sup>, 328<sup>3</sup>
- 9 Chosen from any courses on the subject of Judaism. This may include courses not already taken from the first level of requirement. It is recommended that students take at least one 400-level course.

*NOTE: With the permission of the advisor, Major in Religions and Cultures students concentrating in Judaism may count up to six credits of a related language study, such as Hebrew, Aramaic, or Yiddish. Honours students concentrating in Judaism may also count an additional six credits of a related language study toward their program.*

### **D – Women, Gender, and Sexuality (18 credits)**

3 Chosen from RELI 233<sup>3</sup>, 380<sup>3</sup>

15 Chosen from any religion courses on women, gender, body, sexuality, or food. This may include courses not already taken at the first level of requirement. It is recommended that students take at least one 400-level course.

### **E – Islam (18 credits)**

6 Chosen from: RELI 224<sup>3</sup>, 316<sup>3</sup>, 319<sup>3</sup>

12 Chosen from any courses on the subject of Islam. This may include a course not already taken at the first level of requirement. It is recommended that students take at least one 400-level course.

*NOTE: With permission, Major in Religions and Cultures students concentrating in Islam may count up to six credits of a related language study, such as Arabic and Persian. Honours students concentrating in Islam must take at least six credits of Arabic and may also count an additional six credits of Arabic or another language related to Islam toward their program. Students who demonstrate competency in Arabic by a written examination may substitute Religion courses approved by the departmental advisor.*

## **Southern Asia Studies**

The Department of Religions and Cultures participates with History, Political Science and several other departments in the Southern Asia Studies Programme which offers a major and a minor as follows:

### ***MAJOR (42 credits)***

**6 credits** History 261 and Religion 215

**3 credits** Chosen from any relevant course in the Department of History

**3 credits** Chosen from any relevant course in the Department of Political Science

**6 credits** Chosen from any relevant courses in the Department of Religions and Cultures

**24 credits** Chosen from relevant courses in any department including but not limited to History; Religion; Political Science; Classics, Modern Languages and Linguistics; Economics; English; Geography, Planning and Environment; Sociology and Anthropology; the Faculty of Fine Arts; and the John Molson School of Business. Students may also request credits for Southern Asia related courses (including languages) taught at other Quebec universities.

### ***MINOR (24 credits)***

**6 credits** History 261 and Religion 215

**3 credits** Chosen from any relevant course in the Department of History, Political Science, Economics or English

**6 credits** Chosen from any relevant courses in the Department of Religions and Cultures



**9 credits** Chosen from relevant courses in any department (see above)  
Please see the Undergraduate Calendar for further details on the Southern Asia Studies Programme.

**30 Certificate in Iranian Studies**

- 18 Chosen from RELI 227<sup>3</sup>, 305<sup>3</sup>, 306<sup>3</sup>, 313<sup>3</sup>, 317<sup>3</sup>, 318<sup>3</sup>
- 12 Chosen from any courses related to Iran in various departments at Concordia approved by the undergraduate advisor, including those not already taken at the first level of requirement. Examples of courses offered at various times include Pahlavi and other ancient Iranian languages, Modern Persian, Iranian Mythology, Manichaeism, Avesta, and Classical Persian Music. Students may also request credit for Iran-related courses taught at other Quebec Universities.

For more information, contact:  
Dr. Lynda Clarke: Lynda.clarke@concordia.ca

**SERVICES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS**

**Student Advising**

Students who have questions concerning their programme of study or need assistance relating to academic difficulties can contact the Department either by phone (848-2424, ext. 2065) or email [religion@concordia.ca](mailto:religion@concordia.ca) and make an appointment to meet with an undergraduate advisor.

**Undergraduate Listserve**

Religion students and students taking one or more Religion courses have the option of being added to the Religion Undergraduate listserve. This listserve helps to keep students informed of upcoming events, guest speakers and academic deadlines.

**Department Web Page**

Visit the Department's webpage and find information on the various courses offered, course outlines, faculty research interests, guest lectures and conferences, information on our graduate programmes plus much more:  
<https://www.concordia.ca/artsci/religions-cultures.html>

**THE BOYD SINYARD AWARD**

Each year the Boyd Sinyard award is given to the outstanding graduating student in Religions and Cultures. The award is named after the first chairman of the Department of Religion at Sir George Williams University.

