

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

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The study of religion and philosophy provides a means for understanding human history, experience, and society through the examination of religious traditions and other forms of meaning-making. Students are challenged to reflect upon broad questions of human society and culture, as well as personal questions of ethics and responsibility.

Religion and Philosophy students will:

1. explore sacred and philosophical texts;
2. examine the historical features of religions and philosophies;
3. have the opportunity to conduct field research, exploring a variety of religious traditions and phenomena, both in the local area and at locations abroad;
4. study religious phenomena and philosophical traditions in relationship to various aspects of culture: the arts, literature, politics, etc.

Thus, studying religion and philosophy is by nature interdisciplinary and complements the study of other areas of the humanities, arts and sciences. Women's issues and gender analysis are given particular attention and student research is emphasized.

THE PHILOSOPHY MINOR

The Department of Religion and Philosophy offers a minor program in philosophy. The program is very flexible and can be a profitable complement to any major in the College. Students in religion, English, and politics will find it especially beneficial. To minor in philosophy, a student must take six courses for a total of 18 credit hours. The minor requirements are as follows:

PHI 180: Introduction to Philosophy....3 hours
PHI 200: Philosophical Ethics.....3 hours
PHI 300: Ancient and Medieval Philosophy or
PHI 310: Modern Philosophy.....3 hours
Philosophy Electives (200-level or above)9 hours

Total Hours for Philosophy Minor18 hours

Certain courses offered by other departments in the College, as well as certain philosophy courses offered at Wofford, may count toward the minor. Generally, no more than two such substitutions will be allowed. Courses for the minor program should be selected in consultation with the philosophy adviser.

COURSES OF INSTRUCTION

*100. INTRODUCTION TO LOGIC/THREE CREDITS

GEP, Minor, Elective credit. A study of the fundamental principles of correct reasoning directed toward improving reading, writing, speaking, listening and thinking. Students learn to recognize, analyze, evaluate, construct and refute arguments. Attention is given to both informal modes of reasoning as well as the basics of formal and symbolic system. *Quantitative GEP requirement.*

.150T. PHILOSOPHY STUDY TRAVEL/ FOUR CREDITS

GEP, Minor, Elective credit. A study of a selected topics in philosophy utilizing the unique opportunities of a study-travel experience. Past offerings have included: "Ancient theories of Emotions" taught in Greece and Italy and focusing on historical conceptions of emotions and moral psychology; and "I Think, Therefore..." taught in Spain and France, focusing on Medieval and Early Modern conceptions of human rationality.

*180. INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY/ THREE CREDITS

GEP, Minor, Elective credit. A study of some of the most influential contemporary and historical work in philosophy. The course is designed to expose students to the basic types and methods of academic philosophy and to investigate the "great questions" that philosophers have sought to address. Reading, lectures, discussions, and written assignments examine such topics as the existence of God, the scope of human knowledge, free will, the nature of the human mind, and morality.

*199H. FRESHMAN HONORS SEMINAR/ THREE CREDITS

GEP credit. A study of a selected subject within the discipline which will vary from term to term. The course is designed to encourage student participation in the intellectual processes through class discussion, research, writing, special projects, problem solving, and

evaluation and defense of positions. When the subject matter duplicates that of another course, credit toward graduation will be granted for only one of the courses. *Offered periodically in rotation with seminars in other disciplines.*

***200. PHILOSOPHICAL ETHICS/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Minor, Elective credit. Careful study of the major philosophical texts of various historical and contemporary ethical traditions. Attention is given to specific contemporary moral issues (such as abortion, capital punishment, the ethical treatment of animals, etc.) as well as historically influential normative theories and frameworks. Emphasis on textual analysis and on developing the skills needed to conduct philosophical discussions in writing and in the classroom.

***205. BIOMEDICAL ETHICS/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Minor, Elective credit. In this course the student will become familiar with the ethical theories that philosophers, physicians, biomedical researchers, and other thinking people have used in coming to understand themselves and their world. Students will have the opportunity to apply these theories to some of the most important moral problems in medicine and the biomedical sciences. Emphasis on critical reasoning and analysis, with the goal of developing the ability to distinguish well supported from poorly supported positions. With exploration of the of the life and death Issues of biomedicine, the student should begin to understand the complexity of our moral problems and the need for a careful, rigorous, and sensitive approach to these problems.

