DI 610 Faith in the Neighborhood
An Introduction to America’s Religious Diversity
A Hartford Seminary Asynchronous Online Course

Spring Term 2020

Instructor:
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Office Hours via Zoom or phone: by appointment
[NOTE: Professor Mosher teaches off-campus, from her office in northeast Florida]

Course Format: asynchronous online, by means of a Canvas website—with an additional expectation that students will make research visits to several sites proximate to their location.

Email Policy:
The instructor will use official hartsem.edu student email addresses for all communications. Students are expected to check HartSem email regularly. While students may use Canvas messaging feature, your instructor will see and respond to email much sooner.

Course Description:
The purpose of this course is to introduce the scope of religious diversity in the United States, to provide foundational information about the belief and practices of a number of religions that are part of the fabric of 21st-century America sufficient for intelligent and positive interreligious engagement. Methodologically, instruction will balance formal presentations with experiential, case-study-based, and dialogical learning, facilitated by a Canvas website.

Goals:
Through this course, students will

- Develop familiarity with the concepts and vocabulary particular to interreligious studies as an academic discipline.
- Develop familiarity with the concepts, vocabulary, and practices of several religions sufficient for intelligent dialogue and for being an informed visitor to religious settings.
• Use anthropology-of-religion methodology to arrange, conduct, and report on site-visits.
• Become familiar with tools to think theologically about one’s own faith in the presence of persons of other faiths.
• Practice techniques and articulate rationales for developing interfaith relationship leading to collaborative action.

Alignment with MARS Program Learning Outcomes: The material in the course improves the student’s ability to:

1. To demonstrate foundational and critical knowledge of one’s own religion by:
   b. Relating one’s tradition to public issues which intersect with faith
   c. Engaging one’s own religion analytically and contextually
   d. Developing appreciative knowledge of the continuum of expressions and interpretations of one’s own religious tradition.
   e. Recognizing the different streams of thought and practice within one’s own tradition.

2. To demonstrate the knowledge, capacities, and willingness to respectfully engage other religions and worldviews by:
   b. Being able to compare the social contexts of another faith tradition with one’s own.
   c. Displaying empathy in critical examination of other religions.

Assessment: Grades will be determined by the quality of (a) responses to prompts and interaction with classmates via online VoiceThread activities and Canvas discussion forums, (b) site-visit reports, and (c) a summary paper, and possibly (d) scores on several quizzes.

Required Books

NOTE: Another book (or two) will be added to the “required” list in early December. Additional required or “optional but useful” items will be made available via the Canvas website.

Highly Recommended: