

# RELIGION (RLGN)

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## **RLGN 4000 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion (4 Credits)**

This course begins with a brief overview of the history of the study of religion in the west, from antiquity to the modern period. When we reach the modern period, the course shifts to considering 'representative' theories of religion, broken down roughly along ideological and/or disciplinary lines.

## **RLGN 4105 Empire and the Rise of Christianity (4 Credits)**

This course covers approximately the first five centuries of Christian history with a view toward understanding the role empire played in the rise of Christianity, both in terms of the confluence between Christianity and the Roman Empire as well as its role in the development of Christian beliefs, practices, production of discourse, institutions, and strategies of social control.

## **RLGN 4106 Second Century Life & Thought (4 Credits)**

An attempt to understand Christian life and thought in the Roman Empire in the Second-century by analyzing primary sources.

## **RLGN 4107 Women in Early Christianity (4 Credits)**

An exploration of the role women played in early Christianity, with attention given to the social and literary constructions of women in Greco-Roman antiquity.

## **RLGN 4108 Jewish and Christian Non-Canonical Literature (4 Credits)**

This seminar examines Jewish and Hellenistic backgrounds; the social scientific study of early Christianity; and the New Testament in its literary environment.

## **RLGN 4109 Formation of the Bible (4 Credits)**

This course focuses on the development of the Christian Bible. Some attention, however, will be given to the emergence of the Jewish canon, primarily as it relates to and impacts the Christian canon. The chronological expanse of the course ranges from the Hellenistic through the late Roman period. The approach of the course is necessarily literary and historical, but theoretical issues about what constitutes scripture and canon will also be given attention.

## **RLGN 4110 Hebrew Reading (2 Credits)**

Advanced work in biblical languages or a selected issue in a language study.

## **RLGN 4111 Greek Reading (2 Credits)**

Selected readings from the New Testament and other early Christian literature. Greek I, II and Exegesis are prerequisites Offered each year. May be repeated for credit.

## **RLGN 4113 The Bible and Its Afterlives: Jonah (4 Credits)**

This course invites students to place the biblical book of Jonah in conversation with works of literature, art, and theology that interpret Jonah or explore themes in the book, including the nature of God, prophecy, election, death, and transformation. The course will introduce students to the history of interpretation (or reception history) by considering Jonah's afterlives in a variety of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic texts, artistic programs, and manuscript illuminations.

## **RLGN 4115 Hebrew Bible Literature: Genesis (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected Hebrew Bible literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

## **RLGN 4116 Hebrew Bible Literature: Exodus (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected Hebrew Bible literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

## **RLGN 4117 Hebrew Bible Literature: Leviticus (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected Hebrew Bible literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

## **RLGN 4118 Hebrew Bible Literature: Numbers (4 Credits)**

## **RLGN 4119 Hebrew Bible Literature: Deuteronomy (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected Hebrew Bible literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

## **RLGN 4125 Hebrew Bible Literature - Job (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected Hebrew Bible literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

## **RLGN 4128 Hebrew Bible Literature: Jeremiah (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected Hebrew Bible literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

## **RLGN 4129 Hebrew Bible Literature: Jonah (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected Hebrew Bible literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

## **RLGN 4130 Hebrew Bible Literature: Prophetic Literature (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected Hebrew Bible literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

## **RLGN 4131 Hebrew Bible Literature: Wisdom Literature (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected Hebrew Bible literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

**RLGN 4135 Poetry in the Hebrew Bible (4 Credits)**

In this course, we will analyze poems primarily from the books of Job, Lamentations, Psalms, 2 Isaiah, and Jeremiah. Class sessions will be divided between studying some aspect of Hebrew prosody (e.g., metaphor, parallelism, lineation) and looking at the ways in which various poets use these particular devices. We will be particularly interested in identifying how poets bring their messages to life, engage their audiences, challenge (or uphold) the status quo, and revitalize the community's imagination and, in turn, its faith in YHWH. Each week, we will read about a particular aspect of poetry and prepare specific poems with the readings in mind; the readings will provide us with a language that we might discuss specifically how the poets impart and encode their messages.

**RLGN 4141 New Testament Literature: Mark (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected New Testament literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

**RLGN 4142 New Testament Literature: Luke (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected New Testament literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

**RLGN 4143 New Testament Literature: John (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected New Testament literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

**RLGN 4144 New Testament Literature: Acts of the Apostles (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected New Testament literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

**RLGN 4145 New Testament Literature: Romans (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected New Testament literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

**RLGN 4146 New Testament Literature: Corinthians (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected New Testament literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

**RLGN 4147 New Testament Literature: Galatians (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected New Testament literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

**RLGN 4148 New Testament Literature: Hebrews (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected New Testament literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

**RLGN 4150 New Testament Literature: Revelation (4 Credits)**

Interpretation of selected New Testament literature. Each course focuses on a book or selected topic. Different courses are offered each year.

**RLGN 4151 Studies in Early Christianity (4 Credits)**

A critical study of themes and selected movements within early Christianity and other religions of the Greco-Roman world. May be repeated for credit.

**RLGN 4152 Identity in the Hebrew Bible (4 Credits)**

This course explores diverse constructions of selfhood in the Hebrew Bible in conversation with theories of identity and the self from a range of disciplines, including anthropology, philosophy, sociology, and psychology. In this class, we will consider how the biblical texts present different models of selfhood through discourse, practice, and ritual. Each class session will focus on a different aspect of identity: gender, social class, ethnicity, nationality, colonialism, the body, and kinship and family. Throughout the course, we will discuss the implications of these constructs of identity for ethics, agency, and theology.

**RLGN 4153 War, Politics, & Society in the Hebrew Bible (4 Credits)**

This course examines the interrelationship between war, politics, and society in the Hebrew Bible and their interplay both in the texts and in larger historical, social, and cultural contexts.

