

REL - Religion

Courses numbered 100 to 299 = *lower-division*; 300 to 499 = *upper-division*; 500 to 799 = *undergraduate/graduate*.

REL 110. Old Testament (3). ▸

General education humanities course. Introduction to the books of the Old Testament, including the histories of patriarchs and matriarchs, descriptions of Israelite religion and history, depictions of gender relations, and examples of wisdom literature. This is a Kansas Systemwide Transfer Course.

REL 115. New Testament (3). ▸

General education humanities course. Introduces students to the world of the New Testament, the second section of the Christian Bible and basis for Christian belief and practice. Examines the historical context and contemporary applications of the New Testament paying attention to how it fits into or challenges its social milieu, with specific focus on gender, authority and use of violence. This is a Kansas Systemwide Transfer Course.

REL 150. Special Topics in Religion (0.5).

An umbrella course created to explore a variety of subtopics differentiated by letter (e.g., 150A, 150B). Not all subtopics are offered each semester – see the course schedule for availability. Students enroll in the lettered courses with specific topics in the titles rather than in this root course.

REL 150A. Discovering Babylon (0.5).

After lying buried in the ground for over 2000 years, the remains of Babylon were dug up by archaeologists around one hundred years ago; yet the city remains enveloped in a web of myths which occupy a unique place in our culture. This course surveys portrayals of Babylon in the Bible, both as city and as symbol of an evil empire. Students study depictions of the Tower of Babylon in visual arts and other cultural expressions and the history of the archaeological discoveries, which provide the basis for a survey of Babylonian history. Students also engage in reflections on the encounter between the Babylon of received tradition and historical Babylon.

REL 150B. Jesus-Traditions and Images (0.5).

Jesus is a foundational figure of Christianity. This course examines traditions about Jesus in the New Testament and other early Christian literature, particularly the Gospels. The course charts debates that saw the development of doctrines about Christ and controversies in emerging Christianity over the person of Jesus. The course also explores depictions of Jesus in visual art, poetry and music in various religious traditions, both in the past and in contemporary cultures.

REL 301. Archaeology and the Bible (3).

General education humanities course. Explores the intersection of the biblical text and the archaeology of “biblical lands.” Includes a consideration of the history of archaeological exploration in the areas and time periods associated with the Bible, and how archaeology has impacted the study of the Bible, including ethical challenges of heritage management and politically sensitive contexts of archaeological exploration. Students learn about the social and religious aspects of the cultures and people of the ancient Middle East. Periods and cultures covered include: the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, Persian period Yehud, Judea under Hellenistic and Roman rule, and the empires of the ancient Middle East. Topics include: social organization and settlement patterns, urban and rural life, trade and commerce, gender roles in ancient societies, religious and cultic life, culture, arts and literature.

REL 301H. Archaeology and the Bible Honors (3).

General education humanities course. Explores the intersection of the biblical text and the archaeology of “biblical lands.” Includes a

consideration of the history of archaeological exploration in the areas and time periods associated with the Bible, and how archaeology has impacted the study of the Bible, including ethical challenges of heritage management and politically sensitive contexts of archaeological exploration. Students learn about the social and religious aspects of the cultures and people of the ancient Middle East. Periods and cultures covered include: the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, Persian period Yehud, Judea under Hellenistic and Roman rule, and the empires of the ancient Middle East. Topics include: social organization and settlement patterns, urban and rural life, trade and commerce, gender roles in ancient societies, religious and cultic life, culture, arts and literature.

REL 302. Religion and Society (3).

General education humanities course. Cross-listed as SOC 302. Introduces students to the sociology of religion. Students engage with classic and contemporary theorists and approaches. Topics include practices, customs, beliefs and rituals in the context of social structures such as religious institutions, politics, education, community, media and family. Students explore religion from the perspectives of popular culture, media, gender, sexuality and immigration, among other topics. In addition, this course investigates how people’s religious behavior is shaped by a variety of social factors such as sociodemographic characteristics, social relationships, subcultural distinctives, institutional contexts, geography and beliefs. The impacts of religion on other domains of social life such as health, well-being and social attitudes are also investigated. Throughout the course, students examine the importance of different levels of sociological analysis, including micro, meso and macro levels. *Course includes diversity content.*

REL 303. The Bible and the Ancient Near East (3).

General education humanities course. Examines the Hebrew Bible in its ancient Near Eastern literary and historical contexts. Using a comparative approach, students study a variety of Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian and Canaanite texts together with readings from the Hebrew Bible. Ancient Near Eastern texts range from myths, epics and tales of various genres to hymns, ritual texts, divinatory texts, “wisdom literature,” chronicles, and various monumental inscriptions, archival records and “graffiti.” Artifacts examined include iconographic and decorative objects as well as architecture and religious objects.

