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## Term Information

Effective Term Spring 2025

## General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Religious Studies  
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Comparative Studies - D0518  
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences  
Level/Career Undergraduate  
Course Number/Catalog 3888  
Course Title Death, Dying, and the Afterlife  
Transcript Abbreviation DeathDyingAftrlife  
Course Description This course explores how religious traditions, past and present, have managed death and imagined the afterlife: from taking care of the dying, tidying up corpses, and assisting spirits in their journey from this world to the next, to banishing ghosts, accessing the power of those who have returned from the realms of the dead, and seeking out paths to immortality.  
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

## Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week, 12 Week, 8 Week, 7 Week, 6 Week, 4 Week  
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never  
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No  
Grading Basis Letter Grade  
Repeatable No  
Course Components Lecture  
Grade Roster Component Lecture  
Credit Available by Exam No  
Admission Condition Course No  
Off Campus Never  
Campus of Offering Columbus, Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark, Wooster

## Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites Completion of GEN Writing and Information Literacy course  
Exclusions  
Electronically Enforced No

## Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

## Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 38.0201  
Subsidy Level Baccalaureate Course  
Intended Rank Sophomore, Junior, Senior

## Requirement/Elective Designation

Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

## Course Details

### Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- Learn how relationships with the dead and with the fact of dying have been understood across a range of religious traditions
- Think critically about familiar “secular” practices around death and dying have likewise been shaped by religion
- Illuminate some of the ways in which complex political and cultural histories are concealed within secular rituals for handling dead bodies

### Content Topic List

- Death
- Dying
- Afterlife
- Culture
- Religion

### Sought Concurrence

Yes

## Attachments

- Death Dying Afterlife syllabus 2024-02-28.pdf: Sample syllabus  
*(Syllabus. Owner: Arceno, Mark Anthony)*
- submission-traditions-Curley-Death and Dying.pdf: GE Form  
*(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Arceno, Mark Anthony)*
- Religious Studies Curriculum Map (06-10-24).pdf: Curriculum map  
*(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Arceno, Mark Anthony)*
- RELSTDS 3888 Concurrence - English.pdf: Concurrence  
*(Concurrence. Owner: Arceno, Mark Anthony)*

## Comments

## Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Arceno, Mark Anthony	06/10/2024 12:25 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Armstrong, Philip Alexander	06/10/2024 12:48 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal	08/26/2024 10:31 AM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Jenkins, Mary Ellen Bigler Hanlin, Deborah Kay Hilty, Michael Neff, Jennifer Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal Steele, Rachel Lea	08/26/2024 10:31 AM	ASCCAO Approval





## **Death, Dying, and the Afterlife**

RELSTDS 3888 Spring 2025, xxx xxx

Melissa Anne-Marie Curley, [curley.32@osu.edu](mailto:curley.32@osu.edu)

448 Hagerty Hall, student hours xxx, or by appointment any time

### **Land Acknowledgment**

The land that The Ohio State University occupies is the ancestral and contemporary territory of the Shawnee, Potawatomi, Delaware, Miami, Peoria, Seneca, Wyandotte, Ojibwe and many other Indigenous peoples. Specifically, the university resides on land ceded in the 1795 Treaty of Greenville and the forced removal of tribes through the Indian Removal Act of 1830. As a land grant institution, we want to honor the resiliency of these tribal nations and recognize the historical contexts that has and continues to affect the Indigenous peoples of this land.

### **Course Description**

This course explores how religious traditions, past and present, have managed death and imagined the afterlife: from taking care of the dying, tidying up corpses, and assisting spirits in their journey from this world to the next, to banishing ghosts, accessing the power of those who have returned from the realms of the dead, and seeking out paths to immortality. Working with scholarship in the history of religions, anthropology of religions, and ritual studies, we will look at how relationships with the dead and with the fact of dying have been understood across a range of religious traditions—including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, and indigenous religions in the Americas—and how these understandings are impacted by colonialism, capitalism, and secularism. At the same time, we will seek to think critically about familiar “secular” practices around death and dying have likewise been shaped by religion, and to illuminate some of the ways in which complex political and cultural histories are concealed within secular rituals for handling dead bodies.

### **Content Note**

This course takes a cue from the Death Positive Movement and its suggestion that it is good to think and to talk about death and dying. It moreover takes the view, following Lucy Bregman, that it can be useful and meaningful to place “personal nonacademic experiences” of death and dying in an academic context of “reflection, theoretical frameworks, and historical and

philosophical study.” We should bear in mind, however, that the work we’ll do in class is different from the necessary work of grieving a personal loss—if you are grieving a personal loss and would like to talk about resources for grief support, please don’t hesitate to approach me before or after class.

## **Course Goals and Expected Learning Outcomes**

This course satisfies the requirements for the General Education Theme: Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations.

**Goal 1:** Successful students will analyze an important topic or idea at a more advanced and in-depth level than in the Foundations component.

ELO 1.1: Successful students are able to engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of the theme.

ELO 1.2: Successful students are able to engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of the theme.

**Goal 2:** Successful students will integrate approaches to the theme by making connections to out-of-classroom experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in future.

ELO 2.1: Successful students are able to identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to the theme.

ELO 2.2: Successful students are able to demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.

**Goal 3:** Successful students will engage in a systematic assessment of how cultures and sub-cultures develop and interact, historically or in contemporary society.

