
RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The Department is housed on the 5th floor of the Robert Leslie Social Science Building, University Avenue, Upper Campus, and can be contacted by email at: jackie.stoffels@uct.ac.za, or telephone: 021 650 3452.

The letter code for the Department is REL.

Departmental website: www.religion.uct.ac.za

Professor and Head of Department:

A Ukah, BA MA MSc *Ibadan* PhD; Dr Habil *Bayreuth*

Professor:

A I Tayob, DST/NRF Chair in Islam, African Publics and Religious Values, BA *UDW* BA(Hons) *Cape Town* PhD *Temple*

Professor and Chair of Religious Studies:

Vacant

Robert Selby-Taylor Professor of Christian Studies:

Vacant

Emeritus Professors:

D S Chidester, BA *Cal State* PhD *California*

J R Cochrane, BSc PhD *Cape Town* MDiv *Chicago*

J W De Gruchy, BA BD DLitt h.c. *Rhodes* MTh *Chicago* DTh *Unisa* DSocSc *Cape Town* DLitt h.c. *Chicago* DTh h.c. *Stell* DD h.c. *Knox Toronto*

C A Wanamaker, BA *Lincoln* MA *Illinois* MCS *Regent* PhD *Dunelm*

Associate Professors:

E Porcu, Laurea MA *Cagliari* PhD *Marburg*

S Shaikh, BA *Unisa* BA(Hons) *UND* MA *Cape Town* PhD *Temple*

Senior Lecturers:

L P Blond, BA(Hons) *Sheffield* MA *Lancaster* PhD *Edinburgh*

A Brigaglia, Laurea *Napoli* PhD *Napoli*

Administrative Assistant:

T Wise, BSocSc *Cape Town*

Senior Secretary:

J Stoffels

Mission Statement

The Department of Religious Studies is committed to the study of religions which will contribute to public life in our local, regional, national and continental contexts. It is dedicated to:

- an open, plural, intercultural, and interdisciplinary study of religion in all its forms;
- the in-depth study of African religious traditions;
- the creative and critical analysis of religion as a force in personal, social, economic and political life;
- the promotion of quality education and research in the study of religion as a vital contribution to the transformation and development of South Africa.

The mission statement is implemented through degree specialisations that focus on the broad theme of religion, culture and identity. The Department offers a systematic study of religion in public life,

its meaning and significance in South Africa in particular and Africa in general. This broad theme is explored in core courses team-taught by faculty members and also reflected in various research projects and institutes presently housed in the Department.

Core courses provide the thematic, methodological and theoretical foundations for all students who choose to pursue degrees in this department. Additional courses continue this focus within the established areas of specialisation: African Studies, Christian Studies, Comparative Studies, Islamic Studies, Jewish Studies, Buddhism and Critical Theory.

Requirements for a major in Religious Studies

[REL01]

First Year courses

Code	Title
At least ONE of the following:	
REL1002F	Religions Past and Present
REL1006S	Judaism, Christianity and Islam
REL1017S	African Religious Traditions

Second Year courses

Code	Title
Any TWO of the following THREE:	
REL2040F	Religion and Society
REL2048S	Psychology of Religion
REL2047F	Religion, Sexuality and Gender

Third Year courses

Code	Title
REL3037F	Religion and Politics
REL3042S	Religion and Media

Prerequisites:

- (i) For any **2000-level REL course**: completion of either REL1002F or REL1006S; or completion of any cognate first-year course in the Humanities Faculty; or permission of the Head of Department.
- (ii) For **REL3037F and REL3042S**: completion of REL2040F or REL2048S and any other REL 2000-level course; or completion of two cognate second-year courses in the Humanities Faculty; or permission of the Head of Department.

Course Outlines:

REL1002F RELIGIONS PAST AND PRESENT

18 NQF credits at HEQSF level 5

Convener: Dr L Blond

Course entry requirements: None

Course outline:

This course provides an introduction to the study of religion and various religious traditions. Students are introduced to the analysis of religious symbols, myths, rituals, teachings, and practices. Special attention is given to African indigenous religious traditions, Asian religions (including e.g. Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Japanese religions) and New Religious Movements that have emerged as alternative sources of religious identity and meaning in the world.

Lecture times: Monday, Tuesday and Friday 2nd period.

DP requirements: Mandatory attendance at lectures and tutorials in all sections of the course. Submission of all coursework by due dates.

Assessment: Continuous assessment (essays, projects, tests, etc.) counts 100%.

REL1006S JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

18 NQF credits at HEQSF level 5

Convener: Associate Professor E Porcu

Course entry requirements: None

Course outline:

This course begins by introducing the religions of the Ancient Near East (Egypt, Mesopotamia and Persia). Students then explore the historical foundations of Judaism, Christianity and Islam through examining the formation and development of sacred texts, techniques of interpretation, and religious practices within these three important religious traditions. By studying these religions, the course reflects on the continuity and diversity of historical traditions, social formations and religious identities in the world.

Lecture times: Monday, Tuesday and Friday 2nd period.

