The Department of Philosophy and Religion has a variety of 100 and 200 level courses to help both PAR and non-PAR students gain an understanding of introductory topics in religion.

**Introductory Religion Courses**

- **PAR 103: Introduction to Religion**
  This course is an introduction to the academic study of religion. It looks at how some major scholars of the past century have asked and answered the question, “what is religion?” Scholars discussed made some important claim about what religion is, how religion works, or what religion's role in society ought to be. Explore how their approaches to religion teach us something important about the social, cultural, discursive, or psychological functions of religion at particular times and in particular places.
  University Studies course: partially satisfies historical and philosophical approaches.

- **PAR 125: Great Books of the World’s Religions**
  What do the Qur'an, Torah, Bible, Bhagavad Gita, Lotus Sutra, or Tao Te Ching have in common? They are the great books of the world’s classical religions. These sacred texts of life and death, define religions, peoples, and cultures, and affect how people live their lives in the world. This is an introduction to religion through the study of selected sacred texts and traditions of the world’s classical religions. Studied are selections from classical writings of both Western religions (e.g. Torah, Bible, Qur’an) and Eastern religions (e.g. Chinese, Buddhist, and Hindu scriptures).
  University Studies course: partially satisfies historical and philosophical approaches, satisfies living in a global society.

- **PAR 225: Women and Religion**
  Read primary and secondary sources to better understand how women have practiced religion in colonial America and the United States. These sources will also help you understand how historians have (or have not) written about women, womanhood, gender, and sexuality as they relate to American religions. This includes transcripts of women on trial, as well as diaries, publications, and art made by women and men. See how women (and men) have defined themselves and gender in relation to religion from the 1600s to 2010s. Learn what part religion played in the women’s rights movement and second wave feminism. Investigate women and the construction of gender in Native American religion, Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism, and Islam.
  University Studies course: partially satisfies historical and philosophical approaches, partially satisfies information literacy, satisfies living in our diverse nation.

- **PAR 230: Judaism, Christianity and Islam**
  A survey of the three major Abrahamic faiths; the origins, beliefs and practices of these "people of the Book;" history of their interactions and influence on Western culture.
  University Studies course: partially satisfies historical and philosophical approaches, partially satisfies information literacy, satisfies living in a global society.

- **PAR 232: Asian Religions**
  This course provides a historical and thematic overview of major religious traditions of Asia, including Confucian, Taoist, Hindu, Jain, Sikh, Buddhist, and Japanese religions. Consider ways in which Asian religious practitioners have attempted to understand the nature of the world, human society, and a person's place within them. In examining religious traditions that in many ways seem wholly foreign or “other” in comparison to Western religions, emphasis will be on the internal logic of each, on the resources that each provides for the construction of meaning, value, and moral vision.
  University Studies course: partially satisfies historical and philosophical approaches, satisfies living in a global society.

- **PAR 235: Introduction to the Old Testament**
  This course explores a range of issues and inquiries related to the Bible regarding its nature, origin, composition, history, culture, setting, people, and their stories, and its teachings. Students analyze and analyze approaches to interpreting the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, how it impacts people’s lives, how the study of the text developed, and the reasons for its enduring presence. Students will examine the range of literary genre, symbolic metaphors, figures of speech and religious and theological themes.
  University Studies course: partially satisfies historical and philosophical approaches, partially satisfies information literacy.