**CONCORDIA RELIGION STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (CRSA)**

If you are studying within the Department of Religions and Cultures (i.e. if you are an Honours, Major, Minor or just taking a course offered by the department), you are a member of the CRSA. CRSA is a student-administered organization dedicated to fostering community and expanding the educational experience of all Religion students. Each year the executive branch of CRSA (five students elected to plan and administer CRSA affairs) offers Religion students the chance to meet each other and faculty at various social gatherings, as well as the opportunity to enliven their education by attending CRSA sponsored lectures given by learned academics and religious thinkers from all parts of the world. CRSA members are urged to take advantage of the student lounge located in the basement of annex R (2050 Mackay). This is a place where

students can study, hang out or use the free phone. If you would like more information about CRSA, leave a message in our mailbox at the Department of Religions and Cultures.

## SUMMER 2020

**RELI 214/1 - A (3 credits)**  
RELIGIONS OF THE WEST  
Instructor: Perwaiz Hayat

M.W. 1015-1300

This course surveys the history, doctrines, institutions, and practices of religions that arose in Western Asia, including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The course examines contemporary forms of religious life in those parts of the world where these traditions have spread, as well as indigenous religions. The course explores the religious activities and experiences of both women and men within these various traditions. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for RELI 213 may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 223/1 - A (3 credits)**  
INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIANITY  
Instructor: Sara Terreault

T.J. 1315-1600

This course provides an introductory survey of key developments and enduring structures in the historical evolution of Christianity. It examines the variety of expressions of faith embodied in different churches and traces the ways in which beliefs, institutions, symbols, and rituals have in the past and continue today to carry forward the Christian tradition as a world religion in a variety of cultural contexts.

## FALL 2020

### **RELI 209/2 – A** (3 credits)

M.W. 1615-1730

#### THE RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION

This course explores the conceptual elements that underlie the religious experience. These elements include the notion of the sacred, beliefs, cosmologies and myths, the origins and understanding of evil, ethics and salvation. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for RELI 211 may not take this course for credit.*

### **RELI 210/2 – A** (3 credits)

M.W.1145-1300

#### RELIGION IN PRACTICE

This course focuses on the day-to-day practice of religious traditions. Included are the expression of religious experiences through art, music, and scripture; transmission of these religious expressions through ritual, worship and mystical/ecstatic practices; and the construction and maintenance of different types of religious authority and communal identities. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for RELI 211 may not take this course for credit.*

### **RELI 220/2- A** (3 credits)

W.F. 1015-1130

#### INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM

This course will examine the history of Jews and of Judaism from ancient times until the present. It will emphasize the continuities, changes and interrelationships with respect to Jewish social, religious and intellectual life through the ages. It will also carefully examine the varieties of belief and practice in contemporary Jewish life. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for RELI 222 may not take this course for credit.*

### **RELI 224/2 – A** (3 credits)

T.J.1145-1300

#### INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM

This course explores the religious tradition of Islam through the beliefs and practices of the vast number of Muslims scattered throughout the world – in the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia, North America, and other places. It examines the scriptures and common rituals or “pillars” of the religion, as well as expressions of life and culture in the past and present such as the law (shariah), mystical orders, and the arts.

### **RELI 225/2 – A** (3 credits)

M.W.1445-1600

#### INTRODUCTION TO HINDUISM

This course surveys Hinduism in its diverse history, sects, schools of thought, sacred texts, spiritual practices, and contemporary interpretations. We will focus on several prominent dimensions of the tradition, including the Hindu temple, mysticism and metaphysics in the Upanisads, karma and rebirth, dharma (religious duty and the cosmic/social order), moksha (liberation), gender and caste, devotional traditions, and narrative literatures. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for this topic under a RELI 298 number may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 226/2 – A** (3 credits)  
INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM

T.J.1145-1300

This course introduces students to the diversity of forms of Buddhism that have emerged in history and are practiced today. It examines those aspects that are shared in common by Buddhists all over the world, including reverence for the Buddha, support of the monastic order, and adherence to the Buddha's teachings. The course explores the ways in which these ideals and beliefs are expressed through such Buddhist practices as worship, study, pilgrimage, and meditation.

