

RUTGERS

School of Arts and Sciences

Department of Religion

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Fall 2017

We'd like to stay in touch...

Please let us know if we had the wrong mailing address for you. Please let us know if you would like to be on an email list for announcements of Religion Department events. Send an email to srosa@rci.rutgers.edu with subject line: alumni mailing list. And please check out our website regularly for announcements and updates: religion.rutgers.edu

religion.rutgers.edu

Welcome to what we hope will be a series of newsletters from the Religion Department, School of Arts and Sciences, Rutgers University–New Brunswick, to our alumni. Some of you are recent graduates and familiar with the current faculty and the activities we sponsor these days. But others have been away longer. You may have missed the many changes of the last decade or so. This newsletter is primarily for you. Future newsletters will go beyond catching up to profile faculty, students, and programs in more detail.

As of January 1, 2017, the last faculty member who had been hired when the colleges at Rutgers still had separate faculties retired. Distinguished Professor James Jones (Rutgers College) and Distinguished Professor James Johnson (Douglass College) were the last of the college faculty to leave us, and we are still missing them daily. The good news is that they worked incredibly hard, along with other now-retired faculty (Hiroshi Obayashi, Henry Bowden, Alberto Green, Mahlon Smith, and Chun-fang Yu) to shape the next-generation

Rutgers Religion Newsletter

Did you know?



One of our newest and most popular courses is “Religions Now: 21st-Century Controversies.” Students taking this Signature Course get an in-depth look at how religion—and religious controversies—are shaping our world, from hot-button issues like same-sex marriage to military conflicts around the globe to long-running debates over the relationship between religion and the state. sas.rutgers.edu/signature

Retired New Jersey residents age 62 or older may attend a course at Rutgers if there is space available and the instructor agrees? If you’re interested in our courses, check out Rutgers online course schedule (sis.rutgers.edu/soc) or our department website (religion.rutgers.edu). For details on how to sign up for the program, see ucm.rutgers.edu/about/senior-citizen-audit-program.

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department. The Deans of the Humanities in the School of Arts and Sciences smiled upon their efforts. We now have a full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty of nine, as well as two invaluable non-tenure-track but full-time instructors. You can see us all here: religion.rutgers.edu/faculty-all/core-faculty and we will begin introducing ourselves in detail in future newsletters.

The Bachelor Of Arts In Religion, 2017-STYLE



Students in the “Religions Now” Signature Course.

Many things about the B.A. in Religion have remained the same over the years—the requirement that everyone take the semester-long courses on Religions of the Western World and Religion in Asia, for example. Other things have changed: as New Jersey’s religious populations grew more diverse, so did our course offerings. The department now offers courses in the following traditions: Buddhism, Chinese Religions, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism. Beyond traditions, we also offer such thematic courses as “Gods, Myths, and Religions in a Secular Age,” “Religions Now: 21st Century Controversies,” “The Hero’s Quest: Religion, Mythology, and Harry Potter,” “Martyrdom: From the Maccabees to ISIS,” and “Apocalypse Now? Religious Movements and the End of Time.” Our online offerings are popular: “Jesus” (a survey of stories, artistic depictions, and understandings of Jesus from the New Testament to modern cinema) and “The Birth and Death of God from Mesopotamia to Post-Modernity.”

The Master Of Arts In Religion



The Religion Department began offering a Master of Arts degree in 2013. Students come to the program for many reasons: to get a more thorough grounding in the theories and methods of studying religion before they apply to doctoral programs, to gain the language skills necessary for research in religion, and for personal enrichment. Some are teachers who believe that a deeper knowledge of religion will

make them better educators. Some students come from outside Rutgers. Others take part in our 4+1 program, by which a Rutgers undergraduate can begin taking Masters-level courses in his/her senior year and complete the degree with only one additional year of study. We hope to introduce you to a few of our M.A. students in future newsletters.

And An Invitation

This year’s **Distinguished Lecture in Religion** will be delivered by Robert E. Buswell, Jr. Professor Buswell is the former president of the Association for Asian Studies and was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2016. He also received the prestigious Manhae Grand Prize in Korea for his pioneering contributions to the establishment of Korean Buddhist Studies in the West.

Professor Buswell’s lecture is entitled “Is Zen ‘Enlightenment’ Sudden or Gradual? Insights from the Korean Buddhist Tradition.”

The lecture will take place at 4:30pm on April 20, 2017. You are invited to join us for a reception before the lecture, at 4:00pm in the Alexander Library Lecture Hall on the fourth floor of Alexander Library, 169 College Avenue, New Brunswick.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to srosa@rci.rutgers.edu (It helps us plan the reception).

