



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2023.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Roanoke

Program Title: Inside-Out

Program Category: Criminal Justice and Public Safety

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Brent Hudson

Title: Chief Deputy

Department: Sheriff's Office

Telephone: 540-283-3110 Website: <https://www.roanokecountyva.gov/89/Sheriffs-Office>


Email: bhudson@roanokecountyva.gov

### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Richard Caywood

Title: County Administrator

Signature: Richard L. Caywood

 Digitally signed by Richard L. Caywood  
Date: 2023.04.25 11:13:27 -04'00'

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Roanoke County Sheriff's Office partnered with Roanoke College to provide an Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program for inmates and college students. This program attempts to reduce recidivism by inmates as well as educate college students on the realities of incarceration. The Inside-Out program provides inmates an opportunity to further their education and receive free-of-charge college credits if they complete the course. Theoretically, this will also offer inmates a head start with employment once released and discourage them from reoffending.

The mission of the program is to create an environment where respectful dialogue surrounding justice can occur allowing everyone involved to see we are more than our worst mistakes. Also important is providing an opportunity for students on the "outside" to come inside the facility and see what life is like. These students can then share with their communities what they have learned, which hopefully reduces the assumptions and misconceptions that exist about those incarcerated.

The class meets once a week in the Roanoke County Jail where a Roanoke College professor and students are brought into a secure location where class is held face-to-face with inmates. The Sheriff's Office has purchased the required materials for this class using fees collected from inmates. This makes the class self-sufficient with no additional cost to taxpayers.

Since its inception four years ago, the Sheriff's Office has completed three semesters with 23 inmates successfully completing the course. Of the 23 participants, some continue to serve their sentences and only three individuals have reoffended. The program had to pause during the COVID-19 pandemic but has since restarted and moving forward at a faster pace.

The Sheriff's Office has received positive feedback from many inmates, college students, and professors. It is the hope that the Inside-Out program will reduce re-offense, create opportunities for inmates once released into the community, and promote a positive relationship with the public.

**PROBLEM/CHALLENGE/SITUATION**

Incarcerated individuals face misconceptions, biases, and stereotypes which create social and economic barriers in our society. Statistics show when an inmate is released from incarceration there is a high probability of the individual reoffending which creates concern in the community about additional crimes occurring and the financial costs of incarceration.

The Roanoke County Sheriff's Office seeks ways to provide each inmate with the tools necessary to be successful in society once released from custody. Through a partnership with Roanoke College, an Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program was implemented to encourage inmates to seek further education, as well as give them a head start with free-of-charge college credits. The program also offers inmates the opportunity to sharpen their classroom and communication skills to help them be successful and less likely to reoffend.

**HOW PROGRAM WAS CARRIED OUT/PROGRAM RESULTS**

In the Spring of 2019, Roanoke College Professor Dr. Daisy Ball expressed interest in partnering with the Roanoke County Sheriff's Office to create an Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program. The program, originally created at Temple University in 1997, brings college students together with incarcerated individuals for a semester-long class held in a prison, jail or correctional facility. The goal is to provide all participants an opportunity to discuss criminal justice, social issues, and life experiences, as well as learn from one another.

Dr. Ball received training through the Temple University program prior to Spring of 2019. This training allowed for her to establish courses, like the Inside-Out Program, in correctional facility settings. Upon the program's formation, it became the first course of its kind offered at Roanoke College and the first for the Roanoke County Jail.

According to Roanoke College, Inside-Out's mission is "to foster social change through transformative education. The program exposes traditional college students to the realities of incarceration, while at

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**Criminal Justice & Public Safety Category**

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the same time exposing inmates to academic content and pro-social interactions with college students.”

The class meets once a week in the Roanoke County Jail and all participants who complete the requirements receive college credits.