ELO 3.1: Successful students are able to describe the influence of an aspect of culture (e.g., religious belief, gender roles, institutional organization, technology, epistemology, philosophy, scientific discovery, etc.) on at least one historical or contemporary issue.

ELO 3.2: Successful students are able to analyze the impact of a "big" idea or technological advancement in creating a major and long-lasting change in a specific culture.

ELO 3.3: Successful students are able to examine the interactions among dominant and sub-cultures.

ELO 3.4: Successful students are able to explore changes and continuities over time within a culture or society.

**Goal 4:** Successful students will engage in a systematic assessment of differences among societies, institutions, and individuals' experience within traditions and cultures.

ELO 4.1: Successful students are able to recognize and explain differences, similarities, and disparities among institutions, organizations, cultures, societies, and/or individuals.

ELO 4.2: Successful students are able to explain ways in which categories such as race, ethnicity, and gender and perceptions of difference impact individual outcomes and broader societal issues.

We will meet these outcomes by working with both scholarly and primary sources to support rigorous, critical exploration of complex questions in the fields of religious studies and death

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<sup>1</sup> Lucy Bregman, “What Should a Course on Death and Dying Accomplish? ‘Death Education’ in an Undergraduate Religion Course,” in *Teaching Death and Dying*, ed. Christopher M. Moreman, 18-32, Oxford University Press, 2008.

studies; developing our own research projects, individually and as a group; exploring rituals around end-of-life and visions of the afterlife as they have developed in different times and places, and how they have been transformed in the context of contemporary secular societies; and comparing and contrasting ways of managing death—materially, emotionally, socially, and politically—across different cultures and subcultures. Over the course of the semester, we will deepen our academic knowledge of dying as a culturally mediated process, historically and in the contemporary world, and our capacity to think theoretically and self-reflectively about life and death(s).

## Assignments and Evaluation

For detailed instructions for all the assignments, including prompts and rubrics, please see the Assignments page in Carmen.

Summary of Assignments in Relation to the Final Grade			
Attendance and Participation		25%	
Letters to the Professor (2)	~300 words each	5%	due Week 1, 14
Reflection Papers	~1200 words each	25%	due Week 4, 6, 10, 12
Green Lawn Analysis	~1200 words	10%	due Week 8
Project	~3500 words	25%	due Week 10, 14
End-of-Semester Colloquium		10%	during Finals Week

### Attendance and Participation ... 25 points

Consistent attendance is essential to your success in the course, and your thoughtful participation is vital to making the course itself successful; participation in class discussion and activities is also central to achieving all of the course's learning outcomes. I try to recognize the effort it takes to prepare, attend, and participate every week with some points toward your final grade. In order to make it possible for all students to achieve the mark they are aiming for on this item—including students who might find participation in unstructured large group discussion challenging or intimidating—the grade is based on attendance, participating in structured class activities as well as unstructured large group discussion, and timely submission of I-C-Q briefs ahead of one class each week. (I-C-Q briefs are reading responses that note something in the reading you found interesting, something that challenged your way of thinking about the subject material addressed in the reading, and a question that arose for you out of the reading. For more on this item, please see the Assignments page in Carmen.)


### Letters to the Professor x 2 ... 5 points ... due Week 1, 14

This assignment asks you to take some time at the beginning and end of the semester to consider your own view of what constitutes good and bad death, and to articulate what it would mean for you to make the most of this course, structuring your thinking around some of the questions raised in the game *Morbid Curiosity* (which we'll play as a class throughout the semester). The letters can be written in as formal or informal a style as you find useful for clarifying and expressing your ideas. This assignment particularly supports ELO 2.2.


### Reflection Papers x 4 ... 25 points ... due Week 4, 6, 10, 12

Throughout the semester, we'll encounter a number of complex questions and sticky problems arising in connection with dying as culturally mediated process, and we'll engage


with both some influential scholarly work that first framed these questions in the field of religious studies, and emerging scholarship that seeks to frame them in new ways. The 3-4 page reflection papers are designed to give you an opportunity to write about these questions and problems, taking the scholars we are reading as your intellectual conversation partners and bringing your own insights to bear on the material, as you work to compare and contrast differing answers to similar questions across time or traditions. This assignment particularly supports ELOs 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1, and 4.2.

 Green Lawn Analysis ... 10 points ... due Week 8

Columbus is home to Green Lawn Cemetery, first opened in 1849 and now the second-largest cemetery in Ohio. We'll visit Green Lawn as a class, to attend the annual Day of the Dead Festival organized by the Latino Arts for Humanity. This assignment asks you to bring your analytical eye to bear on the different—and potentially competing?—ways that space, time, and bodies are ritually organized at Green Lawn and through the Festival, and to connect your observations here to questions raised in the course about how religious practices of boundary-making and boundary-crossing connect with political and social practices of integration and segregation. This assignment particularly supports ELOs 1.1, 1.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 4.2.