***215. ANCIENT GREEK PHILOSOPHY/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Minor, Elective credit. A study of the very beginnings of Western philosophical thought. Emphasis on the relationship between philosophy and mythology, the birth of science, and the influence of classical systems of thought on later philosophical traditions. Readings will focus on Plato and Aristotle, but may also include Pre-Socratic and Hellenistic figures.

***299H. INTERDISCIPLINARY HONORS COURSE**

GEP, Elective credit. This course is team taught by members in two departments and is open to Nisbet Honors Program participants and to others who meet Honors Program guidelines. All students registering for these courses must register not only through the Honors Program but also with their adviser and the Registrar's Office.

***305. PHILOSOPHY OF WOMEN/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Minor, Elective credit. A study of selected philosophical works by women or on women and issues of concern to women. Authors, works, and topics will vary. Typical issues include women's and men's nature and causes of sexism and sexual oppression, sexism in language, sexuality, childcare and family, and the status of feminist theory in philosophy. *Writing intensive.*

***315. AESTHETICS/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Minor, Elective credit. A philosophical study of the nature of beauty, art, and artistic experience. Special attention may also be devoted to the social, political, and economic contexts of art and aesthetic experience, various modes of interpreting the "meaning" of artworks, and the relationships between different artistic media.

***320. ADVANCED LOGIC/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Minor, Elective credit. Prerequisite: Phi100.

An examination of contemporary formal systems of deductive logic, focusing on both propositional as well as predicate derivations. Other topics may also include an exploration of logical atomism and Godel's proofs, theories of conditionals, and many -valued logical systems. *Quantitative GEP requirement.*

***325. ANCIENT, MEDIEVAL, AND RENAISSANCE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Minor, Elective credit. A survey of the major works in the Western tradition of political thought from Plato to Machiavelli. *Cross-listed with POL 310.*

***330. MODERN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY/
THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Minor, Elective credit. A survey of the major works in the Western tradition of political thought from Hobbes to Marx. *Cross-listed with POL 312.*

**340. SPECIAL TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY/
THREE CREDITS**

Minor, Elective credit. Prerequisite: permission of instructor Intensive study of a topic or an area in philosophy such as philosophy of language, early analytical philosophy, or 20th century Continental philosophy. *May be repeated for credit if topic changes.*

***341. ADVANCED ETHICS/THREE CREDITS**

Minor, Elective credit. Prerequisite: Phi 200 or permission of instructor. Intensive study of a topic or an area in moral philosophy such as comparative ethics, virtue ethics, moral psychology, or metaethics. *May be repeated for credit if topic changes.*

***342. PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION/
THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Minor, Elective credit. See REL 342.

401. STUDIES IN HUMANITIES: PHILOSOPHY/THREE CREDITS

Minor, Elective credit. Exploration of philosophical and humanistic issues as they relate to the modern *world*. May be taken more than once with the approval of the instructor.

491. DIRECTED INDEPENDENT STUDY IN SPECIAL TOPICS/THREE CREDITS

Minor, Elective credit. Intensive study of a topic of the student's choice under the direction of a faculty member whose course or courses are listed in the philosophy curriculum.

**495. INTERNSHIP IN PHILOSOPHY/
THREE OR SIX CREDITS**

Minor, Elective credit. Prerequisite: permission of department. Exposure to duties and responsibilities of academic philosophers. Assignments may include creation of a philosophy graduate school application, exploration of the nature and industry of philosophy publication, assisting teaching and grading, and /or the preparation of introductory philosophy lectures. *Pass/fail grading.*

RELIGION

A major in religion consists of 33 hours of course work. The major requires one course (no more than two) at the 100-level; three courses at the 200 level (covering at least two religious traditions); and three courses at the 300-level. Majors must also complete REL 391 or its equivalent in the sophomore or junior year after having completed one 100-level course. Senior majors must complete REL 491. The religion classroom is a locus of learning, but not its limit. Extra-classroom activities that enhance course learning are often offered through department forums, speakers, and field trips, or opportunities for research. Majors are expected to take part in departmental functions and projects whenever possible and are welcomed to participate in departmental decision-making.