**RLGN 4154 Migration and the Bible (4 Credits)**

Migration and people on the move pervades the Bible, from Adam and Eve to Jesus. This course examines migration in the Bible and the resources it offers for responding to the current realities of migration, immigration, exile, deportation, and other aspects of migration in the world today. A range of perspectives on migration and the Bible are considered, including denominational resources, international aid agencies, and theoretical viewpoints.

**RLGN 4155 Being Human in the Bible (4 Credits)**

What does it mean to be human, according to the biblical writers? This is both a simple and complicated question to ask, much less answer. How it is addressed has important consequences. A range of perspectives and answers to the question therefore will be taken up in this course. These can include life and death, gender and sexuality, technology, education, family relations, politics, peoplehood, ecology, human vs. animal, philosophy, and economics. These perspectives and answers are engaged in pursuit of gaining a greater appreciation for how one might think through this question.

**RLGN 4160 Teaching the Bible (4 Credits)**

Designed to integrate faith development theory, biblical interpretation and confluent education. Education instructional models for the purpose of assisting students to develop professional self-understanding and functional skills as interpreters and teachers; experience in teaching adults in a local setting.

**RLGN 4161 Queering Early Christianity (4 Credits)**

This course surveys some of the major influences of queer theory on the study of the New Testament and early Christianity, beginning with the work of Judith Butler and continuing through the contributions of queer theorizations inflected by affect, violence, diaspora, race and racialization, and trans discourses. The course considers a variety of canonical and non-canonical texts and practices from the first centuries of the Christian tradition, with an eye to how theorizations of queerness help frame inquiry into the formation of Christian "identity" and belonging.

**RLGN 4162 Minoritized Interpretation of the New Testament (4 Credits)**

Though the academic study of the New Testament has long been controlled by European and North American institutions and persons of European descent, recent decades have seen a surge of other perspectives that are sometimes collected under the heading of “minoritized.” These perspectives include postcolonial and decolonial approaches, and methods centered on racial or ethnic identities, geographies, cultures, shared historical experiences, and gender and sexuality, to name a few. This course considers these forms of interpretation together and separately, as ways of reading biblical texts outside of the field’s historical biases.

**RLGN 4204 Multi-Cultural Pastoral Care & Counseling (4 Credits)**

Examines multicultural issues in pastoral care and counseling and explores the dynamics and complexities of culture, race and other socializing factors in pastoral care conversations.

**RLGN 4205 Introduction to Process Thought (4 Credits)**

This course provides an overview of Process Theology from its early developments out of Process Philosophy to its current incarnations in theopoetics, ecological civilization, and radical interrelationality.

**RLGN 4206 Spiritual Care of Trauma (4 Credits)**

This advanced course integrates knowledge, capacities, and skills for practicing justice-seeking, interreligious, and research-literate spiritual care of trauma. This course draws upon psychological research on trauma and spiritual struggles. Readings on socially just spiritual care focus on practices, beliefs, and values that lament harm done by religiously based violence. A spiritually integrative pedagogy uses (1) body-based self-care practices and deep listening conversations about self-care; (2) self-assessment of one’s interpersonal capacities for deep interreligious listening; (3) a qualitative analysis of one’s spiritual orienting system (self-care practices, struggles, values, and beliefs) embedded in conversations about one’s spiritual practices; (4) spiritually integrative assignment about a personal experience of trauma; (5) conversations with a learning partner and Dr. Doebling about this integrative assignment. These experiential components help students develop capacities for spiritual self-differentiation, empathy, and reflexivity. These experiential components are designed to help students integrate critical theory and research into practices of spiritual self-care, integration, and interreligious deep listening.

**RLGN 4207 Moral Stress, Resilience & Spiritual Integration (4 Credits)**

Moral stress arises from shame/guilt/fear of causing harm involving conflicts in values. Moral injury arises from traumatic stress that is more shame than fear based, and has been researched extensively among military personnel. Spiritual integration of moral stress and injury uses spiritual practices and theological meaning-making to compassionately identify life-limiting embedded shame-based values, beliefs, and ways of coping with moral stress and injury (lived theologies) in order to compassionately understand the origins of moral stress and injury. Relational resilience is the outcome of spiritual integration based on spiritual practices fostering compassion and more complex theological ways of understanding moral conflicts, stress and injury.

**RLGN 4208 Erik Erikson: Resource for Pastoral Care (4 Credits)**

This course explores Erik H. Erikson’s life cycle theory as a resource for the pastoral care of children, adolescents, young adults, adults, and older adults. Attention is given to Erikson’s psychoanalytic orientation and the development of his life cycle theory over the course of his career. The course encourages the use of developmental theory to deepen the student’s introspective reflection and vocational orientation. By focusing on the work of a single author, this course is meant to illustrate how a pastoral theology student may use the work of a prominent psychologist in the development of a dissertation topic.

**RLGN 4209 Spiritual Care in Pluralistic Contexts (4 Credits)**

This course helps students learn emergent pastoral theologies of spiritual care in a pluralistic context and use them to reflect on case studies written by experienced practitioners. In this course, students will identify their personal values, attitudes, and beliefs and examine their own social identities to better understand how these dimensions of self can guide and challenge them in reflecting on spiritual care with those who are different from them.

**RLGN 4210 Theories of the Self in Pastoral Theology (4 Credits)**

This advanced course introduces students to psychological concepts and theories of the self that are operative in pastoral and spiritual care and counseling. Toward that end, this course traces understandings of the self within the works of pastoral theologians, psychologists of religion(s), and practitioners in pastoral and spiritual care. Particular attention will be given to identity formation, relationality, interdependence, and psychic-injury.

**RLGN 4220 Research Methods and Ethics in Lived Religion/Practical Theology (4 Credits)**

This course introduces students to a variety of qualitative and quantitative approaches to rigorous scholarly research in lived religious contexts, as well as to particular ethical challenges and questions that such approaches may elicit. Students will also be introduced to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process as a foundational component in developing a critically informed, contextualized methodology for any research-based project in the fields of lived religion and practical theology.