**RELI 227/2 – A** (3 credits)  
INTRODUCTION TO IRANIAN CIVILIZATION  
(xlist HIST 298A)

T.J. 1615-1730

Iran has played a central role in world history, giving rise to Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and the Baha'i faith, as well as numerous sects. Iranian culture has also played a major role in informing and transforming Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism and Islam. This course covers the long history of Iranian civilization and its influence on peoples from the Mediterranean world to South and East Asia in the realms of religion, literature, architecture, and the arts. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for RELI 412 or for this topic under a RELI 298 number may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 233/2 - A** (3 credits)  
INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN & RELIGION  
(xlist LOYC 298A)

T.J.1615-1730

This introduction to the particular problems and issues in the study of women and religion uses case studies from various religious traditions. The course presents a survey of the different levels of participation, the complex ritual activities, and the intriguing divine imagery associated with women that are found in many religious traditions. Questions pertaining to the contemporary feminist discourse on such topics as witchcraft, matriarchy, and goddess religions are also explored.

**RELI 300/2 – AA** (3 credits)  
CULTS AND RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY

M.1745-20:15

This course takes a sociological and historical approach towards understanding new religious movements (NRMs), popularly known as "cults". The course examines the reasons for their controversial status in society, and undertakes a survey of the beliefs, rituals, leadership, membership, recruitment strategies, and social organization of a number of specific NRMs. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for RELI 217 or for this topic under a RELI 298 number may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 306/2 – AA** (3 credits)  
RELIGION & SOCIETY IN CONTEMPORARY IRAN

J. 1745-2015

Heir to one of the world's great civilizations, Iran today is often viewed negatively by the West. However, the reality of life in the Islamic Republic differs in many ways from popular conceptions. This course explores the roots, development and current situation of a uniquely modern and dynamic contemporary Muslim society. Topics include gender relations, political theory, contemporary literature and the arts.

**RELI 310/2 – A** (3 credits)

T.J.1315-1430

**SELF AND OTHER: IDENTITY AND ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT**  
(xlist LOYC398C)

This course considers ethical issues arising in the context of personal and interpersonal relations, families and friendships, and health and medical care. These issues are discussed in relation to traditional and contemporary moral perspectives, both religious and non-religious. Topics covered may vary from year to year, but may include discussions of conscience and career, privacy, sexual relations, harassment, substance abuse, abortion, euthanasia, and gay and lesbian relations.

**RELI 320/2 - A** (3 credits)

T.J. 1015-1130

**THE MAKING OF CHRISTIANITY**

This course examines how Christianity emerged from a small, splinter movement within Judaism to become the religion of the Roman Empire. It traces the various debates that gave shape to this new movement, stressing the diverse perspectives evident in early Christian sources. Among the topics considered are Jewish and Christian relations, martyrdom and persecution, prophecy and visionary experience, orthodoxy and heresy, gender, sexuality and the body, canon and religious authority, as well as sacred space.

**Note:** *Students who have received credit for RELI 303 or for this topic under a RELI 498 number may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 332/2 – A** (3 credits)

T.J. 10:15-11:30

**CANADIAN JEWISH LITERATURE**  
(xlist ENGL 398A)

This course explores the Jewish voice in Canadian literature which can be seen to be the first opening toward a multicultural tradition in this country. Writers such as A.M. Klein, Mordecai Richler, Henry Kreisel, and Leonard Cohen created an English-language tradition of Jewish writing that is varied, provocative, and lively. Students look at novels, short stories, some poetry, memoir, and criticism. Students also consider non-Jewish authors, such as Gwethalyn Graham and Mavis Gallant, who were among the first to write about Jewish characters for an English-speaking Canadian audience. This course allows students to consider issues related to Canadian identity and culture, ethnic studies, and multiculturalism alongside literary questions.

**RELI 360/2 - A** (3 credits)

J..1145-1430

**RELIGIONS OF CHINA**

This course concentrates on the historical development of Chinese religions from the earliest periods of Chinese civilization to contemporary times. It investigates the relationships among the classical religious traditions as portrayed through scriptures, commentaries, and rituals. Focus is placed on the unfolding of the five great religious currents of China: the classical imperial cults, Daoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and popular cults.**Note:** *Students who have received credit for RELI 349 may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 368/2 – A** (3 credits)  
RELIGION IN NATIVE TRADITIONS  
(xlist LOYC 398D/FPST 398A)

T.J. 1315-1430

This overview looks at the many diverse religious traditions of the First Nations populations in North America. The course examines the sacred stories, ceremonial patterns, life cycle rituals, and religious activities in their varied expressions. Consideration is given to the historical interaction of native government with religious practices.

