

**CRN#****Fall 2019 Religious Studies Cornerstone Course Descriptions**

**20603 REL 100-A, HON COR: Gods, Myths, and Rituals in the Ancient Mediterranean 3 credits (Honors)**  
**20604 REL 100-B, COR: Gods, Myths, and Rituals in the Ancient Mediterranean 3 credits**

**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.

Section A is only open to Honors Scholars that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.  
 Section B is only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

**20605 REL 100-C, COR: Pilgrimage in Nature 3 credits**  
**20606 REL 100-D, COR: Pilgrimage in Nature 3 credits**

**Prof. C. Ives**

Stories in scriptures and the experiences of pilgrims remind us that religious life does not always take place indoors. Much of human religious experience occurs outside, in nature. We will explore this dimension of human religiosity through examination of Christian, Islamic, and Buddhist pilgrimages to such places as Lourdes, Mecca, and northern India, as well as the broader themes of nature symbolism and nature mysticism.

Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

**20607 REL 100-E, COR: Deviance and the Devine 3 credits**  
**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.

**20608 REL 100-F, COR: Religion as Pharmakon: Poison or Cure 3 credits**  
**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.

**20609 REL 100-G, COR: From Cloister to CrossFit: Religion in Medieval and Modern Worlds 3 credits**  
**20610 REL 100-H, COR: From Cloister to CrossFit: Religion in Medieval and Modern Worlds 3 credits**

**Prof. C. Tichelkamp**

What makes a medieval monastery different from a modern-day brewery or gym? What is religion? What is secularism? This course covers medieval and modern religions through critical reading of texts, films, and artwork drawn primarily from Christianity, but also neighboring traditions (Judaism, indigenous religions) and modern movements (science, nation-building).

Only open to Honors Scholars that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.

- 20614 REL 100-I, COR: Justice and Religion 3 credits**  
**TBA**  
 This course considers ways the Christian tradition conceives of and responds to critical issues in building a just society. Using the Gospels and other New Testament texts, we first explore how Jesus and early Christians helped shape the social and spiritual landscapes of their world and then apply them to our present society. To enrich our understanding of justice, we will examine Jewish and Islamic sources in light of New Testament teachings about justice.
- Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.
- 20615 REL 100-J, COR: Critique of Religion 3 credits**  
**20616 REL 100-K, COR: Critique of Religion 3 credits**  
**Prof. D. Ullucci**  
 This course is an introduction to the critical, academic study of religion. It will touch on both personal and broader societal issues that are involved in the contemporary study of religion. It will examine several of the most prominent modern critiques of religion, as well as the various responses to those critiques. Further, it will explore and ask students to reflect on the meaning of religion in today's culturally diverse and religiously pluralistic world. Its objectives are to acquire a basic knowledge of some of the foundational theories of religion, to acquire a working understanding of various methodologies in the critical study of religion, to reflect on one's own understanding and experience of religion, and to reflect on the role of religion in the contemporary world.
- Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.
- 20617 REL 100-M, COR: Abrahamic Faith 3 credits**  
**20618 REL 100-N, COR: Abrahamic Faith 3 credits**  
**TBA**  
 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.
- Only open to students that have not completed the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.
- 20744 REL 122-A, FYS: Pilgrimage and Passage: Religion as "Sacred" Journey 4 credits (First-Year Seminar)**  
**20745 REL 122-B, FYS: Pilgrimage and Passage: Religion as "Sacred" Journey 4 credits (First-Year Seminar)**  
**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 First-Year Seminar and Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.
- 20743 REL 129-A, FYS: From Cloister to CrossFit: Religion in Medieval and Modern Worlds 4 credits (First-Year Seminar)**  
**Prof. C. Tichelkamp**  
 What makes a medieval monastery different from a modern-day brewery or gym? What is religion? What is secularism? This course covers medieval and modern religions through critical reading of texts, films, and artwork drawn primarily from Christianity, but also neighboring traditions (Judaism, indigenous religions) and modern movements (science, nation-building).
- Only open to students that have not completed the First-Year Seminar and Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.