

REL 1290 Quest for Truth and Meaning (3,2,1)

This is an introductory course in philosophy and religious studies for students with no background knowledge. It begins by assisting students to discover the quests for truth and meaning in popular culture. After introducing some basic critical thinking skills, this course guides students to explore and appreciate the multiple relationships between philosophy, religious studies and various dimensions of human existence—individual life, society and civilization. Students will experience the joy and excitement of studying philosophy and religious studies.

REL 2240 History of Christian Thought (3,2,1)

This course is a study of major theological issues that have emerged in the history of the Christian Church. Focus will be given to epistemological and soteriological issues, together with other contextual problems, faced by theologians of each period who struggled to relate Christian faith to their life-situations.

REL 2250 Hermeneutics (3,2,1)

An introduction to the art and science of interpretation. The course examines various contemporary and historically significant theories of interpretation, together with their philosophical assumptions. Students will be equipped with practical principles and guidelines for reading, understanding, and criticizing biblical and other texts. Special attention will be given to applying such principles to the interpretation of symbols, metaphors, myths, and other types of religious language. Examples will be drawn from the Bible and other specifically religious and/or philosophical texts.

REL 2310 Islam (3,2,1)

This course seeks to pursue a historical study of Islamic doctrines, religious practices and institutions. Emphasis is placed on understanding the nature and teachings in the Qur'an, the sacred traditions (*hadith*), and some of their representative interpretations in medieval and modern settings.

REL 2320 Meaning and Knowledge (3,2,1)

This course focuses on methodological problems in relation to the philosophy of language and epistemology. It also will give attention to the issues, problems or ideas in the philosophy of language and epistemology that are most relevant to understanding the major world faiths and religious traditions.

REL 2330 Morality and Society (3,2,1)

The course focuses on the philosophical views concerning morality and society and their implications for thinking critically about the moral and socio-political dimensions of various philosophical or religious traditions. It will give attention to the philosophical theories or ideas that have important bearings on how we should go about answering the fundamental questions in moral and socio-political philosophy such as "How should we live?", "What do we owe to other people?", "Do we have good reason to believe that judgments of value are capable of being true or false?", "What rights and liberties should people have?", and "What rule or principle should govern the distribution of goods within society?"

REL 2340 Existence and Reality (3,2,1)

This course investigates the different ways religious traditions conceive of and explain problems which relate finite life to transcendent realms. Philosophical methods in approaching issues related to existence and reality will be explained, so that students can proceed to explore both exegetically and critically differing religious accounts of the relationship between existence and reality.

REL 2350 Philosophical Issues in Chinese Religion (3,2,1)

This course aims to introduce and investigate various philosophical issues in Chinese religion. The arguments for and against certain philosophical theses related to Chinese religion will be explained. Two or more traditions of Chinese religion will be explored at the

discretion of the instructor. Students will be encouraged to arrive at their own judgments on, or views of, certain conceptions and doctrines of Chinese religion in a critical and rational manner.

REL 2360 Existentialism and Nihilism (3,2,1)

The course is a study of the existentialists' quest for understanding human life and existence, with a focus on the issue of nihilism, i.e. the death of God and the denial of ultimate value and absolute truth. It begins with an introduction to the philosophical movement of existentialism: its historical background and its distinctive features in contrast with other kinds of philosophy. The central problematic of nihilism is introduced by a discussion of Nietzsche's thought. Then the thought of the major atheistic and theistic existentialists will be explored with a special emphasis on their response to the challenge of nihilism. Finally, the existentialists' major insights about the meaning of human existence will be systematically explored and critically assessed.

REL 2410 A Survey of Jewish and Christian Scriptures (3,2,1)

This beginning course of biblical study investigates the background, growth, contents, and messages of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures and the history from which they emerged. It introduces the results of modern biblical scholarship and its contribution to our understanding of the Bible. The situation, form, content, and message of a biblical text (or book) is studied as an integrated whole in order to arrive at a balanced understanding of the meaning of the text (or book). Attention is paid to the unity and diversity of different representations of various traditions, and the religious ideas behind them. The procedure of exegesis and the use of the pertinent tools are introduced.

REL 2420 Biblical Theology and Moral Life (3,2,1)

This course focuses on (1) the moral teachings of the Jewish and Christian traditions and (2) issues, problems or ideas in moral and socio-political theology that are highly relevant to understanding these religious traditions.

REL 2430 Contemporary Theology and the Public World (3,2,1)

This course gives a broad view of the emergence, development and interactions of major Christian thought since early twentieth century. The impact of the Enlightenment and the critical issues raised since then will be discussed. Fundamental ideas and main themes of selected contemporary Christian thinkers and related theological movements will be examined. Emphasis will be given to the contextual problems faced by the theologians who struggled to relate Christian faith to their life-situations and the relevance of creative and constructive theological insights to critical issues in the public world.

REL 2610 Christian Spirituality (3,2,1)

This course aims at providing an introduction to the historical, intellectual as well as the experiential dimensions of the spiritual heritage of the Christian faith. The course will be complemented by a critical evaluation of some of the major conceptual components of the discipline of Christian spirituality.

REL 2720 Daoist Religion (3,2,1)

This course aims to offer a comparative examination of Eastern (with an emphasis on Chinese Philosophy) and Western philosophies from a macroscopic point of view. The focus will be directed on the principal ideas advanced and the modes of thinking employed. Similarities as well as differences between Eastern and Western philosophies will be explored and discussed. Religious implications where relevant to the thoughts and theories concerned will be emphasized.

REL 2730 Contemporary Ethical Problems (3,2,1)

This course will tackle three or more clusters of ethical issues that are especially relevant to Hong Kong society. Ethical issues in birth, death, sex and love will be discussed here because of public concern lately. Some other issues will be included when deemed necessary.