**RELI 372/2 – A** (3 credits)  
RELIGION AND THE BODY

M.W. 1615-1730

This study of religious attitudes to the human body focuses on the body as a foundation for religious symbolism, religious community and identity, ritual, and religious experience. The course examines these problems with reference to various religious traditions. Issues examined include purification of the body; eating; mortification and mutilation of the body; attitudes towards dead bodies and physical immortality; attitudes towards bodies as gendered; embodied spirituality and incarnation.

**RELI 383/2 – A** (3 credits)  
WOMEN AND RELIGION: ISLAM  
(xlisted LOYC 398AB)

W.1745-2015

Course description for online version Fall 2020: The course explores various issues related to women and gender in Islam, including role models, ritual, gendered space, the rulings of Islamic law, and sexuality. The issues are examined principally through the lens of modern Islam and lives of modern Muslims, including those in Canada and the West.

**RELI 398/2 –A** (3 credits)  
SELECTED TOPICS IN RELIGION  
RELIGIOUS BODIES IN SOUTH ASIA

M.W.1145-1300

This course explores embodied practices and conceptions of embodiment in South Asian religions, including Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism, and Islam. We will examine bodily disciplines and asceticism, as well as ecstatic practices, possession, and the adornment and celebration of the body. We consider divine bodies and the bodies of animals and plants, gendered bodies, and the body in life and death. We seek to understand the variety of ways that physiology and the senses are linked to the moral, spiritual, and psychological dimensions of human being – and the methods employed to influence and transform the character of this being.

**RELI 398/2 –C** (3 credits)  
SELECTED TOPICS IN RELIGION  
RELIGION AND ITS MONSTERS

M.W. 1015-1130

This course approaches the figure of the monster from a comparative cultural perspective. It is concerned with how different religious traditions, social groups, and historical periods have constructed their monsters. With attention to the contextualization of its examples, the course poses several questions: 1) What is a monster? 2) What is the function of the monster? 3) How have different monsters been received over time, and in particular religious and cultural worlds? 4) How does the monster relate to the construction of the human, of insider and outsider? Both historical and contemporary

materials will be considered (including literature, visual art, music, cinema, and television). Western and non-Western traditions will be examined.

**RELI 398/2 –D** (3 credits)  
QUEER SPIRITUALITIES

T.J. 1445-1600

This course treats the intersection of gender, sexuality, spirituality and religiosity from an intersectional and queer theoretical approach. It introduces students to histories and discourses around these inter-related areas and is organized thematically. It will also address the construction and production of queer spiritualities and the queering of religion. Topics under consideration include, as follows: global sexualities; celibacy, asexuality and queerness; queerness in history; colonial and postcolonial understandings of sexuality and religion; queer pornography; tantric practice and other forms of esoteric spirituality.

**RELI 409/2 – AA** (3 credits)  
METHODOLOGY AND THE STUDY OF RELIGION  
Prerequisite: Permission of the department

T.1745-2015

This class explores the conceptual and practical foundations that have established the discipline and study of religion as it has developed over the last century or so. At the conceptual level we will be concerned to enquire: how have scholars gone about the study of religion? What sorts of approaches and methods have they relied on? What are the suppositions of these approaches and methods? What kinds of languages and philosophies have been used to explain such scholarly efforts? We will also attend to the various interests that have inevitably guided such research. What are these interests? What are their sources and inspiration? How are they related to wider social, cultural, and historical realities? Thus ours will be a critical examination of religious studies as we endeavour to understand, analyze, and situate the component parts that make up the method and study of religion today. However, we will also be concerned to put these critiques into practice. Toward that end, a portion of this course will be devoted to a guided fieldwork project.

**RELI 498/2 – A** (3 credits)  
FOOD, CULTURE AND RELIGION  
Prerequisite: Permission of the department

T.1445-1700

What does a cookbook tell you? What can you learn from a religious festive meal? Food is present as part of every religious event. Examining foodways exposes the complexity of nationhood and religious continuity. Food studies can facilitate our understanding of cultural and religious patterns. This course will use the study of food as a vehicle through which to approach the ethnographic study of religious communities and their ritual practices. In this course, you will learn how to do an ethnographic study of a community or ritual of your choice by focusing on some aspect of their commensal or culinary heritage.