**RLGN 4221 Internal Family Systems (4 Credits)**

Internal Family Systems Therapy (IFS) is a non-pathologizing psycho-spiritual approach to personal healing and spiritual transformation through self-compassion and self-exploration. This course will introduce students to the core concepts and practices of the model through experiential and theoretical approaches to it and the worlds/pluridimensional qualities of what it means to be “ourselves”.

**RLGN 4302 Buddhist Philosophy (4 Credits)**

An introduction to the Buddhist philosophical tradition that covers both the different philosophical movements within Buddhism as schools of thoughts and major philosophical issues, such as the theory of karma and determinism, the nature of mind, proofs for past and future lives, theories of knowledge, ethics, the doctrine of emptiness and the nature of enlightenment.

**RLGN 4303 Sacred Space and Place in Comparative Perspective (4 Credits)**

This course examines sacred spaces and sacred places from a comparative perspective. Through close reading and discussion of primary and secondary sources, students are challenged to think critically and theoretically about sacred spaces and places.

**RLGN 4304 Material Divinity (4 Credits)**

This course explores how religion happens in material culture- broadly defined as images, devotional and liturgical objects, architecture and sacred space, works of art, and mass-produced artifacts.

**RLGN 4305 Pilgrimage in Comparative Perspective (4 Credits)**

This is a comparative course that examines the dynamics of pilgrimage from a number of different angles - theoretical, doctrinal, ritual, social - and which utilizes a variety of sources - including classical, ethnographic studies of actual pilgrimages, and focused studies of particular pilgrimage places - with the goal of gaining a thorough understanding of the phenomena of pilgrimage in all of its complexity.

**RLGN 4321 Islam and Gender (4 Credits)**

This course examines issues surrounding gender and sexuality in Islam. Through a close reading of religious texts, critiques of patriarchy, and historical studies, students are challenged to think critically about the construction of gender roles and the regulation of sexual practices in Islam. By the conclusion of the class, students gain insight and understanding regarding the ways modernity has radically altered norms surrounding gender and sexual preference in Muslim-majority societies.

**RLGN 4322 Interreligious Dialogue: A Critical Analysis (4 Credits)**

This course exposes students to the theory and practice of interreligious dialogue (broadly defined) and the issues raised by interreligious dialogue, such as theologies of religious pluralism, secularism, religiously motivated violence, and religion and public life. Students have opportunity to read critical scholarship on these topics generally, as well as study specific cases where points of contact occur between religious groups—either in terms of dialogue (or other mutually edifying endeavors) or conflicts that have arisen between religious groups. In the process students will also learn about some of the more prominent organizations working in interreligious dialogue.

**RLGN 4401 Race, Gender, Class: Historical & Social Analysis of Racism in the Modern World (4 Credits)**

An historical survey of the role of racism, sexism and classism in shaping the oppressive institutional structures of the existing world order and of how sociological analysis of these structures can help justice and peace activists direct effective action toward the elimination of race, gender and class oppression.

**RLGN 4402 American Indian Cultures and Worldview (4 Credits)**

A survey of the worldviews of Native American people, as these pertain to both inter-tribal beliefs and Native American ceremonial life, with an attempt to show how Native American practice proceeds from their worldview.

**RLGN 4403 Sects, Cults & New Religions (4 Credits)**

An exploration of non-mainstream religious groups. Topics include innovation and recruitment; "cult" controversies; sectarian Christianity, gender and sexuality; UFO religions; and religion and marginalized racial projects.

**RLGN 4404 Race and Religion in the United States (4 Credits)**

An exploration of the different ways in which race is understood religiously in the United States and how race impacts both white and racial minority religious institutions. Specific topics include the black church, the Nation of Islam, Native American theology, the Christian far right, Asian American religions, Latino/a religions, and multiracial congregations.

**RLGN 4405 Social Construction & Selfhood (4 Credits)**

This course invites us into a collection of investigations into the intersections of social structures and individual identity or selfhood. While reading in a variety of disciplines and genres, we are drawn together around the questions of how one understands the possibilities for individual or communal agency in light of the formative, systemic power of social structures and institutions. Beyond conceptual understanding of this relationship, we ask questions of how to encourage coherent religious, educational, and other forms of practice in light of the realities of social construction. These reflections are particularly important for persons who are interested in social change and the very real barriers to its generation.

**RLGN 4406 Education and Social Change (4 Credits)**

This course investigates the role of education in maintaining and transforming social structures, identity, and commitments. We examine how educational practices can contribute towards social change in both religious and public settings.

**RLGN 4407 Ritual Studies (4 Credits)**

By reading some of the most important "classic" and recent theorists of ritual, and by learning to observe and understand ritual behavior, this class will examine the important role of ritual in defining religious groups, creating religious identity, forming religious beliefs, and structuring how we view the world. Prerequisite: Masters students need permission of instructor.

**RLGN 4408 Science & the Christian Right (4 Credits)**

An examination of the American Christian Right's challenges to mainstream scientific theories and practices. Specific topics include Intelligent Design movement, reparative therapy of homosexuality, denial of human-driven climate change, and opposition to stem cell research.

**RLGN 4409 Social Movements from Liberationist Perspectives (4 Credits)**

Liberationist thought has greatly impacted how social movements, and the theological and ethical perspective which inform them, has been implemented to bring about social and political change since the mid-twentieth century. But with the state of the new millennium, many have proclaimed the death of liberation theology, dismissing its significance as a passing fad. The purpose of this course is to explore the roots, development, and history of liberationist thought as it first manifested itself within a Latin American context then expanding to other continents and faith traditions, and how that thought has been utilized to inform social movements.

