

**University of Ghana**  
**Department for the study of Religions**  
**Sample Spring Courses**

**SREL 302 The Theology and Ethics of the New Testament**

Major New Testament theological and ethical issues as presented by Paul, the Synoptics and the Johannine literature. Paul's understanding of Sin and its remedy, the Holy Spirit and his gifts, the church, and the resurrection of the dead. The work of Jesus and how he carried it out (e.g., by way of parables and miracles) and some of the major concepts in the writings of John. Some ethical matters based on the New Testament such as property and wealth, marriage and divorce, politics and revolution.

**SREL 304 The Faith and Practice of Islam**

Introduction to the main belief systems, creeds, doctrines and dogmas of Islam. An assessment of their influence on the daily life of the Muslim, e.g., the Ghanaian Muslim. The main Islamic Rituals and Modes of worship. The five pillars of Islam; the doctrinal teachings behind them and their relevance to the conduct of the Muslim.

**SREL 308 Old Testament Texts in Hebrew**

The reading and translation of selected Old Testament books or selected texts in Hebrew. Theological and exegetical study of the selected books or texts.

**SREL 314 Arabic I (Unavailable to students of Arabic)**

Elementary Grammar. Selected short passages from both the Qur'an and the Hadith.

**SREL 316 Testament Texts in Greek (Pre-req.: SREL 322)**

The reading and translation of selected New Testament books, or texts, with emphasis on exegesis and the analysis and parsing of words and phrases.

**SREL 318 New Testament Interpretation (Pre-req.: SREL 307)**

A study of the historical background, the context and purpose of selected New Testament books. An exegetical study of the selected book that makes use of modern hermeneutical methods, including linguistic analysis, textual criticism and other historical-critical methods.

**SREL 322 New Testament Greek II (Pre-requisite: SREL 361)**

Lessons in the grammar, syntax and morphology of New Testament Greek. A study of selected texts.

**SREL 328 Pentecostalism in Ghana**

The socio-religious setting of Ghanaian Pentecostalism. The History of Pentecostalism; Spirituality, Theology and Practices of Pentecostalism. Pentecostalism and Ghanaian social life.

**SREL 334 Psychology of Religion**

Psychological understanding of religious experience. Religion as pathological and as therapeutic. Conversion. Religion and stress. Religion and personal values. The religious individual and society. Religious experience in the Ghanaian context.

**SREL 336 Arabic Texts (Pre-req.: SREL 360)**

Translation of selected texts from Qur'an and Hadith. Theological and exegetical study of selected texts.

**SREL 338 The Orthodox Caliphate (Pre-req.: SREL 337)**

Concept and origins of the Caliphate as a religious and political institution. Introduction to the four Caliphs. Expansion of Islam. Administration of Territories. The Caliphs and their non-Muslim subjects. Civil wars. Rise of early sects.

**SREL 344 Hadith Studies**

The origin and structure of Hadith with reference to Sunnah, Isnad and Matn. Transmission, Preservation, Collection and Classification of Hadith. Six authentic collections of Hadith. Muwatta, Musnad of Ahmad b. Hanbal and al-Nawawi collections. A study of selected Ahadith from al-Nawawi including Nos. 1, 2, and 3. The religious, cultural and social significance of Hadith.

**SREL 346 Islam in Ghana**

The origins and development of Islam in Ghana. The origins, nature and characteristics of Islam in the Volta Basin. Islam in the North, Asante and on the coast of Ghana. Islam and national politics; Islamic literacy tradition; Islamic organizations; Islamic leadership; inter-religious relations; Zongo and national development; etc.

**SREL 348 African Myths and Symbols**

Theories of Myths; the universality of mythical motifs and symbols, and the functional value of myths and symbols. Detailed study of selected myths from various religious traditions especially African/ Ghanaian ones. Cross-cultural comparison of Myths and Symbols.