With the exception of REL 391 and REL 491, religion courses count for GEP credit unless otherwise indicated. Students are encouraged, however, to enroll primarily in 100 and 200-level courses to meet the GEP requirement. The Religion Department will consider up to six hours of transfer credits toward the major or minor. No more than six internship hours may be applied toward the major. It will accept no more than one course in biblical languages toward the major or minor.

The rationale for the numbering of courses in religion is as follows:

100 level courses are foundational courses that

- 1) introduce students to aspects of the study of religion as a humanistic discipline in an academic setting and
- 2) employ materials from a variety of religious traditions.

200 level courses introduce students to the fundamental history, literature or interpretation of one or more religious traditions. They are more focused than 100 level courses, and yet often cover the breadth of an historical or literary tradition.

300 level courses are more specific, thematic, often comparative across traditions, focus on a specific aspect of a tradition or traditions, often interdisciplinary and stress the application of methodology to specific problems or issues.

THE RELIGION MINOR

A minor in religion consists of 18 hours of course work. No more than two 100-level courses count toward the minor. Minors must also take at least two 200-level courses, covering at least two religious traditions. Minors are also encouraged to take part in departmental activities outside of regular course requirement.

COURSES OF INSTRUCTION

***100. INTRODUCTION TO RELIGION/
THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. This course is an introductory study of human religious beliefs and practices, including ritual, myth,

symbol, and the sacred. The application of these concepts to the contemporary world is emphasized.

***103. INTRODUCTION TO SACRED SCRIPTURES/ THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. As an introduction to historical and contemporary biblical interpretation, this course explores widely ranging approaches to the academic study of sacred scripture, particularly (but not exclusively) the Hebrew Bible and the Christian New Testament. We will look at the possibilities and limitations of different methods of biblical study and begin the process of understanding how interpretations of sacred texts have shaped and continue to shape our religious traditions and, more broadly, our society. An integral part of this study will be the exploration of the historical contexts in which these sacred texts were written and the development of an awareness of the contemporary contexts in which they are interpreted. The study of different methods of scriptural studies and interpretive approaches should lead to a more sophisticated understanding of the complexity of the biblical text as literature, as history, and as scripture.

***104. INTRODUCTION TO WORLD RELIGIONS/ THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. A study of the basic forms of religious belief, activity, and experience in the major world religions. Traditions to be discussed may include Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese religion, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Meets the *Non-Western/ non-Anglophone GEP requirement.*

***199H. FRESHMAN HONORS SEMINAR/
THREE CREDITS**

GEP credit. A study of a selected subject within the disciplines which will vary from term to term. The course is designed to encourage student participation in the intellectual processes through class discussion, research and writing, special projects, problem solving, and evaluation and defense of positions. When the subject matter duplicates that of another course, credit toward graduation will be granted for only one of the courses. *Offered periodically in rotation with seminars in other disciplines.*

*** 200. THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION/
THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. This course is an introduction to Christianity that focuses on examination of the major theological themes and problems that have commonly occupied Christians and how these issues have developed over time. We will use primary sources for the most part in our explorations. While this course focuses on Christian thought (theology), we will also make connections between theology and worship, ethics, and other aspects of Christianity.

***205. INTRODUCTION TO HEBREW BIBLE AND EARLY JEWISH LITERATURE/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. A survey of the historical development of the ancient Hebrews and their writings (Old Testament/Hebrew Bible and extra-canonical texts).

***206. INTRODUCTION TO EARLY CHRISTIAN HISTORY AND LITERATURE/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. A survey of New Testament and other early Christian writings and the contexts in which they were produced.

***260. INTRODUCTIONS TO NON-WESTERN TRADITIONS/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. Introductory-level studies of specific non-Western religious traditions. May be repeated for credit if subject matter is not duplicated.

***261. INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM/
THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. An introduction to Buddhism as it has developed in various world contexts.

***262. JUDAISM AS A CIVILIZATION: AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE IN JEWISH CULTURE, HISTORY, AND TRADITION/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. An introduction to Judaism across historical and cultural contexts.