 Project ... 25 points ... proposal due Week 10, project due Week 14

This assignment gives you an opportunity to explore—in depth and in conversation with other scholars—a topic of special interest or significance to you, that you understand as a productive entry point for making sense of how a specific culture or sub-culture's understanding of death, dying, and the afterlife has changed over time or is in the process of changing now. Your project can take the form of a formal 12-15-page essay or (following a line of inquiry we have been exploring over the course of the semester) a game. The formal essay option is a good one if you enjoyed writing the reflection papers, if there are scholarly approaches we have encountered in class that you think could be usefully applied to cases or contexts we have not considered, and if you want to challenge yourself to find and work with new secondary sources. The game option is a good one if you enjoyed thinking about how death and the afterlife are represented in creative works, if you found it illuminating to look at the scholarly material through the lens of your own embodied experience in the Green Lawn paper, and if you want to challenge yourself to produce academically informed work for a wider audience. There will be ample opportunities in class to discuss these options before you need to produce a proposal. Depending on topic and approach, this assignment will support a range of ELOs but in every case will particularly support ELOs 1.2, 2.2, and 3.1

 End-of-Semester Colloquium ... 10 points ... during Finals Week

This last assessment will bring together the small discussion groups formed over the course of the semester for a final conversation revolving around each individual group member's project, their letters to the instructor, their reflection on the big social and political issues we've encountered this semester, and their suggestions for an issue to tackle in the next iteration of the course. This assignment particularly supports ELOs 1.1, 2.2, and 3.2.

Plus and minus grades will be given according to the following scale:

A 93-100; A- 90-92; B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B- 80-82;

C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72; D+ 67-69; D 60-66; E 0-59.

## Required Readings and Other Things to Bear in Mind

All of the readings for the semester will be posted on Carmen; there is no textbook you will need to purchase. The field trip assignment requires that you attend the Day of the Dead Festival at Green Lawn Cemetery; if your schedule will not allow you to attend with the rest of the class, you should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss a different way to complete this assignment.

## Course Policies

- Late Assignments

It is not possible to make up attendance and participation points for missed classes. If you need an extension on any other assignment or the final project **for any reason**, please just ask (in person or via email) **on or before the day the assignment is due**. The standard extension is one week; extensions for the final project will be determined based on the registrar's schedule for the submission of final grades. If no extension has been requested, late assignments will be penalized **1 point** per day.

- Faculty Feedback and Response Time

You should expect to receive feedback on assignments submitted for evaluation within one week of submission. You should expect to receive a response to emails **asking a question** within twenty-four hours, Monday through Friday.

- Laptops and Electronic Devices

There is some evidence to suggest that most students produce better work and receive higher grades when taking notes by hand rather than using a laptop, and that sitting near students using laptops and other electronic devices has a negative effect on your grades *even if you are not using such devices yourself*. I also find the presence of laptops distracting. For these reasons, in a class this size, I reserve the right to ask everyone to put away laptops and other electronic devices at any time; you should anticipate that I will ask you to do this frequently. Inappropriate use of laptops and electronic devices during class time will negatively impact your attendance and participation grade.

- ChatGPT (this statement has been adapted from the syllabus statements prepared by Senate Committee on Educational Policy at the University of Minnesota)

Artificial intelligence (AI) language models, such as ChatGPT, may—if suited to the nature of your project—be used for the Project *with appropriate citation*, but not for the Letters to Instructor, the Reflection Papers, or the Green Lawn Analysis. **Please note, however, that the use of AI language models is not likely to lead to successful or even passable work in this course.** If you are in doubt as to whether you are using AI language models appropriately for this course, I encourage you to discuss your situation with me. More importantly, *if you are in doubt as to whether your use of AI language models is likely to lead to successful or even passable work in this course*, I encourage you to discuss your situation with me.



## Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Activities

Week 1 🦴 Theorizing Death: What Makes a Death Good?

Please read:

- TUES Philippe Ariès, "The Reversal of Death: Changes in Attitudes Toward Death in Western Societies" *American Quarterly* 26.5 (1974): 536-560;
- THURS Sjaak van der Geest, "Dying Peacefully: Considering Good Death and Bad Death in Kwahu-Tafo, Ghana," *Social Science and Medicine* 58.5 (2004): 899-911;
- THURS Dorothy Ayers Counts and David Counts, "The Good, the Bad, and the Unresolved Death in Kaliai," *Social Science and Medicine* 58.5 (2004): 887-897.

Due this week:

- Letter to the Instructor 1.

Week 2 🦴 Theorizing Death: When Is a Good Death Impossible?

Please read:

- TUES M Rich, "The Privilege of a Good Death," *Death and the Maiden*, November 27, 2016, <https://deadmaidens.com/2016/11/27/the-privilege-of-a-good-death/>;
- TUES David Wendell Moller, "Introduction" and "Dying Poor: An Invisible World," in *Dancing with Broken Bones*, 1-31, Oxford University Press 2012.

Please play:

- THURS *That Dragon, Cancer* (2016). [play-through takes approximately two hours]

Week 3 🦴 Constructing the Deathbed: Medieval End-of-Life Rituals

Please read:

- TUES James Dobbins, "Genshin's Deathbed Nembutsu Ritual in Pure Land Buddhism," in *Religions of Japan in Practice*, ed. George J. Tanabe, Jr., 166-175, Princeton 1999;
- THURS Fredrick S. Paxton, "Rituals for the Dying," in *Christianizing Death: The Creation of a Ritual Process in Early Medieval Europe*, 32-44, Cornell 1990;
- THURS Avriel Bar-Levav, "Ritualizing Death and Dying: The Ethical Will of Naphtali Ha-Kohen Katz," in *Judaism in Practice: From the Middle Ages Through the Early Modern Period*, ed. Lawrence Fine, 55-168, Princeton 2001.