**SREL 352 Religion and Leadership**

Examination of various forms of traditional leadership forms (e.g., Chieftaincy, Priesthood, Asafo Leadership, Female chiefs and leaders, New forms of traditional Leadership such as the "chiefs of Development", etc). The impact of social change and modernity on these forms of leadership. The impact of Islam and Christianity on traditional forms of leadership. The impact of the religious aspects of traditional leadership on modern types of leadership in Ghana. The responses of traditional leadership forms to the challenges of modernity and non-indigenous religions like Islam and Christianity; adaptations and the future of traditional leadership.

**SREL 356 Contemporary Ethical and Moral Issues**

The theological, ethical and moral dimensions of some contemporary social issues and problems. Issues will be taken from the fields of medicine, politics, family life, culture, business, etc.

**SREL 364 Introduction to Pauline Literature**

The issue of Pauline authorship of the writings attributed to St. Paul, their dating, place of writing, background, addressees, purpose and how these writings fit into the life of Paul. The contents, concerns and main theological themes of these writings.

**SREL 366 The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Christian History**

The Apostolic Age. The Spirit in the first two centuries. The Spirit to the Council of Chalcedon. The Middle Ages and the Rise of Dissent. The Spirit in the Reformation. The Spirit in the Age of Reason. The Spirit in the Methodist and Evangelical Revival. The Spirit in the Catholic/ Anglo Catholic Revival. The Spirit in the 21st Century.

**SREL 368 Magic and Witchcraft**

Definition of terms. Witchcraft and magic in the Bible. Witch hunting; witch meetings. Cannibalism and the Black Mass. Witches and devils. Confessions. Interpretations of European Witchcraft and magic. Modern African witchcraft and magic. Activities of African witches; confessions of African witches; African witch hunting; witch doctors; The social setting of witchcraft and magic. The future of witchcraft and magic.

**SREL 372 Methodological Issues in African Indigenous Religions**

Issues of research methodology in African Indigenous Religions. Critical examination of some theoretical and methodological approaches e.g. phenomenological, comparative, sociological, anthropological, linguistic, meta-narrative etc. Engagement with current issues: Insider/Outsider debate, self-reflexivity, research sensitivity etc.

**SREL 378 Oriental Religions**

The fundamental teachings of some of the major religious traditions of the East/Orient such as Hindism, Buddhism, Shintoism. Sikhism and Confucianism. Aspects of their modern manifestations especially in Ghana.

**SREL 398 New Religious Movements**

Theories of origins, and typologies. Attraction. International and local influence in Ghana. Detailed study of selected International Movements, e.g., Nichiren Shoshu, ISKCON, Eckankar, etc., and local/ indigenous Movements, e.g., Afrikania Mission, Independent Churches, Charismatic Ministries and Charismatic Movements within Mainline Churches.

**SREL 402 West African Church History**

Assessment of materials on the History of the Church in West Africa. Events which led to the establishment of Christianity in West Africa - Two stages of mission (1) Catholic, Portuguese - 15th century. (2) Protestant and Catholic - from 18th century. Mission Theories and Mission Methods. Mission and West African Cultures. Impact and consequences. Formation of African Churches. Types of Mission, Ministry, Evangelism today.

**SREL 404 Shariah**

Sources and development of Islamic Law. Nature and scope of Islamic Law. Islamic Legal Categories and Conceptions. Development of the four main schools of law. Five pillars of Islam. Law of personal status. Law of contract. Family law. Marriage, divorce, inheritance: wills and bequests: succession and inheritance. Penal law. Commercial law. Politics and the State. Modern legal reforms. The practical aspects of the Shariah including its implementation in some African states and the attendant problems.

**SREL 408 Christianity and African Culture**

The historical encounter between Christianity and African Traditional Religions. Problems of the encounter, e.g., Chieftancy, Libation, Polygamy, Healing, Ancestral beliefs, Rites of Passage, Taboos, etc. The counter influences of the two faiths on each other especially in the lives of adherents; intellectual and practical attempts at the indigenisation of Christianity.