## WINTER 2021

**RELI 209/4 – A** (3 credits)

M.W. 1445-1600

THE RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION

This course explores the conceptual elements that underlie the religious experience. These elements include the notion of the sacred, beliefs, cosmologies and myths, the origins and understanding of evil, ethics and salvation. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for RELI 211 may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 210/4 – A** (3 credits)

M.W.1145-1300

RELIGION IN PRACTICE

This course focuses on the day-to-day practice of religious traditions. Included are the expression of religious experiences through art, music, and scripture; transmission of these religious expressions through ritual, worship and mystical/ecstatic practices; and the construction and maintenance of different types of religious authority and communal identities. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for RELI 211 may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 215/4 – A** (3 credits)

W . F . 0845-1000

RELIGIONS OF ASIA

This course surveys the history, doctrines, institutions, and practices of religions that have arisen in and spread throughout Asia, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and the religions of China and Japan. The course explores the religious activities and experiences of both women and men within these traditions. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for RELI 213 or RELZ 215 may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 216/4– EC** (3 credits)

online

ENCOUNTERING RELIGIONS

This course serves as an introduction to some of the religions of today's world, and explores several contemporary contexts where people of diverse religious backgrounds come into contact with one another. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for this topic under a RELI 298 number may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 223/4 - A** (3 credits)

T.J. 1615-1730

INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIANITY

Instructor:

This course provides an introductory survey of key developments and enduring structures in the historical evolution of Christianity. It examines the variety of expressions of faith embodied in different churches and traces the ways in which beliefs, institutions, symbols, and rituals have in the past and continue today to carry forward the Christian tradition as a world religion in a variety of cultural contexts.

**RELI 312/2 – A** (3 credits)

M.W. 1145-1300

JUSTICE AND SOCIAL CONFLICT IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

This course considers ethical issues arising in the context of social, legal, and political relations. These issues are discussed in relation to both traditional and contemporary moral perspectives, both religious and non-religious. Topics covered typically include discussions of social and economic inequality, welfare, poverty,

just punishment, business ethics, public ethics, economic development, and sustainable development.

**RELI 315/4 – AA** (3 credits)

J. 1745-2015

MUSLIM CULTURES OF SOUTH ASIA

About one-third of the world's Muslims live in India, Pakistan, or Bangladesh, making Southern Asia the world region with the largest proportion of Muslims. Yet many aspects of Muslim belief and practice in these countries have a distinctively South Asian flavour and in some cases derive from regional cultural traditions. This course looks at the history of Muslim presence in Southern Asia, including its extensive political and cultural impact from the seventh century to the present, and investigates the complexities of communal identity over the course of that history. The role of Sufism and Muslim contributions to South Asian literature, art, architecture, and music are also explored.

**RELI 318/4 – A** (3 credits)

W. 0845-1130

SHIITE ISLAM

This course explores the history and ideas of Shiism, from the inception of the movement to the present. The various sects are introduced and studied, including the Twelvers, Ismailis, Druze, and Alawites. Shiite doctrines related to esoterism, quietism, and messianism are considered in comparison with other religions, while study of the modern period treats subjects such as theocracy, political activism, and martyrdom.

**RELI 319/4 – A** (3 credits)

W. 1745-2015

MODERN ISLAM

This course surveys some of the questions raised by modernity for Muslims and the various responses Muslims have sought to formulate and put into practice. Issues addressed may include government, law, gender, relations with the West, and religious authority.

**RELI 325/4 – A** (3 credits)

M.W. 1615-1730

LEADERS, REBELS AND SAINTS

This course, which varies in focus from year to year, investigates the lives of controversial or influential women and men in the history of different religious traditions. Going beyond mere biography, the course situates particular figures within their social and cultural contexts, while dealing with how such prominent figures were viewed, portrayed, and used by others. Specific topics for this course are stated in the Undergraduate Class Schedule; examples are Moses, Jesus and Mary.

