

840:112 DEATH & AFTERLIFE
Scott Hall rm 135

Spring 2012

Professor Kathleen Bishop (kathbish@rci.rutgers.edu)

Office Hours (**BY APPOINTMENT**):

Friday 1:00pm – 3:00pm rm 118 Loree Hall Douglas Campus

Requirements:

There will be three tests during the semester. **Test #1** (Tuesday, February 21—in class), **Test #2** (Tuesday, April 3—in class) and **Test #3** (*Tuesday, May 8, 8:00 am during final exam period). No makeup tests will be given without prior notification and documentation of conflict. Class attendance counts significantly toward final grade.

*subject to change

Grade breakdown: tests = 25% each (total 75%) attendance = 25%

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

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES: Attendance at Department of Religion Spring Forums
Department of Religion Website: **Religion.Rutgers.edu**

COURSE SCHEDULE:

1. *Death and Reincarnation Among the Early Races and Non-Literate Cultures*

- Primitive and 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

**NO CLASS: Friday March 2 &
Spring Break: Tuesday 3/13, Friday 3/16
Friday April 6**