**RLGN 4410 American Christianity and Indian Genocide (4 Credits)**

A collaborative research seminar exploring different aspects of the history of the relationship between American Christianity and genocidal campaigns against native peoples, including the colonial period through the 20th century. Students will research particular personalities and historical events related to this topic, including the campaigns of the military on the 18th century Western frontier, sites of massacres including Sand Creek in Colorado, and other events normally obscured by accounts of US history. Students will learn the relationships of ideology and worldview to the narration of history, as well as skills in identifying and working with primary historical sources.

**RLGN 4412 Health & Healing, Death & Dying: Technologies of Inspiration and Expiration (4 Credits)**

Through this course, students will encounter a variety of perspectives on the nature, morality, justices, and injustices of health, healing, and dying.

**RLGN 4413 Theology and the Construction of Race (4 Credits)**

Several important books have recently been published making the case that religion, and more specifically, Christian theology, have played a constitutive role in creating the ideas of race and racial hierarchies. This course is an extended argument (with which students are free to agree or disagree in part or in whole—in any case they will become familiar with the relevant literature and concepts) that 1. In significant ways religion and race are modern, not universal or permanent, constructions; that 2. Religion and race are two of the very few fundamental conceptual building blocks of the modern world, such that, no matter what one thinks of religion and race, one is unable to think or operate in the modern world without them; and that 3. Religion and race are mutually imbricated in such a way that, even when race is not explicitly a topic of discussion or observation, modern religion is always already racialized.

**RLGN 4414 Atheists, Secularists & Nones (4 Credits)**

An examination of non-religious and/or non-affiliated populations, with a primary focus on the United States. We will explore: 1) the variety of beliefs among those not affiliated with religious institutions; 2) different social expressions of atheism; 3) the implications of recent religious trends for debates about secularization in the modern West.

**RLGN 4415 Environmental Racism: The Problem with Water (4 Credits)**

The course seeks to develop a constructive conversation on the intersection of environmental racism and water by examining significant issues surrounding present-day issues the degradation of water quality its negative impact on communities of color. Furthermore, the course will examine what type of praxis can be employed to bring about social and political change.

**RLGN 4416 Decolonizing Theories and Methods (4 Credits)**

Religious studies draws from multiple disciplines which include anthropology, history, feminism, transnationalism, empire studies and sociology. Often, students approach theories and methods by reading classic authors and mainly contemporary eurocentric scholars of religion. This course will approach theories and methods from through the lens of decoloniality, concentrating of the perspectives and contributions emerging from the margins of eurocentric thought.

**RLGN 4417 Still Black Post-human: Blackness Beyond Posthumanism (4 Credits)**

Blackness waits at the door. It sits in the room. It seeps into crevices. It disrupts stable sensibilities. It is the abyss. It is an overwhelming presence of life and the beyond. And it waits. This course will explore many presentations of Blackness as an ontology, material essence, and tangible modality. In doing so, this course will not only explore ontomateriality of Blackness, but present a case for it as an integral framework to engage posthumanism's proclivity to emphasizes animal studies and ecology while holding fast to liberalism's damaging modes of uncritical inclusivity. This is important to the state of the theological experiment as James Cone insisted Blackness is the key to global salvation over 50 years ago. With recent moves to decenter human exceptionalism, shifts in focus to future realities, and intentional re-imaginings of the human-creature-divine relationship. It is important to continue to unravel humanist descendent offerings. As such, this course will provide a lens to investigate/disrupt the potentiality that posthumanity presents, pushing beyond its less obviously regressing boundaries, towards liberative future realities.

**RLGN 4418 Decolonizing Congregational Leadership (4 Credits)**

This course explores the applications of postcolonial and decolonial discourses to the theory and practice of parish leadership, particularly within Christian congregational contexts. Students will reflect on leadership praxis across several areas (i.e., euro-western constructions) of congregational life including: worship and liturgy, education and formation, organizational culture, and missions. As a whole, the course interrogates notions of tradition, practice, and leadership identities in the context of congregations toward the de/construction of lived realities.

**RLGN 4419 Religion and Postcolonial Discourse (4 Credits)**

This course will engage and focus on the intersections of the academic discipline of Religion and the academic discipline of Postcolonial Studies. This course is not an introduction to postcolonial studies course. The discourse of colonialism goes beyond a simple colonizer/colonized binary and is complicated by power, identity, and economics. Postcolonialism arose through the analysis of literary works following the independence and attainment of nationhood of peoples globally to address the continuing disruption set off by colonial logics. This course begins with the assumption that European colonialism is a reality that is defined by a particular worldview and shared features but is diverse in local imbrications. The course will focus on the feature of religion as an integral part of the colonizing worldview of the colonizer and simultaneously focus on how colonized people have recaptured their national and religious metanarrative under postcolonial dispensations as acts of counter-discourse and resistance.

**RLGN 4420 Postcolonial Feminist Theology (4 Credits)**

This course offers a critical exploration of Postcolonial Feminist Theologies. Drawing from the works of key women scholars, students will engage with theological perspectives that challenge colonial legacies and patriarchal structures embedded within traditional theological frameworks. Throughout the course, students will examine how feminist and postcolonial critiques have reshaped interpretations of the scripture, doctrines, and ministry practices. The course will critically assess how postcolonial feminist theologians have addressed issues of race, gender, class, and imperialism within both Christian theology and broader religious contexts. The course will offer students opportunities to develop theologically informed responses to contemporary global issues, emphasizing justice, liberation, and intersectionality.

**RLGN 4501 Holy Spirit: History and Traditions (4 Credits)**

What have Christians believed and written about the Holy Spirit through the centuries? Why does Pentecost show up in such different ways across the pages of Christian theology and literature? In the midst of the European Enlightenment, why did John Wesley hold such special reverence for the role of experience in Christian thought and education? Why has the Pentecostal legacy functioned simultaneously as a subversive trope for critiquing dominant church paradigms while also sparking creative, re-interpretations of Christian tradition among so many reformers? These are just a few of the questions explored in this class as we discuss historical and theological works by contemporary scholars in pneumatology and church history.