**RELI 328/4 - AA** (3 credits)

M.W. 1615-1730

MODERN JUDAISM

This course surveys the major historical events, sociological and political forces, and intellectual currents which shaped Judaism in the modern period as well as the ways that Jewish communities responded to these forces. Among the topics explored are Emancipation, forms of religious adjustment, anti-semitism, the experience of Jewish communities in Russia and North America, the Holocaust, and Zionism and the state of Israel.

**RELI 343/4 – A (3 credits)**

M.W. 1015-1130

**YOGA IN HISTORY, THOUGHT AND PRACTICE**

This course examines the history, thought, and practices of Yoga in their religious and cultural contexts. In the modern West, Yoga has become popular as a secular form of exercise. However, as this course shows, the diverse Yoga traditions of India have also involved sophisticated analyses of the mind and systems of meditation. Intrinsic to no single religion, Yoga has had roles in most South Asian traditions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sufism or Islamic mysticism. The course surveys this rich history, and the various forms of meditative and physical discipline Yoga has entailed.

**Note:** *Students who have received credit for this topic under a RELI 398 number may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 351/4 – A (3 credits)**

T.J. 1315-1430

**JEWISH EASTERN EUROPE**

This course takes into account the arrival of large numbers of Western European Jews in Poland and the Russian empire; the rise of Chasidism; the pre-World War II Yiddish cultural ferment; and political parties. The course focuses on recent developments: the rise of tourism to Eastern Europe; the historical, educational and memorial challenges associated with a reclamation of identity; and contemporary musical, religious and literary expressions. **Note:** Students who have received credit for this topic under a RELI 398 or 498 number may not take this course for credit.

**RELI 355/4 – A (3 credits)**

T.J.1015-1130

**RELIGION AND VIOLENCE**

(xlisted LOYC 398E)

This course explores how religion may be seen to engender or exacerbate violence, as well as the ways that religion may critique, prevent or even offer alternatives to violence. Sacred writings, theologies, rituals and communal actions of particular communities are studied, as well as notions of the self, the group, others, outsiders and enemies. In particular, the life-work and writings of such key figures as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King are studied in order to provide some religious perspectives on the relationship between non-violence and the resistance to injustice. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for this topic under a RELI 398 number may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 378/4 - A (3 credits)**

T.J. 1445-1600

**DEATH AND DYING**

This course provides a comparative perspective on the variety of conceptions and practices related to death and dying that are found in different world religions. In addition, the course considers how people in contemporary North American society utilize traditional religious concepts and rituals, scientific understandings and medical procedures, or innovative combinations of ideas and practices with which to cope.

**RELI 380/4 – A (3 credits)**

T.J. 0845-1000

**RELIGION AND SEXUALITY**

(xlisted LOYC 398F)

This course examines, from a comparative and historical perspective, the interplay between religion and sexuality. It looks at the development of attitudes towards sexuality

within diverse religious traditions, and religious manifestations of sexuality. Topics include, among others: human reproduction, gender roles and identity, birth control, abortion, celibacy, sexual variance, and homosexuality.

**RELI 386/2 - A** (3 credits)

T.1745-2015

WITCHCRAFT, MAGIC AND RELIGION

This course approaches the study of magic, witchcraft, and religion from a variety of perspectives. Taking examples from indigenous cultures, the ancient world, medieval Europe, the early modern period and contemporary movements, the practices and rituals that have been labeled magic or witchcraft are examined, along with the responses to them. The course explores how magicians and witches view themselves, how different cultures relate to them, and how magic, witchcraft, and religion merge and diverge. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for this topic under an RELI 398 number may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 393/4 – A** (3 credits)

T.J. 1145-1300

WOMEN IN ISRAEL

This course explores women's experience in the development of Israeli society. Students are introduced to the history, social planning, politics and religious authority that have shaped the current status of women in Israel. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for this topic under a RELI 398 number may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 394/4 – A** (3 credits)

M.1745-2015

HISTORY OF SATAN

This course investigates the origins, development, and significance of personified evil, that is Satan and his demons, in early Judaism and in the history of Christianity. Consideration is given to some of the most important literary and visual depictions of this figure and his story from the ancient world through the Middle Ages to present day. The course sheds light on how intellectuals thought of this figure and also how Satan came to play an important role in popular culture down through the centuries. **Note:** *Students who have received credit for this topic under a RELI 398 number may not take this course for credit.*

**RELI 398/4– BB** (3 credits)

J.. 1745-2015

SELECTED TOPICS IN RELIGION

ANIMAL RIGHTS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Humans are animals, or are they? The Western cultural tradition has long treated humans and animals as separate categories, with different systems of ethics and values applied to each. How humans perceive their relationship with animals affects choices about diet, understandings of our place in the world, and increasingly, issues of habitat preservation, environmental degradation, and the ethics of scientific research. In this seminar-format course we will discuss how human-animal relationships are being debated and re-imagined today.

