

# HISTORICAL STUDIES (HIS)

## HIS 501. History of Christianity. (3 h)

In this course, we explore the global history of Christianity from its beginnings to the present. By engaging with the unique voices of the Church's past, we uncover not only the antecedents of the Church's present, but perennial resources, spiritual as well as intellectual, that can still nourish, challenge, and inspire.

## HIS 502. History of Christianity II. (3 h)

This course surveys the 17th through the 20th centuries. Attention is given to the rise of modernism and its impact on philosophy, theology, ecclesiology and politics. Catholic studies focus on individuals such as Sor Juana de la Cruz, Teresa of Avila, Alfred Loisy, Pius IX, John XXII and Dorothy Day, and the impact of Liberation Theology. Protestant studies examine the rise of Puritanism, missionary movements, dissenters, global Christianity, slavery and civil rights, and religions in America.

## HIS 591. African-American Religious History and Experience. (3 h)

An exploration of the religious dimensions of African-American life from its African antecedents to contemporary figures and movements.

## HIS 594A. Religions of Egypt. (1 h)

This course provides an historical introduction to Egypt's Muslim society as the context within which minority Christian communities have practiced their faith. By traveling to the Arab Republic of Egypt, students will directly experience Muslim culture and religion as they investigate Egypt's rich religious heritage. The class will visit numerous pharaonic, Christian, Muslim, and (historically) Jewish places of worship in the greater Cairo area and in Egypt's stunning archeological sites at the southern environs of Luxor. We will witness the grandeur of Islamic civilization in Cairo's medieval mosques and modern monuments. We will discuss the tumultuous history of Jews in Egypt while touring Cairo's historic Ben Ezra Synagogue. We will examine Christian monasticism in the place of its origin at the Wadi Natrun. Site visits to numerous Christian churches, including All Saints Anglican Church (with its Sudanese refugee congregation), will expose students to a diversity of Christian practices in Egypt.

## HIS 594B. Religions of Egypt. (1-2 h)

This course provides an historical introduction to Egypt's Muslim society as the context within which minority Christian communities have practiced their faith. By traveling to the Arab Republic of Egypt, students will directly experience Muslim culture and religion as they investigate Egypt's rich religious heritage. The class will visit numerous pharaonic, Christian, Muslim, and (historically) Jewish places of worship in the greater Cairo area and in Egypt's stunning archeological sites at the southern environs of Luxor. We will witness the grandeur of Islamic civilization in Cairo's medieval mosques and modern monuments. We will discuss the tumultuous history of Jews in Egypt while touring Cairo's historic Ben Ezra Synagogue. We will examine Christian monasticism in the place of its origin at the Wadi Natrun. Site visits to numerous Christian churches, including All Saints Anglican Church (with its Sudanese refugee congregation), will expose students to a diversity of Christian practices in Egypt.

## HIS 598. O Jerusalem! Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the Holy City. (3 h)

An introduction to the history and religious heritage of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities in Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Participants will metaphorically "walk the pilgrim's road" as we trace the historic development of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam from their ancient origins, through the medieval period and Crusades, into the modern controversies around colonialism, Zionism, and contemporary politics. Special attention will be given to the city of Jerusalem through the ages; the spirituality of pilgrimage; Hasidism, Kabbalah, and modern ultra-Orthodox Judaism; the art and architecture of the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa mosque; the Via Dolorosa, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and other pilgrimage sites on the Mount of Olives; Eastern Orthodox Christian communities; and diversity within each of the Abrahamic traditions (including Baha'i and Druze sects) in the Holy Land.

## HIS 615. Poets Questioning God. (3 h)

Do things happen for a reason? Why have my people suffered such tragedy? Why have I? Is death the end? Why has the Church become an instrument of oppression? In this class we will see how Christians from a wide variety of pre-modern historical contexts wrestled with these questions through poetry and narrative. Key texts will include *The Recognitions of Clement* (an ancient Jewish-Christian novel), poetry on war and natural disasters by Ephrem of Nisibis, Boethius's *The Consolation of Philosophy*, and *Piers Plowman* (a long poem of biting satire and profound visions from medieval England). Through these texts we will also explore how different forms of writing offer different resources for spiritual and theological reflection.

## HIS 630. Culinary Culture in Black Religious Experience. (1-3 h)

An exploration of the historical, social, cultural, theological, ethnographic, and practical components of African American religious life and foodway culture. Particular attention is given to the historical relationship between eating and church life, highlighting diverse and creative forms of culinary expression in the African American faith tradition and the ways in which food becomes transformative for those struggling for human dignity.

## HIS 654. Humane Leadership: Christian and Confucian Perspectives. (3 h)

In this course we explore the cultivation of virtue as the essential practice for Christian leadership. We begin with writings on ministry from authors of the early Church, who emphasized the importance of a pastor's own moral and spiritual maturity. Then we turn to the classical Confucian tradition, which argued against other philosophical schools of ancient China that moral leadership was essential for a flourishing society. Through the study of these ancient authors, we will apply their wisdom to our own lives and the contexts in which we lead.

