

CRN#**Fall 2014 Religious Studies Cornerstone Course Descriptions****20567 REL 100-A, Honors COR: Gods, Myths, and Rituals in the Ancient Mediterranean****Prof. N. DesRosiers**

This class investigates the diverse religions of the ancient Mediterranean world (ca. 600 BCE-400CE), including Greek and Roman religions, formative Judaism, and the earliest Christianity. The course explores the history and development of these traditions by examining topics related to issues of ritual, myth, sacred space, gender, and concepts of divinity within each group. Particular focus is placed on the ways in which these groups influenced one another and reshaped cultural and religious landscapes through competitive interaction. Through a critical analysis of the sources students will begin to understand the practices, beliefs, and experiences of the Greco-Roman world and the communities that produced them. Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

20687 REL 100-B, COR: Deviance and the Divine**20568 REL 100-M, COR: Deviance and the Divine****Prof. S. Lowin**

This course will use the concept of deviance as the lens through which we will study the three major monotheistic traditions of the world - Islam, Judaism and Christianity. What are the major tenets and beliefs of each? What do they share and where are the conflicts? What does each consider normative and why? When does a belief or practice cross the line in deviance? Ultimately, are they all simply deviants of one another? In our investigation, we will also look to some lesser known religious traditions as foils, such as Scientology, Raelianism, the Nation of Islam, Jews for Jesus, Mormonism, and Christian Science. Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

20559 REL 100-C, COR: The Journey Toward Religious Maturity**Prof. P. Beisheim**

The course takes an interdisciplinary approach to examining the process by which a person achieves an adult faith in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Drawing from psychology and anthropology, we explore the phases of religious development in relation to myths and symbols, and we apply that understanding to a specific person and to a theological issue, while also considering how to read, critically and analytically, a non-religious text through the lens of religion. Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

20560 REL 100-D, COR: Religion as Pharmakon: Poison or Cure**20561 REL 100-E, COR: Religion as Pharmakon: Poison or Cure****Prof. G. Shaw**

For the ancient Greeks pharmakon meant both cure and poison depending on the context. Religion functions in the same way: it can heal us but can also poison us. We will explore the ambiguity and the power - both healing and destructive - of religious traditions. Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

20562 REL 100-F, COR: Pilgrimage and Passage: Religion as "Sacred" Journey**Prof. S. Wilbricht, CSC**

The course begins with the premise that all religions are at their best when they are "betwixt and between," living in the threshold, open to new and unexpected horizons. After a close reading of the Book of Exodus, which will provide the opportunity to identify various themes associated with ritual passage, we will concentrate primarily on the study of the three chief monotheistic religions of Semitic origin: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The course will end with a brief exploration of Hinduism and Buddhism. Through comparative analysis of these religions, we will strive to determine similarities and differences in particular approaches to God, worship, institution, and moral conduct. Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

20563 REL 100-G, COR: The Religious Quest**20564 REL 100-H, COR: The Religious Quest****Prof. C. Ives**

This course explores pilgrimage in Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism in light of theories of pilgrimage, ritual, and sacred space. The primary focus will be on the pilgrimages to Lourdes, Santiago de Compostella, Mecca, and Buddhist sites in Japan and India. The course also considers how for many people - even those who do not consider themselves religious - pilgrimage serves as a model for living a meaningful life. Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

20565 REL 100-I, COR: Abrahamic Faith**20566 REL 100-J, COR: Abrahamic Faith****Prof. P. DaPonte**

This course is an investigation of the religious dimension of human experience, especially as it has been lived, understood and cherished among the three Abrahamic traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Its guiding focus is the centrality of "faith" as a relational response to God who, in line with Abraham's foundational claim, is experienced as living. The course considers significant questions in conversation with some of the most important writings in the tradition of Western religious thought, as well as some of the basic questions that arise in the academic investigation of religion: What is the nature of religious experience? How does religion provide motivation and direction for the life of individuals and communities? How does religion nurture or inhibit human development and well-being? Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

20557 REL 100-K, COR: Religion and How to Create One**20570 REL 100-O, COR: Religion and How to Create One****Prof. J. Lanci**

Is there a future for religion in the 21st century? This course will consist of a semester - long conversation - fueled by readings and a lot of writing - about the nature of spirituality and religion. To promote deep learning about how religions work and why they might still be valuable to our society, the class will see if it can develop a new religion, one that might better meet its generation's need for a way to make sense of - and meaning for - their lives. Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

20569 REL 100-N, COR: The Subject is the Question of God**Prof. T. Clarke**

Religious traditions were established before humans were aware that they were subjects. With awareness of subjectivity, religious traditions have to be reconstructed on what we know today about the brain and universe. How is this possible in an atheistic universe? Beyond atheism, the very significance of the human as a subject open to freedom is the question of God. Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

20572 REL 112-A, FYS: Saints and Sinners in Church History**Prof. R. Gribble, CSC**

Saints and sinners, much like victors and vanquished in war, are often determined by those who triumph in Church conflicts. This course will address several Church controversies throughout the 2000 years of its history, review the issues and debates that arose through the reading of primary and secondary sources, and who in the end were considered victors, saints, and the vanquished, sinners, in Church history. Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

20714 REL 124-A, FYS: God Doesn't Do Religion**Prof. M. Leith**

We tend to think that religion is all about God, but why? And if God "doesn't do religion," who does? What do we even mean by "religion" in these questions? This course will inquire into the "building blocks" of religion and human religiousness, considering the practices of Jews, Christians and Muslims from an anthropological and historical perspective. Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.