

# RELIGION

## School Notes

*Subject Code for Religious Studies: RELS*

*World Wide Web Address: [www.queensu.ca/religion/](http://www.queensu.ca/religion/) (<https://www.queensu.ca/religion/>)*

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## Overview

Religion plays a major role in shaping and influencing various cultures and historical and political movements around the world. Thus, understanding religious traditions and their impact on diverse modern issues is vital preparation for building a career in the global marketplace. Studying religion involves examining the history of religious traditions, comparing the ideas and values of different religious systems, and understanding the place and function of religion in society. Students of Religious Studies investigate why people are religious, where religion comes from, and how it should be defined and understood.

## Faculty

For more information, please visit: <https://www.queensu.ca/religion/people-0> (<https://www.queensu.ca/religion/people-0/>)

- Amarnath Amarasingam
- Dustin N. Atlas
- Richard S. Ascough
- Forough Jahanbakhsh
- Danielle Lagrone
- Jennifer S. Leath
- Jorge Legoas P.
- Sharday C. Mosurinjohn
- Aditi Sen

- Tracy J. Trothen
- M. Shobhana Xavier

## Major

- Religious Studies – Major (Arts) – Bachelor of Arts (Honours) (<https://queensu-ca-public.courseleaf.com/arts-science/schools-departments-programs/religious-studies/religious-studies-major-arts-ba-honours/>)

## Joint Honours

- Religious Studies – Joint Honours (Arts) – Bachelor of Arts (Honours) (<https://queensu-ca-public.courseleaf.com/arts-science/schools-departments-programs/religious-studies/religious-studies-medial-arts-ba-honours/>)

## General/Minor

- Religious Studies – General (Arts) – Bachelor of Arts (<https://queensu-ca-public.courseleaf.com/arts-science/schools-departments-programs/religious-studies/religious-studies-general-arts-ba/>)
- Religious Studies – Minor (Arts) (<https://queensu-ca-public.courseleaf.com/arts-science/schools-departments-programs/religious-studies/religious-studies-minor-arts/>)

## Courses

### **RELS 131 World Religions/Religious Worlds Units: 6.00**

Introduces religion in India, China and Japan; also the movements of Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Humanism. NOTE Also offered online. Consult Arts and Science Online. Learning Hours may vary.

**Learning Hours:** 228 (48 Lecture, 24 Tutorial, 156 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite None. Exclusion Maximum of 6.0 units from RELS 131/6.0; RELS 132/3.0; RELS 133/3.0.

**Course Equivalencies:** RELS131; RELS131B

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Develop a definition of religion that recognizes the diversity of religious traditions.
2. Compare and contrast the components of the major world religions.
3. Identify the world's religious traditions within their global and cultural context.
4. Situate contemporary religious issues in their historical roots.



### **RELS 132 Western Religions Units: 3.00**

This course will examine Judaism, Christianity, Islam as well as some indigenous traditions and new religious movements. It will primarily consider these religious traditions in their historical context, looking carefully at their origins, sacred literature, and ritual life, though at times we will consider selected contemporary issues that highlight different religions' response to modernity.

NOTE RELS 132 and RELS 133 together, are equivalent to RELS 131.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (24 Lecture, 12 Tutorial, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite None. Exclusion Maximum of 6.0 units from RELS 131/6.0; RELS 132/3.0; RELS 133/3.0.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

#### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Develop a definition of religion that recognizes the diversity of religious traditions.
2. Identify the world's religious traditions within their global and cultural context.
3. Critically analyze contemporary religious issues in their historical roots.
4. Communicate their critical thinking through research and writing.

### **RELS 133 Eastern Religions Units: 3.00**

This course will examine a host of religions from the "east". It will primarily consider these religious traditions in their historical context, looking carefully at their origins, sacred literature, and ritual life, though at times we will consider selected contemporary issues that highlight different religions' response to modernity.

NOTE RELS 132 and RELS 133 together, are equivalent to RELS 131.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (24 Lecture, 12 Tutorial, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite None. Exclusion Maximum of 6.0 units from RELS 131/6.0; RELS 132/3.0; RELS 133/3.0.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

#### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Develop a definition of religion that recognizes the diversity of religious traditions.
2. Identify the world's religious traditions within their global and cultural context.
3. Critically analyze contemporary religious issues in their historical roots.
4. Communicate their critical thinking through research and writing.

### **RELS 137 Religion and Film Units: 3.00**

This course will explore how religion is portrayed in film, noting particularly the depiction of religious belief, practices, practitioners, and institutions, and the use of religious symbols and metaphors.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (24 Lecture, 12 Tutorial, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite None. Equivalency RELS 237/3.0\*.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

#### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Analyze how religion can be presented in films.
2. Collaborate with others in critical thinking, research, and writing.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the basic terminology and concepts for the academic study of religion; demonstrate comprehension of different analytical methods that can be used in the interpretation of religion in film.
4. Evaluate how a film's use of religion reflects and/or creates worldviews.

**RELS 140 Religion and Science Units: 3.00**

This course examines the categories of both science and religion and attempts to explore the possible relationships between them. Case studies involve: medicine and health, relationships with other animals, concepts of human nature, super/natural ontologies, and science-and-technology-based religions.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (24 Lecture, 12 Tutorial, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite None.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Engage with the complexity of relationships between religion and science using the methods and theories of religious studies.
2. Examine the form and functions of a variety of stories about religion and science that people have told themselves across different places and times.
3. Formulate research questions about religion and science and analyze the significance of these research questions for public life and academic conversations.
4. Identify some key concepts, issues, and debates going on in the study of religion and science.
5. Practice your scholarly writing and conversation skills.

**RELS 161 Contemporary Problems in Religion and Culture Units: 6.00**

Explores religious issues in culture, literature, politics and social ethics.

