INTRODUCTION
The Level I religion course introduces first-year students to the dialogue between the Biblical traditions and the cultures and communities related to them. Students study the Biblical storyline, major Biblical texts and their interaction with, for example, theology, religious practice, ethics, and social values, while considering methods and fields in the study of religion in a liberal arts setting. An additional prospectus describes the theme of each section. For details see below.

121 A: LAGERQUIST, 800-855, MWF
READING THE BIBLE AROUND THE WORLD. What does the place one reads the Bible matter? What difference does who one reads with make? These questions are central to this section. Composed in what we call the Middle East, the Bible has been carried around the world. The Bible is one thing Christians in have in common, though the context in which they read it varies. Protestant Reformers insisted that the Bible be made available in the vernacular, common language of believers. Missionaries make translating the Bible among their first tasks. Despite agreement that the Bible is central to faith differing readings of the Bible often lead to disputes and divisions among Christians. In this section we consider both what the Bible says and to how it is heard/read by various audiences. We pay particular attention to readers in the global south, where Christianity is growing, read this book. In addition, we look at the ways artists interpret the Bible in images drawn from the culture of their time and place. We ask what constitutes a “good” reading and what factors contribute to one.

121 B: RIPLEY, 800-855, MWF
THE BIBLE AND SALVATION. Like the Philippian jailer, who cries out for salvation while his life crumbles around him, people for millennia have turned to the God of scripture for hope in the midst of brokenness. From images of personal healing to cosmic renewal, the Bible employs a surprising variety of metaphors to speak of God’s care and faithfulness toward God’s creation and covenant people. Employing both literary and historical approaches to reading, we will explore the rich diversity of biblical images of salvation. We will also delve into ways select theologians, artists, and filmmakers have utilized these biblical motifs to address specific cultures and contexts, with an eye toward exploring metaphors of salvation appropriate to our contemporary situations.

121 C: LAGERQUIST, 905-1000, MWF
For a description of this section, see the description for Section A.

121 D: ODELL, 905-1000, MWF
READING THE BIBLE FOR LOVE AND JUSTICE. This course traces the twin themes of justice and love in the Bible. Some of the questions we’ll ask include: How do conceptions of divine love and justice change over the course of the Bible’s history? What kinds of justice and love are envisioned for human communities? How do different contexts, such as family, clan and community, national and international relations, affect biblical perspectives on justice? Where do we see biblical writers wrestling with problems posed by the
apparent lack of justice? Can there be love without justice, or justice without love? A major focus of the course will be on the ways contemporary reading communities address lingering problems caused by unjust uses of the Bible, for example, in questions of gender, race, and power. We will also ask whether the Bible can continue to be a resource for reflecting on justice in the modern world, and if so, how.

121 E: RIPLEY, 1045-1140, MWF
For a description of this section, see the description for Section B.

121 F: JORGENSEN, 120-245 T, 215-335 TH
CALL AND RESPONSE IN BIBLICAL TRADITIONS. For better or worse religious persons throughout history have acted out of a sense of divine calling. As in the biblical texts humans today migrate and mobilize, associate and separate, build and destroy in effort to respond to God. This section explores the tension of these lived realities by asking: 1) What authenticates calling in the Bible? 2) Who is called, and to whom? 3) For what purposes are persons called? Specifically examining the biblical underpinnings of Protestant renderings of vocation we will address these questions by attending to the relationship between self, God and neighbor in the texts and in their contemporary reception and application. Our study will be informed by consideration of four major themes related to vocation: work, family, the environment and political engagement.

121 G: BOOTH, 1150-1245, MWF
LAND, FOOD AND JUSTICE IN BIBLICAL TRADITIONS. This section uses food as a lens for understanding the Bible, both in the context of cultures that wrote it, and in the context of contemporary discussions of sustainability. Because food is prominent in biblical narratives it is a useful interpretative lens. Biblical prophets make food central in their vindication of the poor and hungry. Biblical communities announce, debate, adjust, and renounce dietary prescriptions. Biblical texts employ similes, metaphors, and parables derived from food to advance larger points about spiritual growth or fulfillment. Guided by these considerations, we will address four main themes involving food and biblical traditions: (1) distributive food justice; (2) food production and care of the land; (3) food and just treatment of animals; and (4) food choices as religiously meaningful.

121 H: SCHILLINGER, 1150-1245, MWF
ABRAHAM’S CHILDREN. Daily news reports regarding violence between Jews, Christians, and Muslims make it difficult to remember that these religions share common roots. Yet, all three trace their lineage back to Abraham. This section explores the common roots of these religions by introducing students to the Bible and the Qur’an, and examining their parallel characters and narratives. At the same time, distinctive beliefs and practices of each religion that are grounded in scripture will be investigated to better understand what makes each religious tradition unique. In our pluralistic world, a basic understanding of the relationship between these three monotheistic religions may be more valuable now than ever before.