DP requirements: Mandatory attendance at lectures and tutorials in all sections of the course. Submission of all work by due dates.

Assessment: Continuous assessment (essays, projects, tests, etc.) counts 100%.

REL1015F RELIGIONS PAST AND PRESENT +

10 NQF credits at HEQSF level 5

Convener: Dr L Blond

Course entry requirements: None (extended programme students only).

Co-requisites: REL1002F.

Course outline:

The purpose of this course is to augment and support its co-requisite course: REL1002F RELIGIONS PAST AND PRESENT. It aims to improve students' performance by enhancing their grasp of key ideas and concepts, and by developing their mastery of the disciplinary discourse. It provides additional pedagogic enrichment in the form of regular Plus Tuts that extend into Writing Hub exercises and consultations. In these tutorials, students will receive explicit support around the co-requisite course assignments and detailed feedback on their written work.

Lecture times: Tutorial times by sign-up with the department.

DP requirements: 100% tutorial attendance plus successful completion of all coursework assignments.

Assessment: Coursework 100% comprising of tutorial assessments and other written work.

REL1016S JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM+

10 NQF credits at HEQSF level 5

Convener: Associate Professor E Porcu

Course entry requirements: None (extended programme students only).

Co-requisites: REL1006S.

Course outline:

The purpose of this course is to augment and support its co-requisite course: REL1006S JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM. It aims to improve students' performance by enhancing their grasp of key ideas and concepts, and by developing their mastery of the disciplinary discourse. It provides additional pedagogic enrichment in the form of regular Plus Tuts that extend into Writing Hub exercises and consultations. In these tutorials, students will receive explicit support around the co-requisite course assignments and detailed feedback on their written work.

Lecture times: Tutorial times by sign-up with the department.

DP requirements: 100% tutorial attendance plus successful completion of all coursework assignments.

Assessment: Coursework 100% comprising of tutorial assessments and other written work.

REL1017S AFRICAN RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

18 NQF credits at HEQSF level 5

Convener: Professor A Ukah**Course entry requirements:** None**Co-requisites:** None**Course outline:**

Africa is religiously pluralistic, having three major religious traditions. These are African indigenous religions, Christianity and Islam. Each of these is internally diverse and multifaceted, creating a mosaic of religious cultures, rituals, communities, ethics and worldviews. This course intends to investigate the histories, rituals and discourses of the traditions where they interact, differ and display common elements. As an introductory course to Religious Studies, we use content that engages the diversity of students' lifeworlds and is cognizant of our African location. We employ innovative teaching and delivery methods, including multilingual pedagogies and digital literacy, that allow more time for active engagement and the development of critical reading, writing and analytical skills in the Humanities.

DP requirements: Mandatory attendance of lectures and participation in tutorials. Submission of all work by due dates.

Assessment: Continuous assessment (essays, projects, tests, etc.) counts 100%.

REL2040F RELIGION AND SOCIETY

24 NQF credits at HEQSF level 6

Convener: Professor A Ukah**Course entry requirements:** Second-year status.**Course outline:**

This course introduces the student to classic and contemporary theories of religion as a social reality. The course develops descriptive, interpretative, and explanatory methods for analysing the role of religion in social relations and the construction of group identities. Using critical approaches from the sociology of religion, hermeneutic philosophy and the anthropology of religion, the course includes analyses of selected case-studies from the history of religions, focusing on the role of sacred narratives or myths in identity-making; on religion and power/politics; and on religious pluralism.

Lecture times: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 6th period.

DP requirements: Mandatory attendance at lectures and tutorials in all sections of the course. Submission of all work by due dates.

Assessment: Continuous assessment (essays, projects, tests, etc.) counts 100%.

REL2047F RELIGION, SEXUALITY AND GENDER

24 NQF credits at HEQSF level 6

Convener: Associate Professor S Shaikh**Course entry requirements:** Second-year status.**Course outline:**

This course explores ideologies of gender and sexuality in the history of religious traditions, focusing particularly on the role of women in religion. Special attention will be given to how gender is symbolised in religious myth and ritual practices, exploring how this relates to women's lived experiences. Connections between sexuality, embodiment and spirituality will be addressed through case studies in 'Abrahamic,' African and Asian religions. Drawing on examples from the beliefs and practices of different religious traditions, the course aims to engage with cross-cultural and interdisciplinary scholarship in religious studies, gender studies, women's studies and feminist theory. Theoretical reflections on gender in religious traditions will be addressed throughout the course.

Lecture times: Monday, Tuesday, Friday 3rd period plus one tutorial.

DP requirements: Mandatory attendance at lectures and tutorials in all sections of the course. Submission of all work by due dates.

Assessment: Coursework counts 70%; one two-hour examination counts 30%. Final examination and one essay will be sent to external examiners.

REL2048S PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

This course may also be offered in Summer Term – please consult the Department. Additional session offering: REL2048P.

24 NQF credits at HEQSF level 6

Convener: Dr L Blond

Course entry requirements: Second-year status.