The Sheriff’s Office purchases the required course materials, Peacemaking and the Challenge of Violence in World Religions by Ifran A.Omar and Michael K. Duffey, for the “insider” students. The books and materials are paid for with inmate funds which come predominantly from canteen sales. This makes the class self-sufficient with no additional cost to the tax payer. Roanoke College applied for and received a grant from the C.E. Richardson Benevolent Foundation. Some of the grant money helped to purchase course texts for the Roanoke College students as well as for additional instructors to get certified for the program.

Staff in the Sheriff’s Office carefully select qualifying inmates for each class. The inmate’s criminal history, behavior and school records must meet certain standards before being considered. The inmate’s criminal sentence is also a factor due to the length of the class; if an inmate is released, they are not allowed to return. The safety of all participants is of utmost importance and criminal history checks are completed for all the students that participate. This program creates many security challenges in an environment such as a jail and everything is planned out extensively. Each week before entering the jail facility, students and the professor go through a metal detector and no bags are allowed. Students are educated in the importance of not developing personal relationships with the inmates or their families; any such behavior would disqualify the student from further participation. During class, a deputy is in the classroom to monitor all activity. While the Inside-Out program creates additional responsibilities for staff, it has proven to be invaluable for the inmates and college students.

A graduation ceremony is held at the end of the semester for all students. This past year, students advocated to wear matching t-shirts which proved how well the barriers had been broken down and they all saw each other as equals. Following the opening remarks from Roanoke County Sheriff Eric

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Orange and President of Roanoke College Dr. Frank Shushok's address to the students in a graduation speech, the students took the lead. Students rotated sharing testimonials, various peace-making practices from religious cultures, and mindfulness strategies, while encouraging audience participation. Many students shared their preconceived notions of what interacting with each other would be like and a popular theme among all students was worrying about judgment; however, by the end of the ceremony, it was evident all the students supported each other and wanted one another to succeed.

Since its inception four years ago, the Sheriff's Office has completed three semesters with 23 inmates successfully completing the course. Of the 23 participants, some continue to serve their sentences and only three individuals have reoffended. The program had to pause during the COVID-19 pandemic but has since restarted and moving forward at a faster pace.

**FULFILLING AWARDS CRITERIA**

**Innovative Solution**

The Roanoke County Sheriff's Office seeks ways to provide each inmate with the tools necessary to be successful in society once released from custody. Statistics show when an inmate is released from incarceration there is a high probability of the individual reoffending. Incarcerated individuals face many barriers following the end of their sentences, including overcoming stereotypes, preconceived ideas, and biases. The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program works to breakdown these barriers through higher education and correctional facilities coming together to create an environment where respectful dialogue surrounding justice can occur allowing everyone involved to see we are more than our worst mistakes.

The program encourages inmates to seek further education, giving them a head start with free college credits, as well as opportunities to sharpen classroom and communication skills to help them be successful and less likely to reoffend.

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Also important is providing an opportunity for students on the “outside” to come inside the jail facility and see what life is like. These students can then share with their communities what they have learned, which hopefully reduces the assumptions and misconceptions that exist about those incarcerated.

**Collaboration**

The Roanoke County Sheriff’s Office and Roanoke College’s Religion and Philosophy Department partnered together to implement the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program and offer the semester-long course. Together, the Sheriff’s Office and the College have cultivated a relationship of mutual respect, collaboration, and cooperation during the partnership. For the Fall 2022 semester, 10 Roanoke College students and nine students from the Roanoke County Jail were enrolled in the course taught by Dr. Melanie Trexler.

**Model for Other Localities**

Roanoke College applied for and received a grant from the C.E. Richardson Benevolent Foundation. Some of the grant money helped to purchase course texts for the Roanoke College students as well as for additional instructors to get certified for the program. The Sheriff’s Office purchases the required course materials, Peacemaking and the Challenge of Violence in World Religions by Ifran A.Omar and Michael K. Duffey, for the “insider” students. The books and materials are paid for with inmate funds which come predominantly from canteen sales. This makes the class self-sufficient with no additional cost to the tax payer.