Week 4 🦴 Constructing the Deathbed: Contemporary End-of-Life Rituals

Please read:

- TUES Elana D. Buch, "Postponing Passage: Doorways, Distinctions, and the Thresholds of Personhood among Older Chicagoans," *Ethos* 43.1 (2015): 40-58;
- THURS Thomas Quartier, "Deathbed Rituals: Roles of Spiritual Caregivers in Dutch Hospitals," *Mortality* 15.2 (2010): 107-121.

Due this week:

- Reflection Paper 1

Week 5 🦴 Managing What Remains: Rituals of Transformation

Please read:

- TUES Jonathan Parry, "The Last Sacrifice," in *Death in Banaras*, 151-177, Cambridge 1994;
- TUES Banhishikha Ghosh and Athira BK, "From Ritual Mourning to Solitary Grief: Reinterpretation of Hindu Death Rituals in India," *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying* (2022);
- THURS Beth A. Conklin, "Thus Are Our Bodies, Thus Was Our Custom": Mortuary Cannibalism in an Amazonian Society," *American Ethnologist* 22.1 (1995): 75-101.

Please watch:

- THURS "Sky Burial: A Tibetan Death Ritual" (2015) [12 mins]

Week 6 🦴 Managing What Remains: Rituals of Place-Making

Please watch:

- TUES "Homegoings: Funeral Rites in the African American Community" (2013) [57min]

Please read:

- TUES Osman Balkan, "Burial and Belonging," *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 15.1 (2015): 120-134.

Please play:

- THURS *A Mortician's Tale* (2017). [play-through takes approximately one hour]

Due this week:

- Reflection Paper 2.

Week 7 🦴 Recalling the Dead: Memorial Rituals

Please read:

- TUES John Nelson, "Contemporary Household Altars," in *Handbook of Contemporary Japanese Religions*, eds. Inken Prohl and John Nelson, 573-593, Brill 2012;
- THURS Regina Marchi, "El Dia de los Muertos in the USA: Cultural Ritual as Political Communication," in *Spontaneous Shrines and the Public Memorialization of Death*, ed. Jack Santino, 261-283, Palgrave MacMillan 2006;
- THURS Cruz Medina, "Day of the Dead: Decolonial Expression in Pop de los Muertos," in *The Routledge Companion to Latina/o Popular Culture*, ed. Frederick Luis Aldama, 370-380, Routledge 2016.

Weekend field trip: Green Lawn Cemetery, Day of the Dead Festival
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Week 8 🦴 Recalling the Dead: Monumental Death

Please read:

- TUES Bill Niven, "War Memorials at the Intersection of Politics, Culture, and Memory," *Journal of War and Culture Studies* 1.1 (2007): 39-45;

- TUES Timur Hammond, “Making Memorial Publics: Media, Monuments, and the Politics of Commemoration Following Turkey’s July 2016 Coup Attempt,” *Geographical Review* 110.4 (2020): 536-555;
- THURS Jack Santino, “Performative Commemoratives: Spontaneous Shrines and the Public Memorialization of Death,” in *Spontaneous Shrines and the Public Memorialization of Death*, ed. Jack Santino, 5-15, Palgrave MacMillan 2006.

Please review:

- THURS Celebrity memorial shrine gallery (Carmen).

Due this week:

- Green Lawn Analysis

Week 9 🧠 Imagining the Afterlife: Visions of Heaven and Hell

Please read:

- TUES Nerina Rustomji, “Visions of the Afterworld,” in *The Garden and the Fire: Heaven and Hell in Islamic Culture*, 21-39, Columbia University Press 2008; Colleen McDannell and Bernhard Lang, *Heaven: A History*, Yale University Press, 1988 [excerpts].
- THURS Caroline Hirasawa, “The Inflatable, Collapsible Kingdom of Retribution: A Primer on Japanese Hell Imagery and Imagination,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 63.1 (2008): 1-50; Henry Ansgar Kelly, “Hell with Purgatory and Two Limbos: The Geography and Theology of the Underworld,” in *Hell and Its Afterlife: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, eds. Isabel Moreira and Margaret Toscano, 121-136, Routledge 2016.

Week 10 🧠 Imagining the Afterlife: Cinematic Visions

Please watch:

- TUES Hirokazu Kore-eda, *After Life* (1998) [118 mins.]

Due this week:

- Project Proposal;
- Reflection Paper 3.

Week 11 🧠 Communicating with the Dead: Spirits and Mediums

Please read:

- TUES Alyson Prude, “A Reexamination of Marginal Religious Specialists: Himalayan Messengers from the Dead,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 88.3 (2020): 779-805;
- THURS R. Laurence Moore, “The Spiritualist Medium: A Study of Female Professionalism in Victorian America,” *American Quarterly* 27.2 (1975): 200-221;
- THURS Anthony Enns, “Voices of the Dead: Transmission/Translation/Transgression,” *Culture, Theory, and Critique* 46.1 (2005): 11-27.