**SREL 412 Islamic Theology**

Meaning, origin and development of Islamic theology, Kalam. Contemporary religious and political movements. Early Muslim Sects. Birth of scholastic theology. Maturing of Sunni Theology. A study of Al-Ashari and Iman Ghazzali. Jewish, Christian and Perso-Indian influence on the growth and development of Muslim Thought.

**SREL 414 Islam and African Culture**

Introduction to the History of Islam in Africa with special reference to Ghana. Comparative study of some African and Islamic concepts, e.g, God, Divinities, Man, Spirits. Adaptation of Islam in the African context.

**SREL 422 Old Testament Interpretation (Pre-req.: SREL 307)**

Theological and exegetical study of selected Old Testament books or sections of them.

**SREL 432 Advance Hadith Studies**

A study of the Arabic and English translation of selected Ahadith of An Nawawi's Collection of Hadiths. A study of selected Ahadith in Arabic and English from Imam khomeini's Forty Hadiths. Emphasis on identification, interpretation, application and lessons in the selected Hadiths. Gharib al Hadith.

**SREL 434 Hebrew II (Pre-requisite: SREL 433)**

Introduction to difficult parts of Hebrew grammar. Syntax. Simple translations.

**SREL 436 Women in African Indigenous Religions**

Definitions of concepts. Examination of the various concepts and stereotypes of womanhood in Africa. Status, roles, rights and responsibilities of women in African Indigenous Religions. Female leaderships in indigenous set-ups. Emerging roles of women in African Indigenous Religions. Challenges. Selected case studies.

**SREL 438 Missions**

Meaning, Biblical and Theological foundations of Mission. The Early Period – from Pentecost to the Middle Ages. The Medieval Period to the 19th Century. The Modern Period (20th Century):

- (a) Missionary activities in West Africa, e.g., Policies, Methods, Principles and Strategies of the historic Missionary Societies in evangelizing West Africa.
- (b) New trends in mission, ministry and evangelization.
- (c) Current problems, e.g., mission and the cultural revolution in Ghana.

**SREL 442 Philosophy Set Texts**

Historical and critical study of selected texts from major philosophers and theologians – pre-Christian, non-religious, anti-religious, Christian and Islamic; and from the classical, medieval, modern and contemporary periods. Philosophers to be studied will include Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Hume, Kant, Kierkegaard, Wittgenstein, John Hick; Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, Ibn-Sina (Avicenna), Ibn Rushd, Al-Ghazzali, the Mu'tazilah. Topics will include: the nature of God, Analogy, Religious Language, Religious Experience, Reason and Faith, Knowledge, Revelation, Evil, Miracles, The Soul, Meaning of Life and Death, Immortality, Science and Religion.

**SREL 444 Professional Ethics (Pre-requisite: any course in Ethics)**

A general survey of some ethical systems, concepts and norms. A study of professional ethics. Analysis of ethical codes of selected professional and business groups. Issues confronting professionals. Decision-making. Case studies.

**SREL 452 Religion in the African Diaspora**

Definition of the African Diaspora. African traditional religious retentions in the Diaspora and continuities in the Diaspora. Islam, Hebraism and Christianity in the African Diaspora. Religion and politics in the African Diaspora; Diasporic New Religious Movements return 'home'. Religion in the New African Diaspora.

**SREL 454 Introduction Wisdom Literature**

The world of wisdom; wisdom tradition; theology and ethics of wisdom books in the Old Testament (Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes).

**SREL 456 The Theology of St. Paul**

Paul's background (Pharisaic, Qumranic, Rabbinic background, Hellenism, the revelation to Paul, Paul's apostolic experience). Pauline soteriology (Christ's role in salvation history, reconciliation, expiation, justification). The person of Christ; Holy Spirit; Sacraments. Pauline anthropology (the human being before Christ, human being in Christ); Pauline ecclesiology and ethics (the Church, the demands of Christian living); Pauline eschatology (the resurrection of the body).