

Term Information

Effective Term Spring 2025

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Near Eastn Lang and Cultures
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Near East S Asian Lang/Culture - D0554
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences
Level/Career Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog 3168
Course Title The History of God
Transcript Abbreviation History of God
Course Description Exploration of how the idea of a single God developed in religions having their origins in the ancient near East and the Mediterranean (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Hellenistic philosophy) from ancient times to the present.
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 English 1110 or completion of GE Foundation Writing and Information Literacy course
Exclusions Not open to students with credit for RelStds 3168
Electronically Enforced No

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings Cross-listed in Religious Studies

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 16.1199
Subsidy Level Baccalaureate Course
Intended Rank Sophomore, Junior

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

- Understand the diversity of ways the concept of God took form.
- Evaluate the complex dynamics of religion, culture, myth, and ritual and how they have affected the worldviews and social organizations that constitute the history of religions in the Middle East, Europe, and the Western Hemisphere;
- Understand the varieties of functions that the idea of God and the gods in world religions by placing Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in their historical background.

Content Topic List

- The Origins of God
- Monotheism and Polytheism
- The Origins of Judaism and Christianity
- Islam: Muhammad is His Messenger
- Philosophy, mysticism, and theory

Sought Concurrence

No

Attachments

- History of God-submission-traditions (april24).pdf: GE Rationale
(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Carmichael, Phoebe Cullen)
- Heb Major Curric Map.pdf: Curriculum Map
(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Carmichael, Phoebe Cullen)
- History of God Syllabus.pdf: Syllabus
(Syllabus. Owner: Carmichael, Phoebe Cullen)
- History of God comments.pdf: Feedback response
(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Carmichael, Phoebe Cullen)

Comments

- Please see feedback email sent to department 09-30-2024 RLS *(by Steele, Rachel Lea on 09/30/2024 09:09 AM)*

COURSE REQUEST
3168 - Status: PENDING

Last Updated: Vankeerbergen, Bernadette
Chantal
10/06/2024

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Carmichael, Phoebe Cullen	06/10/2024 03:41 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Liu, Morgan Yih-Yang	06/10/2024 03:50 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal	08/26/2024 10:36 AM	College Approval
Revision Requested	Steele, Rachel Lea	09/30/2024 09:09 AM	ASCCAO Approval
Submitted	Carmichael, Phoebe Cullen	10/03/2024 10:17 AM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Brenner, Naomi	10/06/2024 07:34 AM	Unit Approval
Approved	Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal	10/06/2024 08:06 AM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Jenkins, Mary Ellen Bigler Hanlin, Deborah Kay Hilty, Michael Neff, Jennifer Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal Steele, Rachel Lea	10/06/2024 08:06 AM	ASCCAO Approval

Dear Reviewing Faculty,

Thank you for your feedback on NELC 3168 *History of God*. We are anxious to offer this course of our students in SP25. We have addressed the contingencies below and they have been marked in blue font in the syllabus document. Since the syllabus is the student-facing document, we have only made changes to the syllabus. We are happy to do a copy-paste in the GE form as well if that will be useful.

- Contingency:** The reviewing faculty ask that the department provide more information in both the syllabus and the GEN Submission Form about the specific course assignments, activities and assessments that will help students to achieve and demonstrate their understanding of ELOs 3.1-3.4. While the committee notes that there is information about *what* students will learn, they are uncertain as to *how* students will acquire the knowledge/skills. They also offer the friendly observation that in the GEN submission form the explanation for ELO 3.3 seems to cut off mid-sentence, and they ask that this be completed.

We believe that students will demonstrate an understanding of ELOs 3.1-3.4 in class discussion, quizzes, and self-reflection essays. Throughout the syllabus we have spelled out ways in which these ELOs will be addressed. We have corrected the error in the GE form.
- Contingency:** The reviewing faculty ask that the department list the goals and ELOs for the GEN Theme: Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations in their entirety on the syllabus (pp. 1-2). Currently, the ELOs associated with goals one and two are not found on the syllabus. The Goals and ELOs for all GEN categories are available in an easy-to-copy/paste format on the [ASC Curriculum and Assessment Services website](#).

We have added the missing ELO.
- Recommendation:** The reviewing faculty recommend that the department make the fulfillment of ELO 2.2 more explicit in the syllabus. While they acknowledge that the nature of the course and its topic encourage self-reflection, they suggest that it be more present in the syllabus so that students understand that it is an integral part of the course. They offer the friendly suggestion that the more traditional evaluation of participation may be easier to assess and clearer to students.

We believe that the self-reflection essays will do so. We have further expanded the scope of the essays and this recommendation should be satisfied.
- Recommendation:** The reviewing faculty recommend that the department re-consider the evaluation of students' "willingness to learn" (syllabus, pp. 4,5) as this may be difficult to measure and assess and does not provide clear information to students about what they must do to earn this part of their grade.

We have removed this language from the syllabus.

Thank you,

Ila Nagar

NELC/Religious Studies 3168
THE HISTORY OF GOD

What role has idea of God played in our civilization? Was the idea of one God always part of human history, or did it evolve and change over time? Did Jews, Christians, and Muslims always believe that God was invisible, or indivisible, or that he intervened in nature?

The History of God is a course in human behavior. **We are not going to ask whether anything exists beyond our material world, whether God exists, or whether any religious tradition holds ultimate truth or teaches the best way of life.** In this course, we will explore how the idea of a single God developed in religions having their origins in the ancient near East and the Mediterranean (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Hellenistic philosophy) from ancient times to the present. We will explore how the idea of God emerged from ancient peoples, who believed in many gods, and how that idea was transformed in the light of cultural, geographic, political, and technological changes that occurred over the centuries.

This exploration will take us to a wide range of literatures, histories, and cultural phenomena. We will become acquainted with key selections from the scriptures of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and debates among those communities. We will see how politics and power relationships between and within these communities affected abstract ideas such as holiness, divine intervention, incarnation, and evil over the centuries. And we will see how religious communities put those ideas into practice through ritual, ethics, and social organization. Each of these forms of discourse and will lead us to analyze and critique conventions, theories, and ideologies that influence interactions in human society.

I. **Prerequisite:** completion of GE Foundation Writing and Information Literacy course.

II. **GOALS OF THIS COURSE:**

By the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Understand the diversity of ways the concept of God took form from ancient Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean through the rise of philosophy in the Middle Ages to the modern age, focusing on relationships between paganism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam;
2. Understand and evaluate the complex dynamics of religion, culture, myth, and ritual and how they have affected the worldviews and social organizations that constitute the history of religions in the Middle East, Europe, and the Western Hemisphere;
3. Understand the varieties of functions that the idea of God and the gods in world religions by placing Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in their historical background.
4. Explore and think critically about how to study myth, ritual, and their social and historical settings in an academic environment.
5. Learn to engage those skills through written essays and research presentations or creative works.

