

WHY STUDY WORLD RELIGIONS?

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- 1. To appreciate the breadth, the extension and diversity of human experiences among their differences, similarities and oddities.**
- 2. To value the mystery, depth and greatness of human experiences with a sense of fascination and awe at how other persons, groups and cultures encounter and describe their deepest happenings.**
- 3. To explore the wisdom and life meanings accumulated within the stories, practices and beliefs of other religions to discern insights for living one's own life more fully.**
- 4. To identify within other religions the various ways human community has been established and held together amid different changes and crises by using rituals, values, beliefs, scriptures and roles to glue human groups into a whole society.**
- 5. To enhance other academic disciplines such as politics, economics, psychology and sociology to aid in a more comprehensive analysis of how humanity lives and works in various settings.**
- 6. To understand more completely the history of how we got to where we are today through a comparative study of the different origins and journeys of peoples and their cultures through the ages.**
- 7. To practically understand one's own personal experiences with those of different religious traditions so that future experiences might be more fruitful.**
- 8. To enable one's own profession or job to be more effective as one encounters those of different religions.**
- 9. To equip oneself with more accurate understandings when confronted with conflict with others of different religions...hopefully to make it possible for everyone to work for peace, justice and compassion.**
- 10. To facilitate more accurate understanding of world and local events and news.**

- 11. To encourage more healthy self- understanding and growth in a world increasingly more diverse and multi-cultural through the analysis of different value systems and philosophical and religious traditions.**
- 12. To wrestle with our own faith as we explore the differences between one's own religious tradition and another or several others. This will allow us to place one's own tradition within the scope and context of the presence of alternative traditions in one's environment to determine how to respond to them, to affirm or reject them.**
- 13. To help others (friends, family, neighbors, colleagues) to reach a better understanding of the beliefs of different religious traditions to grow out of narrow and shallow fears and hatred into more accepting and tolerant ways of relating to and working with persons of different religions.**
- 14. To enable persons of different religious traditions to work together on common goals on a local scale, e.g. providing housing and health care to those in need, and to those on a global and international scale, e.g. responses to natural disasters, terror and war.**