**RLGN 4502 Historiography (4 Credits)**

This course surveys the various theories and methods developed by historians since the emergence of the historical profession from the roots of historicism and philosophy of history in the mid-1800s; and examine the relationship of history to theology, cultural theory and literary studies.

**RLGN 4503 Women in Medieval Europe (4 Credits)**

This class focuses on the role of medieval women, who struggled to find a voice in the political, religious, social and literary arenas of medieval Europe from about 1100 to 1600. Through primary and secondary source readings we look at everyday women's lives in this period. The class also includes the lives and careers of some of the most famous women writers and leaders of the period, such as Hildegard of Bingen, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Marie de France, Margery Kempe, Julian of Norwich, Queen Isabel of Castile, Teresa of Ávila, and Queen Elizabeth I of England.

**RLGN 4504 Muslims, Jews and Christians in Medieval Spain (4 Credits)**

An exploration of the "Golden Age" of cross-cultural encounters that occurred in Medieval Spain from the Muslim conquest in 711 to the fall of Granada and the expulsion of Jews in 1492. This course offers an overview of the historical and ecumenical dimensions of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic coexistence, known as "La Convivencia," and critical reflection on the relevant lessons this era still holds in the post 9/11 period.

**RLGN 4505 Spanish Mystics and Reformers (4 Credits)**

Early modern Spain witnessed the emergence of Catholic and Protestant individuals whose timeless works and popular appeal in subsequent centuries rested largely upon the practice of "contemplation in action." This course examines the historical context and works of such mystics and reformers as Teresa of Ávila, John of the Cross, Ignatius of Loyola, Juan de Valdés, Constantino Ponce de la Fuente Cipriano de Valera, Casiodoro de Reina, Antonio del Corro, and others, and others. It also explores the influence of Islam and Judaism on these sixteenth century religious movements, as well as modern Spain's subsequent rejection of this pluralistic legacy as it sought to define the young nation-state sought to define its new national identity and consolidate power across Europe and its vast colonial territories in the Western Hemisphere.

**RLGN 4506 The Pursuit of Happiness: A History (4 Credits)**

This course provides a historical examination of key concepts, major questions, and practices about humanity's search for happiness from the Hellenistic-Roman period of Antiquity through the Early Christian and Medieval periods. The content centers on the role of Classical moral philosophy and Christian theology in the formulation of eudemonic theories about the problem of happiness in relation to metaphysical and religious influences as well as to socio-cultural, political, and institutional norms and practices that shaped Christian notions of human purpose and potential. The legacies of these ancient ideas on the development of modern assumptions about happiness and human flourishing are also discussed towards the end of the course.

**RLGN 4507 Violence & Tolerance in Medieval Europe (4 Credits)**

This course examines a wide range of texts and events from the 11th to the 16th centuries dealing with various forms of violence across the medieval European world and contrasts these with medieval European notions of toleration in theological, literary, and political discourse. Among the topics to be covered will be the Peace of God and the Truce of God, feudal warfare and its legacy, the Crusades and their impact upon the Latin West as well as the on Arab East, anti-Semitism in the Latin West, the Inquisition, persecution of heretics and witches, Church and State struggles, and the various dialogues of mutual, theocentric edification among Islamic, Jewish, and Christian authors.

**RLGN 4508 Judaism, Gender, and Religion (4 Credits)**

Germans refer to the period of roughly 1770-1850 as the Sattelzeit, or "Saddle Era"—the time between the end of the early modern world and Europe and the modern world. During this era basic assumptions that we continue to make about what religion is and what gender is are constructed. This is also the era when what we think of a Judaism is re-shaped in major ways. Through a close reading of primary texts by Jewish women we will examine the intersection of gender, Judaism, and religion and examine the modern construction of these categories.

**RLGN 4509 Jewish Christian Relations 50-500 C.E. (4 Credits)**

This course considers the "parting of the ways" between Judaism and Christianity, beginning with the tumultuous first century (the Jewish War and the beginnings of the Jesus tradition) and continuing through the synthesis of Christianity and Empire in late antiquity. Along the way, we will consider how Christianity and Judaism emerged from a common matrix, influenced and co-created each other, and Othered each other in their processes of self-definition. We will attend especially to the problems with the "World Religions" model, ancient identity formation, the origins of Christian anti-Semitism, the effects of empire and diaspora, and modern attempts to explain the "parting."

**RLGN 4520 Religion and Film (4 Credits)**

Can film elicit the holy? Does the story of Jacob and Esau look different when told by a North African filmmaker? How does a Buddhist sensibility shape the form of Japanese films? Can we ask theological questions about secular films? In this course films are the primary texts, supplemented by readings, lecture and discussion. Students develop the film literacy and theological and theoretical acumen to explore these and other interactions between religion and film in cultural context. While there is no explicit prerequisite, background in film or literary criticism and/or theological or religious studies is helpful.

**RLGN 4604 Religion in the Public Square (4 Credits)**

What is the proper role of religion in the public debates necessary to healthy democracy? Some argue that religion in the public square threatens the fundamental democratic right the freedom of conscience; others that only religion can insulate the communal values that make democracy possible. This course examines the best and most prominent arguments in this contemporary debate.

**RLGN 4605 Feminist Theology (4 Credits)**

Analysis of feminist theology with attention to methodological issues, the relation of contemporary feminist visions to historical material, the ideas of God/Goddess and the question of what it means to be female. Prerequisite: At least one introductory level theology course.

**RLGN 4607 Liberating Sex (4 Credits)**

The purpose of the course is to search the Christian Scriptures, in spite of its accusations of being patriarchal, to find biblically-based guidelines for developing an ethical sexual lifestyle that is aware of how racism, classism, and specifically sexism influences the current conversation on sexual ethics. This course focuses on developing healthy models that foster intimacy and vulnerability for a disjointed and at times oppressive community.