## HIS 660. Islam and Interfaith Encounters in Morocco. (1-3 h)

Since 1994 the historic North African city of Fes, Morocco, has hosted the annual Festival of World Sacred Music. Musicians and dancers come from across the globe to perform and share in intercultural and interfaith conversations. The nine-day festival celebrates "the spiritual heart of Islam—peaceful, pluralistic, generous and cheerful—" as it honors the diverse spiritual traditions of the world. Each day of the festival features a morning forum, an intimate afternoon concert in the courtyard of the Batha Museum, an evening performance outside the medina's medieval gate (Bab Al-Makina), and a late-night exhibition of Sufi chants and dancing (dhikr) from various Moroccan brotherhoods. Academic topics include Islam, Sufism, world sacred music, and Moroccan culture, history, and literature.

**HIS 661. World Religions. (3 h)**

An examination of the ideas and practices of major religious traditions in their historical and cultural contexts. The primary focus is on the Hindu and Buddhist traditions, the religions of China and Japan, and Islam.

**HIS 671. Religions in America. (3 h)**

A study of religious traditions, events, and individuals shaping religious life in America. Attention is given to native religions, colonization, denominations, awakenings, religious liberty, the western movement and the rise of the American Self. The development of pluralism and the impact of immigration, civil rights, and new religions is studied.

**HIS 673. Evangelicalism in North America. (3 h)**

An examination of evangelicalism with regard to its important contributions to American religious culture, its variety in forms, and its ability to reconsider itself in an increasingly pluralistic United States.

**HIS 674. Religion and the Civil Rights Struggle. (3 h)**

Resistance to racial bias dates back to institutional slavery. This course will chart an intellectual history from antebellum America through the most publicized protest movement during the mid-to- late twentieth century—the Civil Rights Movement. Students will assess several classic and contemporary texts on radical black political thought, connecting those historical voices to contemporary religious thinking and social activism. This course will consider the ways in which faith communities, organizations, and individuals have fueled or been reinforced by African American protests and demands for equal rights. As a site of investigation, this class also will pay some attention to the history and nature of the civil rights struggle in Winston-Salem and surrounding areas. Ultimately, this class will engage the complexity of religious voices within the American freedom struggle—including Judaeo-Christians, Muslims, or even the non-religious. We will trace the role religious faith plays in the various forms of the resistance over the nearly 400 years of the African American pilgrimage for equal rights.

**HIS 682. A History of the Baptists. (3 h)**

A study of Baptist history with particular attention to Baptists in the United States and the diversity of Baptist ways of belief and practice.

**HIS 693. African-American Religious Traditions. (3 h)**

A history of religious movements, communities, and individuals within African-American traditions.

**HIS 712. Gender and the Trinity in the Early Church. (3 h)**

In the ancient church—as in the present day—theological debate was never only about theology. In this class we will explore ancient controversies over the Trinity in their historical context, uncovering the complex ways that theological debates over the divine persons were intertwined with conceptions of gender and the rhetorical battle to define the communal identities of “Christian,” “Roman,” “Greek,” and “Jew.” Through engagement with the writings and history of early Christians, we explore the challenge and promise of striving to speak truthfully about God.

**HIS 725. Preachers of the Early Church. (3 h)**

Christianity, from the beginning, has been a preached religion. This class will explore the varied landscape of preaching in the first five centuries of the church. From the difficulties of Christian doctrine to interpretive puzzles in the Biblical text to flights of mystical poetry to declamations against societal injustice, the sermons of the early church offer a window onto the world of the ancient Christians and a whetstone to hone the practice of preaching today.

**HIS 735. Classic Texts from World Religions. (3 h)**

This course examines great works of literature from the world’s religious traditions (including Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism). While the basic teachings of selected religions are introduced for students with little or no background in the subject, the focus of this class remains on scriptural and literary texts that offer classic theological perspectives on the human condition. These are beautiful and profound writings, ranging from the tragic to the sublime, that challenge readers with perennial questions of religious significance. Our subjects and readings may encompass philosophical discourses, prophetic oracles, lyric and mystical poetry, lamentation and tragedy, erotic imagery, and apocalyptic visions of cosmic destruction. Readings include the Gilgamesh Epic, the Qur’an, Sufi poetry, Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, the Dhammapada, and Zen sutras. This year’s class will also consider some recent novels or works that complement the scriptural texts.

**HIS 743. Poets Questioning God. (3 h)**

Do things happen for a reason? Why have my people suffered such tragedy? Why have I? Is death the end? Why has the Church become an instrument of oppression? In this class we will see how Christians from a wide variety of pre-modern historical contexts wrestled with these questions through poetry and narrative. Key texts will include *The Recognitions of Clement* (an ancient Jewish-Christian novel), poetry on war and natural disasters by Ephrem of Nisibis, Boethius’s *The Consolation of Philosophy*, and *Piers Plowman* (a long poem of biting satire and profound visions from medieval England). Through these texts we will also explore how different forms of writing offer different resources for spiritual and theological reflection.

**HIS 790. Topics. (1-4 h)**

Courses in history can be developed and offered on a one-time basis using this designation.

**HIS 790A. Topics Course in Historical Studies. (1-3 h)****HIS 790B. Topics Course in Historical Studies. (1-3 h)****HIS 790C. Topics Course in Historical Studies. (1-3 h)**