121 I: SCHILLINGER, 1255-150, MWF
For a description of this section, see the description for Section H.
**121 J: VAN YPEREN, 1145-110 T, 1245-205 TH**

“NATURE” AND THE BIBLICAL TRADITION. This section, focused on ecological themes and experiences, considers how different interpretations of the Bible have influenced (positively and negatively) conceptions of responsibility to and for the natural world. What is the relationship between “human nature” and the "natural" world? How do encounters with wildness and wilderness shape dispositions of gratitude, joy, and wonder? What is the value or significance of the more-than-human world? How should we deliberate about questions of wildlife management, endangered species, wilderness conservation, or climate policies? We will pair close readings of the Bible with selections from the tradition of nature writing, an interdisciplinary exercise which will allow us to address these questions of historical and on-going significance.

**121 K: HANSON, 200-255, MWF**

THE BIBLE AS SCREEN PLAY. Movies have become our common language, one of the principal means by which we communicate and interpret our experiences and ideas (not to mention our primary form of entertainment). Biblical stories and themes have been a central source for filmmakers from the very beginning of the medium. What happens to those stories and themes in the process? What does the process of filmmaking teach us about how the Biblical authors may have brought their stories to life in their time? How do films illuminate the Biblical text, and how are contemporary perspectives, values, and prejudices reflected in the filmmakers' work? The balcony is open. Please note that the films will be screened outside of class; there will be a weekly scheduled screening, and the films will be available on library reserve for those unable to attend.

**121 L: BOOTH, 200-255, MWF (ENVIRONMENTAL CONVERSATION STUDENTS ONLY)**

For a description of this section, see the description for Section G.

**121 M: JORGENSON, 800-925, MWF**

For a description of this section, see the description for Section F.

**121 N: HEIDGERKEN, 800-925 T, 800-920 TH**

THE BIBLE, ANGELS AND DEMONS. How should interpreters of the biblical text make sense of references to supernatural beings like angels and demons? In what sense are they supposed to be real? How do they relate to the divine? What is their relationship with evil? Are there evil angels in the Bible and if so, where do they come from? This section will explore how different biblical texts deal with these questions. It will also examine how diverse religious communities, reading the Bible from different cultural backgrounds, have interpreted biblical texts differently in constructing concepts of spiritual, superhuman, and non-corporeal beings. From biblical texts, we will discuss figures such as the heavenly court, the serpent and Watchers of Genesis, angelic visitors, the Adversary of Job, and angels, demons, and the devil seen in many New Testament texts. We will consider how the interpretation of these biblical texts has impacted post-biblical reflection on discernment, the importance of radical hospitality, witchcraft, and heresy. In addition to the biblical text, students will work with historical writings, film, literary fiction, and traditions of scientific skepticism.
121 P: BATEZA, 935-1100 T, 930-1050 TH
BELONGING AS BLESSING AND CHALLENGE. The Bible is filled with stories of conflict and hope as people interpret their relationship with God and with one another. Lines are drawn and identities are defined within families, communities, and nations. In this section we will discuss how kinship, ethnicity, race, and friendship function within key Biblical narratives. How are identities defined and contested? Are the boundaries fixed or porous? Making use of historical, literary, and theological methods we will weigh the benefits and burdens of belonging. While exploring the Biblical narrative we will also examine the impact of racism on contemporary religious and political struggles.

121 Q: VAN OVERMEIRE, 1255-150, MWF
COMPARATIVE SCRIPTURES: THE BIBLE AND OTHER SACRED TEXTS. What is the place of the Bible in our religiously diverse world? In this section of Religion 121 we will study the Bibles of Judaism and Christianity together with scriptures of other religious traditions. We will consider the following questions: What is scripture? What kinds of literature are found in scriptures? What kinds of questions do scriptures address? How are scriptures used by religious people around the world? What is the relevance of scripture in the 21st century? We will carefully read and discuss selections from the Hebrew Bible of Judaism, the Old and New Testaments of Christianity, the Qur’an of Islam, the Vedas and other sacred texts of Hinduism, various Buddhist sutras, and Native American stories.

121 R: JORGENSON, 1145-1110 T, 1245-205 TH
For a description of this section, see the description for Section F.

121 S: VAN OVERMEIRE, 1045-1140, MWF
For a description of this section, see the description for Section Q.

121 T: BATEZA, 120-245 T, 215-335 TH
For a description of this section, see the description for Section P.

121 U: VAN YPEREN, 800-925 T, 800-920 TH
For a description of this section, see the description for Section J.

121 V: VAN YPEREN, 120-245 T, 215-335 TH
For a description of this section, see the description for Section J.