III. **GE Education Goals and Expected Learning Outcomes**

This course meets the requirements for the Traditions, Cultures, & Transformations category. The University's expected learning outcomes (ELO) for fulfilling these requirements are as follows:

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.

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.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

Successful students will be able to:

ELO 1.1 Engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of the theme.

ELO 1.2 Engage in an advance, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of the theme.

ELO 2.1 Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to the theme.

ELO 2.2 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.

ELO 3.1 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.

ELO 3.2 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 Examine the interactions among dominant and sub-cultures.

ELO 3.4 Explore changes and continuities over time within a culture or society.

ELO 4.1 Recognize and explain differences, similarities, and disparities among institutions, organizations, cultures, societies, and/or individuals.

ELO 4.2 Explain ways in which categories such as race, ethnicity, and gender and perceptions of difference, impact individual outcomes and broader societal issues.

How this course fulfills the expected learning outcomes:

This course will satisfy those outcomes by [introducing students to the history of the idea of God](#)

and the gods and myths, theories, and functions of “big” cultural ideas as they developed over the centuries, especially in the interactions between the three major religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Students will gain an appreciation of the wide variety of forms that those ideas have taken over time through comparison of related themes in those traditions. The course will be structured both historically and thematically: After an introduction to the role that the idea of divinity and deity plays in human culture, students will learn about the roots of biblical monotheism in beliefs in pluralities of divine beings and how those ideas were transformed by encounters with other cultures, including Hellenism. They will learn about the histories of Christianity and Islam and how they were influenced by Judaism and other cultures of the ancient Mediterranean. From here the course will explore how the idea of God was expressed and acted upon in philosophy, mysticism, ritual, and other forms of religious behavior across diverse historical communities.

Through this trajectory you will develop skills in the study of religion and culture. You will learn how religion is approached in an academic environment as distinct from religious communities themselves. You will do so by close readings of primary texts from scriptures, works of philosophy, mythology and poetry from ancient to modern times in translation. The course will incorporate comparative and historical perspectives, drawing on the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, and literary and folklore studies. At the same time, the main textbook will provide you with an overall historical framework for those explorations. You will also contribute your individual observations and responses to those works through class discussion, reflective essays, and examinations.

IV. COURSE MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES

I. Texts:

Three textbooks (Denney, Eire, and Jaffee, *Jews, Christians, Muslims*; James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*; and Sells, *Approaching the Quran*) will be made available at the Barnes and Noble OSU Bookstore on High Street and will be placed on reserve in the Main Library (Thompson). Other readings will be made available on the OSU Carmen/Canvas site for this course or the OSU Library website. **These readings are marked with an asterisk (*)**.

I. Texts:

- A. John Corrigan, Frederick M. Denny, Carlos M.N. Eire, Martin S. Jaffee, *Jews, Christians, Muslims: A Comparative Introduction to Monotheistic Religions* (= “Corrigan” in this syllabus). This volume is a comparative survey of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam from their beginnings to the present. We will be using this textbook to place the ideas we explore into historical and behavioral context.
- B. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (= “James” in this syllabus). One of the pioneering works in the academic study and psychology of religion. Chapters from this book will help us think about the human dimension of belief, philosophy, mysticism, and other phenomena.
- C. Michael Sells, *Approaching the Qur’an* (= “Sells” in this syllabus). This book is a scholarly rendition of selected chapters from the Qur’an, the scriptures of Islam. The book also includes an excellent introduction and audio files with examples of Quran recitation in Arabic.
- D. **A good scholarly Bible translation:** The word “bible” refers both to the scriptures of Judaism and Christianity, but those scriptures have different contents in each religion. The Bible used in Christianity includes what Christianity calls the Old Testament (also known as the Hebrew Bible) and the New Testament. The Bible used by Jews consists

only of the Hebrew Bible. The Old Testament or Hebrew Bible was written in mostly in Hebrew by the ancient Israelites and the Jewish people. The New Testament was written in Greek by the early Christian movement. Therefore, all English versions of the Bible are translation from ancient languages, which reflect what we know about those languages as scholarship evolves.

Good translations that contain the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, are: *The New Revised Standard Bible* and the *Revised Standard Bible* (also contained in the *Oxford English Bible*); *Revised English Bible*. A good translation of the Hebrew Bible is *Tanakh: The Jewish Publication Society Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, but it does not include the New Testament. The King James version (also known as the Authorized Version), *New International Version*, and the *Artscroll* edition are not recommended for this course. These Bible translations can be found in most major bookstores and on online book distributors. Some copies of the *New Revised Standard Version* will be available at the OSU Barnes and Noble. Please contact me if you have any questions.

II. Course requirements

- A. **Attendance is required for this course.** You are allowed **two absences**. Any additional unexcused absence will lower your grade. If you have any questions, please discuss them with me.
- B. **Preparation** of assigned readings is an essential requirement of this course. You will be required to be familiar with the material so you can come in with informed questions and observations.
- C. Together with this requirement, **class participation** in discussions and readings are essential requirements of this course. Your level of participation in discussions can make a significant difference in your grade.
What does "class participation" mean?
 1. Of course, it means **regular attendance** in class and (**staying awake** during the class!). The readings will not give you the whole story. Lectures and presentations will provide essential information. You are also responsible for assignments given in class, such as one-page essays due the next class session. Just reading someone else's notes won't help much—without seeing how the instructor fits the facts into a larger point or how the class arrived at an insight in the course of a discussion, your grade will suffer. Your essays will look like a collection of catch phrases without coherence or logic.
 2. It means **preparing readings** before class and bringing them to class if possible. If the readings are online, you are encouraged to print them out so you can bring them to class.
 3. It means **speaking up when you have a question**. Make a habit of writing down questions that occur to you in the course of your reading. If you have prepared the assignment, you don't need to be afraid that your questions might sound "dumb" or that other students came into this course knowing more than you. Sometimes the so-called "dumb" questions are the most insightful.
 4. It means **good citizenship** in class. This means **listening** quietly to the person who is talking (instructor or student), **being respectful** of other people's opinions and cultures and not forcing your own on them, showing up to class **on time**, and **staying for the whole class session**. It also means **turning off cell phones, laptop computers, MP3**

players, and other electronic devices before you begin class. Failure to comply with these rules could result in a significant difference in your grade.

5. Most important, it means **contributing to class discussions**. Often when we are looking at an image or reading a text, I will ask a question, like: What motivates this particular opinion? Or: Why did the artist use this style or theme? Other times, especially at the end of a unit, I will ask a general question about what we've learned, such as: What do the ancient synagogue mosaics have in common? How do modern Jewish artists draw on traditional images for new purposes? There are many good ways to answer these questions, and I expect you to give me your informed opinion and discuss it with your classmates and me in class.

D. **Five short (10-15 minute) quizzes**, in which you will be asked to identify important concepts and persons briefly. Each quiz will be held **at the beginning of class. No allowances will be made for taking it afterward.**

E. Alternating with those quizzes will be **reflection essays** in which you are to consider the themes and materials we are studying and think through your responses to them. The topics for those essays will be listed under the class sessions when they are due. These essays will be graded with a check (√) for satisfactory work; a plus (+) for an exceptionally insightful essay, and minus (-) for unsatisfactory work.

