REL/ASIA/PHIL 010  Introduction to Buddhism: Love, Death and Freedom (4)  HU 14285/14286/14287  Prof. Annabella Pitkin (TR, 15:00-16:15)
This course will introduce students to Buddhist practices, philosophical systems, and cultural forms, from Buddhism's Indian origins to its spread across Asia and globally. Students will explore how Buddhists have approached the problem of death, the possibility of freedom, and the forms of social and individual love and concern. Course materials include poetry, biographies, philosophical writings, art and film.

REL 090  Freshman Seminar: Religion and the Paranormal (4)  HU 14288  Prof. Christopher Driscoll (12:10-13:25)
UFOs. Bigfoot. Ghosts. Cattle Mutilations. Life after Death. Angels and Demonic possession. Psychics, Telepathy, and other “Stuff They Don’t Want You to Know.” Is any of this stuff real? What does “real” mean, anyway? Ask an “experiencer” and the answer is surely yes, but ask a skeptic and it is all make believe. Some of the most well-known religious leaders, and many scholars of religion, too, focus attention on what today we call the paranormal. Debates about the paranormal offer a wonderful window into the study of religion, and the issue of how we understand and study human experience. Are our experiences shared? And if not, are they credible? Are you a believer? And, if so, in what? “The truth is out there,” so come join us as we search for it in Religion and the Paranormal.

REL 040  Is God Dead?  HU 14687  Prof. Christopher Driscoll (TR, 9:20-10:35)
Is God Dead? Some people think so. Do you? Come decide for yourself. This course looks at the idea of god in Western philosophy and theology, with particular attention to death of god movement(s), and the changing shape of these movements in light of culture wars and identity politics. The course surveys key thinkers to ask questions about the origins, functions, and future of god and gods in the contemporary world. Posed as an ongoing question-Is god dead?
Muslim Asia in the 21st Century: Religion, Culture, Politics (4)
Prof. Khurram Hussein (MW, 15:00-16:15)
Despite an overwhelming focus on Islam in the Middle East, most Muslims in the World now live in South, Central and South-East Asia. In this course, we will explore the ongoing evolution of these societies as they deal with the novel opportunities and challenges of globalization in the 21st century. We will also investigate how modern Muslim identities emerge from a complex interplay between religion, culture, and politics.

Antisemitism Past and Present
Prof. Hartley Lachter (MW, 15:00-16:15)
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.

Christian Origins:
New Testament & the Beginnings of Christianity
Prof. Benjamin Wright (MW, 9:20-10:35)
Early Christianity from its beginnings until the end of the second century. Coverage includes the Jewish and Hellenistic matrices of Christianity, traditions about the life of Jesus and his significance, and the variety of belief and practice of early Christians. Emphasis on encountering primary texts.

Religion, Law and Constitution (4)
Prof. Lloyd Steffen (TR, 15:00-16:15)
An examination of the relationship of religion to American law and the United States Constitution. Course will focus on Supreme Court decisions involving the "establishment" and "free exercise" clauses of the First Amendment. Attention will also be given to the intellectual, historical, religious and theological background behind the American experiment in "church-state" separation, including the thought of Roger Williams, the Founders (Washington, Jefferson, Madison), and contemporary analysts (e.g., M. Nussbaum).

Jewish Philosophy (4)
Prof. Hartley Lachter (MW, 10:45-12:00)
Consideration of how major Jewish thinkers from the first to 21st centuries confronted questions at the intersection of religion and philosophy: the existence and nature of God, free will, evil, divine providence, miracles, creation, revelation, and religious obligation.

Sex, Gender, Jews (4)
Prof. Jodi Eichler-Levine (MW, 10:45-12:00)
How do Jews of all genders tell their stories? What are the varied Jewish approaches to sexuality? How have feminist movements affected Jewish rituals? In this course, we will consider how religion, gender, sexuality, race, and class intersect in the lives of Jews, with a particular focus on North America. Topics will include: Jewish women's memoirs; the voices of LGBTQ Jews; recent innovations in Jewish ritual and leadership; Jewish masculinities; and the gendering of Jewish children’s literature, among others.
Religion has become a renewed political force on the world stage in recent years. This course will focus on how religion has often provided both the ideological language and the organizing principles for many modern nationalisms. Our exploration of this topic will take the form of case studies from various parts of the world, including but not limited to Pakistan, Israel, No. Ireland, India, Iran and USA.

A survey of the various intellectual, cultural, political and ecclesiastical developments that have shaped contemporary Roman Catholic life and thought.

We often think of globalization as a modern phenomenon. Yet as early as the twelfth century BCE, transportation, trade, political and religious networks tied the Mediterranean basin together. This course will examine in three periods—the Late Bronze Age, the Hellenistic period, and the Roman period—how these networks were organized and how they affected a range of Mediterranean and Near Eastern peoples. We will use some modern approaches to globalization as analytical tools for understanding the ancient world.

Major 20th century movements within Christian and Jewish theology understood as responses to the problems of modern times. May be repeated for credit as the subject matter varies.

Buddhism’s intellectual, ethical, and spiritual resources are reexamined in light of contemporary environmental problems. Is Buddhism the most green of the major world religions? What are the moral implications of actions that affect the environment?

This advanced seminar will focus on the diversity among modern and contemporary Jewish writers, with particular attention to race, gender, sexuality, and ability. Although we will read predominantly Jewish American writers, we will also look back at how classical Jewish sources are deployed in modern texts. Genres will include memoirs, poetry, short stories, and at least one novel.