Week 12 🧠 Communicating with the Dead: New Media and New Mediums

Please read:

- TUES Jennifer Huberman, “Dearly Departed: Communicating with the Dead in the Digital Age,” *Social Analysis* 61.3 (2017): 91-107;

- TUES Susan Kwilecki, “Twenty-First Century American Ghosts: The After-Death Communication—Therapy and Revelation from Beyond the Grave,” *Religion and American Culture* 19.1 (2009): 101-133;
- THURS Rasha Darghawth, “Contemporary Mediumship: Anthropological Perspectives on the Long Island Medium,” *University of Western Ontario Journal of Anthropology* 21.1 (2013): 83-90.


Due this week:

- Reflection Paper 4

Week 13  Transcending Death: Alchemy and Immortality

Please read:

- TUES Livia Kohn, “Modes of Mutation: Restructuring the Energy Body,” in *Internal Alchemy: Self, Society, and the Quest for Immortality*, eds. Livia Kohn and Robin R. Wang, 1-26, Three Pines 2009;
- TUES Althea Northage-Orr, “Western Parallels: The Esoteric Teachings of Hermeticism,” in *Internal Alchemy: Self, Society, and the Quest for Immortality*, eds. Livia Kohn and Robin R. Wang, 219-241;
- THURS Alex Dumas and Bryan S. Turner, “The Life-Extension Project: A Sociological Critique,” *Health Sociology Review* 16.1 (2007): 5-17;
- THURS Herbert Anderson, “Forever is Always Finite: Reflections on Radical Life Extension,” *Theology and Science* 17.2 (2019): 223-232.

Week 14  Final Projects Workshop

Due this week:

- Final Project
- Letter to the Instructor 2

<p>Finals Week: End-of-Semester Colloquium</p>
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## University Policies

- Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

- Disability Services

The university strives to maintain a healthy and accessible environment to support student learning in and out of the classroom. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.

If you are isolating while waiting for a COVID-19 test result, please let me know immediately. Those testing positive for COVID-19 should refer to the [Safe and Healthy Buckeyes site](#) for resources. Beyond five days of the required COVID-19 isolation period, I may rely on Student Life Disability Services to establish further reasonable accommodations. You can connect with them at [sllds@osu.edu](mailto:sllds@osu.edu); 614-292-3307; or [sllds.osu.edu](http://sllds.osu.edu).

- Religious Accommodations

Ohio State has had a longstanding practice of making reasonable academic accommodations for students' religious beliefs and practices in accordance with applicable law. In 2023, Ohio State updated its practice to align with new state legislation. Under this new provision, students must be in early communication with their instructors regarding any known accommodation requests for religious beliefs and practices, providing notice of specific dates for which they request alternative accommodations within 14 days after the first instructional day of the course. Instructors in turn shall not question the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system in reviewing such requests and shall keep requests for accommodations confidential.

With sufficient notice, instructors will provide students with reasonable alternative accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements with respect to students' sincerely held religious beliefs and practices by allowing up to three absences each semester for the student to attend or participate in religious activities. Examples of religious accommodations can include, but are not limited to, rescheduling an exam, altering the time of a student's presentation, allowing make-up assignments to substitute for missed class work, or flexibility in due dates or research responsibilities. If concerns arise about a requested accommodation, instructors are to consult their tenure initiating unit head for assistance.

A student's request for time off shall be provided if the student's sincerely held religious belief or practice severely affects the student's ability to take an exam or meet an academic requirement and the student has notified their instructor, in writing during the first 14 days after the course begins, of the date of each absence. Although students are required to provide notice within the first 14 days after a course begins, instructors are strongly encouraged to work with the student to provide a reasonable accommodation if a request is made outside the notice period. A student may not be penalized for an absence approved under this policy.

If students have questions or disputes related to academic accommodations, they should contact their course instructor, and then their department or college office. For questions or to report discrimination or harassment based on religion, individuals should contact the Office of Institutional Equity.

- Mental Health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting [ccs.osu.edu](https://ccs.osu.edu) or calling [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766). CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on call counselor when CCS is closed at [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766) and 24 hour emergency help is also available 24/7 by dialing 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

- Sexual Misconduct and Relationship Violence

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at [titleix@osu.edu](mailto:titleix@osu.edu).

# GE Theme course submission worksheet: Traditions, Cultures, & Transformations

## Overview

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Courses in the GE Themes aim to provide students with opportunities to explore big picture ideas and problems within the specific practice and expertise of a discipline or department. Although many Theme courses serve within disciplinary majors or minors, by requesting inclusion in the General Education, programs are committing to the incorporation of the goals of the focal theme and the success and participation of students from outside of their program.

Each category of the GE has specific learning goals and Expected Learning Outcomes (ELOs) that connect to the big picture goals of the program. ELOs describe the knowledge or skills students should have by the end of the course. Courses in the GE Themes must meet the ELOs common for **all** GE Themes and those specific to the Theme, in addition to any ELOs the instructor has developed specific to that course. All courses in the GE must indicate that they are part of the GE and include the Goals and ELOs of their GE category on their syllabus.

The prompts in this form elicit information about how this course meets the expectations of the GE Themes. The form will be reviewed by a group of content experts (the Theme Advisory) and by a group of curriculum experts (the Theme Panel), with the latter having responsibility for the ELOs and Goals common to all themes (those things that make a course appropriate for the GE Themes) and the former having responsibility for the ELOs and Goals specific to the topic of **this** Theme.