The class meets once a week in the Roanoke County Jail where a Roanoke College professor and students are brought into a secure location where class is held face-to-face with inmates. They meet the incarcerated students in a room that is monitored by a Roanoke County deputy. For 13 weeks, the students facilitate an inclusive environment and safe space for everyone to learn from each other.

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The description of the course that students see when selecting classes for the upcoming semester is detailed below:

*What is the relationship between religious worldviews and peacebuilding? What role can religions play in promoting peace? To explore these questions, we will examine religious worldviews of Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, and Muslims. We will ask how practitioners think critically about the relationship between religion and peace to encourage peacebuilding. Students will choose one specific religious tradition and explain the importance of its peacemaking practices to those incarcerated in the Virginia Department of Corrections.*

Objectives of the course include:

- understand the complex relationship between religion and peacemaking
- apply humanities methodologies of contextualization, textual analysis, and lived religion to the course topic
- raise vital questions about religious traditions, assess relevant evidence, develop well-reasoned conclusions, and practice open mindedness
- connect course content to your families and to communities beyond the classroom
- apply research findings to a formal project addressing religious peacemaking and present this proposal in an oral presentation
- write about course topics clearly and effectively

Throughout the semester, students complete five critical reflections as well as work on a 20-minute presentation project on peacemaking, and complete a final exam. A heavy focus from the semester is on active learning.

Throughout the semester, the Sheriff's Office works to keep the "insider" students engaged and coordinates a deputy to be present for each class. The deputy's role during the class time is to ensure

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the safety for all students and the professor. Additionally, the Sheriff's Office makes all inmates aware of the Inside-Out program and its value beyond incarceration.

**BRIEF OVERVIEW**

The Roanoke County Sheriff's Office partnered with Roanoke College to provide an Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program for inmates and college students. This program attempts to reduce recidivism by inmates as well as educate college students on the realities of incarceration. The Inside-Out program provides inmates an opportunity to further their education and receive free-of-charge college credits if they complete the course. Theoretically, this will also offer inmates a head start with employment once released and discourage them from reoffending.

The mission of the program is to create an environment where respectful dialogue surrounding justice can occur allowing everyone involved to see we are more than our worst mistakes. Also important is providing an opportunity for students on the "outside" to come inside the facility and see what life is like. These students can then share with their communities what they have learned, which hopefully reduces the assumptions and misconceptions that exist about those incarcerated.

It is the hope that the Inside-Out program will reduce re-offenses, create opportunities for inmates once released into the community, and promote a positive relationship with the public.



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**SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS**

- Graduation program
- Class syllabus and outline
- Art work by student for graduation program
- Roanoke College's webpage on Inside-Out  
[https://www.roanoke.edu/academics/majors\\_by\\_categories/criminal\\_justice/inside-out\\_prison\\_exchange\\_program](https://www.roanoke.edu/academics/majors_by_categories/criminal_justice/inside-out_prison_exchange_program)

**Reference**

[https://www.roanoke.edu/academics/majors\\_by\\_categories/criminal\\_justice/inside-out\\_prison\\_exchange\\_program](https://www.roanoke.edu/academics/majors_by_categories/criminal_justice/inside-out_prison_exchange_program)

**Media coverage**

WFXR: [Inside-Out program helps inmates and students connect in the classroom.](#)

WDBJ-7: [Roanoke College students and Roanoke County inmates take criminology class together.](#)

The Roanoke Times: [Roanoke College students, county inmates tackle class side by side.](#)

Roanoke College: [https://www.roanoke.edu/about/news/inside\\_out\\_graduation\\_2022](https://www.roanoke.edu/about/news/inside_out_graduation_2022)

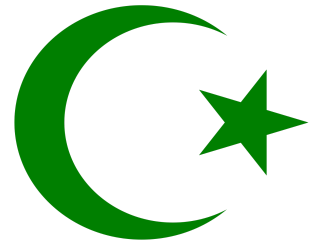
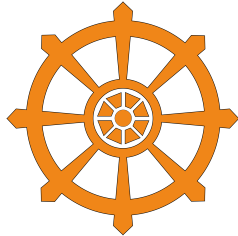
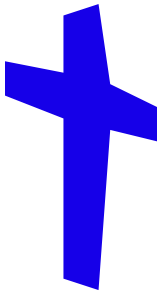
# HNRS 271 – Inside - Out Prison Exchange