**Learning Hours:** 228 (48 Lecture, 24 Tutorial, 156 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite None.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**RELS 162 Religion, News, and Media Units: 3.00**

This course will identify and describe characteristics of religion as they appear in news reports of social, political, and economic aspects of public life and analyze how the news presents, shapes, and creates perceptions of religion in public discourse.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (24 Lecture, 12 Tutorial, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite None.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Closely read and critically evaluate media depictions of religion.
2. Describe how the advent of new media have changed religious practice.
3. Recognize how news media create and shape discourses about religion.
4. Write a cogent, critical analysis of news media engaging with religion.

**RELS 163 Popular Culture and Religion Units: 3.00**

This course will identify and describe characteristics of religion as they appear in popular culture (e.g. fashion; comics; movies; art; music; novels; sitcoms; dramas; video games) and analyze how such depictions present, shape, and create perceptions of religion in public discourse.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (24 Lecture, 12 Tutorial, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite None.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**RELS 200 Religion and Global Development Units: 3.00**

This course will examine the vital role that different religious ideas and groups play in major development organizations and initiatives. Students will look at how religious ideas and groups have influenced issues around global poverty, pandemics, child welfare, economics and debt relief, education, etc.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 9 Group Learning, 75 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite Level 2 or above and 6.0 units in RELS at the 100-level.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**RELS 201 Topics in Religious Studies I Units: 3.00**

A topic of current interest in Religious Studies not covered in other available courses.

NOTE This course is repeatable for credit under different topic titles.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. The instructor appointed to teach the course would set the specific learning outcomes. The Director of the School of Religion will ensure that the specific learning outcomes on the course syllabus are aligned with the general learning outcomes for the undergraduate program in Religious Studies, which are listed below.
2. Graduates of the undergraduate program in Religious Studies will have skills to; examine the historical, textual, and cultural dimensions of diverse religious traditions.
3. Articulate characteristics of religion as a cultural phenomenon in the social, political, and economic aspects of public life.
4. Employ the methods and theories used in the academic study of religion.
5. Engage in self-reflective, open, informed, and civil conversations about diverse religious traditions.
6. Conceptualize and develop arguments through careful analysis, cogent writing, effective speaking, and critical thinking.

**RELS 202 Traditions in Religious Studies Units: 3.00**

A topic of current interest in Religious Studies not covered in other available courses.

NOTE This course is repeatable for credit under different topic titles.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**RELS 205 Religion Meets Empire: Global Perspectives Units: 3.00**

Religion and other belief systems played a crucial role in governing empires, ranging from homogenization to accepting diversity - and even to both approaches or strategies in the same empire. The course critically assesses constructions of "religion" as a category and concerning inequality and diversity in global history.

NOTE Also offered online, consult Arts and Science Online (Learning Hours may vary).

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 9 Group Learning, 75 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite None.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**RELS 206 Drugs and Religion Units: 3.00**

This course explores the role of mind/body-altering substances in religions; as things claimed to be of spiritual significance; and as the objects of a fervor (today's "psychedelic renaissance") that we religion scholars can analyze as a new religious movement. It attends to western appropriation of plants and fungi sacred to Indigenous peoples.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (24 Lecture, 12 Group Learning, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Examine the role of psychoactive substances in religious life historically and today, with special attention to esotericism.
2. Investigate how Western medicine is secularizing sacred psychoactive substances from Indigenous traditions.
3. Identify the use of religion-related concepts in today's so-called "psychedelic renaissance," and analyze this movement itself as a "new religious movement."
4. Articulate how religious ideas (like mystical experiences or notions of salvation) have informed legal and cultural perceptions of drugs (e.g., the categorical division of drug vs. food vs. medicine; the moral and health risks connoted by discourses of addiction and abuse vs. experimentation and recreation).
5. Consider and evaluate claims that substances (e.g., psychedelics) give us access to true knowledge about the nature of reality itself (e.g., other dimensions, beings, ultimate purpose and meaning, etc.).

**RELS 207 Religion, Hate, and Xenophobia Units: 3.00**

This course will examine the history of islamophobia, the history of antisemitism, and other kinds of xenophobia related to religion and religious communities around the world. Students will become closely acquainted with the origins of these ideas, how they were articulated in the past, and the ways in which they play out in the contemporary world.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 9 Group Learning, 75 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Demonstrate factual knowledge of hateful ideas and groups that have been targeted throughout history and in the contemporary world.
2. Engage with historical and cultural aspects of how religious communities have experienced hate and xenophobia over the years.
3. Critically analyze issues around racism, anti-religious sentiment, and hate movements that are prevalent today.
4. Communicate their critical thinking through research and writing.

**RELS 209 Radical Jews Units: 3.00**

This course examines the life and work of Jewish radical thinkers: analysts, anarchists, communists, feminists, environmentalists, and anti-nationalists. We will be interested both in the ways they created difficulties for dominant cultural and political institutions, and traditional Jewish authorities.

**Learning Hours:** 126 (12 Lecture, 12 Tutorial, 12 Online Activity, 90 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite Level 2 or above and 6.0 units in RELS at the 100-level.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Name key figures and problems in the history of Jewish social, political, and religious thought.
2. Describe key positions in this tradition (Jewish socialism, anarchism, analysis).
3. Identify and analyze fundamental arguments made by the texts and figures we study.
4. Demonstrate effective critical reading skills.
5. Develop concise and clear writing skills.

**RELS 212 Mythology of the Ancient Near East Units: 3.00**

Similarities and differences in the myths of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia will be explored on the basis of material remains (e.g., the pyramids and temple architecture) and texts.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Analyze the interaction between religious and political ideologies.
2. Compare the religious/social ideas expressed in one ancient myth with those of another
3. Describe important cultural narratives/myths transmitted in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.
4. Learn a method for analyzing a mythic artifact or composition.

**RELS 213 The Bible Units: 3.00**

Analysis of the biblical texts (Hebrew Bible; New Testament) and the use and abuse of these texts in various cultural developments globally.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (24 Lecture, 12 Seminar, 48 Online Activity, 36 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level). Exclusion RELS 210/3.0\*; RELS 214/3.0\*.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Engage with the complexity of the historical development of the stories in the Biblical texts.
2. Cultivate skills to analyze biblical texts.
3. Examine how historical, literary, and archaeological evidence contributes to reconstructing the development of religious groups and movements in antiquity.
4. Deploy the methods and theories of religious studies.

