SPRING 2019 COURSES

RELS 3060- Religion and Science
TR, 11:00-12:15 | David Bell
Explores contemporary perspectives on the relation between religion and science as well as historical conflicts that arose over new forms of scientific knowledge. Topics may include the Galileo controversy, debates about Newtonian physics, conflicts between creationism and evolution, scientific studies of prayer and the afterlife, and recent advancements in biomedical research.

RELS 3700- Topics in Religious Studies: Religion, Medicine, and Healing in America
ONLINE | Clare Van Holm
This course explores the intersection of religious traditions, biomedicine and healing in the American context. In analyzing individual and community experiences of illness, suffering and healing from a religious studies perspective, students gain insight into the complexity and richness of these experiences, both in relation to faith communities and modern medicine. Students will apply course concepts and theory to “real world” experiences through an interview with a community member who exemplifies the intersection of religion, healing and medicine. Topics include biomedicine as a cultural system, major religious traditions’ understanding of the suffering and health, healing from trauma and structural violence, issues of complementary and alternative medicine, collisions of faith healing and the law, and the intersection of religion and faith within the hospital setting.

RELS 3900- Religion and Popular Culture
TR, 9:30-10:45 | Cassie Velasco
Religion and Pop Culture is a class that aims to render visible the ways in which religion is present in all types of pop culture you are already consuming. What is religion? How does religion influence pop culture? Or conversely, how does pop culture influence religions and further religious representation? These questions and more will be the focus of this class. By interrogating what we mean when we use the term religion, we will begin to develop a new understanding of the term’s definition and boundaries. We then can create enough distance from our previous understandings to better examine how those same religions are being portrayed, consumed, and re-appropriated throughout different mediums.

RELS 4700- Issues in Religious Studies: Catholic/Christian Bioethics
M, 4:30-7:00 | Joseph Bertino
This course examines the detailed nuances in Catholic/Christian Healthcare in the U.S. and abroad. Due to advancements in medical technology, determining the ethical nature of procedures in Catholic/Christian health care institutions has become an onerous task. Since Catholic/Christian health care alone makes up 26% of the world’s health care, various issues arise that beg questions of religious and medical permissibility. Students will gain an understanding of the differences between Catholic/Christian health care and secular health care, their differences in financial status, and the ways in which these institutions operate. Students will comparatively evaluate the ethical arguments that justify certain medical interventions in these institutions.

RELS 8210- Seminar in Religious Studies: Science and Religion
TR, 1:45-5:00 | David Bell
The RELS 8210 seminar will use an Americanist approach to explore the relationship between religion and science by looking at the emergence of the Darwinian revolution in the 19th and 20th centuries. Students will then study the historical development of the concept of science as it develops through the 20th and 21st century, especially in quantum physics and astrophysics. Finally, the course will investigate various models of creationism and science denial in popular culture with a focused view of the role of religion in the public square. Students will gain a working literacy in modern scientific concepts, as well as the ability to critically engage in the religion/science discourse that influences much of modern politics and social policies.

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