

Department of Religious Studies

Schedule of Classes

Fall 2002

REL 100.001 World Religions

TR 12:30 – 1:45 205 Smith

Russell McCutcheon

REL 100.002 MWF 9:00 – 9:50 207

Manly

Tim Murphy

REL 100.003 MWF 11:00 – 11:50

207 Manly

Tim Murphy

REL 100.004 MWF 12:00 – 12:50

207 Manly

Staff

This lecture course starts with the history of the concept “religion” and then moves on to redescribe the concept so as to make it into a scholarly tool useful in identifying an aspect of observable cultural practices. The course surveys a broad number of important debates in the history of religious studies, such as the definition of religion, the insider/outsider problem, theories on the origins of religion, how to compare religions, religion’s psychological, sociological, and political functions, and the manner in which human communities authorize systems of behavior. In addition to lectures there will be small group work.

REL 110.001 Intro to the Old Testament

MWF 10:00 – 10:50 207 Manly

Steven Jacobs

An introduction to the books of the TANAKH/Old Testament in their historical settings, with emphasis upon the literary types within the biblical materials, and their

place within Ancient Israelite society and religion.

REL 220.001 Survey of Asian Religions

TR 3:30 – 4:45 207 Manly

REL 220.002 TR 2:00 – 3:15 207

Manly

Kurtis Schaeffer

The religious traditions of Asia are vast, diverse, and endlessly fascinating. In this course we will explore the religions of India, China, Japan, and other Asian countries, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism. We will read three enjoyable stories from each of the major traditions, including the most popular Hindu epic adventure, the story of a Tibetan Buddhist saint who reached enlightenment in the Himalayas, and tales of Taoist adepts searching for immortality in the mountains of China. Throughout our readings we will focus on common themes in the different parts of Asia. We will learn that the religious traditions of Asia are more than abstract philosophical systems; they are integral aspects of Asian cultures which influence all aspects of life.

REL 238.001 Philosophies of Judaism

MWF 1:00 – 1:50 207 Manly

Steve Jacobs

Survey of major philosophical formulations of the unique nature and role of Jews and Judaism, by Jewish thinkers such as Judah

Halevi, Moses Maimonides, Judah Loew of Prague, Moses Mendelssohn, and Martin Buber

REL 240.001 Apocalypse in Contemporary Film

M 2:00 – 4:40 207 Manly

Ted Trost

What is “The Apocalypse”? How do human and divine purposes unite to construct the future? How does the world end? These questions have fascinated and haunted humanity from the beginning of time. This course examines contemporary portrayals of the end times in six popular films, including Twelve Monkeys, Blade Runner, Dogma, The Left Behind, Repo Man, and The Matrix. While these films will constitute our basic “texts,” our conversations about them will be supplemented with careful readings of religious, cultural, and literary scholarship. The class will be conducted mainly as a seminar; it will also include occasional brief lectures.

REL 311.001 English Bible as Literature

TR 11:00 – 12:15 207 Manly

Ted Trost

This course offers a critical study of the Hebrew Bible (TANAKH) and the Christian Bible as distinct but related theological traditions. Stories will be examined in light of their cultural and historical contexts. Emphasis will be placed on the literary qualities of the texts (for example: the use of symbol, metaphor, repetition; typology and myth; dialogue, type-scenes, and narrative technique), though other

approaches to the study to the Bible will be encouraged throughout the semester.

REL 324.001 Tibetan Buddhism

W 2:00 – 4:40 207 Manly

Kurtis Schaeffer

An introduction to the rich Buddhist traditions of Tibet and the Himalayas, focusing on religious thought and practice, history, and contemporary developments.

REL 480.001 History of the Study of Religion

R 2:00 – 4:40 200A Manly

Russell McCutcheon

Beginning with such 19th century European writers as F. Max Muller, E. P. Tiele, and then moving on to E. B. Tylor, R. Otto, E. Durkheim, and S. Freud, this seminar course will survey the history of the academic study of religion by familiarizing students with the work of some of its most influential early figures. The course will include an examination of debates on such topics as: the relations between religious studies and theology, the colonialist context of the early field, the place of religious experience in ones study, reductionism, and the psychological and sociological functions of religion. The course will end by looking at some recent examples of scholarship on religion influenced by feminist and postmodernist critiques.

REL 360, 361, 460, 461

Individual Directed Research

Courses have prerequisites of 6 and 9 hours in Religious Studies, and are available only after consultation with a faculty member who approves a project for the coming semester. when the student has obtained a signed permission form

from an instructor; forms and enrollment
can be completed in 212A Manly.

FACULTY

Steven L. Jacobs

Russell T. McCutcheon

Timothy M. Murphy

Catherine M. Roach

Kurtis R. Schaeffer

Theodore L. Trost