**RELS 218 Christianity Units: 3.00**

Introduction to Christianity as a religious tradition through its texts, its history and its contemporary forms.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students will have a better basis for placing both historical and current developments in Christianity in context.
2. Students will have a deepened appreciation for the complexities of history generally and of the history of Christianity in particular.
3. Students will have a growing awareness of the mix of greatness and frailty found in those who have sought to be practitioners of Christianity.

**RELS 221 New Religious Movements Units: 3.00**

All religions were once new, small, and unusual to the cultures around them - often therefore attracting suspicion. This course examines the practices, beliefs, and histories of several NRMs, and why some gain legitimacy while others get derided as "cults." Doing so illuminates broader processes like mythmaking, Othering, and (de)secularization.

**Learning Hours:** 126 (24 Lecture, 12 Group Learning, 6 Online Activity, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Collaborate with others in critical thinking, research, and writing.
2. Describe characteristics (history, practices, beliefs, aesthetics etc.) of several New Religious Movements.
3. Formulate research questions about New Religious Movements and analyze the significance of these research questions for ongoing academic conversations.
4. Identify some key concepts, issues, and debates going on in the study of New Religious Movements today and demonstrate an understanding of how the field is composed around them.
5. Practice your scholarly writing, conversation, and presentation skills.
6. Translate research-based knowledge and scholarly language on new religious movements into lay language that can inform public conversation about these topics.

**RELS 222 The Hindu World Units: 3.00**

Developments through 3,000 years of Indian history; the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, Yoga and Vedanta, mythology of Vishnu and Shiva, and recent Hindu thinkers (e.g., Tagore, Aurobindo).

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Be familiar with the position of women in Hinduism.
2. Be introduced to the Hindu pantheon of Gods and know their significance in Hindu religion.
3. Conduct research that develops individual interest in a topic related to Hindu religion. Understand the role of yoga past and present.
4. Know the basic content and significance of the two epics.
5. Know the basic content of the 4 Vedas.
6. Understand the basic components of the Hindu religion.

**RELS 223 Buddhism Units: 3.00**

Buddhism in India, the life and teaching of Gautama the Buddha, and the growth of the Theravadin and Mahayanist traditions.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Develop a "critical understanding" of the practice of meditation through lectures and guest lecture.
2. Examine Buddhism in its modern context by looking specifically at its transplantation to the West.
3. Learn about the history of Buddhism from its earliest origins as a religion indigenous to India.
4. Understand and assess the philosophical, social, and historical developments of Buddhism throughout Asia.

**RELS 224 Taoism Units: 3.00**

The philosophy, worldview, spirituality and ethics of Taoism, China's organized indigenous religion, in Chinese history and in the contemporary world.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Appreciate how and why scholars produce different interpretations of or approaches to Taoism.
2. Evaluate the significance of Taoism in the contemporary world according to your own reasoned criteria.
3. Gain experience and confidence in basic life skills such as reading, thinking, evaluating, summarizing, presenting, arguing, etc.
4. Understand core texts, values, and worldviews of Taoism, China's indigenous, organized religion, as it developed over history.

**RELS 226 Islam Units: 3.00**

Historical and topical survey of Islam, its development through the study of its rise, institutionalization of its beliefs and practices, formation of its theology, law, mysticism; as well as its modern interpretations and practices.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Develop a critical analytical frame of reference in order to be able to understand and explain religious issues in an educated manner.
2. Identify why there are different voices and manifestations of Islam.
3. Understand how historical developments take place within a religion.

**RELS 227 Indigenous Religious Traditions Units: 3.00**

Introduction to the study of the Indigenous religious experience in Canada and abroad.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Analyze the making and unmaking of Indigenous identity and spirituality by the State, the Church, the social sciences, and Human Rights to generate decolonizing processes and debates in the social and academic arenas.
2. Define the Indigenous condition in relation to coloniality and the environment.
3. Describe religious systems in ancient Indigenous cultures to explain their syncretism with mainstream world religions in the colonial encounter.

**RELS 228 Sages, Scholars, and Rabbis Units: 3.00**

The religious institutions produced by the Jews from the second to the seventh centuries. This course will explore in critical fashion the principal areas of rabbinic activity including: topics on jurisprudence, philosophy, social and political thinking, the role of tradition, and scriptures.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science



### **RELS 229 Confucianism Units: 3.00**

The philosophy, worldview, spirituality and ethics of Confucianism in its classical, modern and contemporary forms.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

#### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Engage with Confucian philosophy and history and explore the ways in which it can dialogue with and content contemporary Western notions of philosophy, psychology, and spirituality, and so forth.
2. Formulate research questions about religious traditions and seek out new modes of inquiry into older material.
3. Identify the key ideas, practices, and people in the history of Confucianism.
4. Investigate the ways in which the Confucian tradition challenges and enriches our understanding of "religion" and examine the various ways the term has been employed across spatial and temporal locales.
5. Practice academic reading, writing, research, and critical thinking.

### **RELS 232 Religion and Social Movements Units: 3.00**

This course will examine the field of social movements studies, with a particular focus on how religion has played a role in the rise of social movements, how religious communities have been influenced by social movements, and how mobilization and activism around social justice issues is coloured by religion and culture.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 9 Group Learning, 75 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

#### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Demonstrate how religion has animated a whole host of social and political movements through history and in different contexts.
2. Demonstrate skills in research, writing, and critical thinking.
3. Describe the ways in which religion and politics, to take one example, are often more intertwined than we generally recognize.
4. Develop a deeper understanding of the historical and cultural aspects of some of the events students may be reading in the news.

### **RELS 234 Judaism Units: 3.00**

An introduction to the self-definition of Judaism through an analysis of the concepts of God, Torah and Israel past and present. Also, a preliminary study of the struggles facing Jews in Europe, the State of Israel and North America.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

#### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Collaborate with others in critical thinking, research, and writing.
2. Critically read source texts.
3. Distinguish between course-relevant terms (e.g., Judaism, secularism, midrash, orthodoxy, and so on).
4. Extrapolate from textual evidence to try and understand and interpret cultural practices.
5. Practice your scholarly writing skills (including grammar, punctuation, structure, and referencing).



