**Religious Studies Department Course Offerings: Spring Semester 2014**

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| Course Code | Course Title | Course Description |
| REL 103 | Religion and Nonviolence | This course examines the interplay between religion and violence, the challenge of nonviolence in religious traditions, and the practice of religious nonviolence in US history. Special attention will also be granted to religious terrorism. |
| REL 105 | Exploring Religion and Religions (HUM) | A survey introducing historical origins, practices and beliefs of many of the world’s religious traditions and the methods of inquiry in the various disciplines in the field of religious studies. Theories of the nature and origin of religion, and categories such as the sacred, myth, scripture, ritual, ethics, religious change and questions of religious truth are explored. Significant attention to the contemporary environment of religion is granted. |
| REL 170 | Spirituality and Servant Leadership | This course will explore the theory and practice of servant leadership across cultures. Special attention will be given to the spiritual and religious roots of both service and servant leadership within many of the world’s religious traditions, as well as in Native American, Latino, and African-American communities. Students will review case studies of successful servant leadership in different sectors of the economy, including for-profit, non-profit, government, education, health care, and policing. Throughout the course, students will carry out an applied interreligious action or servant leadership project. |
| REL 172 | Jesus | This course examines the life and teachings of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament Gospels against the background of Judaism in the 1st century and traces changing views of Jesus from the 1st through the 21st centuries. |
| REL 225 | The Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East (NCH and GWR) | An introduction to the Hebrew Bible with emphasis on its ancient Near Eastern context. Readings will include myths, stories, laws, hymns, poetry and wisdom texts from Egypt, Babylonia and Ugarit, in addition to selected readings from the Bible Tanakh or Old Testament). |
| REL 290 | Dharma Traditions: Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Sikh (NCH) | This course is an introduction to and overview of the four major religions, or dharma traditions, that originated in the Indian subcontinent: Vedic dharma (popularly known as Hinduism), Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. The course will examine the distinctive beliefs and practices of each tradition, while also emphasizing the common features, historical interactions, and close interconnections–both social and theological–among all four. Students who have received credit for either REL 291 OR REL 292 will receive 2.00 credits for the completion of this course. Students who have received credit for REL 291 AND REL 292 may not enroll in this course. |
| REL 364 | Amish Society (SO 364) | The history, culture and social organization of the Old Order Amish. Sociological theories and models utilized by social scientists to describe and analyze the Amish will be presented. Special attention will be paid to recent social changes among the Amish. |
| REL 370 | Tolkien (EN 370) | This upper level elective offering in Religious Studies and English is an exploration of the religious and archetypal mythic themes in the works of J.R.R. Tolkien. Topics of discussion will include the profound effect of Tolkien’s Catholic faith on his mythic vision, as well as the cultural sources on which he draws in the construction of his mythology, both consciously (Finnish, Norse, Anglo-Saxon, and Celtic mythologies) and unconsciously (ancient Near Eastern, Indian, and Chinese). Students will be encouraged to engage with Tolkien’s works in depth, not only enjoying them at an aesthetic level, or even stopping at analyzing their theological implications or the cultural influences that can be discerned in their construction, but also engaging with the mythic themes as philosophical statements with potential relevance to their lives and to the contemporary world. |
| REL 392 | Religion in China and Japan | An in-depth exploration, building on the foundation established in Religious Studies 292, of the religious traditions of China and Japan: Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, and Chinese and Japanese forms of Buddhism. Readings will be drawn mainly from primary sources in English translation, such as the Daodejing, the Chuang-tzu, the Analects of Confucius, the Kojiki, and the Shobogenzo of Dogen, as well as writings by modern Zen masters and scholars such as D.T. Suzuki and Alan Watts. *\*Prerequisite(s):* [REL 290](http://catalog.etown.edu/search_advanced.php?cur_cat_oid=6&search_database=Search&search_db=Search&cpage=1&ecpage=1&ppage=1&spage=1&tpage=1&location=33&filter%5Bkeyword%5D=rel+292#tt229) or [REL 292](http://catalog.etown.edu/search_advanced.php?cur_cat_oid=6&search_database=Search&search_db=Search&cpage=1&ecpage=1&ppage=1&spage=1&tpage=1&location=33&filter%5Bkeyword%5D=rel+292#tt483) .  [Close](javascript:void(0))  [Close](javascript:void(0)) |
| REL 491 | Senior Seminar in Religious Studies II | An integrative, capstone course in religious studies. Students will complete an independent research project that results in a major paper and oral presentation. *\*Prerequisite(s):* [REL 490](http://catalog.etown.edu/search_advanced.php?cur_cat_oid=6&search_database=Search&search_db=Search&cpage=1&ecpage=1&ppage=1&spage=1&tpage=1&location=33&filter%5Bkeyword%5D=rel+292#tt3517) . (Although not recommended, REL 490 may be taken as a corequisite.) Register by Instructor. Spring semester.  [Close](javascript:void(0)) |
| HRE 285 | Amish, Brethren, and Mennonites in the U.S. Since 1875 | An interdisciplinary study of the Amish, Brethren, and Mennonite experience (beliefs, history, practices) in the context of modern American culture. Primary attention focuses on understanding how these communities responded to major modernizing developments in western culture since 1875—the industrial revolution, the modern state, individuation, conscription, the rise of technology, compulsory education, understandings of progress, and religious pluralism. The course will explore how such changes in western cultural heritage have encouraged assimilation, fragmentation, and in some cases reactionary (Old Order) movements within Anabaptist groups. Register by Instructor. Spring semester. |