**RLGN 4608 Latinx Theology and Ethics (4 Credits)**

The primary sources of Latinx theological and ethical thought are read to discover its foundational tenets. The course explores this contextual approach to religion to discover how it could serve to liberate the Latinx community from prevalent oppressive social structures. Comparisons are made with Eurocentric ethics and theology.

**RLGN 4609 Queer Theory, Theoethics & Activism (4 Credits)**

Queer theory has transformed religious thought in extraordinary ways especially over the course of the past four decades. This course explores the nature of queer theory as a discipline within and outside of the religious academy. This course also invites students to explore the ways that queer theory intersects with theories of race and praxes of activism.

**RLGN 4610 Ethics of Neoliberalism and Globalization (4 Credits)**

People of faith have responded to the triumph of the free market economy around the world in a variety of ways. To some, "neoliberalism" seems to hold the key to sustained economic growth worldwide and, eventually, to nothing less than the eradication of poverty itself. To others, it represents the unleashing of corporate greed on a scale previously unknown, with momentous and often disastrous consequences for the working poor, the economically marginalized, and the environment. Does the new global economy signify the lifting of all boats or the race to the bottom? Does it further Christian ethical values, or subvert them?

**RLGN 4611 Theology and the Challenge of Postmodernism (4 Credits)**

An examination of representative postmodern thinkers, how they have changed the context for theology, and how theology has responded to them.

**RLGN 4612 African Theology and Post-Colonial Discourse (4 Credits)**

This course attempts to examine the relationship between the emergence of African Theology and the historical conditions which characterize Africa's encounter with the European/American will to power. The initial hypothesis to be tested is the claim that the will to power provides the locus classicus for formulating the identity of African theological reflection. This makes the latter a part of a much larger discourse on Africanity. The course takes the student through a close reading of basic texts produced by African theologians themselves. All the major issues characteristic of the discourse of African Theology is dealt with.

**RLGN 4613 Augustine and His Influence: 400 C.E. to 1000 C.E. (4 Credits)**

Theological contribution of the great North African Bishop; his major writings, such as Confessions, City of God and The Trinity; and his anti-Pelagian, anti-Donatist, and anti-Manichaean writings.

**RLGN 4614 Liberation Theologies (4 Credits)**

Consideration of contemporary liberation movements with focus on feminist, black and Third World theologies. Special concern is with what the various perspectives of sex, race and class analysis suggest for one another and for theology and social ethics generally.

**RLGN 4615 Being Human in the Modern World (4 Credits)**

What does it mean to be human? After a brief survey of traditional Christian answers to this question, we focus on the theological anthropology that has become the de facto theory of human nature since the emergence of the modern western world in the early 19th century. Theological anthropology can be the driver of other doctrines in a systematic theology; it also underpins work not necessarily seen as theological, such as ethics, development, and human rights. A rich understanding of this anthropology is necessary for theological reflection in our current context.

**RLGN 4617 Forgiveness (4 Credits)**

In the histories of philosophy and religions, 'forgiveness' emerges as a grounding concept for thinking about God, self, and community. This course examines core texts and contexts within a range of religious, philosophical, and theological discourses on forgiveness, 'loving the enemy', and reconciliation. The course explores a variety of spaces of forgiveness as well as the possibility that the 'impossibility of forgiveness' must be allowed to emerge as a valued theological, ethical, and civic principle of personal and communal identity.

**RLGN 4618 Doctrine of God in the Modern World: The Pantheism Controversy (4 Credits)**

What is the most fruitful model for thinking about God? There are a few perennial options, each of which have social, political, and ethical implications in addition to metaphysical ones. In the post-Enlightenment world a version of the pantheism model swept through philosophers and theologians, Jews and Christians, raising issues which, if possible, are even more pressing in our post-Christian context. The so-called Pantheism Controversy has the advantage of not only unpacking all the issues involved in the various models of God, but of also being a good story of the personal lives and relationships of a fascinating group of people. This course introduces students to the most pertinent writings from this controversy and engages theological and philosophical work, influenced by the controversy, from our own contexts.

**RLGN 4619 Christian Theology and Disability (4 Credits)**

Using the category of "disability" as a starting point, this seminar examines constructive theologies in which attention to human vulnerability, limitation, and interdependence is fundamental to religious thought and practice. It presents "ableism" as a form of social injustice, emphasizing its intersections with other forms of oppression. It names Christianity's past and present complicity in ableism, while also highlighting the tradition's resources for effective opposition. Consideration expands beyond persons with disabilities to include common phases of life like infancy and frail old age. The course's primary aim is to equip students to articulate theologies that affirm that which ableism devalues.

**RLGN 4620 Fanon, Foucault and Friends (4 Credits)**

This course reads the primary sources of post colonialists (mainly Fanon) and postmodernists (mainly Foucault) to explore creating ethical approaches to globalized manifestations of race, class, and gender oppression. Special attention is given to the use of Christianity as a liberationist response to global structures of oppression in spite of its historic use in causing much of said oppression.

**RLGN 4621 Kierkegaard and Existential Theology (4 Credits)**

Kierkegaard and the origins of existentialism; twentieth-century forms of existentialism and recent developments; the decline of neo-orthodoxy and resurgence of phenomenology.

**RLGN 4622 Schleiermacher as Resource (4 Credits)**

Consideration of the theology of Friedrich Schleiermacher. Analysis of the philosophical and theological predecessors of Schleiermacher as well as the tradition of theological liberalism that followed him.

**RLGN 4640 Doing Christian Ethics from the Margins (4 Credits)**

Many of us have been taught religion through the eyes of white, middle-class males. How then do we do ethics from the perspective of the disenfranchised? The aim of this course is to enable students to: construct ethical responses to case studies from the perspectives of those suffering from race, class and gender oppression; to investigate Biblical protest narratives as to the resistance and struggle against race, class and gender domination and oppression; and to examine various liberationist ethical interpretations as a source for overcoming dominant religious power structures.