**RELS 235 Religion and Environment Units: 3.00**

Examines how religious traditions shape human values and behaviours towards the environment and how environmental problems are shaping the evolution of religious and spiritual traditions.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Be conversant with major religious perspectives, both historical and contemporary, on the human/nature relationship.
2. Critically analyze current environmental issues.
3. Evaluate what the various cultural traditions of the world say about human responsibility toward the environment.
4. Gain familiarity with key concepts and terms in the field of religion and ecology.

**RELS 236 Religion and Sex Units: 3.00**

Views of and attitudes toward sexuality in selected world religions; the place of sexuality in religious traditions; relationship between sex and the sacred; specific topics such as marriage, gay and lesbian issues, contraception will be chosen.

**Learning Hours:** 126 (36 Lecture, 12 Group Learning, 6 Online Activity, 72 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Demonstrate a knowledge of key theories, ideas and concepts surrounding the historical and contemporary study of religion and sexuality.
2. Evaluate various methods of interpreting the relationship between religion and sexuality from a comparative perspective.
3. Further develop reading, writing and research skills.
4. Identify and explain key strategies that scholars utilize to study religion and sexuality.

**RELS 239 Sport and Religion Units: 3.00**

This course will provide an overview of the relatively new and expanding body of research that examines the relationship between sport, spirituality and religion. Topics including play, games, flow, ritual, prayer, sports stars as role models, doping, fandom and miracles in sport will be explored.

**Learning Hours:** 129 (36 Lecture, 93 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Develop an understanding of the intersections of religion with sports.
2. Develop an understanding of the intersections of spirituality with sports, including flow experiences.
3. Explore multiple ways that spiritual or religious-like experiences occur in sport, and to ask critical questions about these experiences.
4. Develop an understanding of some of the ethical issues raised through these intersections.



**RELS 240 Magic, Witchcraft, and the Supernatural Units: 3.00**

Studies the differences between the categories of religion, magic, witchcraft, the supernatural, etc., as constructed in scholarship, popular culture, and practice. Focuses on examples such as New Religious Movements, depictions of magic in film and TV, and moral panics over alleged occult practices, and the histories that let us make sense of them.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (24 Lecture, 6 Group Learning, 12 Online Activity, 78 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Apply some of the course readings to theorize your own experiences with magic, witchcraft, and the supernatural in popular culture and explain them in relation to social forces.
2. Assess your own academic development and form your own learning goals.
3. Collaborate with others in critical thinking, research, and writing.
4. Identify some key concepts, issues, and debates going on in the study of magic, witchcraft, and the supernatural today and demonstrate an understanding of how the field is composed around them.
5. Practice your scholarly writing, conversation, and presentation skills.
6. Translate research-based knowledge and scholarly language about magic, witchcraft, and the supernatural into lay language that can inform public conversation about these topics.

**RELS 242 Objects in Global Indigenous Spirituality Units: 3.00**

The course addresses the sacred or profane status of objects in Indigenous cosmologies. What they are, mean, and do, and how Indigenous persons position themselves in relation to them. This leads to reflections on the object/subject division, the condition of materiality and immateriality, and the resulting nature of spirits in Indigenous worlds.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Name and describe traditional knowledges to criticize the application of the Western category of "things" and "objects" to Indigenous contexts.
2. Distinguish those items as more than simple materiality in Indigenous contexts to redefine the scope of the sacred/profane division in religious studies.
3. Identify the immaterial qualities attached to "objects" to examine the category "spirits" in Indigenous worlds.

**RELS 250 Mythology of Heroes Units: 3.00**

Examines how hero stories are formed, transmitted, and function using a variety of source materials from ancient writings through to contemporary cultural expressions.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Critically analyze the philosophical, religious, and moral challenges posed by the teaching of various hero myths.
2. Demonstrate a knowledge of key theories, ideas, and concepts surrounding the historical and contemporary study of mythology.
3. Evaluate various methods of interpreting mythology from a comparative perspective.
4. Further develop reading, writing, and research skills.
5. Identify and explain key strategies that scholars utilize to study mythology.

**RELS 252 Mysticism Units: 3.00**

The academic study of mysticism; mystical movements; and mystics.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Demonstrate a knowledge of key theories, ideas and concepts surrounding the historical and contemporary study of mysticism.
2. Evaluate various methods of interpreting mystical experience from a comparative perspective.
3. Further develop reading, writing and research skills.
4. Identify and explain key strategies that scholars utilize to study mysticism.

**RELS 255 Research and Writing in Religious Studies Units: 3.00**

An investigation into the techniques of critical reading and writing for research in Religious Studies.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Seminar, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units in RELS at the 100-level). Equivalency RELS 355/3.0\*.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Identify and discuss issues concerning how we study religion as an academic topic.
2. Translate scholarly language about course topics into meaningful and creative modes that can inform public conversations.
3. Imagine and apply ways to understand, research, and write about experiences deemed religious.

**RELS 257 Indigenous Sages and Wisdoms Units: 3.00**

Following the specific roles usually associated with the category "shamanism", this course examines empirical accounts on the knowledges and practices of various types of spiritual specialists, such as sages, healers, diviners, priests, sorcerers, and mediums in Indigenous traditions in Canada and various regions of the world.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Identify the character and cultural practices referred to by the broad categories "shaman" and "shamanism" in Indigenous contexts.
2. Describe the shaman's relationship with humans and non-humans, and list the traditional knowledges associated with them.
3. Analyze in what ways shamanic practices and utterances produce symbolic and material effects.
4. Understand the concept of "shamanism" as a colonial tool imposed onto Indigenous subjects.