Briefly describe how this course connects to or exemplifies the concept of this Theme (Traditions, Cultures, & Transformations)

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In a sentence or two, explain how this class “fits’ within the focal Theme. This will help reviewers understand the intended frame of reference for the course-specific activities described below.

*(enter text here)*

## Connect this course to the Goals and ELOs shared by *all* Themes

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Below are the Goals and ELOs common to all Themes. In the accompanying table, for each ELO, describe the activities (discussions, readings, lectures, assignments) that provide opportunities for students to achieve those outcomes. The answer should be concise and use language accessible to colleagues outside of the submitting department or discipline. The specifics of the activities matter—listing “readings” without a reference to the topic of those readings will not allow the reviewers to understand how the ELO will be met. However, the panel evaluating the fit of the course to the Theme will review this form in conjunction with the syllabus, so if readings, lecture/discussion topics, or other specifics are provided on the syllabus, it is not necessary to reiterate them within this form. The ELOs are expected to vary in their “coverage” in terms of number of activities or emphasis within the course. Examples from successful courses are shared on the next page.

**Goal 1:** Successful students will analyze an important topic or idea at a more advanced and in-depth level than the foundations. In this context, “advanced” refers to courses that are e.g., synthetic, rely on research or cutting-edge findings, or deeply engage with the subject matter, among other possibilities.

**Goal 2:** Successful students will integrate approaches to the theme by making connections to out-of-classroom experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in future.

	Course activities and assignments to meet these ELOs
<b>ELO 1.1</b> Engage in critical and logical thinking.	
<b>ELO 1.2</b> Engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or ideas within this theme.	
<b>ELO 2.1</b> Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences.	
<b>ELO 2.2</b> Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.	

*Example responses for proposals within “Citizenship” (from Sociology 3200, Comm 2850, French 2803):*

<b>ELO 1.1</b> Engage in critical and logical thinking.	<i>This course will build skills needed to engage in critical and logical thinking about immigration and immigration related policy through: Weekly reading response papers which require the students to synthesize and critically evaluate cutting-edge scholarship on immigration; Engagement in class-based discussion and debates on immigration-related topics using evidence-based logical reasoning to evaluate policy positions; Completion of an assignment which build skills in analyzing empirical data on immigration (Assignment #1)</i>
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	<p>Completion 3 assignments which build skills in connecting individual experiences with broader population-based patterns (Assignments #1, #2, #3)</p> <p>Completion of 3 quizzes in which students demonstrate comprehension of the course readings and materials.</p>
<p><b>ELO 2.1</b> Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences.</p>	<p>Students engage in advanced exploration of each module topic through a combination of lectures, readings, and discussions.</p> <p><u>Lecture</u>  Course materials come from a variety of sources to help students engage in the relationship between media and citizenship at an advanced level. Each of the 12 modules has 3-4 lectures that contain information from both peer-reviewed and popular sources. Additionally, each module has at least one guest lecture from an expert in that topic to increase students' access to people with expertise in a variety of areas.</p> <p><u>Reading</u>  The textbook for this course provides background information on each topic and corresponds to the lectures. Students also take some control over their own learning by choosing at least one peer-reviewed article and at least one newspaper article from outside the class materials to read and include in their weekly discussion posts.</p> <p><u>Discussions</u>  Students do weekly discussions and are given flexibility in their topic choices in order to allow them to take some control over their education. They are also asked to provide information from sources they've found outside the lecture materials. In this way, they are able to explore areas of particular interest to them and practice the skills they will need to gather information about current events, analyze this information, and communicate it with others.</p> <p>Activity Example: Civility impacts citizenship behaviors in many ways. Students are asked to choose a TED talk from a provided list (or choose another speech of their interest) and summarize and evaluate what it says about the relationship between civility and citizenship. Examples of Ted Talks on the list include Steven Petrow on the difference between being polite and being civil, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's talk on how a single story can perpetuate stereotypes, and Claire Wardle's talk on how diversity can enhance citizenship.</p>
<p><b>ELO 2.2</b> Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.</p>	<p>Students will conduct research on a specific event or site in Paris not already discussed in depth in class. Students will submit a 300-word abstract of their topic and a bibliography of at least five reputable academic and mainstream sources. At the end of the semester they will submit a 5-page research paper and present their findings in a 10-minute oral and visual presentation in a small-group setting in Zoom.</p> <p>Some examples of events and sites:  The Paris Commune, an 1871 socialist uprising violently squelched by conservative forces</p>

	<p><i>Jazz-Age Montmartre, where a small community of African-Americans—including actress and singer Josephine Baker, who was just inducted into the French Pantheon—settled and worked after World War I.</i></p> <p><i>The Vélodrome d’hiver Roundup, 16-17 July 1942, when 13,000 Jews were rounded up by Paris police before being sent to concentration camps</i></p> <p><i>The Marais, a vibrant Paris neighborhood inhabited over the centuries by aristocrats, then Jews, then the LGBTQ+ community, among other groups.</i></p>
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## Goals and ELOs unique to Traditions, Cultures, & Transformations

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Below are the Goals and ELOs specific to this Theme. As above, in the accompanying Table, for each ELO, describe the activities (discussions, readings, lectures, assignments) that provide opportunities for students to achieve those outcomes. The answer should be concise and use language accessible to colleagues outside of the submitting department or discipline. The ELOs are expected to vary in their “coverage” in terms of number of activities or emphasis within the course. Examples from successful courses are shared on the next page.

