



RELIGION STUDIES

Fall 2023

REL 005 **Spiritual Exercises in Religious Traditions (4)** **HU**
44615 **Prof. Michael Raposa (TR, 15:00-16:15)**

Explores a variety of religious disciplines developed in various traditions, ranging from the practice of yoga and the martial arts to various forms of prayer, meditation, and asceticism.

REL/ASIA 012 **Mountains, Buddhas, Ancestors:** **HU**
Introduction to East Asian Religions (4) **BUD**
44764/44765 **Prof. Annabella Pitkin (TR, 12:10-13:25)**

This course explores the principal religions of East Asia, including Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, and Shamanic Traditions. What is each tradition's view of human potential? How is ultimate reality depicted and experienced? What do home altars, boisterous festivals, and silent meditation halls have in common? Several primary texts are read in translation.

REL 032 **Religion of Disney** **HU**
44692 **Prof. Jodi Eichler-Levine (MW, 15:00-16:15)**

In its vast scope, power, various forms of consumer products, and enormous intellectual property holdings (including Star Wars and the Marvel Cinematic Universe, as well as its recent acquisition of 20th Century Fox), the Walt Disney Company has tremendous influence over modern American--and global--society. This course uses the rubric of "religion" to investigate both the fan culture surrounding Disney and its many properties, and the company's corporate aspirations, structure and ethos.

REL/JST 070 **Antisemitism Past and Present (4)** **HU**
45347/45348 **Prof. Hartley Lachter (MW, 13:35-14:50)**

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**
44773/44777 **Prof. Hartley Lachter (MW, 15:00-16:15)**

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 075** **The Christian Tradition (4)** **HU**
44610 **Prof. Benjamin Wright (TR, 10:45-12:00)**
 Introduction to the Christian tradition from its early variety and subsequent classical definition in the church councils up to the enlightenment. Special emphasis will be placed on the multiform interpretations of the Christian message.
- REL/JST 098** **Beyond Bagels: Jews and Food (4)** **HU**
44695/44699 **Prof. Jodi Eichler-Levine (MW, 10:45-12:00)**
 What does Crisco have to do with Jewish history? What is eco-kashrut? And why do so many Jews eat Chinese food on Christmas? This course explores Jewish life through the diverse history of Jewish foods. From New York deli to matzah ball gumbo, we will dig into a rich stew of diverse Jewish practices, regions, genders, ethics, and rituals.
- REL/JST 112** **The Beginnings of Judaism and Jewish Origins:** **HU**
Jewish Diversity in the Greco-Roman World (4)
44612/44614 **Prof. Benjamin Wright (TR, 13:35-14:50)**
 The variety of approaches to Judaism in the period following the Babylonian exile through the second century C.E. The literature studied will include Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and the Dead Sea Scrolls.
- REL/PSYC 115** **Religion and Psychology (4)** **HU**
44711/44712 **Prof. Michael Raposa (TR, 9:20-10:35)** **BUD**
 A study of the origins, development and consequences of religion from a psychological perspective. Attention will be given to classic and contemporary sources, with a focus on major psychoanalytic theorists of religion (Freud, Jung, Erikson); psychological analyses of religious experience (e.g., Wm. James, Victor Frankl); and the diverse cultural and religious forms that structure the connection between religion and psychology (e.g., Buddhist psychology, Japanese Morita therapy).
- REL/GS 140** **Globalization and Religion (4)** **HU**
445057/44059 **Prof. Khurram Hussain (MW, 10:45-12:00)**
 This course examines the complexity of globalization and its multi-layered impact on religious identity and piety. Though comparative in methodology and historical framework, the class will give special attention to Islam and Hinduism in South Asia. Topics include: European colonialism; Orientalism and its legacy; religious nationalism; Islamophobia; and the Internet and mass media.
- REL/ASIA 172** **Tibetan Buddhism and Society (4)** **HU**
44768/44769 **Prof. Annabella Pitkin (TR, 15:00-16:15)**
 This course examines the history, rituals, practices and art of the Tibetan Buddhist world, and the interaction of Tibetan Buddhism with the Tibetan Bon religion and Tibetan Islam. Students will explore film, autobiography, visual arts, and religious writings, asking, How has Tibetan Buddhism shaped Tibetan societies, as well as neighboring cultures in East Asia and Inner Asia? In what ways is Tibetan Buddhism now a global religion?

For First-Year Student ONLY

**PSYC/REL 090
43426/44981**

What makes a Meaningful Life? (4)

HU

Prof. Christopher Burke

Prof. Lloyd Steffen (TR, 15:00-16:15)

Life is often described as a journey, and while every life journey is unique in its details, the desire to live with meaning and purpose is universal. Indeed, the fact that people seek out, locate, and create meaning through the events of their lives is one of our most characteristically human attributes. In this “Big Questions” seminar, we explore how individuals search for and construct meaning through the ecstasy, agony, and ordinary of life. First, the ecstasies: Are success, glory, and excitement components of a meaningful life? What about love – is it “all you need”? Second, the agonies: How can we transform failure, suffering, and death from sources of anger, grief, and victimhood to sources of significant meaning? And finally, the ordinary: If the ecstasies and agonies are milestones along the path of life, what about all of the steps in between? Can meaning be found in the everyday conversations, the drive to the grocery store, the stranger crossing your path on the sidewalk? If so, what kind of life follows from being able to spin the straw of life into gold? This seminar will examine a variety of relevant issues, including the interplay of cognition, volition, and emotion in meaning making, the contribution of beauty to meaning, fictional and biographical accounts of purposeful living and their impacts, the many ways to pursue happiness, the flight from isolation and loneliness, and the access to meaning available through both the technical/scientific and the spiritual/moral realms. This interdisciplinary seminar is co-taught by a psychologist and an ethicist in religion studies. The big questions raised in this seminar arise for each through their distinct fields of study, but the instructors share an interest in the psychological, philosophical, and spiritual dynamics to be discovered through these paths to meaning