Description
The course looks at the beliefs and practices on the topic of death and afterlife in major religious traditions of the world.

Instructor
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Office: Loree 134, Douglas Campus
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday: 12.30 - 1:15 pm

Requirements
1. Three Exams (90% of final grade):
   Exam 1: Monday, September 30, in class
   Exam 2: Monday, November 4, in class
   Exam 3: Wednesday, December 11, in class
   No make-ups will be given on these three exams already scheduled as above, unless arrangements are made prior to the scheduled dates with documentation for the reasons for requesting make-ups.

2. Class Attendance and Participation (10% of the final grade):
   You are expected to attend every class meeting. If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to you. Every session missed, without proper explanation provided through the dean’s office, will result in 1 point reduction of your final grade.

Textbook (required reading)
H. Obayashi, ed., Death and Afterlife: Perspectives of World Religions, Praeger.

Course Schedule
1. Death and Reincarnation among the Early Races and Non-Literate Cultures
   Primitive Pan-Vitalism and Death
   Animism and Death
   Totemism and Death
   Required reading: Text, Intro., and Chap. 1

2. Death and Afterlife in Ancient Egypt and Near East
   Mesopotamian (Babylonian) Concept of the Underworld
   Mummification
   Egyptian Notions of the Soul
   Zoroastrian Funeral Rites
   Required Reading: Text, Chaps. 2&3

3. Death and Immortality in Greek Thought
   Greek Mythology and Tragedy
   Socrates
   Plato
   Required reading: Text, Chap. 4
4. The Biblical Understanding of Death and Resurrection – The Hebrew Outlook
   Pre-Exilic concept of Death and the Underworld
   Eschatology
   Apocalypticism
   Messianic Kingdom
   Individual and Corporate Resurrection
     Required reading: Text, Chaps. 5 & 7

5. The Christian Answer to Death
   Crucifixion and Resurrection
   The Kingdom of God
   The Eternality of Human Personhood
   Immortality or Resurrection
     Required reading: Text, Chaps. 6 & 8

6. Islamic Images of the Afterlife
   Seven Levels of Heaven
   Seven Levels of Hell
     Required reading: Text, Chap. 9

7. Death and Reincarnation in India
   The Land of the Fathers
   Karma Reincarnation
   The Ultimate Fate of the Soul
     Required reading: Text, chap. 10

8. Death in Buddhist Thought
   Buddhist Interpretation of “Reincarnation”
   “Nothingness” and “Extinction”
     Required reading: Text, Chaps. 11 & 12

9. Death and Afterlife in China and Japan
   Ancient Chinese Concepts of the Soul—Hun and P’o
   Taoist Cult of Immortality
   Shintoism and Deification
     Required reading: Text, Chap. 13