# Religion and Peacebuilding



Fall 2022



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## Class Description

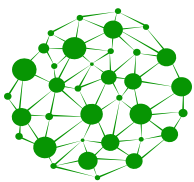
What is the relationship between religious worldviews and peacebuilding? What role can religions play in promoting peace? To explore these questions, we will examine religious worldviews of Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, and Muslims. We will ask how practitioners think critically about the relationship between religion and peace to encourage peacebuilding. Students will choose one specific religious tradition and explain the importance of its peacemaking practices to those incarcerated in the VA Dept of Corrections.

### Where do we meet?

Roanoke County Jail

Time: Thursdays 1:00–4:00  
pm

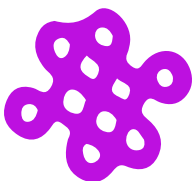
## Learning Objectives



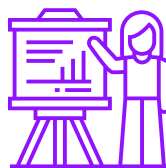
Understand the complex relationships between religion, and peacemaking



Connect course content to your lives and to communities beyond the classroom



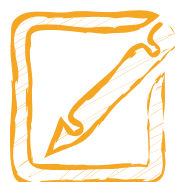
Apply humanities methodologies of contextualization, textual analysis, and lived religion to the course topic



Apply research findings to a formal project addressing religious peacemaking and present this proposal in an oral presentation



Raise vital questions about religious traditions, assess relevant evidence, develop well-reasoned conclusions, and practice open-mindedness



Write about course topics clearly and effectively

## Class Texts

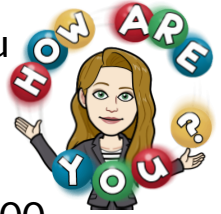


Omar, Irfan A. and Michael K. Duffy, eds. *Peacemaking and the Challenge of Violence in World Religions*. Malden, MA: Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2015.

Additional readings included in your weekly I/O folder

## Professor Contact Info

Your Professor: Dr. Melanie Trexler  
Office: West 303  
Email: [trexler@roanoke.edu](mailto:trexler@roanoke.edu)



## Student Hours

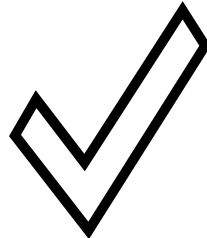
Drop-in hours: MW 1:00–2:00 pm, Tuesdays 1:30–2:30 pm, and by appointment

# Course Requirements

## 1. Attend

Strive for perfect attendance.

- I hope you don't miss any classes because missing even one class may have an effect on your learning. Inside-Out is a unique experiential learning course that needs you in the classroom. We have a limited time together – only 12 classes. We want to use that time well. If you miss class, you will miss things. More importantly, **we** will miss **you**. Absences detract from the whole class experience for everyone.
- However, life will happen. Life does not stop because you have class. You'll probably get sick at least once this semester. Worse things could happen, too. (Although I'm certainly hoping they will not.) So, there is some flexibility. How much? If you miss more than one week of class, please contact me as soon as possible. We'll make a plan to get you back on track and moving toward success as best we can. I want everyone to succeed in this class and I will work with you to the best of my ability.



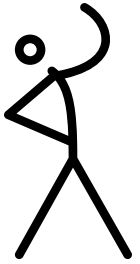
## What should you do if you miss class?

- One week of class: Nothing. Things happen. I don't even need to know anything about it, but if you'd like to tell me, I'm happy to listen.
- More than one week of class: Inform me of what is going on as soon as possible. I'm not going to yell at you, or for that matter, be upset with you. We just need to chat to make a plan. If you are an inside student, ask Sgt. Flannagan to reach out to me on your behalf.
- Notes on an Incomplete: A grade of an Incomplete is possible if you are only missing one major assignment at the end of the semester. More than one major assignment is too much for an Incomplete to handle.