**GOAL 3:** Successful students will engage in a systematic assessment of how cultures and sub-cultures develop and interact, historically or in contemporary society.

**GOAL 4:** Successful students will engage in a systematic assessment of differences among societies, institutions, and individuals’ experience within traditions and cultures.

	Course activities and assignments to meet these ELOs
<b>ELO 3.1</b> Describe the influence of an aspect of culture (religious belief, gender roles, institutional organization, technology, epistemology, philosophy, scientific discovery, etc.) on at least one historical or contemporary issue.	
<b>ELO 3.2</b> Analyze the impact of a “big” idea or technological advancement in creating a major and long-lasting change in a specific culture.	
<b>ELO 3.3</b> Examine the interactions among dominant and sub-cultures.	
<b>ELO 3.4</b> Explore changes and continuities over time within a culture or society.	
<b>ELO 4.1</b> Recognize and explain differences, similarities, and disparities among institutions, organizations, cultures, societies, and/or individuals.	
<b>ELO 4.2</b> Explain ways in which categories such as race, ethnicity, and gender and perceptions of difference, impact individual outcomes and broader societal issues	

**From:** [Hewitt, Elizabeth](#)  
**To:** [Arceno, Mark Anthony](#)  
**Subject:** Re: New course concurrence, proposal, and GE submission--RELSTDS 3888  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:32:48 AM

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Hi Mark Anthony and many apologies for not writing back about this one. I had reached out to Hannibal to ask him (since he wanted to propose a Literature and Death course), and he indicated that he felt that there wasn't overlap with course content. And then I forgot to write you back indicating that English gives concurrence.

Thanks for reaching out,  
Beth

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**From:** Arceno, Mark Anthony <arceno.1@osu.edu>  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 at 5:48 PM  
**To:** Hewitt, Elizabeth <hewitt.33@osu.edu>  
**Subject:** FW: New course concurrence, proposal, and GE submission--RELSTDS 3888

Hello, Beth,

I know we're past the typical 2-week period for seeking concurrence, but I did want to nevertheless follow up and confirm whether English is okay with us offering this new course?

I would ideally like to get this into the system by Friday if at all possible.

Best,  
Mark Anthony

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**From:** Arceno, Mark Anthony  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 4, 2024 2:00 PM  
**To:** Hewitt, Elizabeth <hewitt.33@osu.edu>  
**Cc:** Perez, Ashley <perez.390@osu.edu>; Curley, Melissa <curley.32@osu.edu>  
**Subject:** FW: New course concurrence, proposal, and GE submission--RELSTDS 3888

Hello, Beth,

Please see attached a syllabus for a new course that Melissa Curley has put together. We'd like to ask for English's concurrence. Though it's not a literature course, we're aware that Hannibal has taught a course on death and dying, so we want to make sure he's happy that this is sufficiently distinct from his.

As always, please do let us know if you have any questions, comments, or concerns about this one!

Best,  
Mark Anthony

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**Mark Anthony ARCEÑO, Ph.D.**

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Food & Environmental Anthropologist  
[Ohio State APOP](#) Lecture Series Team Leader  
Culture & Agriculture [Sensorium](#) Editor in Chief

*Pronouns: he, him, his*  
<http://about.me/markanthonyarceno>

**Curriculum Map for Religious Studies Major**

Program Learning Goals for the Religious Studies Major

Goal 1: Students will attain a broad knowledge of the world’s religions.

Goal 2: Students will understand some of the methodological challenges facing any scholar of religion.

Goal 3: Students will develop an understanding of religion and how to study it comparatively and critically in a range of cultural and historical contexts.

Goal 4: Students will develop multi-disciplinary skills to appreciate the role religion plays in social and cultural production (in terms of art, literature, politics, society).

\*Beg=Beginning; Int=Intermediate; Adv=Advanced

<b>CURRICULUM MAP FOR RELIGIOUS STUDIES MAJOR</b>				
Learning Goals:	<u>Goal 1:</u> Students will attain a broad knowledge of the world’s religions.	<u>Goal 2:</u> Students will understand some of the methodological challenges facing any scholar of religion.	<u>Goal 3:</u> Students will develop an understanding of religion and how to study it comparatively and critically in a range of cultural and historical contexts.	<u>Goal 4:</u> Students will develop multi-disciplinary skills to appreciate the role religion plays in social and cultural production (in terms of art, literature, politics, society).
<b>Core Courses (12 Credit Hours)</b>				
2370 Introduction to Comparative Religion <b>OR</b> 2102.02 Comparative Sacred Texts	beg	beg	beg	beg
3972 Theory and Method in the Study of Religion	int	int	int	int
CS 3990 Approaches to Comparative Studies	int	int	int	int
RS 4970 Religious Studies Capstone <b>OR</b> CS 4990 Senior Seminar in Comparative Studies	adv	adv	adv	adv