REL 311. Old Testament Topics (3).

An umbrella course created to explore a variety of subtopics differentiated by letter (e.g., 311A, 311B). Not all subtopics are offered each semester – see the course schedule for availability. Students enroll in the lettered courses with specific topics in the titles rather than in this root course.

REL 311F. Violence and the Bible (3).

General education humanities course. Examines the issue of violence in the Bible and the later use of the Bible to justify acts of violence and war. Students study biblical stories of fraternal strife, divinely sanctioned violence, the ideology of holy war, and gendered violence in narrative and poetic texts. Students look at ways in which biblical texts have been used to justify violence, war and oppression, historically and in their own time: for example, to defend harsh practices of child rearing and gendered violence, and in political ideologies. The course includes examinations of biblical violence in art, poetry, theology and culture. When appropriate, comparisons to other sacred traditions is made. *Course includes diversity content.*

REL 321. New Testament Topics (3).

An umbrella course created to explore a variety of subtopics differentiated by letter (e.g., 321A, 321B). Not all subtopics are offered each semester – see the course schedule for availability. Students enroll in the lettered courses with specific topics in the titles rather than in this root course.

REL 321C. Jesus: Traditions and Images (3).

Examines traditions about Jesus in the New Testament and other early Christian literature, in particular the Gospels. The course charts debates that saw the development of doctrines about Christ and controversies in emerging Christianity over the person of Jesus. The course also explores depictions of Jesus in visual art, poetry and music in various religious traditions, both in the past and in contemporary cultures.

REL 327. Magic, Witchcraft and Religion (3).

General education humanities course. Cross-listed as ANTH 327.

Examines various concepts concerning the realm of the supernatural as held by various peoples around the world. Relates such religious beliefs and the resultant practices to the larger patterns of cultural beliefs and behaviors. *Course includes diversity content.*

REL 370. Women in World Religions (3).

Examines past and present roles and statuses of women in various religious traditions of the world, e.g., Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism. Examines the portrayal of women's roles in various religious and philosophical texts, and the redefinition of women's roles in the modern age within the contexts of these belief systems. *Course includes diversity content.*

REL 380. Special Studies (3).

An umbrella course created to explore a variety of subtopics differentiated by letter (e.g., 380A, 380B). Not all subtopics are offered each semester – see the course schedule for availability. Students enroll in the lettered courses with specific topics in the titles rather than in this root course.

REL 382. Early Christianity (3).

Cross-listed as HIST 382. Provides students with a survey of the development of Christianity to 1000 CE. The course examines the complex evolution of Christianity in its historical contexts. It also provides students with opportunities to explore the tools and professional practices of the disciplines of history and religious studies, particularly reading primary sources, writing and engaging in collegial discussion.

REL 393. Race and the Bible (3).

General education humanities course. Focuses on antiracism, racism and race categories in biblical interpretation. Students learn about systemic and institutionalized racism and its links with biblical texts and interpretative practices. The course examines ideas and constructions of race within the biblical texts, the ancient world, and applications of these ideas in religious and secular traditions. The course centers minoritized voices, leading students to explore a range of approaches beyond traditional, hegemonic paradigms of interpretation. Specific topics include, but are not limited to: colonialism, slavery, oppression of women, homophobia, marginalization of foreigners/immigrants, antisemitism and other systemic structures of inequality. *Course includes diversity content.*

REL 420. Women and the Bible (3).

General education humanities course. Examines the roles and statuses of women in biblical narrative, poetry and law, as well as the position of women in various Near Eastern societies. Attention may be given to the ways in which later theologians, novelists and artists have refashioned and re-evaluated the biblical portrayal of women in their works. *Course includes diversity content.*

REL 490. Independent Work (1-3).

Designed for the student capable of doing advanced independent work in a specialized area of the study of religion that is not formally offered by the department. Repeatable for credit. Prerequisite(s): departmental consent.

REL 542. Religion in America (3).

Cross-listed as HIST 542. Surveys various religious traditions in American history from Colonial times to the present. Discusses how religions, groups, beliefs and issues have changed over time and how they interact with each other. Includes the different branches of Christianity and Judaism, the study of awakenings and revivals, the stories of prominent religious thinkers and leaders, immigrant religious traditions, the tensions between liberal and traditional religious forms, the prophetic and apocalyptic traditions in American, and the impact of Native American, Asian and African beliefs and practices on the religious landscape.

REL 780. Special Topics in Religion (1-3).

Intensive study of topic(s) in religion. Discussion, reports and research projects. Repeatable for credit with departmental consent. Prerequisite(s): instructor's consent.

REL 790. Independent Study (1-3).

For the student who is capable of doing graduate work in a specialized area of the study of religion not formally offered by the department. Repeatable for credit. Prerequisite(s): departmental consent.