F. There will be a **midterm exam** and a **final exam** in which you are to identify and write about major facts and ideas learned in the course. The midterm exam will be held in class in Week 7. The final exam will be held on the day designated by the registrar for our class. The exact timeframe and details will be announced during the semester.

You are responsible for an assignment whether or not you were present in class when it was announced. If you missed class, you may try to get in touch with me—you can email me or leave a message at the phone number listed above.

G. To gain a deeper understanding the academic study of religion, students will be required to attend a **lecture** at the University relevant to religious studies, Near Eastern Studies, or Jewish Studies and to write a **one-page report** on that lecture or exhibit. Events that will fulfill this requirement will be made available in class and in email messages. The report is due a week after the lecture or visit and will count as much as one essay.

EVALUATION: Final grades will be assigned on the following basis:

1. Class participation: 20%
2. Quizzes: 15%
3. Essays and lecture report: 15%
4. Midterm Exam 25%
5. Final Exam: 25%

III. COURSE POLICIES AND OTHER NOTES:

Academic Integrity

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/>.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by university rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the university's *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the university.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

- Committee on Academic Misconduct web page (go.osu.edu/coam)
- Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity (go.osu.edu/ten-suggestions)

Attendance and Other Policies:

Attendance at class sessions is required for this course. You are allowed **two unexcused absences**. Every additional unexcused absence will lower your grade by half a grade. If you have any questions, please discuss them with me.

So that we can all engage directly with the texts and class discussions, **all other personal electronic devices** (besides what you are using for our Zoom sessions or reading materials) **must be turned off—not simply put on silence or vibrate**. This includes laptops, cell phones and smart phones, tablet computers, e-book readers, and iPod/MP3 players. Please advise your contacts that you will not be available during class hours.

Grading Scale

93–100: A	73–76.9: C
90–92.9: A-	70 –72.9: C-
87–89.9: B+	67 –69.9: D+
83–86.9: B	60 –66.9: D
80–82.9: B-	Below 60: E
77–79.9: C+	

Feedback for Assignments and Communication

- Grading and feedback: Quizzes and essays will generally be graded a week after submission.
- Email: Please check your OSU email account regularly or be sure that you have forwarded your OSU email to your personal account. You may receive important announcements about the course and the class schedule through that account. I will contact you through OSU email or the Carmen inbox function, which sends messages to your OSU email address. I will not contact you through your private email account (such as Gmail).

Student Services and Advising

University Student Services can be accessed through BuckeyeLink. More information is available here: <https://contactbuckeyelink.osu.edu/>

Advising resources for students are available here: <https://advising.osu.edu>

Copyright and Instructional Materials

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

Statement on Title IX

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

Commitment to a Diverse and Inclusive Learning Environment

The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge 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 Cherokee 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. I/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.

More information on OSU's land acknowledgement can be found here:

<https://mcc.osu.edu/about-us/land-acknowledgement>

Your 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 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.

Accessibility and Accommodations

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 slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; or slds.osu.edu.

Accessibility of course technology: This course requires use of CarmenCanvas (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.

- Canvas accessibility (go.osu.edu/canvas-accessibility)
- Streaming audio and video
- CarmenZoom accessibility (go.osu.edu/zoom-accessibility)
- Collaborative course tools

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**.

III. Class Schedule

Please note that **this schedule is subject to change**; you will be notified in advance. In this schedule, every capital letter (such as A or B) represents a topical unit, and every Arabic numeral (such as 1 or 2) designates a class session.

A. Introduction to the Course

WEEK 1

We will begin our exploration of the history of God by orienting ourselves to the questions we will ask in this course: What are the differences between studying religion in a religious community and the academic setting of the University? What can history and the social sciences tell us about the function of beliefs and practices related to God? How did we, as modern people, come to see this history—and the concept of God—in the way we do? How do ideas that we might think of as unchanging, such as theology and morality, change with time and cultural and social context?

1. What is God For?
 - In-class readings
2. Mind, Body, and Community
 - *Ninian Smart, “The Six Dimensions of Religion”
 - *William James, “The Reality of the Unseen”

WEEK 2

3. The History of the History of God
 - *Guy G. Stroumsa, *The Idea of Semitic Monotheism*, chapter 1
4. Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations
 - Corrigan, pp. vii-19
 - Essay #1: What questions do you have that you would like to explore in this course? [How does your experiences with contemporary religion compare with religious belief represented in this week’s readings?](#)

B. The Origins of God

WEEK 3

Most historians believe that monotheism, the idea that there is only one God, developed out of a variety of beliefs and religious traditions. In Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, the idea of monotheism is rooted in the history of the ancient Near East and took shape in ancient Israel. In

For Judaism and Christianity, the definitive source for this idea is The Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament. In this unit we will ask how the idea of one God developed out of a wide range of cultures, ideas and practices. We will also think about the consequences of the idea of one God for women, non-elite people, and individuals faced with the problem of evil.

5. What is Monotheism?
 - Corrigan, pp. 55-76
6. Polytheism before Monotheism
 - *Enuma Elish (Michael D. Coogan, *A Reader of Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, pp. 9-15), Hymn to Aten (pp. 125-127)
 - Bible: Genesis chapters 1-3, Psalm 104
 - QUIZ #1: The Study of Religion: This quiz will directly focus on ELO 3.2 where students will be asked to reflect on big ideas that interact with people's everyday lives and the effects of which are felt within and across cultures.

WEEK 4

7. Mesopotamia vs. Genesis
 - Bible, Genesis 1-3; Exodus chs. 19-20, 33; Isaiah ch. 6; Ezekiel chs. 1-3
8. Did God Have a Wife?
 - Bible, Deuteronomy 7:1-11, Judges 6:11-32, 2 Kings 23:1-17
 - *William G. Dever, *Did God Have a Wife?* pp. 209-247
 - Video Lecture: William S. Dever
 - <https://youtu.be/7bSBNr1vEsk>
 - REFLECTION ESSAY #2: This self-reflection will directly address ELOs 3.1 and 3.2. Are Polytheism and Monotheism really different? Or how do religious beliefs and ways to live whether they be about gender roles or institutions impact day to day life.

WEEK 5

9. Angels, demons, and consorts
 - *Sarah Iles Johnston, "Magic"
 - "Ancient Jewish Magic"
10. When Bad Things Happen to Biblical People
 - Bible, Job, chapters 1-12, 37-42
 - *R. Robert Brenner, *The Faith and Doubt of Holocaust Survivors*, ch. 5.
 - QUIZ #2: Ancient Near Eastern and Israelite Religion. This quiz will directly address ELO 3.3. Students will be asked to engage with questions of dominant and subjugated identities and ideologies.