**RELS 266 Religion and Social Ethics Units: 3.00**

Moral problems and religious responses: e.g., sexual morality; violence; civil disobedience.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Apply ethical theories to a range of contemporary social issues of moral concern.
2. Describe the central ideas of major ethical theories from religious, philosophical, and Indigenous perspectives.
3. Practice religious studies-specific critical thinking, reading, writing, and speaking and mindful listening skills.
4. Recognize and critically reflect on your own and others' assumptions (and biases) on the morality of disputed moral issues.

**RELS 284 God and the Holocaust Units: 3.00**

"God and the Holocaust" is an interdisciplinary course on the Holocaust's effect on religion, ethics, and politics in the 20th and 21st centuries, which also draws comparative insights from other genocides. It examines the Holocaust's challenges especially concerning understanding of otherness, God, and evil, from both religious and secular perspectives. Additionally, the course explores the impact of the Holocaust on inter-religious dialogues, and critically evaluate the call for a Jewish homeland post-Holocaust.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (24 Lecture, 12 Seminar, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Identify the theological questions the Holocaust initiated for both Judaism and Christianity, including issues of chosenness, theodicy, and the nature of evil.
2. Analyze the religious context of the Holocaust, especially concerning religious sentiments, teachings, and attitudes that may have contributed to or been influenced by it.
3. Compare the range of Jewish religious, philosophical, and cultural responses to the Holocaust, including the challenges to traditional beliefs and the evolution of post-Holocaust theology.
4. Communicate the moral and ethical dilemmas faced during the Holocaust and their implications for modern discussions of ethics in both religious and secular contexts.
5. Demonstrate effective critical reading skills.

**RELS 296 Islam in Canada Units: 3.00**

This course examines the historical and contemporary expressions of Islam in Canada. Starting from early Muslim migrants to Canada to current issues of media representations, Islamophobia, and gender and sexuality, as they are unfolding in Canadian contexts for Muslims.

**Learning Hours:** 138 (18 Lecture, 18 Seminar, 12 Group Learning, 90 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Demonstrate how the experiences of Muslims in Canada may be historically, theologically, regionally, and transnationally informed. Begin to develop religious studies-specific critical writing, reading, and thinking skills.
2. Differentiate and model how a religious studies' student approaches the study of Muslim communities, as opposed to how media, insiders, or others may discuss Islam or Muslims.
3. Recognize some of the historical and contemporary developments of Islam in Canada.
4. Think carefully about your positionality and own bias to the subject content at hand.

**RELS 301 Themes in Religious Studies Units: 3.00**

A topic of current interest in Religious Studies not covered in other available courses.

NOTE This course is repeatable for credit under different topic titles.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. The instructor appointed to teach the course would set the specific learning outcomes. The Director of the School of Religion will ensure that the specific learning outcomes on the course syllabus are aligned with the general learning outcomes for the undergraduate program in Religious Studies, which are listed below.
2. Articulate characteristics of religion as a cultural phenomenon in the social, political and economic aspects of public life.
3. Conceptualize and develop arguments through careful analysis, cogent writing, effective speaking, and critical thinking.
4. Employ the methods and theories used in the academic study of religion.
5. Engage in self-reflective, open, informed, and civil conversations about diverse religious traditions and/or themes.
6. Graduates of the undergraduate program in Religious Studies will have skills to; examine historical, textual, and cultural dimensions of diverse religious traditions and/or themes.

**RELS 302 Traditions in Religious Studies Units: 3.00**

A topic of current interest in Religious Studies not covered in other available courses.

NOTE This course is repeatable for credit under different topic titles.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. The instructor appointed to teach the course would set the specific learning outcomes. The Director of the School of Religion will ensure that the specific learning outcomes on the course syllabus are aligned with the general learning outcomes for the undergraduate program in Religious Studies, which are listed below.
2. Articulate characteristics of religion as a cultural phenomenon in the social, political and economic aspects of public life.
3. Conceptualize and develop arguments through careful analysis, cogent writing, effective speaking, and critical thinking.
4. Employ the methods and theories used in the academic study of religion.
5. Engage in self-reflective, open, informed, and civil conversations about diverse religious traditions and/or themes.
6. Graduates of the undergraduate program in Religious Studies will have skills to; examine historical, textual, and cultural dimensions of diverse religious traditions and/or themes.

**RELS 312 Feminist Theology and Christianity Units: 3.00**

An examination of some of the issues raised by the feminist critique of traditional theology and of some feminist attempts at theological reconstruction. In this course we will look at feminist theologies and Christianity.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Identify and comprehend some of the key issues in contemporary feminist theologies.
2. Develop critically reflective understandings of feminist theologies in dialogue with the thinking of others.
3. Gain respect for the diversity of theological opinions on contemporary feminist theologies.
4. Demonstrate an ability to construct your own scholarly positions in dialogue with some publications by a few feminist theologians.

**RELS 314 Queering Religion Units: 3.00**

This course examines the complex intersection of gender, sexuality and religion and the ways in which religious traditions have shaped and continue to shape complex notions of gender and sexuality in the modern era. It considers a review of feminist, gender studies and queer theories, thereafter we will apply these concepts to case studies.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Articulate theories about gender, sexuality and religion.
2. Compare the approaches of sociologists, anthropologists, and gender studies and religious studies scholars in addressing the relationship between gender, sexuality, and religion.
3. Critically analyze how religious myth, doctrine, and ritual is used to understand gender.
4. Critically analyze the way gender and sexuality are used to understand the religion in a variety of contexts; and how they inform one another.
5. Identify and explain how you utilize and/resist gender and queer theories in approaching the study of religion (your own or someone else's).

**RELS 316 Living with the Dead: Religion, Culture, and Death Units: 3.00**

In this interactive, inquiry-based course students will develop their own research project in order to explore how human beings attempt to live with the dead and to share spaces and lives with those who are no longer alive.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Seminar, 48 Online Activity, 36 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 2 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level). Exclusion RELS 301/3.0 (Topic Title: Religion, Culture, and Death - Winter 2023).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Articulate various conceptualizations of death that arise in religious traditions.
2. Examine the forms and functions of how humans ritually engage death and the dead in daily life.
3. Analyze cultural and historical trends in how people live with death.
4. Deploy the methods and theories of religious studies.