## 2. Active Learning

Everyone participates in this course. How? Active learning happens in many ways – small discussions in pairs, small group tasks, class activities, the group project, turning in critical reflection assignments, and invitational participation. I will not make you participate in our conversations; I will invite you to share your insights whenever you feel ready.



### Why do I encourage you to engage in active learning?

I value you. And I value what you have to contribute to this class. I consider this classroom a place where you will be treated with respect, and we will welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, abilities – and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.



### What can you do to prepare to practice active learning?

Come to class having read and thought about the assigned materials. We will use class time to talk about your ideas and think through more difficult concepts together. We will not always agree – and we do not need to. The classroom space is not a boxing ring where people battle for air-time or compete to earn the best grade for the shiniest of ideas. **The classroom is a place where we meet each other where we are, as we are.** And, together, we listen. We share. And we try to understand others' perspectives. In doing so, we participate in a peacemaking practice of cultivating mutual respect for each other as humans.



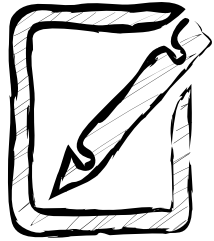
### What happens if I get Covid-19?

- We will all wear masks this semester to hopefully prevent the spread of Covid-19. While Covid can still infect people wearing masks, masks do reduce the spread. As part of I/O, our commitment to each other is to do no harm. Masking will help us accomplish that goal.
- Inside Students: If you have a temperature of 100.4 or higher or other COVID symptoms, don't come to class. Please ask Sgt. Flannagan to notify me. I will work with you to stay as up-to-date in the course as possible.
- Outside Students: If you have a temperature of 100.4 or higher or other COVID symptoms, don't come to class. Call Health Services immediately. If Health Services informs you that you should isolate and not attend class for multiple days, email me as soon as possible. I will work with you to stay as up-to-date in the course as possible.



### 3. Complete Writing Assignments

Each week, I will task you with writing a Critical Reflection. Why? I want to help you think critically about the experience of learning in an Inside-Out classroom, analyze course readings, *and* reflect on the relationship between the readings and your understanding of peace (and the world) prior to arriving in class. Doing these assignments will enrich our time together and help you engage in active learning.



I'm tasking you with two types of Critical Reflections this semester – Required, which means everyone will do them, and Student Choice, which means you choose which ones you get to write.

#### Required Critical Reflections

##### Critical Reflection #1: What is peace?

Before we really start studying peacemaking, we need to consider what we think “peace” is and the relationship between religious traditions and peace. In a 2-3-page critical reflection, explain your understanding of peace in response to five questions. The detailed assignment, and grading rubric, is in your I/O folder.



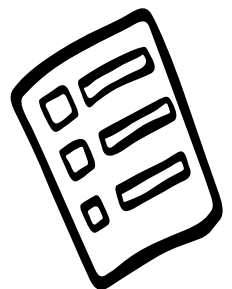
##### Final Critical Reflection

Students will write a 3–4 page final critical reflection. This assignment is informed by Inside-Out best practices that aim to help students think critically about the experience of learning in an Inside-Out classroom and reflect on what they want to say to each other as we complete this course. I will give you the final critical reflection assignment in your I/O folder on November 17.

#### Student Choice Critical Reflections #2–#6

Students will write **three** additional Critical Reflections; you can choose to write any of the Critical Reflections #2–#6 this term.

You can skip two critical reflections during weeks #2–#6. If you are unhappy with a critical reflection grade, you can do an extra critical reflection to grade replace the lower grade. The full assignment for Student Choice Critical Reflections #2–#6 is in your I/O folder.