**RELI 398/4 – F (3 credits)**  
DECOLONIZING RELIGION

M.W. 1445-1600

This course explores how the category, conceptualization and history of religion is connected to colonialism, past and present. We will interrogate how colonial discourses, power, and history shape the way we think about religion and various possibilities for moving beyond these colonial assumptions. The course will cover topics such as decolonization, post-colonialism, indigeneity, settler colonialism, power/knowledge, colonial discourse theory, black anti-colonial philosophy, Marxism, queer theory, the protestant presuppositions of religion, and the deconstruction of ‘religion’.”

**RELI 498/4 – C (3 credits)**  
RELIGION AND POPULAR CULTURE  
Prerequisite: Permission of the Department

M.1145-1400

This seminar explores the relationship between religion and popular culture. Topics for discussion include: the topographies of popular culture in today's digitally integrated, superflat world; the nature of religion in a society that is inundated, saturated, and orientated by popular culture; the redeployment and functions of traditional religious themes and tropes in new pop-cultural forms; and the global "apocalyptic shift" of the past generation and its pop-cultural expressions.

**RELI 498/4 – D (3 credits)**  
THE TANTRIC SYSTEMS  
Prerequisite: Permission of the Department

W.1145-1400

The Tantras are one of the more flamboyant of the spiritual systems of India. They created a revolution in spiritual practices during the Medieval period (roughly 600-1300). Its adaptations of Vedic ritual for non-Brahmins shocked the conservative establishment with antinomian behaviour and macabre symbolism and rituals. These various systems were soon adopted by Jainism and Buddhism and in the latter's versions spread far to Central, South-East, and East Asia. Tantric masters were considered holders of occult powers and were hired by courts to lend their spiritual help to imperial and royal governments. This course examines the history, textual sources, ritual, philosophies, practices and social contexts of the tantric or “esoteric” traditions of Asia, and explores the roles of tantric practice in the broader landscape of Asian religion and culture.

**RELI 498/4 - B (3 credits)**  
HOLOCAUST HISTORY, GENDER AND SEXUALITY  
Prerequisite: Permission of the Department

T. 1530-1745

This course will engage with recent and important shifts in Holocaust reception. Gender and sexuality have not been among the foremost contexts in the field, though recently, important work is changing this. We will consider established forms of response, by way of a review of canonical Holocaust materials in order to explore how new approaches have changed their status. Established memoirs by women writers such as Ruth Kluger and Charlotte Delbo will be viewed in relation to newer critical work, including Zoe Waxman's study *Women in the Holocaust: A Feminist History*. Similarly, we will look at how an early work like the play *Bent*, in its presentation of gay wartime experience,

accounted for recent approaches. While offering a review of the field this class will aim to examine where these issues are leading Holocaust studies.

**Department of Religion - Timetable Fall 2020**

	<b>MON</b>	<b>TUE</b>	<b>WED</b>	<b>THUR</b>	<b>FRI</b>
0845-1000		233		233	
10:15-11:30	398C	320 332	220 398C	320 332	220
11:45-13:00	210 398A	224 225	210 398A	224 225 360 until 1430	
13:15-14:30		310 368		310 368	
14:45-16:00	225	398D	225	398D	
16:15-17:30	209 372	227	209 372	227	
17:45-20:15	300	409	383	306	
20:30-22:45					

**Department of Religion - Timetable Winter 2021**

	<b>MON</b>	<b>TUE</b>	<b>WED</b>	<b>THUR</b>	<b>FRI</b>
0845-1000		380	215 318 until 11:30	380	215
10:15-11:30	343	355	343	355	
11:45-13:00	312 210	393	312 210	393	
13:15-14:30	382	351	382	351	
14:45-16:00	209 398 F	378	209 398 F	378	
16:15-17:30	325 328	223	325 328	223	
17:45-20:15	394	386	319	315 398BB	
20:30-22:45					