**RELS 321 Greek and Roman Religions Units: 3.00**

A study of the development and organization of non-civic religious associations in the Greek and Roman empires using inscriptions, papyri, and literary texts. Insight into religious practices of the Greco-Roman period comes through exploration of groups organized by deity, cult, occupation, or ethnic identity, and the so-called mystery religions.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Cultivate abilities to analyze ancient inscriptions, papyri documents, and literary texts.
2. Encounter various learning styles through content input, interactive tasks, and graded assignments.
3. Engage with the methodological complexity of (re-)constructing ancient religious practices.
4. Examine diverse social contexts and practices of private and semi-private religious associations in the Greco-Roman period.

**RELS 322 Yoga in India and the West Units: 3.00**

Surveys the history and philosophy of yoga in India and the West.

NOTE Yoga Practicum: estimated cost \$90.

**Learning Hours:** 128 (36 Lecture, 8 Off-Campus Activity, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Develop a "critical understanding" of the practice of postures or asana through field research.
2. Examine yoga in its modern context and raise a number of critical debates.
3. Understand and assess the philosophical and theological teachings of yoga in India.
4. Understand the history of yoga starting with its earliest known origins as a spiritual practice indigenous to India.

**RELS 326 Religion and Politics in Muslim Societies Units: 3.00**

Explores the role of religion in the politics of Muslim societies with particular attention to the modern period.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Critically analyze cases and everyday events related to religion and politics in an informed and educated way.
2. Examine the relationship between debates of religion and politics in Muslim societies.
3. Understand theories relevant to the relationship between religion and politics; historical overviews in the post-colonial era; certain major themes such as: secularization, nationalism, politics of identity, human rights and democracies, war and peace, and liberationist ideologies and theologies.

**RELS 328 Apocalypse Units: 3.00**

The primary focus of the course will be the theological perspectives and social functions of apocalypse in select religious traditions. The course will also survey the appropriation of apocalyptic themes throughout history in artistic forms such as art, fiction, and film, with particular attention to our modern times and cultures.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Collaborate with others in critical thinking, research, and writing.
2. Critically read source texts, and extract ideas from them which you think will help understand and address ecological problems.
3. Distinguish between course-relevant terms (e.g., nonreligion, secularity, atheism, etc.) and use them critically in your writing and speaking (i.e., demonstrating an understanding of their origins and politics).
4. Practice your scholarly writing skills (including grammar, punctuation, structure, and referencing).
5. Translate research-based knowledge and scholarly language about course topics into language that can inform public conversation related to other domains, such as art and politics.

**RELS 331 Religion and Violence Units: 3.00**

Links between violence and religious beliefs, practices and institutions; for example, sacrifice, holy wars, scapegoating, and suicide.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Analyze ideological factors implicated in contemporary discourse about religion and violence.
2. Explain particular cases of religiously motivated resistance to experiences of violence in terms of the major processes listed in point.
3. Explain particular cases of religiously motivated violence in terms of the major processes listed in point.
4. Identify major processes that characterize cases of religiously motivated violence, i.e., social indexing, mimetic rivalry, othering and heroic ideology.
5. Replicate the arguments of academic papers and book chapters in the form of short papers.

**RELS 332 Race, Ethnicity, and Religion Units: 3.00**

The course will explore the intersection of race, ethnicity, and religion, alongside gender, sexuality, culture and more. It will challenge students to think about how racial identities, theories, and movements implicate(d) the way religious communities construct their own systems and worldviews.

**Learning Hours:** 128 (18 Lecture, 18 Seminar, 12 Group Learning, 80 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Listen and articulate the fraught topic of race and ethnicity as it intersects with religion in an emphatic, respectful, and critical way.
2. Make acute connections between aesthetic and politics, between texts and context, between ideology and representations, and between individuals and communities.
3. Practice religious studies-specific critical writing, reading, and thinking skills.
4. Practice self-reflective reading and think about their positionality to the religious communities studied throughout the term.

**RELS 334 Jewish Views of the Other Units: 3.00**

A study of the tensions that come into play as Jews formulated views of the Other to balance co-existence with them. Source materials include authoritative writings of Jewish commentary and law and social scientific views of them.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Collaborate with others in critical thinking, research, and writing.
2. Critically read source texts.
3. Distinguish between course-relevant terms (e.g., Judaism, otherness, alterity, gender, and so on).
4. Extrapolate from textual evidence to try and understand and interpret implicit arguments.
5. Practice your scholarly writing skills, especially the formation of argument (but also including grammar, punctuation, structure, and referencing).

**RELS 340 Religion and Democracy Units: 3.00**

Deals with the role of religion in the public sphere and its relation to liberal democracy. It examines the (in)compatibility of some tenets of certain religions with modern democratic principles.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Gain a deeper understanding of certain ongoing social, legal, and political issues related to religion in the society.
2. Improve students' critical thinking ability and analyzing skills through constructing and deconstructing arguments.
3. Understand the concepts of religion and democracy and their functional roles in society.



**RELS 341 Spirituality, Secularity, and Nonreligion Units: 3.00**

A study of concepts intended to summarize positions which are necessarily defined in reference to religion but considered to be other than religious. We explore the origins and presents of perspectives and experiences including the secular, spiritual-but-not-religious, atheistic, and other forms of imitation, indifference, and hostility to religion.

**Learning Hours:** 126 (24 Lecture, 6 Group Learning, 12 Online Activity, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Assess your own learning and growth as a scholar by reflecting on your efforts, achievements, and progress through this class.
2. Collaborate with others in critical thinking, research, and writing.
3. Demonstrate knowledge about specific groups and movements (e.g., SBNRs, Nones, the New Atheists and the new New Atheists).
4. Distinguish between course-relevant terms (e.g. nonreligion, secularity, atheism, etc.) and use them critically in your writing and speaking (i.e., Demonstrating an understanding of their origins and politics).
5. Practice your scholarly writing skills (including grammar, punctuation, structure, and referencing according to a recognized style guide) by participating in the ongoing, public conversation about this field (with your book review and your comments on the NSRN blog).
6. Translate research-based knowledge and scholarly language about course topics into lay language that can inform public conversation about these topics.

