

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE
FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number SD3922S
Date of Senate Approval 3/31/2022

Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

APC Document 34 (RELS)

Delete RELS 200, 354, and 384

Effective Date: Fall 2022

Delete: On pages 285 and 287, the following courses in the Religious Studies curriculum:

200 Introduction to the Study of Religion (4)

An introduction to the academic study of religion that explores classical and contemporary theories of religion as well as comparative themes such as concepts of the sacred, myths and rituals, ways of being religious, and ideas of the afterlife through case studies drawn from various religious traditions. Fall and Spring.

354 Greek and Roman Religion (4)

Introduces students to the religions of the Greek and Roman worlds. Although the focus will be on the polytheistic religions of Classical Greece and Republican and Imperial Rome, the course will also consider the impact of Egyptian, Persian, Etruscan, and the mystery religions, including early Christianity, of the Roman Empire. Religious practices and beliefs will be considered in a wide range of literary, artistic and archeological sources. Prerequisite: HUM 124. Even years Fall.

384 Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in the Mediterranean World (4)

Recasting the more traditional examinations of the “medieval” period away from northern and western Europe, this course examines the ways in which Jews, Christians, and Muslims living in the areas surrounding Mediterranean Sea (including North Africa, Iberia, Italy and Sicily, and Western Asia) interacted with one another and negotiated their religious and social identities through conflict and coexistence, tolerance and intolerance, and cultural and scientific exchanges, from the early Byzantine period to the sack of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258. See department chair.

Impact: The impact on faculty will be negligible. Both RELS 354 and 384 were elective courses; their elimination will not impact student progress toward a degree. RELS 200 will be replaced by three new introductory courses to be offered by departmental faculty in rotation each semester (the way in which RELS 200 is currently offered); thus, there will be no impact on faculty resources, nor will students be impacted in their progress toward a degree. None of the courses are part of the UNC Common Numbering System.

Rationale: RELS 354 was a cross-listed section for a topical CLAS course that has been changed to CLAS 325. RELS 384 is being eliminated since it is no longer taught regularly, and some of the subject matter has been transferred to other courses. At the suggestion of an external reviewer, RELS 200 is being eliminated and will be replaced by a new set of topical gateway course options. The title and level of RELS 200 has deterred student enrollments by first-year students and by students without previous

experience in the academic study of religion; thus, many students who develop an interest in majoring or minoring in Religious Studies do so only after taking an RELS course in their junior or senior years. As topical introductions to the academic study of religion, the new gateway courses – some of which have already been successfully offered as special topics courses – are designed to attract students to the department earlier in their academic careers and potentially boost the number of RELS majors and minors as well as increasing enrollments in upper-division courses.