

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (RLST)

RLST 10100 Religion Matters (LA)

What is religion? Why is it important for understanding our rapidly changing world? This course investigates what religion is all about, drawing illustrations from various traditions around the globe. Students cultivate skills used in the academic study of religion, while exploring issues of belief, atheism, mysticism, morality, sex, and more. (F)

Attributes: HM, TIII
3 Credits

RLST 10300 Hebrew Scriptures (LA)

This course treats the books of the Bible critically as literature, as religious and moral texts, and as a source of sociological knowledge. It surveys the biblical literature, acquaints students with critical methods for the study of the Bible, situates the Bible within the literature and culture of the ancient Near East, and discusses the religion of ancient Israel. The course will deal with questions of history and archaeology and with questions of meaning: what the biblical text meant to its ancient readers and what meanings it has today. Cross-listed as JWST 10300. (F,Y)

Attributes: H, HM, INBG, TIDE, TMBS
3 Credits

RLST 10400 Introduction to the New Testament (LA)

A survey of the life and teaching of Jesus, and major themes in the Pauline Epistles and the Book of Revelation. (IRR)

Attributes: HM, INBG, TIDE, TIII
3 Credits

RLST 10500 Religion in Global Contexts (LA)

Introduces students to the academic study of religious traditions prevalent in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. Specific topics vary, but may include Native American shamanism, Islam in China, African witchcraft, the politics of Tibetan Buddhism, celebrity Hindu gurus, and Brazilian megachurches. The course considers what it means to label these phenomena 'religious' as well as how traditional religious practices have adapted to the challenges of a modern, globalized world. (F,Y)

Attributes: AN3, G, H, HM, INBG, NACI, NASE, TMBS
3 Credits

RLST 10600 A History of God (LA)

Explores historical developments and living practices within Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions as they encounter other peoples and traditions around the world. Engages with historical events, politics, and changing cultural contexts of the three traditions. Issues covered may include ways of thinking about God in monotheistic traditions; sacred texts and rituals; understandings of gender and sexuality; fundamentalism; science; and encounters with polytheistic, feminine, and/or pagan views of the divine. (S,Y)

Attributes: AN3, G, H, HM, INBG, TIDE, TMBS
3 Credits

RLST 15600 What Is Belief? (LA)

Designed to familiarize students with the field of Religious Studies, this course provides a rigorous but accessible introduction to the phenomenon of religious belief, a phenomenon that is currently debated by scholars of religion and is of significant interest to the wider public. We will consider the relationship between belief and knowledge, doubt, and practice; the possibility of multiple forms of religious belief; and the problem of belief's utility as a tool of comparative analysis. (F)

1 Credit

RLST 17500-17510 Selected Topics in Religion (LA)

Topics to be determined according to teacher and student interest. (IRR)
Attributes: HU
3 Credits

RLST 20100 Religion and Culture (LA)

Study of the mutual relations between religion and culture. The course explores the religious dimension of art, music, and other contemporary media, and considers the way religious symbols influence cultural and social movements. Students study both Western and non-Western examples, of the intersection between religion and culture in art, music, literature, ritual, film, and games. Prerequisites: One liberal arts course in any of the following departments: ANTH, ARTH, CMST, CLTC, CSCR, ECON, EDUC, ENGL, GERO, HIST, JWST, LGST, PHIL, POLT, PSYC, RLST, SOCI, WGST, WRTG. (Y)

Attributes: AN3, HM, INBG, SCE, TIII
3 Credits

RLST 20300 Living Judaism (LA)

Introduces Judaism as a lived tradition, with a focus on ethical, ritual, and cultural practices and beliefs from a wide variety of Jewish communities. Readings include texts from the biblical, rabbinic, medieval, and modern periods. Theological and ethical issues addressed include God, good and evil, covenant, death and afterlife, justice, and social responsibility, as lived out through practices associated with birth and death; marriage and commitment; sexuality; and the life of study, prayer, and devotion. Course cross-listed with JWST 20300; students may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisites: One three credit Liberal Arts course. (S,Y)

Attributes: G, HM, INBG, TIDE, TMBS
3 Credits

RLST 20400 Christianity: Contexts and Conflicts (LA)

Explores some of the varieties of Christianity in its two thousand year history, with special attention to the women who have played a critical role in shaping its tradition. Surveys the features Christianity shares with other religious traditions, as well as how Christianity has been transformed in global contexts. Examines how Christianity has both defended the vulnerable (e.g., liberation theology) and harmed others (e.g., colonial missionary activity). Also considers the ways that Christianity figures into contemporary politics in America in volatile discussions about issues like abortion, race, gender and sexuality. No previous knowledge of Christianity necessary. Prerequisites: One three credit liberal arts course. (O)

Attributes: ESE, INBG
3 Credits

RLST 20500 Engaging Islam (LA)

Introduces the origins and historical development of Islamic religious traditions, while exploring the wide spectrum of beliefs, practices, and interpretations of Muslims. Particular attention is given to historical and contemporary Muslim engagements with mysticism, empire, nationalism, race, and notions of sexuality and gender. Prerequisites: One liberal arts course in any of the following departments: ANTH, ARTH, CMST, CLTC, CSCR, ECON, EDUC, ENGL, GERO, HIST, JWST, LGST, PHIL, POLT, PSYC, RLST, SOCI, WGST, WRTG. (F,Y)

Attributes: DV, ESE, G, H, HM, INBG, TIDE, TMBS
3 Credits

RLST 20700 Death, Dying, and Immortality (LA)

What is death? What, if anything, lies beyond it? This course investigates how different religious traditions from around the world imagine death, dying, and the afterlife. Topics may include reincarnation, end-of-life care, funerary rites, and suicide. Students are invited to explore their relationship with mortality in light of other traditions' perspectives.

Prerequisites: One three credit course in the liberal arts. (Y)

Attributes: 1, AN3, H, HM, HU, TMBS

3 Credits

RLST 21000 Religion, Race, and Social Justice (LA)

Explores the intersection of race and religion in the context of historical and contemporary movements in North America and globally. Challenges students to think about how religion is implicated in the construction of racial identities and theories, and how particular racialized communities utilize religion to resist racial oppression. Case studies may include religion and #BLM, Black Liberation Theology, the Nation of Islam, and Rastafarianism. Prerequisites: One liberal arts course in any of the following departments: ANTH, ARTH, CMST, CLTC, CSCR, ECON, EDUC, ENGL, GERO, HIST, JWST, LGST, PHIL, POLT, PSYC, RLST, SOCI, WGST, WRTG. (O)

Attributes: DV, ESE, HM, TPJ

3 Credits

RLST 21100 Religion, Gender, and Sexuality (LA)

Where do attitudes about gender roles and sexual orientations come from? How do religious traditions reflect, reinforce, or subvert those attitudes? This course explores issues of gender and sexuality in the context of different religious traditions, past and present. Special attention is given to religion's role in current debates surrounding, for example, gender politics, sexual ethics, masculinity, feminist and queer theory, etc. Prerequisites: One liberal arts course in any of the following departments: ANTH, ARTH, CMST, CLTC, CSCR, ECON, EDUC, ENGL, GERO, HIST, JWST, LGST, PHIL, POLT, PSYC, RLST, SOCI, WGST, WRTG. (O)

Attributes: ESE, WGS, WGSJ

3 Credits

RLST 23500 The Nature of Nature (LA)

Investigates why different religious traditions view our planet so differently. To what extent do these traditions shape peoples' perceptions of and interactions with the natural environment? Also explores how religious communities around the globe are responding to deforestation, biodiversity loss, and climate change. Makes use of a wide range of materials, including religious texts, documentaries, ethnographic studies, and science fiction. Prerequisites: One three-credit course in the liberal arts. (E)

Attributes: ABSS, AN3, ENVE, HM, TMBS, TQSF

3 Credits

RLST 24000 Writing about Religion: Heaven and Hell (LA)

An interdisciplinary introduction to how portrayals of heaven and hell have been transformed over time, with a focus on learning how to write about religion from a secularly minded but religiously-informed perspective. The course explores two thousand years of the history of heaven and hell with a focus on human meaning-making in religious practice, poetry, art, and digital media. Includes significant attention to the development of research and writing skills in the humanities.

Prerequisites: WRTG 10600, ICSM 10800, or ICSM 11800. (IRR)

Attributes: WI

4 Credits

RLST 25200 Introduction to Mysticism (LA)

Focuses on mystical journeys and ecstatic experiences from around the world. Draws from a variety of disciplines to analyze mystical paths in different cultural contexts, including philosophy, anthropology, ethnobotany, neurophysiology, psychology, and religious studies. Topics include voices and visions, the use of psychotropic substances, bridal mysticism, meditation, and the occult. Prerequisites: One three credit course in the liberal arts. (E)

Attributes: HU

3 Credits

RLST 25500 Religions in America (LA)

A sociohistorical survey of the varieties of religions in North America, including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, new religious movements, and religions of various ethnic groups, such as Native American religions and African American religions. Emphasizes the role religion plays in the political and ethical spheres of American life. Prerequisites: One liberal arts course in any of the following departments: ANTH, ARTH, CMST, CLTC, CSCR, ECON, EDUC, ENGL, GERO, HIST, JWST, LGST, PHIL, POLT, PSYC, RLST, SOCI, WGST, WRTG. (IRR)

Attributes: HU

3 Credits

RLST 27500-27510 Selected Topics in Religion (LA)

Topics to be determined according to teacher and student interest.

Prerequisites: One liberal arts course in any of the following departments: ANTH, ARTH, CMST, CLTC, CSCR, ECON, EDUC, ENGL, GERO, HIST, JWST, LGST, PHIL, POLT, PSYC, RLST, SOCI, WGST, WRTG. (IRR)

Attributes: HU

3 Credits

RLST 28100 Hindu Worlds (LA)

Introduces students to the richly diverse yet interrelated traditions of practice and thought that have contributed to what is today called "Hinduism". Emphasizes how these traditions have evolved from ancient times to the present, as well as the persistent tension between their textual and performative dimensions. Students examine Hindu religious literature and philosophy, temples and pilgrimage, iconography and mythology, in addition to issues pertaining to gender, colonialism, and the diaspora. Prerequisites: One liberal arts course in any of the following departments: ANTH, ARTH, CMST, CLTC, CSCR, ECON, EDUC, ENGL, GERO, HIST, JWST, LGST, PHIL, POLT, PSYC, RLST, SOCI, WGST, WRTG. (O)

Attributes: DV, G, HM, INBG, TMBS

3 Credits

RLST 28300 Seeking the Buddha (LA)

Engages the historical evolution and lived experience of Buddhist religious traditions by exploring how people have variously attempted to search for, discover, imagine, understand, become, and even kill the Buddha. Considers how the Buddha and his teachings have been interpreted through stories, philosophies, rituals, images, and objects across Asia and beyond. Special attention is paid to the transmission and modernization of Buddhist traditions in the contemporary western world.

Prerequisites: One three credit liberal arts course. (E)

Attributes: DV, G, H, HU, INBG

3 Credits

RLST 31000 Epic Adventures: Readings in Hindu Mythology (LA)

Explores the rich narrative traditions of India's twin epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, which have constituted the core of Hindu mythology for over two millennia and profoundly shaped the cultures of South and Southeast Asia. Examines these myths in their diverse literary, philosophical, and performative dimensions and addresses broad thematic issues raised in the texts, including the nature of war, deception, gender, fate, friendship, duty, and divinity. No previous knowledge of Hinduism is presumed. Prerequisites: One 200-level RLST course; WRTG 10600 (or equivalent). (E,S)

Attributes: WI

3 Credits

RLST 31100 Philosophy of Religion (LA)

Study and discussion of a broad range of issues in the philosophy of religion, such as religious epistemology, the ontological argument, the cosmological argument, the teleological argument, religion and science, and the problem of evil. Primary source readings. Prerequisites: One 20000-level PHIL course. (IRR)

Attributes: HU

3 Credits

RLST 32300 Gender and Sexuality in Judaism (LA)

Exploration of what it means to be a Jewish man or woman. The course addresses how Jewish gender roles have changed throughout history, as well as how contemporary Jews deal with changes in women's roles and demands for gender equality. Topics covered include what is "gender" and how to study it; traditional roles of men and women in Judaism; the gendered Jewish body; family and sexuality; homosexuality; Jewish feminism; the gender of God; and changing women's religious roles. Cross-listed with JWST 32300. (Y)

Attributes: 1, DV, HU

3 Credits

RLST 33300 Jewish Mysticism (LA)

This course traces the history of Jewish mysticism. After a brief overview of early Jewish mysticism from the biblical and rabbinic periods, students will concentrate on the medieval flowering of Kabbalah, and its further development in the 16th-century Kabbalah of Safed and Israel and 18th-century Eastern European Hasidism. The emphasis will be placed on understanding both the theoretical and experiential aspects of Jewish mysticism and on examining some of the key texts of Jewish mysticism. Cross-listed with JWST 33300. (Y)

Attributes: HU

3 Credits

RLST 35600 Religion and Literature (LA)

This course explores the ways in which religious ideas and practices appear in contemporary novels associated with various cultures and religious traditions. We consider how authors utilize religious themes to negotiate challenges and questions posed by modernity, as well as how they engage questions of religious identity through the medium of modern literary forms. We read these works against the background of contemporary changes in the relationship between the religious and the secular. Cross-listed with ENGL 35600; students may not receive credit for both. Prerequisites: One course in RLST or ENGL; WRTG 10600, ICSM 10800, ICSM 11800, or equivalent. (IRR)

Attributes: WI

3 Credits

RLST 37500-37513 Selected Topics in Religion (LA)

Topics to be determined according to teacher and student interest.

Prerequisites: One 20000-level RLST course. (IRR)

Attributes: HU

3 Credits

RLST 39100 Independent Study: Religion (LA)

Study or research project(s) of the student's own devising carried out in consultation with faculty sponsor; final project(s) evaluated by faculty sponsor. Offered on demand. May be repeated for credit for different projects. Prerequisites: One 20000-level RLST course and permission of instructor. (IRR)

Attributes: UND

0.5-3 Credits

RLST 39300 Tutorial in Religion (LA)

Work by student and teacher together on a problem or project of interest to both. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisites: One 20000-level RLST course and permission of instructor. (IRR)

Attributes: UND

1-4 Credits

RLST 39800 Internship: Religious Studies (NLA)

Enables students to participate in an internship opportunity with the collaboration of a faculty sponsor in Religious Studies. In addition to internship-based activities, assignments include related readings and a final paper. Completion of H&S dean's office internship form is required. Can be repeated to a maximum of Prerequisites: Three RLST courses; permission of instructor. (IRR)

0.5-3 Credits

RLST 41000 Religious Studies Capstone (LA)

Serves as the capstone for religious studies majors and minors. Engages students in organizing interdisciplinary community discussions about contemporary issues in global religious practice. Facilitates reflection on studies in the major/minor and the Integrative Core Curriculum, and how these connect to the student's personal intellectual formation at Ithaca College. Prerequisites: At least three courses in religious studies, with at least one RLST course at the 300 level. (S,Y)

Attributes: CP, HU, WI

1 Credit