## Religion

### BIBLE, QUR’AN, & WESTERN CULTURE

**REL 2040-01**  
Mark Verman  
11:15-12:10  
MWF  

**REL 2040-02**  
Heidi Wendt  
9:30-10:50  
T&Th  

**REL 2040-03**  
Peter Bekins  
2:00-3:20  
T&Th  

This course introduces students to the formative periods and scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, while also acquainting them with methodologies and research questions that scholars working within a secular academic context pursue in their investigations of these writings. Together we will read selections from the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament, and the Qur’an with a view to the various historical contexts in which these writings took shape, were united in different scriptural canons, and influenced or otherwise came to share common material with one another. The course will also consider how these three traditions have shaped the development of western culture.  
**This course fulfills the Area 4: Arts & Humanities requirement in the WSU Core Curriculum, and is required for new Religion majors and minors.**

### WHAT IS RELIGION?  

**REL 2050-01**  
Valerie Stoker  
11:00-12:20  
T&Th  

This course will explore fundamental yet challenging questions for all students of religion: what is religion and how best does one study it? To answer these questions, we will explore the ideas of some of the most famous theorists of religion including Frazer, Freud, Durkheim, and Marx. We will also adopt a case study approach that will consider, in comparative perspective, the features of different religious traditions from around the world. Using this combined approach, students will learn to make their own contributions to the field of religious studies.  
**This is a required course for Religion majors and minors.**

### NON-WESTERN RELIGIONS  

**REL 2320-01**  
Carmine Anastasio  
11:00-12:20  
T&Th  

**REL 2320-02**  
2:00-3:20  
T&Th  

**REL 2320-03**  
3:30-4:50  
T&Th  

This course is a general introduction to various nonwestern religious traditions. Examples of religions typically covered include Buddhism, Hinduism, Shinto, Zen, Daoism, Confucianism, and/or Native American religions. The class explores how nonwestern religions have addressed, in diverse ways, fundamental religious questions and problems. For example, what is the world? What are human beings? How should we live, and what should we do? And what is the significance of life? There are no prerequisites for enrolling in this course, and no prior knowledge is assumed.  
**This course fulfills the Area 3: Global Studies requirement in the WSU Core curriculum. This course is required for all Religion majors and minors; it was previously listed as CST 2320/REL 2060.**
DEAD SEA SCROLLS  
Mark Verman  
REL 3100/5100-01, HST 4000/6000-01  
12:20-1:15 MWF  
This ancient collection of biblical and extra-biblical texts was compiled by a group of radical Jewish priests known as the Essenes. Their writings and message influenced John the Baptist and Jesus. Come delve into some of the most fascinating literature that has ever been preserved. This course will satisfy the Western Religion or the Biblical Studies requirement & is writing intensive.  
This course fulfills the Western Religions area requirement for the Religion major.

RADICAL REFORMATION  
Roy Vice  
REL 3200/5200-01, HST 4100/6100-01  
2:30-3:25 MWF  
This course will focus on one wing of the Protestant Reformation, the Anabaptist and the Radical Reformation. The radicals did not have the support of the magistrates or the state officials, so they were often persecuted and executed for their beliefs. As a grassroots movement, Anabaptists had a variety of views on such questions as the Christian’s duty to the state, the meaning of baptism, and social justice. Today the surviving Anabaptist groups are Mennonites, Amish, and Hutterites. Students will read a variety of sources by Johann Tauler, Thomas Muentzer, Hans Hut, Balthasar Hubmaier, Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt and others.

INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM  
Awad Halabi  
REL 3310/5310-01  
5:00-7:40 Thursday evening  
The course is intended as an introduction to Islam, its practices and institutions. Topics that will be covered in class include the life of Muhammad, the development of the Islamic community, Islamic theology and law, the various branches of belief (Sunni and Shi’i), Sufism, the themes of the Qur’an, gender issues, modern Islam and how Muslims have responded to the challenges of the modern era.  
This course fulfills the Western Religions area requirement for the Religion major.

BUDDHISM  
Valerie Stoker  
REL 3430/5430-01  
2:00-3:20 T&Th  
This course will explore one of the world’s oldest continually practiced religions, Buddhism. We will focus on its philosophy, rituals, art, architecture, and social practices, emphasizing the origins of Buddhism in India and its spread to the neighboring regions of Southeast Asia and Tibet. Class time will be devoted to lectures, slide shows, discussions, and documentary films.  
This course fulfills the South Asia area requirement for the Religion major.
**RELIGION & POLITICS IN AMERICA**

**REL 3640/5640, PLS 3150-01**

11:15-12:10 MWF

Despite – or because of – the constitutional separation of church & state, there is a close relationship between religion & politics in the United States. In this course we will examine the nature of this relationship both historically & in its contemporary manifestations. We will begin with a discussion of such contemporary issues as how religious affiliation affects voting behavior. We will then gain some historical perspective on the contemporary situation by examining the debate surrounding the composition of the First Amendment. Given this historical background, we will turn to the development of modern legal definitions of religious establishment & free exercise.

*This course fulfills the American Religion area requirement for the Religion major.*

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**ANTHROPOLOGY OF RELIGION**

**REL 3810/5810-01, ATH 4010-03**

9:05-10:00 MWF

ATH 3020, The Anthropology of Religion, is an introduction to the anthropological study of the practices and ideas associated with religions of the world, and how they relate to other domains of human cultural existence. It will discuss many examples of contemporary non-Western religions, and touch upon topics such as shamanism, spirit possession, masks and agrarian religion. But it will also use that information to help us gain insight to some of the more familiar World Religions.

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**GNOSTICISM**

**REL 4930/6930-01**

12:30-1:50 T&Th

This course will acquaint students with the various Christian groups and writings typically included in the scholarly category ‘Gnosticism’, as well as the problems and implications of the category itself. Situating our investigations within the historical-religious context of the Roman Empire, we will consider evidence for early Christian diversity in order to ask such question as: What, if anything, was distinctive about so-called gnostic Christians? If they were distinctive, how do we explain what made them so? And, how did the groups in question interact with other Christians and social movements (e.g., philosophy) in their social environments? Our investigation will necessarily require attention to the historical development of ‘orthodoxy’ and its antithesis ‘heresy’ as we consider whether the success of certain forms of Christianity and not others was an inevitable outcome, or the result of particular, and unpredictable, circumstances and events.

*All Religion majors must take REL 4930, Senior Seminar, to complete the major.*