



## Shared Futures Global Learning Forum

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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### Religion in Global Contexts

#### Questions:

- How do we internationalize the sense of identity and purpose that religion can provide?
- How are faith values informing politics, and how do we explore them historically and comparatively in the U.S. and around the world?
- What is the relationship, avowed or not, of religion and states, and how do states and peoples wrestle with this?
- How do we define and effectively convey what we mean by an academic study of religion, when the issue is deeply personal and public internationally, nationally, and for everyone on the campus?
- How can we deal with religiously illiterate students and faculty? What can we do to make faculty (beyond the Dept. of Religion) comfortable with issues of religion and teaching of religion? What can faculty do with students who take objective/academic study of religion as an affront to their “one true faith”?
- How can we create more civic and social learning around issues of religious and cultural differences?
- What are we doing in the cocurricular sphere to engage students (as well as faculty) to participate in activities that encourage understanding of difference religions and cultures?
- How can we encourage all disciplines to focus on global religions? Does it make sense to do so?

#### Big Ideas:

- Knowledge of religion is key to understanding other cultures.
- Ways to get students involved in thinking about religion in global context:
  - Look at key cultural issues (gender, poverty, etc.) through the lens of multiple religions and see the process of how the different religions’ conceptions of these issues developed historically.

#### Faculty/Institutional Development:

- Faculty and administration must be in alignment on desired outcomes of teaching religion in a global context.
- Joint programs with other institutions to bring in external educational resources and share the cost.