

CRN#**Spring 2020 Religious Studies Cornerstone Course Descriptions**

40381 RST 100-A, COR: God Doesn't Do Religion 3 credits

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.

40383 RST 100-B, 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.

40384 RST 100-C, COR: Pilgrimage into Nature 3 credits

40385 RST 100-D, COR: Pilgrimage into 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.

40386 RST 100-E, COR: Catholicism and Indigenous Religions of the Americas 3 credits

40387 RST 100-F, COR: Catholicism and Indigenous Religions of the Americas 3 credits

Prof. C. Tichelkamp

When Catholic missionaries first met the indigenous peoples of the Americas, they faced a moral and theological dilemma. What to make of these peoples and their religious thought and practice? This course studies indigenous religious cultures such as the Aztec, Ojibwe and Inca alongside three European religious orders who encountered them. Through readings, field trips, guest speakers, and artwork, we will compare indigenous traditions to Catholic traditions, thinking analytically and critically about indigenous spirituality, Catholic theology, and "religion" itself. When Catholic missionaries first met the indigenous peoples of the Americas, they faced a moral and theological dilemma. What to make of these peoples and their religious thought and practice? This course studies indigenous religious cultures such as the Aztec, Ojibwe and Inca alongside three European religious orders who encountered them. Through readings, field trips, guest speakers, and artwork, we will compare indigenous traditions to Catholic traditions, thinking analytically and critically about indigenous spirituality, Catholic theology, and "religion" itself.

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

~~**40388 RST 100-G, COR: Pilgrimage and Passage: Religion as "Sacred" Journey 3 credits**~~ **CANCELLED**

40778 RST 100-M, COR: Pilgrimage and Passage: Religion as "Sacred" Journey 3 credits

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.

- 40389 RST 100-H, COR: Religion as Pharmakon: Poison or Cure 3 credits**
40390 RST 100-I, 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.

- 40391 RST 100-J, COR: Creation, Creativity, and (Re)creation 3 credits**
40392 RST 100-K, COR: Creation, Creativity, and (Re)creation 3 credits
Prof. R. Bannon

Creation, Creativity, and ReCreation is a journey of self-discovery through the study and celebration of the enormous diversity of human thought about the meaning and purpose of existence and our responsibilities to nature and society. Through in-class discussions and small group podcast recordings, we consider the relationship between creation, creativity, and playful re-creation. We dive deeply into Hindu theologies, Buddhist theologies, and Christian theologies in comparative reflection while exploring the relationships between work/karma and play/leela.

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

- 40784 RST 100-N, COR: Critique of Religion 3 credits**
40785 RST 100-O, 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.

- 40774 RST 126-A, FYS: Critique of Religion (First-Year Seminar) 4 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 First-Year Seminar and Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.