C. The Origins of Judaism and Christianity

The conquest of Mediterranean civilization by the Greeks and Romans changed human history forever. During the Hellenistic and Roman age, Judaism developed into a complex religious tradition that went beyond the borders of the land of Israel and Christianity grew from a small Jewish messianic movement to the dominant religion of the Roman Empire. During this period, Greek philosophy and internal developments influenced concepts of God to embrace ideas such as incorporeality, Logos or divine wisdom, the incarnation, and fallen angels.

WEEK 6

11. Greek philosophy: The Many and the One
 - *Jan Assmann, “Monotheism and Polytheism”
 - *Michael Frede, “Monotheism in Pagan Philosophy”
12. Athens and Jerusalem
 - Corrigan, pp. 60-63
 - Philo, *The Migration of Abraham* (selections)
 - REFLECTION ESSAY #3: How did Greek philosophy transform the idea of God? How were their ideas different from those of other groups at this time? This essay will directly address ELO 3.2 and 4.1

WEEK 7

13. The Son of Man and the Son of God
 - *I Enoch* (selections)
14. At the Right Hand of God
 - Bible (New Testament): The Book of Mark
 - QUIZ #3: Hellenistic Judaism and the origins of Christian thought. Students will be asked compare interactions between different communities and how they are expressed within this week’s texts. The quiz will directly address ELO 3.1 and 3.3.

D. Judaism and Christianity: Conflict and Conversation

Late Antiquity, the age of the Christian Roman empire, also saw trends in philosophy, mythology, and scriptural interpretation that set the stage for Islam and medieval religion. It was also a period of mutual influence and fierce debates between Judaism and Christianity.

WEEK 8

11. The Invention of Heresy
 - Corrigan , pp. 77-100
 - Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*, Introduction

12. MIDTERM EXAM

This exam will ask students to demonstrate their understanding of the emergence of monotheism and the Jewish and Christian communities and scriptures (ELO 3.2). Students will be expected to synthesize material from the first half of the semester as they critically analyze ancient texts covered so far (ELO 1.1, 2.1) as they analyze interactions and major shifts within Ancient Mediterranean communities (ELO 3.3, 3.34)

E. Islam: Muhammad is His Messenger

In the seventh century CE, a new monotheistic religion rose in the Arabian Peninsula that came to be known as Islam. Influenced by Judaism and Christianity, Islam held that the prophet Mohammad was the recipient of the definitive revelation from God, who transmitted those revelations in Arabic in the form of sacred scriptures, known as the Quran. Islam transformed the culture and religion of the Middle East, southern Europe, and beyond.

WEEK 9

13. Islam in Context

- Corrigan, chapters 3 and 6
- Sells, Introduction
- 14. The Quran
 - Sells, pp. 41-144
 - REFLECTION ESSAY #4: How does the Quran try to convince the reader that it is the word of God? This essay and weekly readings and discussions address a critical point for our society. Students will be prompted to respond to this self-reflection essay with an eye on ELOs 3.2 and 3.4. Students will be asked to think through big ideas and their impact on culture and society through time.

WEEK 10

E. The Philosophers

Classical philosophy was born in ancient Greece and spread through the Hellenistic and Roman empires to the Mediterranean, northern Africa, and Europe. Although the Greeks and Romans were polytheists, the new monotheistic religions adapted Greek philosophy to their theologies. From the early Christians to medieval Islam, and then to Judaism in the Islamic world, philosophical methods and ideals changed the way intellectuals and spiritual seekers conceived of God.

- 15. Proofs for God?
 - Nathan Schneider, *God in Proof: The Story of a Search from the Ancients to the Internet*, chapters 1, 2, and 3
 - William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, “Philosophy”
- 16. Defending the Faith
 - **Classical Arabic Philosophy*, pp. xvii-23 (Introduction, al-Kindī)
 - QUIZ #4: Islam. With the material for this week, students will be asked to directly engage with ELOs 4.1 and 4.2 as they explore the differences of Islamic thought with ideas and texts from other religious communities, including pagan, Jewish, and Christian cultures.

WEEK 11

- 17. The Jewish Aristotle:
 - Moses Maimonides *The Book of Knowledge* (excerpts)
- 18. The Christian Aristotle
 - Thomas Aquinas, *City of God* (excerpts)
 - REFLECTION ESSAY #5: What is the function of philosophy in a religious culture? Students will directly engage with ELOs 3.1 and 3.3 in their comparison of Christian and Jewish philosophers.

WEEK 12

F. The Mystics

Mysticism is another way of perceiving the divine. Mysticism relies on experience and non-rational criteria for finding truth and relating it to one’s consciousness. In Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, mystical thinkers and movements often drew on philosophical principles but transformed them through mystery, symbolism, and altered states of consciousness.

- 19. Mysticism
 - James, “Mysticism”

20. Christian Mysticism: Love and Union

- Meister Eckhart. Sermons (selections)
- Bernard McGinn, “Love, Knowledge and *Unio Mystica* in the Western Christian Tradition”
- Watch: Hildegard of Bingen, *Ordo Virtutum*
<https://youtu.be/HmgngY3TKH0?feature=shared>
- QUIZ #5: Philosophy: In quiz 5, students will directly engage with ELO 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4. The relationships and views on non-dominant and dominant cultures are integral to understanding mystical traditions.

WEEK 13

21. Sufism: “I Am the Real”

- Michael Sells, *Early Islamic Mysticism*, Introduction
- Attar, *The Conference of the Birds* (selections)

22. The Kabbalah: The Androgynous Body of God

- Daniel Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, Introduction and selections
- REFLECTION ESSAY #6: What are differences between philosophy and mysticism? Students will reflect on ELO 3.1 most prominently this week but ELOs 3.4 and 4.1 will also be touched upon.

WEEK 14

G. Theory and Practice

23. Ritual

- Corrigan, Part 4 (chapters 10, 11, and 12)

24. Spirit and Stones

- Corrigan, Part 6 (chapters 13, 14, and 15)

WEEK 15

H. God in the 21st Century

25. God after Feminism

- Mary Daley, *Beyond God the Father*, pp. 13-43
- Judith Plaskow, *Standing Again at Sinai*, pp. 121-136

26. God as a Habit

- Tanya Luhrmann, *How God Becomes Real*, chapter 1

FINAL EXAMINATION

The final examination for this course will ask students to engage in in-depth exploration of the question of God (ELO 1.2) drawing on the critical analysis of historical, philosophical, and religious texts and transformative ideas from diverse groups in the ancient and modern world (ELO 1.1, 3.1, 3.2). They will consider how perceptions of difference in the study of ideas about God shape their own reflections as learners (ELO 2.2) and how those have been shaped by cultural beliefs and texts (ELO 3.1, 4.2).

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

Overview

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)

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.