**RELS 342 Indigeneity and Nature Units: 3.00**

The seminar deals with the knowledges and practices through which Indigenous peoples conceptualize and approach what the West calls "Nature". Applying their underlying principles, we further analyze contemporary initiatives to promote interspeciesism, and to grant rights to Nature and legal personhood to different elements of the environment.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Seminar, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Identify Indigenous conceptualizations of their environment to reinterpret the Nature/Culture divide as a specifically Western cultural product.
2. Examine Indigenous social, technical, and ritualized practices to compose their epistemological approaches to the environment.
3. Analyze the human/no-human relationships in Indigenous contexts to debate on the inter-speciesist movement and the rights of Nature.

**RELS 345 Religion and Art Units: 3.00**

An examination of discursive, historiographical, and affective aspects of a variety of historical and contemporary artistic expressions (e.g., painting, sculpture, video) through the lens of Religious Studies.

NOTE Field Trip (National Gallery of Canada): estimated cost \$55.

**Learning Hours:** 126 (12 Lecture, 24 Group Learning, 90 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Collaborate with others in critical thinking, research, and writing.
2. Demonstrate knowledge about course-relevant terms, concepts, and theories (e.g., Art criticism, ritual as a cultural phenomenon, affect theory, etc.) and use them critically in writing and speaking (i.e., demonstrating an understanding of their origins and politics).
3. Practice scholarly communication skills (including argumentation, structure, grammar, punctuation, and referencing according to a recognized style guide) by participating in the ongoing, public conversation about this field (with your art criticism assignment and your blog assignment).
4. Translate research-based knowledge and scholarly language about course topics into non-technical language that can inform public conversation about these topics.

**RELS 346 AI, Biohacking, and Future Technology Units: 3.00**

This course looks at issues raised by the intersection of religion and human enhancement technologies. We will consider categories of biohacking, AI, and possible future technologies including mind uploading. Engaging diverse religious issues, we will consider what it means to be human and "better".

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Seminar, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Analyze and assess possible social and religious/spiritual implications of human enhancement technologies and investigate what religion scholars are saying about these implications.
2. Discuss and debate issues raised in the scholarly material assigned in this course regarding the intersections of religion, spirituality, A.I., biohacking, and possible future technologies, and facilitate peer conversations about these intersections.
3. Imagine some possible ethical complexities associated with how we evaluate and interpret human enhancement technologies, including A.I., in relation to religion/spirituality and diverse communities.
4. Translate scholarly language about course topics into meaningful language that can inform public conversations.

**RELS 347 Gender and Sexuality in Islam Units: 3.00**

This course explores conversations regarding women, gender, and sexuality in Islam from classical to the modern period. This is a survey course that utilizes gender and religious studies theories. We will engage with textual traditions of Muslim women and contemporary treatment of women and queer Muslims in Muslim societies.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (24 Seminar, 12 Group Learning, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Challenge understandings of traditional gender norms and binaries, specifically in the context of Islamic cultures, religions and societies.
2. Investigate Islam as a lived tradition that is transforming and transformative, while acknowledging some historical and geographical developments within Muslim societies.
3. Engage primary texts, such as the Qur'an and hadiths, and discuss the interpretative tendencies that have developed from these foundational sources as a hermeneutic process.
4. Discuss how religious and gender identities and meanings are constructed (and are not necessarily self-evident) based on factors such as race, class, gender, culture and region.
5. Research and utilize a variety of reference materials and genres of scholarly work.

**RELS 354 Theory in Religious Studies Units: 3.00**

An introduction to major theoretical approaches to the study of religion.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite Level 3 or above and 6.0 units in RELS at the 200-level. Exclusion A maximum of 6.0 units from RELS 353; RELS 354; RELS 355.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Be able to apply specific theories and methods to specific concrete manifestations of religion.
2. Develop an understanding of some historical and contemporary approaches (methods for understanding religion).
3. Develop an understanding of some theories that can be used to interpret various manifestations of religion.
4. Develop an understanding of the various ways that religion can be defined.
5. Develop an understanding of the ways in which religious studies as a field influences theories and methods for study religion and vice-versa.

**RELS 356 Christianity and American Politics Units: 3.00**

Christianity has significantly shaped U.S. politics, policies, and societal norms. The course examines this impact, especially in light of the constitutional separation of church and state. It delves into how Christian beliefs influence political ideologies and legislation, and its role in shaping voter perceptions and behaviors. The course also addresses the ethics of religious influence in politics, policy-making, and electoral processes, and its global implications, particularly in foreign policy and international relations.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 9 Group Learning, 75 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Analyze and evaluate the historical and present-day impact of America's religious traditions in contemporary politics.
2. Demonstrate understanding of historical and contemporary interplay between Christian groups and American politics.
3. Be able to critically analyze how Christianity as a "public religion" has impacted political discourse in the United States.
4. Demonstrate how Christianity in the US has animated a whole host of social and political movements through history and in different contexts.

**RELS 367 Medicine, Ethics, and Religion Units: 3.00**

The aim of this course is to provide an overview of some ethical issues that arise at the intersection of biomedicine and religion. These ethical issues include moral distress, consent, beginning of life issues, indigeneity and healing, medically assisted death, gene editing, and anti-aging interventions.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (18 Lecture, 18 Seminar, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units in RELS at the 100-level). Equivalency RELS 268/3.0\*.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Understand the basics of some prominent approaches to biomedical ethics including deontological, teleological and virtue ethics.
2. Comprehend and engage some issues in contemporary biomedical ethics.
3. Identify examples of the impact of diverse religious perspectives on healthcare and other biomedical decisions.
4. Understand and explain why religions are morally relevant to biomedical issues.