Course outline:

This course pays special attention to issues of theory and method in the psychology of religion, in order to develop an understanding of personal identity, as well as mental and spiritual health in religious contexts. While recognising the importance of gender, class, race, ethnicity and other social forms of identity, the course focuses on religious dynamics of personal identity and the formation of selfhood through case studies in consciousness, mysticism, embodiment, intertextual reading practices and cultural resources for being human. The course explores the various ways in which religion might inform personal, social and intersubjective notions of self, while providing conception of the good/the good life.

Lecture times: Tuesday 5th and meridian, Thursday, 5th period plus one tutorial.

DP requirements: Mandatory attendance at lectures and tutorials in all sections of the course. Submission of all work by due dates.

Assessment: Continuous assessment (essays, projects, tests, etc.) counts 100%.

REL2053S AFRICAN RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

Not offered in 2020

24 NQF credits at HEQSF level 6

Course entry requirements: Completion of REL1002F or REL1006S; or completion of any cognate first-year course in the Humanities Faculty; or by permission of the Head of Department.

Course outline:

Africa is religiously pluralistic, having three major religious traditions. These are African indigenous religions, Christianity and Islam. Each of these is internally diverse and multifaceted, creating a mosaic of religious cultures, rituals, communities, ethics and worldviews. This course intends to investigate the histories, rituals and discourses of the traditions where they interact, differ and display common elements.

Lecture times: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 6th period.

DP requirements: Mandatory attendance at lectures and tutorials in all sections of the course. Submission of all work by due dates, and attainment of an average mark of at least 50% for all assignments.

Assessment: Coursework counts 70%; one two-hour examination counts 30%. Final exam and 20% of coursework will be sent to external examiners.

REL2054F RELIGION, SEXUALITY AND GENDER +

10 NQF credits at HEQSF level 6

Convener: Associate Professor S Shaikh

Course entry requirements: None (extended programme students only).

Co-requisites: REL2047F.

Course outline:

This course explores ideologies of gender and sexuality in the history of religious traditions, focusing particularly on the role of women in religion. Special attention will be given to how gender is symbolised in religious myth and ritual practices, exploring how this relates to women's lived experiences. Connections between sexuality, embodiment and spirituality will be addressed through case studies in 'Abrahamic,' African and Asian religions. Drawing on examples from the beliefs and practices of different religious traditions, the course aims to engage with cross-cultural and

interdisciplinary scholarship in religious studies, gender studies, women's studies and feminist theory. Theoretical reflections on gender in religious traditions will be addressed throughout the course.

Lecture times: Tutorial times by sign-up with the department.

DP requirements: 100% tutorial attendance plus successful completion of all coursework assignments.

Assessment: Coursework 100% comprising of tutorial assessments and other written work.

REL3037F RELIGION AND POLITICS

30 NQF credits at HEQSF level 7

Convener: Dr L Blond

Course entry requirements: Completion of REL2040F or REL2048S and any other REL 2000-level course; or by permission of the Head of Department (second year students who are majoring in Politics would be given standard HoD allowance to take this course).

Course outline:

This course discusses the configuration of religious and secular spaces in the modern nation state and examines the role of religion in social and political conflict in local, national and global contexts. The course develops a selection of case studies, which may include religion, politics and conflict in South Africa; religion and the state in Asian countries; Judaism, modernity and the Holocaust; religion, nationhood and conflict in Israel/Palestine.

Lecture times: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 3rd period.

DP requirements: Mandatory attendance at lectures and tutorials in all sections of the course. Submission of all work by due dates.

Assessment: Continuous assessment (essays, projects, tests, etc.) counts 100%.

REL3042S RELIGION AND MEDIA

30 NQF credits at HEQSF level 7

Convener: Professor A Ukah

Course entry requirements: Completion of REL2040F or REL2048S and any other REL 2000-level course; second or third year status; or permission of the Head of Department (second year students who are majoring in FAM would be given standard HoD allowance to take this course).

Course outline:

Religion's relationship with media begins with the voice and the text – the written word and the oral tradition of storytelling – as well as with accompanying visual signs. The investment of these means of communication with a sacred power is foundational to both religion and myth. This course will examine some of the foundational elements of oral, written and visual traditions and how the sacred power inherent in media are interpreted and amplified across cultures into new technological forms such as the printing press, radio, film, television and the internet. Religion has become increasingly textual, densely visual, intensely mediated. We will, for example, analyse religion in its connection with films, videos, and music both within and outside Africa; Japanese popular culture (manga and animated movies, or anime); as well as other instances of religion in and through the media worldwide. Further, we will investigate the diverse and complex relationships between religious theory, practice and media and the technologies that enable their transference. Students taking this course are expected to engage with the different ways in which religion is theorised, interpreted and practiced as a medium of communication and the ways religion is publicised, textualised, mediated and visualised.

Lecture times: Monday 5th period and meridian, Tuesday, 5th period.

DP requirements: Mandatory attendance at lectures and tutorials in all sections of the course. Submission of all work by due dates.

Assessment: Continuous assessment (essays, projects, tests, etc.) counts 100%.