“The History of God” is an exploration of the idea of God, its origins, and its consequences in religious and cultural traditions having their origins in the Middle East and their histories in Western and global civilizations. This course avoids endorsing any particular beliefs about the supernatural or natural worlds, but rather traces changing conceptions of God and their relationships to social and cultural conditions from antiquity to the present, principally in ancient Near Eastern religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

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

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
<p>ELO 1.1 Engage in critical and logical thinking.</p>	<p>Each unit of the course will include close readings of primary sources combined with theoretical perspectives and historical dynamics that shaped those texts. For example, the course begins with examinations of the function of religious belief and its manifestations in behavior and social organization. Throughout the course students will engage in class discussion focusing on comparing cases and evaluating the effects of historical circumstances on beliefs and practices. The students will also have opportunities to think through the conceptual implications of their material through class assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of biweekly quizzes in which students demonstrate comprehension of the course readings and materials. - Completion of biweekly reflection essays in which students build skills in reading pre-modern and modern texts in translation and relating them to the larger historical themes of the units; - Completion of essay questions in the midterm exam and final, in which students will not only demonstrate their knowledge of the material, but their ability to synthesize observations about the changes and diverse cultural and historical settings of those sources with the larger ideas expressed in them.
<p>ELO 1.2 Engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or ideas within this theme.</p>	<p>The lectures for the course will combine examinations of the historical and social context of stages in the history of religion with intensive reading primary texts from ancient, medieval, and modern sources. The textbooks for this course emphasize this combination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our main textbook, <i>Jews, Christians, and Muslims</i> (Corrigan, Denny, Eire, and Jaffee) is an exceptionally sophisticated yet accessible comparative overview of those three traditions. The textbook compares key themes, such as scripture, monotheism, ritual, and material culture, and how conceptions of myth and divinity developed from their roots to modern expressions. - <i>Approaching the Quran</i> (Sells) is an innovative translation of passages from the Quran that emphasizes the complex relationships between oral performance and conceptions of the sacred book as enactments of the divine word. <p>A major component of the course is in-person class discussion, in small groups and in the class as a whole. In each class students will discuss key issues in the unit under study. The comparative methodology advanced in course lectures, discussions, and assignments constitutes an advanced, in-depth exploration of the topic.</p>
<p>ELO 2.1 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reading</u> - The textbook for this course provides background information on each topic and corresponds to the lectures. Besides the textbooks, course readings also include other articles and academic treatments of the class material. Another important component of the course is the selection of primary readings from sacred texts and works of philosophy, mythic narrative, and ritual.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Classroom lectures and discussion</u> The lectures and discussions in class enable students to synthesize these two kinds of readings: - <u>Class lectures</u> will frame each phenomenon covered in the readings in its social and cultural context, showing how historical forces and patterns in religious behavior shaped key developments in conceptions of divinity and religious institutions and practices. - <u>Class Discussion</u> will focus on close readings of those primary sources and how we can understand them in light of modern findings about their historical context and reinterpretation across centuries and cultures. Each discussion will begin with a question that brings these two forms of learning together.
<p>ELO 2.2 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>Both the class discussions and the reflection essays will help students develop their skills as active learners by posing questions related to the synthesis of themes in the units and leaving those questions open for them to explore.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The unit on Ancient Near Eastern religions introduces the idea of monotheism and at the same time problematizes that idea by exploring how Israelite religion often acknowledged the existence of other gods; The reflection essay in Week 4 thus asks, “Are polytheism and monotheism really different?” - The unit on Islam stresses close reading of the Quran in its historical context and stresses the dynamic relationship between written scripture and oral performance. The reflection essay asks them to apply those skills in close reading by examining the poetics and rhetoric of the Quran.

Goals and ELOs unique to Traditions, Cultures, & Transformations

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
<p>ELO 3.1 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.</p>	<p>All of the units deal with the influence of concepts of God, including polytheism, monotheism, corporeality, and abstraction, on social circumstances, historical change, and intercultural dynamics.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the unit on ancient polytheism and monotheism (Unit B, Weeks 3-5), students learn about the relationship between the emergence of the Israelite system of a single temple in Jerusalem and its relationship to the organization of Davidic monarchy. Class lectures and discussions focus on setting these foundational ideas into historical and social context. - Week 5 of that unit explores concepts of evil and theodicy

	<p>and how they impact daily life and influence religious life to this day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The unit on God in the twenty-first century explores the impact of earlier ideas of God on modern thinking about such contemporary issues as gender and the place of religion in secular society. In class discussion and essays in the final examination students will draw on their own observations to think about the links between past and present.
<p>ELO 3.2 Analyze the impact of a “big” idea or technological advancement in creating a major and long-lasting change in a specific culture.</p>	<p>The idea of God and its various manifestations through the centuries forms the structure of the course. The readings and assignments stress how this idea has shaped the history of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and other religions. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For the unit on the origins of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Units C, D and E, weeks 6-9), students will be asked in discussion and essays to rethink conventional ideas about the relationship between the two religions, learning how Christianity emerged from Judaism, how both influenced Islam, and how the three religious communities engaged in dialogue and conflict in the course of their early histories. - The units on philosophy and mysticism (Units 9 and 10) show that common intellectual and spiritual streams resulted in the formation of religious movements that were both beholden to earlier traditions and subversive of them. In the essays and discussions of those units, students will be asked to consider the functions of philosophy and spiritual contemplation beyond the conventional evaluation of their claims to truth.
<p>ELO 3.3 Examine the interactions among dominant and sub-cultures.</p>	<p>The course pays attention to the interactions within and between cultures. The essays and class discussions will focus on the complexities of those interactions. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The unit on Judaism and Christianity (Unit D) explores how Christianity and Judaism grew to define themselves as separate religions, from the beginnings of the Jesus movement as a small movement in Judean society to the rise of Christianity as the imperial religion in Rome. Students will be asked to think about how both the common background of both religions resulted in conflict as well as dialogue. - Likewise, the unit on philosophical systems (Unit E) stresses the interrelationship of Islamic, Jewish, and Christian intellectuals and their mutual adoption of Hellenistic methods of thought.
<p>ELO 3.4 Explore changes and continuities over time within a culture or society.</p>	<p>The course is organized so that each stage in the major monotheistic religions is examined as it developed new forms over historical time. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In Unit C students explore how the common heritage of biblical religion was transformed by the influence of social cultural change to form classical Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity. - In Unit H on “God in the Twenty-First Century,” students consider how the radical changes brought on by modernity, including secularization, democratization, and feminism let to the religious landscape we see around us.
<p>ELO 4.1 Recognize and explain differences, similarities, and disparities among institutions, organizations, cultures, societies, and/or individuals.</p>	<p>An important goal of this course is to understand how our preconceptions of the history of religion and its concerns are products of contemporary culture; a careful reading of disparate sources from pre-modern religions and cultures provides case studies.</p> <p>Examples:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In Unit B, Weeks 3 and 4, our comparison of the ancient Babylonian creation myth Enuma Elish with the first chapter of Genesis points up both the common background and distinct variations in ancient Near Eastern worldviews. In class discussion students will be asked to enumerate mythological and structural similarities and differences between Mesopotamian and biblical creation stories. - Unit G, on “Theory and Practice,” shows how each religious tradition brings concepts of the divine into practice through the particulars of ritual and material culture. Students will draw on their own observations in discussions of the nature and role of ritual in both secular and religious societies.
<p>ELO 4.2 Explain ways in which categories such as race, ethnicity, and gender and perceptions of difference, impact individual outcomes and broader societal issues</p>	<p>Concepts of ethnicity, universalism and particularism, and perceptions of gender both human and divine are the key themes in the course: Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Class #10 in Unit B (“When Bad Things Happen to Biblical People”) traces the concept of theodicy in Judaism from its roots in the books of Job and Lamentations to Holocaust survivors’ reflection on their attitudes to God and religiosity. This unit will prompt students to reflect on how ancient sources influence philosophical issues that remain topics of vigorous discussion in religious communities to this day. - The class on Kabbalah (class #22) demonstrates how medieval Jewish mysticism sought to include the female in its complex system of divine attributes. This theme is picked up in Unit H, which explores how 20th-and 21st-century religious feminism grapples with the patriarchal heritage of traditional religion. These units will give students the opportunity to examine their preconceptions about the roles gender plays in religion. -