**RELS 368 Religion and Business Ethics Units: 3.00**

Students will develop background knowledge and analytic skills necessary to identify and negotiate religious commitments in business relationships and resolve ethical issues around the role of religion in business contexts. We will analyze case studies to explore various ways in which business practitioners can and do address questions arising in everyday interactions in the business world.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Construct and communicate rational, responsible, and realistic responses to religious issues.
2. Demonstrate pre-class preparation and comprehension of key concepts and ideas in written and oral form.
3. Develop a critical awareness of and analyze their own morality and religious framework.
4. Identify and analyze religious issues, conflicts, and responsibilities in business contexts.

**RELS 385 Religious Fundamentalisms Units: 3.00**

Religious fundamentalism is a modern phenomenon not exclusive to any religion. In the past few decades, religious fundamentalist movements have been shaping new social, cultural and political norms in a predominately secular age. The course explores theoretical aspects and examines specific case studies across various religions and cultures.

**Learning Hours:** 126 (36 Lecture, 20 Online Activity, 70 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Communicate their critical thinking related to what fundamentalist movements have in common across cultural and political contexts.
2. Demonstrate a factual understanding of how and why fundamentalist movements have arisen within different religions.
3. Engage with the sociological and historical consequences of these movements and their ideas in modern society.

**RELS 393 Buddhism in the Modern World Units: 3.00**

Encounter between Buddhism and the West, major movements and thinkers, and socio-politically engaged Buddhism.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Critically analyze the role of mindfulness meditation in psychotherapy and wellness cultures.
2. Engage with the debates in contemporary Buddhist communities as they pertain to issues of gender, sexuality, race, politics, and ecology.
3. Explore the role of contemplative practice in contemporary Buddhism by practicing various kinds of meditation.
4. Identify key ideas, traditions, practices, and people in the history and transplantation of Buddhism in the West.
5. Practice academic reading, writing, research, and critical thinking.

**RELS 394 Religion and Politics in Contemporary China Units: 3.00**

Examines Chinese and foreign religions in mainland China from 1949 to the present day. Topics include the status of established religions, the political control of new religious movements and the resurgence of traditional Chinese religions and ideologies including Daoism and Confucianism.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**RELS 396 Islam in the Modern World Units: 3.00**

Exploration of Islamic developments since the 19th century: major thinkers, trends of thought, and contemporary movements as responses to modernity.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Develop a critical analytical frame of reference in order to be able to understand and explain issues in an educated manner.
2. Understand how historical developments take place within a religion, here, Islam.
3. Understand why there are different voices talking in the name of Islam.
4. Understanding of current events in Muslim societies.



**RELS 398 Jewish Cultural and Political Thought Units: 3.00**

The development of modern Jewish thought and practice, including the Reform, Orthodox, Conservative and Reconstructionist movements. The consequences of the Holocaust and the establishment of the modern State of Israel.

**Learning Hours:** 132 (36 Lecture, 96 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite (Level 3 or above) or (6.0 units of RELS at the 100-level).

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Name some key concepts, issues, and debates that are current in the study of Modern Judaism.
2. Interpret key primary sources and describe the ways they respond to modernity.
3. Practice your scholarly writing, conversation, and presentation skills.
4. Collaborate with others in critical thinking, research, and writing.

**RELS 401 Honours Seminar Units: 3.00**

Advanced seminar providing detailed reading of one contemporary theme or thinker in religious studies.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (6 Lecture, 30 Seminar, 12 Online Activity, 72 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite Level 4 or above and registration in a RELS Major or Joint Honours Plan and a minimum GPA of 2.60 in 24.0 units of RELS. Corequisite (RELS 354/3.0 and [RELS 255/3.0 or RELS 355/3.0\*]) or RELS 353/6.0\*.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. The Director of the School of Religion will ensure that the specific learning outcomes on the course syllabus are aligned with the general learning outcomes for the undergraduate program in Religious Studies, which are listed below.
2. Articulate characteristics of religion as a cultural phenomenon in the social, political and economic aspects of public life.
3. Conceptualize and develop arguments through careful analysis, cogent writing, effective speaking, and critical thinking.
4. Employ the methods and theories used in the academic study of religion.
5. Engage in self-reflective, open, informed, and civil conversations about diverse religious traditions and/or themes.
6. Graduates of the undergraduate program in Religious Studies will have skills to; examine historical, textual, and cultural dimensions of diverse religious traditions and/or themes.

**RELS 452 The Contemporary Religious Situation Units: 3.00**

Religion in modernity; traditional groups, newer religious movements, contemporary ideologies and social trends of religious significance.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (36 Lecture, 84 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite Level 3 or above and registration in a RELS Major or Joint Honours Plan. Corequisite (RELS 354/3.0 and [RELS 255/3.0 or RELS 355/3.0\*]) or RELS 353/6.0\*. Exclusion RELS 451/6.0\*.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Communicate and present on research projects on religion in the contemporary society.
2. Imagine and develop individual research projects.
3. Integrate body of debates around the role of religion in contemporary society.

**RELS 501 Directed Special Studies I Units: 3.00**

Reading courses on topics not covered in other available courses, arranged with individual members of the Department.

**Learning Hours:** 120 (12 Individual Instruction, 108 Private Study)

**Requirements:** Prerequisite Level 4 or above and registration in the RELS Major Plan and permission of the Department.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**RELS 502 Directed Special Studies II Units: 3.00**

Reading courses on topics not covered in other available courses, arranged with individual members of the Department.

NOTE RELS 502/3.0 may be taken independently or as a continuation of RELS 501/3.0.

**Requirements:** Prerequisite Level 4 or above and registration in the RELS Major Plan and permission of the Department.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science

**RELS 594 Independent Study Units: 3.00**

Exceptionally qualified students entering their third- or fourth-year may take a program of independent study provided it has been approved by the Department or Departments principally involved. The Department may approve an independent study program without permitting it to be counted toward a concentration in that Department. It is, consequently, the responsibility of students taking such programs to ensure that the concentration requirements for their degree will be met.

NOTE Requests for such a program must be received one month before the start of the first term in which the student intends to undertake the program.

**Requirements:** Prerequisite Permission of the Department or Departments principally involved.

**Offering Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Science