**RLGN 4641 Formative White Male Ethicists (4 Credits)**

This course on formative white male figures in Christian Ethics examines the ethical canon from a historical perspective. Special attention is given to texts and traditions as living changing heritages.

**RLGN 4642 Theology and the Rise of the Historical Consciousness (4 Credits)**

Theological work today is done in the context of the rise of the historical consciousness, a phenomenon with its roots in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. We inherit a fundamentally different worldview from the worldviews of the ancient and medieval worlds that gave rise to many of the classical Christian practices and beliefs, and different from contemporary non-western worldviews. The historical consciousness leads to a particular set of assumptions about Biblical authority, identity and subjectivity, epistemology, the relationship of individuals to communities, etc. This class examines important texts in the development of the historical consciousness, analyzes issues raised for Christian theology, and points to some of the theological resources developed in its wake.

**RLGN 4643 Women and Christian Theologies from the Global South: A Postcolonial Feminist Approach (4 Credits)**

This course is a critical study of the challenges and contributions of Christian feminist theologies from the global south to theological studies in North America, particularly, Christian feminist theologies. Framed in postcolonial discourses, this course will study works of representative figures in Christian feminist theologies from Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Topics will include the impact of globalization, postcolonial discourse, religion and culture, sexuality and spirituality, and ecological concerns.

**RLGN 4644 Environmental Ethics and Global Hunger (4 Credits)**

The course seeks to develop a constructive conversation on the causes of global hunger by examining significant issues surrounding the present-day distribution of food and its negative impact on the environment. Furthermore, the course will examine what type of praxis can be employed to bring about social and political change.

**RLGN 4645 Artificial Intelligence and What It Means to Be Human (4 Credits)**

Artificial Intelligence raises pressing questions about machines: Are they really intelligent? Can they have consciousness? Ought they have moral status? Are algorithms related to computers like minds are to bodies? Do smart machines change the relationship of humans to technology? Each of these questions, in turn, is actually a question about human nature: What are the kinds of human intelligence, and are they unique to humans? Why do humans have moral status? What kinds of embodiment are essential to humans? (Do we include things like race and gender?) Are humans tool-users, or did we evolve as humans because of tools? In that case, have humans always been cyborgs? Questions about human nature are one of the classic theological loci, falling under the rubric of theological anthropology. In other words, religious traditions have thousands of years of deep thinking on these questions that are being raised in new ways (as Nick Bostrom has famously argued, AI is like "philosophy with a deadline"). This course is a sophisticated but non-technical introduction to the history of AI and to the tools and ideas of AI in its current forms. We will cover the most important ethical issues with which AI confronts us, and bring the resources of philosophy and theology to tackling some of the questions of human nature raised by AI.

**RLGN 4646 Ethics in an Age of Plagues, Pestilence, and Pandemics (2 Credits)**

The world is gripped by a deadly pandemic. This is neither the first time, nor probably will be the last. What we do know is in the aftermath of such deadly epidemics, the societal bonds which once held community together are frayed if not completely broken as radical changes take hold and new ways of being arise. This course will wrestle with the importance of maintaining a moral compass during crisis and an ethical vision as a new reality is constructed. Special attention will be given to how not all suffer equally, and the roles of racism, classism, and sexism during national emergencies. Finally, the course would assist the student in finding their own ethical voice during a time of hopelessness and desperation.

**RLGN 4647 Jesus for Christians and Non-Christians (4 Credits)**

Who is Jesus of Nazareth, and what is his relationship to Jesus Christ? This course will examine this central question in multiple religious and non-religious cultural contexts. We will use the methods of comparative theology to read ideas about Jesus in the contexts of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Paganism, Spiritual But Not Religious (SBNR), and non-theistic texts. Students will compare and contrast these ideas of Jesus to create their own understanding of Jesus' narrative and his relationship to our present world in their particular context.

**RLGN 4648 Biblical Ethics (4 Credits)**

Anyone who reads the Bible does so from a particular social location. We are all born into an on-going society that shapes us. When we turn our attention to the biblical text as the source of our ethical perspectives, we participate in a dialogue between the written word and the meanings our community taught us to give to these words. Many of us have been taught to read the Bible through the eyes of white, middle-class males. Yet, can the text liberate those who are oppressed? To do so, it must be read with the eyes of the disenfranchised. This course will explore how the Bible can be used to bring about justice for those who suffer due to race, class and gender oppression.

**RLGN 4649 WOMANIST THEOETHICS (4 Credits)**

This course will focus on the canonical works of womanist theology and womanist ethics. Students will read the seminal texts of first wave womanist theologians and first wave womanist ethicists. Students will also read works by third wave womanists and evaluate how these texts build upon the canonical works to form what is known as the Womanist House of Wisdom. The course will seek to examine how pioneer womanist scholarship was interpreted in its historical context and how the discipline of womanist religious thought in theology and ethics was formed. Students will also explore womanist methodologies and how they can be operationalized by people outside of Black female embodiment. Finally, students will learn how womanist theoethics is used in womanist social justice praxis, pastoral care, and preached in congregational settings.

**RLGN 4650 Advanced Practical Theological Research (4 Credits)**

This collaborative seminar provides an opportunity for students to explore the process of practical theological research for their own dissertation projects and to work collaboratively to shape research that is impactful and compelling. Students will establish the theoretical framing of their project through deep engagement with a body of literature relevant to their topic, engage in rigorous contextual analysis of their research site/community, and begin the descriptive work necessary for their particular question, and in doing so refine their research question and appropriate self-reflexive research strategies necessary to their project.

**RLGN 4651 Social Issues, Social Ethics (4 Credits)**

The purpose of this course is to examine social issues through the lens of Christian Social Ethics. Students will learn about the discipline of Christian Social Ethics with focused learning on ethics from the margins and the ethics of responsibility. Students will learn how to analyze social issues through a Christian social ethical framework. A component of the course will focus on student leadership development with assignments that will develop students as leaders through the course's focus on skill development. The social issues examined in the course will vary each time the course is taught.