Hebrew Major Curriculum Map

Course:	Goal 1: Students Acquire intermediate language competency (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking).	Goal 2: Students Acquire Familiarity with Jewish and/or Israeli cultures and communities.	Goal 3: Students read and interpret critically a diverse range of Hebrew and/or Jewish texts
Prerequisites			
Hebrew 1101	Beg.	Beg.	Beg.
Hebrew 1102	Beg.	Beg.	Beg.
Hebrew 1103	Beg. /Int.	Beg.	Beg. .
Required Courses			
Hebrew 2105: Intermediate Hebrew II	Int.	Beg./Int.	Beg. /Int.
Hebrew 2216: The Medieval Jewish Experience		Beg.	Beg.
Hebrew 2700: Bible in the Ancient Near East		Beg.	Beg./Int.
Jewish Studies 2201: Introduction to Jewish Cultures, Thought and Practice	_____	Beg.	Beg.
History 2450: Ancient and Medieval Jewish History		Beg./Int.	Beg.
History 2451: Medieval and Early Modern Jewish History		Beg/Int.	Beg.
History 2452 Modern Jewish History		Beg. /Int.	Beg..
History 2453: History of Zionism and Modern Israel		Beg/Int.	Beg.
Required for Language Track		Beg/Int.	Beg.
Hebrew 4101: Advanced Hebrew	Adv.	Int.	Int.
Hebrew 5100 Introduction to Biblical Hebrew	Int.	Int.	Int.
Electives in NELC			
NELC 3168 The History of God		Beg	Beg
Hebrew 3245 Israeli Film and Society		Beg./Int.	Int.
Jewish Studies 3636 Jewish Bodies		Beg/Int.	Beg/Int.
Hebrew 3703 Prophecy in the Hebrew Bible	.	Int.	Beg/Int.
Hebrew 3704 Women in the Bible and Beyond		Beg.	Int.
Hebrew 3705 Holocaust and Israeli Society		Int.	Int.
Hebrew 3708 Wisdom Literature in the Bible		Int.	Beg./Int.
Hebrew 4102: Hebrew and the Media	Int.	Int.	Int.

Hebrew 4601: Modern Hebrew Short Story	Adv.	Int.	Adv.
Hebrew 4602 Modern Hebrew Poetry	Adv.	Int.	Adv.
Hebrew 4605 Introduction to Rabbinic Literature	Adv.	Int.	Int..
5101: Biblical Hebrew Grammar	Adv.	Int.	Adv.
Hebrew 5105: History of the Hebrew Language	Adv..	Int.	Int.
Hebrew 5601: Introduction to Hebrew Literary and Cultural Texts	Adv.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 5602: The Bible as Literature: Selected Readings	Adv.	Adv..	Adv..
Hebrew 5603: Readings in Rabbinic Literature	Adv.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 5802: The Problem of Evil in Biblical and Post- Biblical Literature	Beg.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 5806: Studies in Biblical Law	Beg.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 4998: Undergraduate Research	Adv.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 4998H: Undergraduate Honors Research	Adv.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 4999H: Undergraduate Thesis	Adv.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 4999H: Undergraduate Honors Thesis	Adv.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 5192: Workshop	Int.	Int.	Int.
Hebrew 5193: Individual Studies	Int. /Adv.	Int. /Adv.	Int. /Adv.
Hebrew 5194: Group Studies	Int. /Adv.	Int. /Adv.	Int. /Adv.
Hebrew 5797 Study at a Foreign Institute	Int. /Adv.	Int. /Adv.	Int. /Adv.
Jewish Studies 3205 Art and Judaism		Int.	Int.
Jewish Studies 3209 World of the Rabbis		Int.	Int.
Jewish Studies 3516 Medieval Jewish Experience		Int.	Int.
Jewish Studies 3210 Jewish Mystical Tradition		Int.	Int.
Jewish Studies 3120 Engaging Time		Int.	Int.
NELC 4601: Israeli & Palestinian Literature		Int.	Int.
NELC 5120 Biblical Aramaic	Int.	Int.	Int.
NELC 5121 Jewish Aramaic	Int.	Int.	Int.
NELC 5145 Digital Editions of Ancient Texts and Artifacts			Adv.
Electives Outside NELC			

History 3218 Paul and His Influence on Early Christianity		Int.	Int.
History 3219 Historical Jesus		Int.	Int.
History 3353 Jewish Communities Under Islamic Rule		Int.	Int.
History 3450 History of Ancient Israel		Int.	Int.
History 3455 Jewish Life from the Early Renaissance to the Early Enlightenment		Int.	Int.
History 3460 European Jewish History I		Int.	Int.
History 3465 American Jewish History		Int.	Int.
History 3470 Messiahs and Messianism in Jewish History		Int.	Int.
History / Jewish Studies 3480		Int.	Int.
History 5613 The American Jewish Experience		Adv.	Adv.
Philosophy 3111 Introduction to Jewish Philosophy		Beg/Int	Beg/Int
Philosophy 3351 Judaism and Ethics		Int	Int.
Philosophy 5870 Topics in Jewish Philosophy		Adv.	Adv.
Political Science 4327 Politics in the Middle East		Adv.	Int.
Yiddish 3371 Yiddish Literature in Translation		Int.	Int.
Yiddish 3399 Holocaust in Yiddish and Ashkenazic Literature and Film		Int.	Int.
Yiddish 4401 Advanced Yiddish I		Int.	Beg.
Yiddish 4402 Advanced Yiddish II		Int.	Beg.
Yiddish 4721 Studies in Yiddish Literature		Int.	Adv.

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

Overview

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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)

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.

