2015 Fall Courses/ Religious Studies

REL 110. Religion in a Global Context

REL 203. Islamic Traditions, MES

REL 202. Hindu Traditions, AS

REL 205. Jewish Traditions, JS, MES, WGS

REL 212. Introduction to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature, JS, CS

REL 292. Approaches to the Study of Religion

REL 348. Environmental Ethics
In an exploration of the moral dimensions of the environmental crisis, students examine the roles which religious and philosophical ethics play in providing frameworks for understanding environmental issues and developing guidelines for addressing specific contemporary problems. Cross-listed with PHL 348.

REL 357. Sages and Samurai: Religion in the Japanese Experience, AS
This course explores the historical and contemporary role of religion in Japan. It pays particular attention to primary texts in translation and to the visual and ritual expressions of Shintoism, Buddhism, Neo-Confucianism, Christianity and folk religion. In addition, it emphasizes these as vibrant, lived traditions in Japan whose continued relevance can be discerned today.

REL 376. Religion in Modern African Fiction, AAAS, IS
What is the relationship between literary expression, social and cultural change, and religious identity? Over the past century, African writers have used the mediums of short stories, novels, and films, to reflect on, criticize, or promote the sweeping changes of the last century. In the process they have integrated local forms of narrative and storytelling with genres drawn from Western literary and linguistic traditions and constructed new visions of religion, society, and literature. This class will investigate these complex relationships through close readings of some of the most influential African literary productions of the twentieth century.

REL 384. Modern Jewish Thought, JS
This course offers a historical and philosophical investigation of modern Jewish thought, considering the approaches of major Jewish thinkers from a range of movements and approaches. We will explore perspectives on topics including the meaning of Judaism, the relationship between the Jewish people and other nations, the authority of tradition, the nature of moral goodness, and the nature of God.

REL 472. Christians and Nazis, JS
This course is a look at one of the cultural forms that allowed and even acquiesced to the Nazi regime-Christianity. Specifically, this course is designed to explore the Christian faith in the cultural context of the early twentieth century to find why it was such a colossal failure in face of the Nazis. We will take a close look at Christian theology and trace out the lines of anti-Semitism that became internalized by German Christians to the point where they could not separate out their culture from their religion. We will spend the second part of the class studying the life and thought of the few who resisted the Nazis, and ask the question of what motivated those small number of Christians to resist the seduction of their society.