<b>Individual Religious Traditions courses (9-15 Credit hours)</b>	<u>Goal 1:</u> Students will attain a broad knowledge of the world's religions.	<u>Goal 2:</u> Students will understand some of the methodological challenges facing any scholar of religion.	<u>Goal 3:</u> Students will develop an understanding of religion and how to study it comparatively and critically in a range of cultural and historical contexts.	<u>Goal 4:</u> Students will develop multi-disciplinary skills to appreciate the role religion plays in social and cultural production (in terms of art, literature, politics, society).
ARABIC 5701 The Qur'an in Translation	adv	adv	adv	adv
CLAS 3401 Ancient Greek Religion	int	int	int	int
CLAS 3404 Magic in the Ancient World	int	int	int	int
CLAS 3405 Christians in the Greco-Roman World	int	int	int	int
CLAS 3408 Ancient Roman Religion	int	int	int	int
CS 4822 Native American Identity	adv	adv	adv	adv
ENGLISH 2280 The English Bible	beg	beg	beg	beg
HEBREW 2700 The Hebrew Bible in Translation	beg	beg	beg	beg
HIST 2220 Introduction to the History of Christianity	beg	beg	beg	beg
HIST 2221 Introduction to the New Testament	beg	beg	beg	beg
HIST 2351 Early Islamic Society, 610-1258	beg	beg	beg	beg
HIST 2375 Islamic Central Asia	beg	beg	beg	beg
HIST 2450 Ancient and Medieval Jewish History, 300 BCE-1100 BCE	beg	beg	beg	beg
HIST 2451 Ancient and Medieval Jewish History, 700-1700 CE	beg	beg	beg	beg
HIST 2452 Modern Jewish History, 1700-Present	beg	beg	beg	beg
HIST 3218 Paul and His Influence in Early Christianity	int	int	int	int

HIST 3219 Historical Jesus	int	int	int	int
HIST 3227 Gnostics and Other Early Christian Heresies	int	int	int	int
HIST 3229 History of Early Christianity	int	int	int	int
HIST 3245 The Age of Reformation	int	int	int	int
HIST 3470 Messiahs and Messianism in Jewish History	int	int	int	int
HISTART 3005 Christian Art	int	int	int	int
HISTART 4421 Medieval Art	adv	adv	adv	adv
JS 2201 Introduction to Jewish Culture, Thought and Practice	beg	beg	beg	beg
NELC 3230 Introduction to Shi's Beliefs and History	int	int	int	int
NELC 3501 Introduction to Islam	int	int	int	int
NELC 3508 Sufism	int	int	int	int
PHIL 2120 Asian Philosophies	beg	beg	beg	beg
PHIL 3111 Introduction to Jewish Philosophy	int	int	int	int
RS 2222 From Istar to Christ: The History of Mediterranean Religions	beg	beg	beg	beg
RS 3186 History of God	int	int	int	int
RS 3210 Kabbalah and the Jewish Mystical Tradition (cross-listed with HEBREW and JS)	int	int	int	int
RS 3671 Religions of India	int	int	int	int
RS 3672 Native American Religions	int	int	int	int
RS 3673 The Buddhist Tradition (cross-listed with EALL)	int	int	int	int
RS 4342 Religion, Meaning, and Knowledge in Africa and its Diaspora (cross-listed with AFAMAST)	adv	adv	adv	adv

RS 4872 Varieties of Christianity	adv	adv	adv	adv
RS 5871 The Japanese Religious Tradition (cross-listed with JAPANESE)	adv	adv	adv	adv
<b>Comparative/ Interdisciplinary courses: 9-15 credit hours</b>				
AFAMAST 4342 Religion, Meaning, and Knowledge in Africa	adv	adv	adv	adv
CLAS 3401 Ancient Greek Religion	int	int	int	int
CLAS 3404 Magic in the Ancient World	int	int	int	int
HEB 2367.01 Scripture and Script	beg	beg	beg	beg
HEB 3704 Women in the Bible and Beyond	int	int	int	int
HIST 3045 American Religious History	int	int	int	int
HIST 3214 Women, Gender, and Sexuality in the History of Christianity	int	int	int	int
MEDREN 2666 Witchcraft and Magic in the Middle Ages and Renaissance	beg	beg	beg	beg
NELC 2680 It's the End of the World!	beg	beg	beg	beg
NELC 3201 Muslims in America and Europe	int	int	int	int
PHIL 2120 Asian Philosophies	beg	beg	beg	beg
PHIL 5850 Philosophy of Religion	adv	adv	adv	adv
RS 2102.01 Literature and Religion	beg	beg	beg	beg
RS 2102.02 Comparative Sacred Texts	beg	beg	beg	beg
RS/CLAS 2222 From Ishtar to Christ	beg	beg	beg	beg
RS 2670 Science and Religion	beg	beg	beg	beg



RS 2677 Religion and Environmentalism	beg	beg	beg	beg
RS 3666 Magic in the Modern World	int	int	int	int
RS 3671 Religions of India	int	int	int	int
RS 3678 Religion and American Culture	int	int	int	int
RS 3679 Popular Culture and World Religion	int	int	int	int
RS / HIST 3680 Religion and Law in Comparative Perspective	int	int	int	int
RS 3888 Death, Dying, and the Afterlife	int	int	int	int
RS 4370 Research Seminar on Religion in Ohio	adv	adv	adv	adv
RS / INTSTDS 4873 Contemporary Religious Movements in a Global Context	adv	adv	adv	adv
RS 4875 Gender, Sexuality and Religion	adv	adv	adv	adv
SOCI 3467 Sociology of Religion	int	int	int	int