~~“The History of God” is an exploration of the idea of God, its origins, and its consequences in religious and cultural traditions having their origins in the Middle East and their histories in Western and global civilizations. This course avoids endorsing any particular beliefs about the supernatural or natural worlds, but rather traces changing conceptions of God and their relationships to social and cultural conditions from antiquity to the present, principally in ancient Near Eastern religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.~~

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

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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
<p>ELO 1.1 Engage in critical and logical thinking.</p>	<p>Each unit of the course will include close readings of primary sources combined with theoretical perspectives and historical dynamics that shaped those texts. For example, the course begins with examinations of the function of religious belief and its manifestations in behavior and social organization. Throughout the course students will engage in class discussion focusing on comparing cases and evaluating the effects of historical circumstances on beliefs and practices. The students will also have opportunities to think through the conceptual implications of their material through class assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of biweekly quizzes in which students demonstrate comprehension of the course readings and materials. - Completion of biweekly reflection essays in which students build skills in reading pre-modern and modern texts in translation and relating them to the larger historical themes of the units; - Completion of essay questions in the midterm exam and final., in which students will not only demonstrate their knowledge of the material, but their ability to synthesize observations about the changes and diverse cultural and historical settings of those sources with the larger ideas expressed in them.
<p>ELO 1.2 Engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or ideas within this theme.</p>	<p>The lectures for the course will combine examinations of the historical and social context of stages in the history of religion with intensive reading primary texts from ancient, medieval, and modern sources. The textbooks for this course emphasize this combination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our main textbook, <i>Jews, Christians, and Muslims</i> (Corrigan, Denny, Eire, and Jaffee) is an exceptionally sophisticated yet accessible comparative overview of those three traditions. The textbook compares key themes, such as scripture, monotheism, ritual, and material culture, and how conceptions of myth and divinity developed from their roots to modern expressions. - <i>Approaching the Quran</i> (Sells) is an innovative translation of passages from the Quran that emphasizes the complex relationships between oral performance and conceptions of the sacred book as enactments of the divine word. <p>A major component of the course is in-person class discussion, in small groups and in the class as a whole. In each class students will discuss key issues in the unit under study. The comparative methodology advanced in course lectures, discussions, and assignments constitutes an advanced, in-depth exploration of the topic.</p>
<p>ELO 2.1 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reading</u> - The textbook for this course provides background information on each topic and corresponds to the lectures. Besides the textbooks, course readings also include other articles and academic treatments of the class material. Another important component of the course is the selection of primary readings from sacred texts and works of philosophy, mythic narrative, and ritual.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Classroom lectures and discussion</u> <p>The lectures and discussions in class enable students to synthesize these two kinds of readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Class lectures</u> will frame each phenomenon covered in the readings in its social and cultural context, showing how historical forces and patterns in religious behavior shaped key developments in conceptions of divinity and religious institutions and practices. - <u>Class Discussion</u> will focus on close readings of those primary sources and how we can understand them in light of modern findings about their historical context and reinterpretation across centuries and cultures. Each discussion will begin with a question that brings these two forms of learning together.
<p>ELO 2.2 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>Both the class discussions and the reflection essays will help students develop their skills as active learners by posing questions related to the synthesis of themes in the units and leaving those questions open for them to explore.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The unit on Ancient Near Eastern religions introduces the idea of monotheism and at the same time problematizes that idea by exploring how Israelite religion often acknowledged the existence of other gods; The reflection essay in Week 4 thus asks, “Are polytheism and monotheism really different?” - The unit on Islam stresses close reading of the Quran in its historical context and stresses the dynamic relationship between written scripture and oral performance. The reflection essay asks them to apply those skills in close reading by examining the poetics and rhetoric of the Quran.

Goals and ELOs unique to Traditions, Cultures, & Transformations

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
<p>ELO 3.1 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.</p>	<p>All of the units deal with the influence of concepts of God, including polytheism, monotheism, corporeality, and abstraction, on social circumstances, historical change, and intercultural dynamics.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the unit on ancient polytheism and monotheism (Unit B, Weeks 3-5), students learn about the relationship between the emergence of the Israelite system of a single temple in Jerusalem and its relationship to the organization of Davidic monarchy. Class lectures and discussions focus on setting these foundational ideas into historical and social context. - Week 5 of that unit explores concepts of evil and theodicy

	<p>and how they impact daily life and influence religious life to this day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The unit on God in the twenty-first century explores the impact of earlier ideas of God on modern thinking about such contemporary issues as gender and the place of religion in secular society. In class discussion and essays in the final examination students will draw on their own observations to think about the links between past and present.
<p>ELO 3.2 Analyze the impact of a “big” idea or technological advancement in creating a major and long-lasting change in a specific culture.</p>	<p>The idea of God and its various manifestations through the centuries forms the structure of the course. The readings and assignments stress how this idea has shaped the history of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and other religions. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For the unit on the origins of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Units C, D and E, weeks 6-9), students will be asked in discussion and essays to rethink conventional ideas about the relationship between the two religions, learning how Christianity emerged from Judaism, how both influenced Islam, and how the three religious communities engaged in dialogue and conflict in the course of their early histories. - The units on philosophy and mysticism (Units 9 and 10) show that common intellectual and spiritual streams resulted in the formation of religious movements that were both beholden to earlier traditions and subversive of them. In the essays and discussions of those units, students will be asked to consider the functions of philosophy and spiritual contemplation beyond the conventional evaluation of their claims to truth.
<p>ELO 3.3 Examine the interactions among dominant and sub-cultures.</p>	<p>The course pays attention to the interactions within and between cultures. The essays and class discussions will focus on the complexities of those interactions. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The unit on Judaism and Christianity (Unit D) explores how Christianity and Judaism grew to define themselves as separate religions, from the beginnings of the Jesus movement as a small movement in Judean society to the rise of Christianity as the imperial religion in Rome. Students will be asked to think about how both the common background of both religions resulted in conflict as well as dialogue. - Likewise, the unit on philosophical systems (Unit E) stresses the interrelationship of Islamic, Jewish, and Christian intellectuals and their mutual adoption of Hellenistic methods of thought. At the same time, students will be asked to consider how
<p>ELO 3.4 Explore changes and continuities over time within a culture or society.</p>	<p>The course is organized so that each stage in the major monotheistic religions is examined as it developed new forms over historical time. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In Unit C students explore how the common heritage of biblical religion was transformed by the influence of social cultural change to form classical Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity. - In Unit H on “God in the Twenty-First Century,” students consider how the radical changes brought on by modernity, including secularization, democratization, and feminism led to the religious landscape we see around us.
<p>ELO 4.1 Recognize and explain differences, similarities, and disparities among institutions, organizations, cultures, societies, and/or individuals.</p>	<p>An important goal of this course is to understand how our preconceptions of the history of religion and its concerns are products of contemporary culture; a careful reading of disparate sources from pre-modern religions and cultures provides case studies.</p> <p>Examples:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In Unit B, Weeks 3 and 4, our comparison of the ancient Babylonian creation myth Enuma Elish with the first chapter of Genesis points up both the common background and distinct variations in ancient Near Eastern worldviews. In class discussion students will be asked to enumerate mythological and structural similarities and differences between Mesopotamian and biblical creation stories. - Unit G, on “Theory and Practice,” shows how each religious tradition brings concepts of the divine into practice through the particulars of ritual and material culture. Students will draw on their own observations in discussions of the nature and role of ritual in both secular and religious societies.
<p>ELO 4.2 Explain ways in which categories such as race, ethnicity, and gender and perceptions of difference, impact individual outcomes and broader societal issues</p>	<p>Concepts of ethnicity, universalism and particularism, and perceptions of gender both human and divine are the key themes in the course: Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Class #10 in Unit B (“When Bad Things Happen to Biblical People”) traces the concept of theodicy in Judaism from its roots in the books of Job and Lamentations to Holocaust survivors’ reflection on their attitudes to God and religiosity. This unit will prompt students to reflect on how ancient sources influence philosophical issues that remain topics of vigorous discussion in religious communities to this day. - The class on Kabbalah (class #22) demonstrates how medieval Jewish mysticism sought to include the female in its complex system of divine attributes. This theme is picked up in Unit H, which explores how 20th-and 21st-century religious feminism grapples with the patriarchal heritage of traditional religion. These units will give students the opportunity to examine their preconceptions about the roles gender plays in religion. <p>-</p>

