



# RELIGION STUDIES

## Fall 2024

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**REL 007** **What is Religion? (4)** **HU**

**Prof. Michael Raposa (TR, 10:45am-12pm)**

**Prof. Ben Wright**

The word "religion" is fairly recent in origin, its linguistic roots unclear, and the phenomena that it has been used to designate both vast and amorphous. This course explores some of the most prominent attempts to define "religion," definitions produced both by religious thinkers and by critics of religion. We will examine some of the methods used by scholars to study religion. Finally, we will ask how the meaning of the word may be shifting in a modern, secular age.

**REL/JST 070** **Antisemitism Past and Present (4)** **HU**

**Prof. Hartley Lachter (MW, 3:00-4:15pm)**

As a ubiquitously present minority in western Christian societies over time, Jews have served as a foil for western identities in ways that continue to resonate in the modern and contemporary contexts. This course will consider the role that anti-Judaism and antisemitism have played in western culture from the ancient period to the present day.

**REL/JST 073** **The Jewish Tradition (4)** **HU**

**Prof. Hartley Lachter (MW, 1:35-2:50pm)**

Judaism is both a textual tradition and a lived religion. Students read basic Jewish texts—Bible, Talmud, Midrash—and study the ways Jews sanctify the life cycle through rites of passage, and the round of the year through the festival cycle.

**REL/ASIA/GS 077** **The Islamic Tradition (4)** **HU**

**Prof. Khurram Hussain (TR, 1:35-2:50pm)**

A thematic introduction to Islamic history, doctrine and practice. Topics include: Qur'an; prophecy and sacred history; ritual practices; community life; legal interpretation; art and aesthetics; mysticism; politics and polemics.

**REL/JST 095** **Religion, Superstition, and Film (4)** **HU**

**Prof. Minjung Noh (MW, 12:10-1:25pm)**

What distinguishes the boundary between religion and superstition? Which concepts, bodily rituals, sensory representations, racial dynamics, gender roles, and emotional dimensions are linked to superstition, and conversely, to religion? Furthermore, how do mainstream media and films amplify, exploit, and contest established perceptions of religion and superstition? This course explores the modern boundary-making between religion and superstition through visual media. Open to all levels, the course will discuss concepts such as magic, paganism, New Age beliefs, the occult, spiritualism, shamanism, reiki, yoga, and many other popular spiritual practices.

