INTRODUCTION TO THE HEBREW BIBLE
Professor Anne Merideth
RELC 101; M/W/F 1025-1115
Examination of the texts of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament for Christians) in their religious, historical, and literary contexts. In this course, students will learn the history of the Ancient Israelite people from their origins down through the post-Exilic period. Study of the texts of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) enable us to explore what we can know about Ancient Israelite society and culture, the rise and fall of Israel as a nation-state, religious and theological debates about the role of God in shaping history and the problem of suffering, as well as the writing of the biblical texts and the development of the canon. Crosslists: JWST 106.

HISTORY OF ISLAM
Professor John Thibdeau
RELC 107; M/W 1650-1805
Framed as a historical introduction to Islamic traditions, this course will explore the political, social, and intellectual histories of Islam as a global tradition. The goal of the course is to introduce students to the central texts, figures, events, geographies, institutions, and schools of thought that make up Islamic histories. We will begin by tracing Islam’s political history as it spreads from the Arabian Peninsula and encounters diverse cultures and peoples. We will then retrace that history through the development of social institutions and norms. Crosslists: HIST 184/AAAS 107

ASIAN SEARCH FOR SELF
Professor Douglas Brooks
RELC 105; T/R 0940-1055
The basic teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism as to human nature and the paths to liberation. We shall investigate particularly the ways in which early Vedism, classical Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism conceive of the cosmos, meaningful human existence, and life’s ultimate goals. Readings include original sources in translation, such as the Upanisads, the Bhagavadgita, and Buddhist scriptures in both Mahayana and Nikaya-based traditions.

HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY
Professor Jack Downey
RELC 104; M/W 1525-1640
The purpose of this course is to explore the general development of Christianity throughout its twenty centuries of existence, paying special attention to the religious presuppositions behind Christianity and its complex relationship to its socio-cultural matrix. The course will focus on important moments in Christian history, including its inception as a Jewish religious movement set in motion by Jesus, its dissemination in the Greco-Roman world, its growth and triumph in the Roman Empire, medieval Catholicism, the Reformation and rise of Protestantism, and the modern world. Crosslist: HIST 183.

THE BLACK CHURCH AND UNDERGROUND RAILROAD EXPERIENCE
Professor Cona Marshall
RELC 152; Wednesdays 1400-1640
This course will provide students first-hand experience on the 2.5-mile route of the Underground Railroad here in Rochester, NY, known to many runaway enslaved Africans as “The Last 100 Miles”, in their quest for freedom to Canada. This class will situate the institution of the Black Church within the context of the institution of slavery on American soil. We will compare the roles of the Christian God of the enslavers and the enslaved. Crosslist: AAAS 152.

IMAGINING THE JEW
Professor Nora Rubel
RELC 214; Thursdays 1400-1640
This seminar will examine the representation of Orthodox Jews by American Jews on both page and screen. This course should equip you to understand historically and critically the core factors in this contemporary culture war such as (gender, religious authority, political affiliation) as well as to empathetically appreciate current concern over acculturation, Americanization, and Jewish continuity. Crosslists: GSWS 214/JWST 214.
MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

One of the following:
- REL 101: Introduction to the Old Testament
- REL 102: Introduction to the New Testament

One of the following:
- REL 103: History of Judaism
- REL 104: History of Christianity
- REL 105: Asian Search for Self
- REL 106: From Confucius to Zen
- REL 107: History of Islam

Theory Requirement (Junior Year):
- REL 293: Theories of Religion

Capstone Experience (Senior Year):
- REL 389: Senior Seminar
- REL 393: Senior Tutorial

Electives (Any Year):
- 6 elective courses of your choice in consultation with your advisor

MINOR REQUIREMENTS

One of the following:
- REL 101: Introduction to the Old Testament
- REL 102: Introduction to the New Testament

One of the following:
- REL 103: History of Judaism
- REL 104: History of Christianity
- REL 105: Asian Search for Self
- REL 106: From Confucius to Zen
- REL 107: History of Islam

Theory Requirement:
- REL 293: Theories of Religion

Electives:
- 3 elective courses of your choice in consultation with your advisor

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION

ADVICE FOR FRESHMAN

The Rochester Curriculum is based on the idea that students learn best when they are allowed to study what excites and interests them. In the Department of Religion we couldn’t agree more! Which is why we place such a high value on providing personalized guidance for each student who enters our classroom and office. We want students to take courses in areas that fascinate them, and, thus, there are no prerequisite courses that students need to take as they begin their journey to majoring in Religion.

We do encourage our Freshman to begin with a 100-level course, but there are many such classes covering a wide range of interests. Some students may want to begin with REL 100: Introduction to the Study of Religion which introduces students to the field of Religion and challenges students to think about the many ways to approach the study of religion and to reflect upon the ways in which religion intersects with many other aspects of culture and society.

Many students initially take courses in Religion in order to fulfill their cluster requirement in the humanities and then go on to declare a minor or major in Religion, as evidenced by the fact that majority of our students graduate with a double major! Freshman are encouraged to contact our Director of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Anne Merideth, with any questions.

anne.merideth@rochester.edu