Hebrew Major Curriculum Map

Course:	Goal 1: Students Acquire intermediate language competency (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking).	Goal 2: Students Acquire Familiarity with Jewish and/or Israeli cultures and communities.	Goal 3: Students read and interpret critically a diverse range of Hebrew and/or Jewish texts
Prerequisites			
Hebrew 1101	Beg.	Beg.	Beg.
Hebrew 1102	Beg.	Beg.	Beg.
Hebrew 1103	Beg. /Int.	Beg.	Beg.
Required Courses			
Hebrew 2105: Intermediate Hebrew II	Int.	Beg./Int.	Beg. /Int.
Hebrew 2216: The Medieval Jewish Experience		Beg.	Beg.
Hebrew 2700: Bible in the Ancient Near East		Beg.	Beg./Int.
Jewish Studies 2201: Introduction to Jewish Cultures, Thought and Practice	—————	Beg.	Beg.
History 2450: Ancient and Medieval Jewish History		Beg./Int.	Beg.
History 2451: Medieval and Early Modern Jewish History		Beg/Int.	Beg.
History 2452 Modern Jewish History		Beg. /Int.	Beg.
History 2453: History of Zionism and Modern Israel		Beg/Int.	Beg.
Required for Language Track		Beg/Int.	Beg.
Hebrew 4101: Advanced Hebrew	Adv.	Int.	Int.
Hebrew 5100 Introduction to Biblical Hebrew	Int.	Int.	Int.
Electives in NELC			
NELC 3168 The History of God		Beg	Beg
Hebrew 3245 Israeli Film and Society		Beg./Int.	Int.
Jewish Studies 3636 Jewish Bodies		Beg/Int.	Beg/Int.
Hebrew 3703 Prophecy in the Hebrew Bible		Int.	Beg/Int.
Hebrew 3704 Women in the Bible and Beyond		Beg.	Int.
Hebrew 3705 Holocaust and Israeli Society		Int.	Int.
Hebrew 3708 Wisdom Literature in the Bible		Int.	Beg./Int.
Hebrew 4102: Hebrew and the Media	Int.	Int.	Int.

Hebrew 4601: Modern Hebrew Short Story	Adv.	Int.	Adv.
Hebrew 4602 Modern Hebrew Poetry	Adv.	Int.	Adv.
Hebrew 4605 Introduction to Rabbinic Literature	Adv.	Int.	Int..
5101: Biblical Hebrew Grammar	Adv.	Int.	Adv.
Hebrew 5105: History of the Hebrew Language	Adv..	Int.	Int.
Hebrew 5601: Introduction to Hebrew Literary and Cultural Texts	Adv.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 5602: The Bible as Literature: Selected Readings	Adv.	Adv..	Adv..
Hebrew 5603: Readings in Rabbinic Literature	Adv.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 5802: The Problem of Evil in Biblical and Post- Biblical Literature	Beg.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 5806: Studies in Biblical Law	Beg.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 4998: Undergraduate Research	Adv.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 4998H: Undergraduate Honors Research	Adv.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 4999H: Undergraduate Thesis	Adv.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 4999H: Undergraduate Honors Thesis	Adv.	Adv.	Adv.
Hebrew 5192: Workshop	Int.	Int.	Int.
Hebrew 5193: Individual Studies	Int. /Adv.	Int. /Adv.	Int. /Adv.
Hebrew 5194: Group Studies	Int. /Adv.	Int. /Adv.	Int. /Adv.
Hebrew 5797 Study at a Foreign Institute	Int. /Adv.	Int. /Adv.	Int. /Adv.
Jewish Studies 3205 Art and Judaism		Int.	Int.
Jewish Studies 3209 World of the Rabbis		Int.	Int.
Jewish Studies 3516 Medieval Jewish Experience		Int.	Int.
Jewish Studies 3210 Jewish Mystical Tradition		Int.	Int.
Jewish Studies 3120 Engaging Time		Int.	Int.
NELC 4601: Israeli & Palestinian Literature		Int.	Int.
NELC 5120 Biblical Aramaic	Int.	Int.	Int.
NELC 5121 Jewish Aramaic	Int.	Int.	Int.
NELC 5145 Digital Editions of Ancient Texts and Artifacts			Adv.
Electives Outside NELC			

History 3218 Paul and His Influence on Early Christianity		Int.	Int.
History 3219 Historical Jesus		Int.	Int.
History 3353 Jewish Communities Under Islamic Rule		Int.	Int.
History 3450 History of Ancient Israel		Int.	Int.
History 3455 Jewish Life from the Early Renaissance to the Early Enlightenment		Int.	Int.
History 3460 European Jewish History I		Int.	Int.
History 3465 American Jewish History		Int.	Int.
History 3470 Messiahs and Messianism in Jewish History		Int.	Int.
History / Jewish Studies 3480		Int.	Int.
History 5613 The American Jewish Experience		Adv.	Adv.
Philosophy 3111 Introduction to Jewish Philosophy		Beg/Int	Beg/Int
Philosophy 3351 Judaism and Ethics		Int	Int.
Philosophy 5870 Topics in Jewish Philosophy		Adv.	Adv.
Political Science 4327 Politics in the Middle East		Adv.	Int.
Yiddish 3371 Yiddish Literature in Translation		Int.	Int.
Yiddish 3399 Holocaust in Yiddish and Ashkenazic Literature and Film		Int.	Int.
Yiddish 4401 Advanced Yiddish I		Int.	Beg.
Yiddish 4402 Advanced Yiddish II		Int.	Beg.
Yiddish 4721 Studies in Yiddish Literature		Int.	Adv.