

# HWST 217 : Understanding Polynesian Religions

This course provides an introduction to the study of Polynesian religions through an exploration of the oral traditions of Hawai‘i, Aotearoa (New Zealand), French Polynesia (Tahiti et al.), and Samoa among others. In this class, students will gain a foundational understanding of important religious themes that permeate Polynesia. Main themes include but are not limited to deities’ forms & functions, cosmogonies, etiologies, and belief-regulated practices. Additionally, a portion of the semester will focus on belief narratives as vehicles for the transmission of knowledge and the significance of contemporary representation and self-representation of Polynesian religion and culture. This class will use comparative analysis between Hawaiian religion and the religious traditions of Aotearoa, French Polynesia, and Samoa to identify the fundamental concepts needed to understand Polynesian religions and explore how they are interconnected and interwoven into the fabric of our lives today. (Cross-listed as REL 217)

**Credits** 3

**Lecture Hours** 3

**Designation**

DH

**Course Outcomes**

- Identify and describe significant source-language terms, major figures, and stories in Hawaiian and other Polynesian religions
- Identify and describe important themes common to Hawaiian and other Polynesian religions
- Analyze, compare, contrast, major themes common to Hawaiian and other Polynesian religions