**RLGN 4701 Topics in the Study of Religion (0-4 Credits)****RLGN 4702 Topics in Biblical Studies (0-4 Credits)****RLGN 4703 Topics in Theological Studies (0-4 Credits)****RLGN 4761 Social Ethical Issues (4 Credits)**

Examination of the scope of Christian social ethics and the relationship of the analytic and diagnostic task to normative and prescriptive endeavor. May be repeated.

**RLGN 4762 Justice & Peace Struggles (2,4 Credits)**

Regular offerings include "Columbusday and the History of Christian Denial," "Justice in Native America," and "Church and the Colonial Residual: Pine Ridge, the Black Hills, Missionaries and Indian Justice.

**RLGN 4991 Independent Study (1-4 Credits)****RLGN 5000 Pedagogy and the Teaching of Religion (4 Credits)**

This course looks at pedagogical methods as they relate to the teaching of religion. Students design syllabi and materials appropriate for the teaching of religion in at least two different contexts. In addition, the course covers theoretical issues related to the teaching and learning process.

**RLGN 5010 Lived Religion Colloquium (4 Credits)**

This weekly colloquium functions as a collaborative space in which students and faculty of the JDP come together to discuss an interdisciplinary body of scholarship focused on religion as it is lived by persons and communities. The specific theme of the colloquium changes each time it is taught.

**RLGN 5020 Conceptual Approaches to Religion Colloquium (4 Credits)**

This weekly colloquium functions as a collaborative space in which students and faculty of the JDP come together to discuss an interdisciplinary body of scholarship focused on conceptual approaches to the study of Religion. The literature may focus on specific issues, concepts, and/or social and cultural phenomena. The specific theme of the colloquium changes each time it is taught.

**RLGN 5030 Religion in Text, Image, and Artifact Colloquium (4 Credits)**

This weekly colloquium functions as a collaborative space in which students and faculty of the JDP come together to discuss an interdisciplinary body of scholarship focused on texts, images, and/or artifacts through which religion, culture and worldview can be studied. The specific theme of the colloquium changes each time it is taught.

**RLGN 5101 Methods for Interpreting Biblical Texts (4 Credits)**

This seminar addresses critical study of biblical texts, the history of interpretations and hermeneutics.

**RLGN 5102 Religious Identity in Antiquity (4 Credits)**

An exploration of the way individuals and communities understood their religious beliefs and behaviors during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. The focus is on varieties of Jews and Christians (including how they formed their identities in relation to each other), but consideration is also given to the Greco-Roman religious context.

**RLGN 5750 Professional Development (0 Credits)**

This course provides the "nuts and bolts" on not only surviving, but also thriving within the academy. Assuming that the student's goal is an eventual tenure-track position, the course demystifies the PhD route so that the student, through a working knowledge of the academy, can better position her/himself to succeed. Besides providing professional development, the course attempts to raise the level of involvement of PhD candidates in the profession, from presenting papers to publishing articles.

**RLGN 5751 Experiential Learning (0 Credits)**

This 0-credit course enables students to acquire valuable teaching and other professional experience as teaching assistants, instructors of record, researchers, or other positions on or off campus. In the case of a teaching position, it will normally only be taken after completing RLGN 5000 Pedagogy & Teaching Religion. Students should work with the JDP Program Manager at least one quarter before they plan to register in order to get this course in the class schedule when it will be needed.

**RLGN 5991 Independent Study (1-10 Credits)****RLGN 6000 Dissertation Proposal Seminar (4 Credits)**

This seminar focuses upon the range of research topics and methods in religious and theological studies by examining dissertations and dissertation proposals related to the Joint Ph.D. Program at Iliff and the University of Denver. Bibliographic and research methods and matters of style and format receives particular emphasis. Students present their own dissertation proposals for discussion.

**RLGN 6010 Comprehensive Review I: Perspectives in the Study of Religion (4 Credits)**

Students meet weekly for review and discussion of the bibliography for theories and methods in the study of religion. The bibliography is available on line and students are encouraged to read in advance of the course. The final exam is the comprehensive exam in theories and methods in the study of religion. This course is taken in the fall quarter of the student's third year.

**RLGN 6020 Comprehensive Review II: Area Theories and Methods (4 Credits)**

Students meet weekly for review and discussion of the bibliography for theories and methods in one of the current areas of JDP program strength: 1) Bible, ancient Judaism and early Christianity 2) Religion, Race and Ethnicity 3) Media, Art and Religion 4) Religion and its Publics 5) Religion and Human Experience or 6) Theories of Religion. Bibliographies are available on line and students are encouraged to read in advance of the course. The final exam is the comprehensive exam in the area. This review course and exam is taken in the fall quarter of the student's third year.

**RLGN 6030 Comprehensive Review III: Knowledge in a Professional Field (4 Credits)**

Students work individually or in small groups with their dissertation advisor and committee members or other faculty in the students' chosen field of specialization. The purpose is to synthesize coursework, fill in gaps, and expand knowledge needed as a professional in the specific field. The final exam is the comprehensive exam in the major field. This review course and exam is taken in the winter quarter of the student's third year. It must be coordinated with Comp Review IV, and between these two reviews the student must have at least 3 different faculty examiners.

**RLGN 6040 Comprehensive Review IV: Knowledge in Minor Areas or Subfields (4 Credits)**

Students work individually or in small groups with faculty in the students' chosen subfield or minor area of study, or with the dissertation advisor on a deeper area of specialization within the professional field. The final exam is the comprehensive exam in the subfield or minor area. This review course and exam is taken in the winter quarter of the student's third year. It must be coordinated with Comp Review III and between these two reviews the student must have at least 3 different faculty examiners.

**RLGN 6991 Independent Study (1-10 Credits)****RLGN 6995 Independent Research (0-10 Credits)**

Joint Doctoral Program students use these credits as they work on their dissertations, beginning upon completion of comprehensive exams. Normally 8 credits are completed by each student.