***299H. INTERDISCIPLINARY HONORS COURSE**

GEP, Major, Elective credit. This course is team taught by members in two departments and is open to Nisbet Honors Program participants and to others who meet Honors Program guidelines. All students registering for these courses must register not only through the Honors Program but also with their adviser and the Registrar's Office.

***300. STUDIES IN SACRED TEXTS/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. An intensive study of a selected portion of a sacred text. May be repeated for credit if subject matter

is not duplicated.

***302. FROM CREED TO CHRISTENDOM: CHRISTIANITY FROM 300-1300/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. A survey of the history of Christianity from the fourth century to the late Middle Ages. This course will focus on the issues, thought, and historical events which shaped Christianity, and on its contribution to western culture.

***303. THEMES IN RELIGIOUS ETHICS/
THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. Studies in selected ethical problems and the process of making decisions in religious contexts. May be repeated for credit if subject matter is not duplicated.

***304. REFORMATIONS OF EARLY MODERN CHRISTIANITY/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. This course is a survey of the development of Christianity from the late Middle Ages through the Early Modern period, covering institutional and theological developments, spirituality, and popular movements. The course will focus on various types of reform during this period.

***305. WOMEN AND RELIGION/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. A survey of important themes significant to the impact of religion on women and women on religion, historically and in the modern world. A variety of religious traditions and cultures will be discussed. A special focus of the course is recovering the narratives of women's religious experience.

***306. FIELD STUDIES IN RELIGION/
THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, credit. Field studies courses focus on significant investigation of religious phenomena outside as well as in the classroom. Travel may be involved in some field studies. May be repeated for credit if subject matter is not duplicated.

***307. CHRISTIANITY IN THE MODERN WORLD/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. A survey of the history of Christianity from 1650 to the present, with focus on the issues, thought, and events which shape Christianity in its present forms. A special focus of the course will be the development of Christianity beyond Europe and North America.

***308. RELIGION IN AMERICA/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. Historical survey of religious life and thought in America, with attention given to the diversity of religious experience in the United States. Emphasis is given to the role of religion in American life and the impact of the American experience on religious traditions.

***309. STUDIES IN RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. Studies in selected topics in religious thought, culture, and history. May be repeated for credit if subject matter is not duplicated.

***313. STUDIES IN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT/
THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. Studies in selected issues, figures, or movements in religious thought. May be repeated for credit if subject matter is not duplicated.

***330. STUDIES IN RELIGION/THREE CREDITS/FOUR CREDITS IN JANUARY TERM**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. Studies of significant humanistic issues in religion. *May be repeated for credit if subject matter is not duplicated.*

***340. RELIGION AND LITERATURE/
THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. A study of religious thought and problems reflected in the writing of selected authors. May be repeated for credit if subject matter is not duplicated. Only the topic Asian Women in fiction and film meets the non-Western/non-Anglophone requirement.

***342. PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION/THREE CREDITS**

GEP, Major, Minor, Elective credit. A study of philosophical problems relevant to religious belief. Topics to be considered may include proofs for the existence of God, the problem of evil, miracles, the nature of religious belief, the relation of religion and morality, and the

nature of God. *Cross-listed with PHI 342.*

350. RELIGION INTERNSHIPS/
THREE OR SIX CREDITS

Major credit. Prerequisite: permission of the department. Pass/fail grading. Offered as needed.

391. THEORY AND METHOD IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION/THREE CREDITS

Major credit. A survey of important theories and methods in the academic study of religion for sophomore and junior majors. Majors must complete at least one 100-level course in religion and consult with the religion faculty before enrolling in this course.

490. DIRECTED INDEPENDENT STUDY IN SELECTED TOPICS/THREE CREDITS

Prerequisite: permission of the instructor. An independent course of study in a topic not covered by regular course offerings. May be repeated for credit.

491. SENIOR PROJECT IN RELIGION/THREE CREDITS

*Major credit. In consultation with religion faculty, the senior student will chose a topic on which to conduct a major research project. While all capstone projects will ultimately culminate in written form, the form might vary: classic senior research thesis, sophisticated analytical article, written research talk or position paper are some possibilities. Whatever the format, the project should reflect the student's development in coursework and independent research. Each senior will present her project in some form in the spring of her senior year. *Capstone.**