## Major Project

Imagine that the members from the Division of Policy, Research, and Legislative Affairs Committee at the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services want to learn more about the ways people practice their religion while incarcerated. To learn more, they asked you to study one of the five major world religions – Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, or Islam – and offer them a presentation about that tradition. The committee wants you to present on two major topics: a brief informational overview of the religious tradition and how religious practitioners build peace by practicing that tradition. Ultimately, the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services seeks to support people who wish to practice their religion while incarcerated in Virginia. You will give a 20-minute presentation to the Division of Policy, Research, and Legislative Affairs Committee on November 17 in class.



\*Note: The Divisions of Policy, Research, and Legislative Affairs Committee members will not attend our class. You will only give a presentation to our class members. You should, however, approach this project as if they might one day see your work.

To prepare you for the main presentation, this assignment is divided into two parts:

1. Peacemaking Report (Individual Assign.) – Due October 27
2. Presentation (Group Assignment) – Due November 17



I will include a detailed version of the Major Project assignment in your I/O folder in October, before Fall Break. We'll spend time in class working on the Peacemaking Report, as well as the group presentation.

## 4. Final Exam

Inside-Out requires we spend the final class of the semester separately to process the experience (much like class #1). This processing and debriefing session counts as the final exam for this course and is the only exam in this course. Everyone is required to attend their session.



- Outside Students: 2:00 pm on Monday, December 12 in West 319
- Inside Students: 1:00 pm on Thursday, December 15 in classroom.



# Course Grading

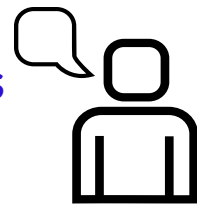


Assignments	Points Possible	Your Points
<b>Active Learning</b>		
Syllabus Agreement	5	_____
Active Learning	50	_____
<b>Critical Reflections: Required</b>		
Critical Reflection #1: Peace?	50	_____
Final Critical Reflection	50	_____
<b>Critical Reflections: Your Choice</b>		
Critical Reflections #2-#6 *Choose three*	150	_____
<b>Peacemaking Project</b>		
Peacemaking Report Draft + Peer Review	10	
Peacemaking Report	125	_____
Presentation	50	_____
<b>Final Exam</b>	10	_____
<b>Total</b>	500	_____

## Grade Distribution

Points Range	Percentage Range	Letter Grade
465+	93%+	A
450-464	90-92.9%	A-
435-449	87-89.9%	B+
415-434	83-86.9%	B
400-414	80-82.9%	B-
385-399	77-79.9%	C+
365-384	73-76.9%	C
350-364	70-72.9%	C-
335-349	67-69.9%	D+
315-334	63-66.9%	D
300-314	60-62.9%	D-
below 300	below 60	F

## Answers to Important Questions

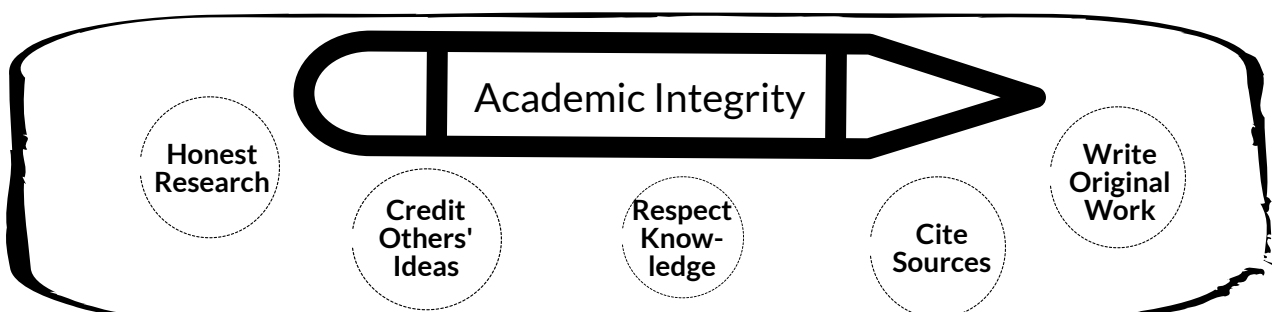


### How many hours a week should I plan to spend on this class?

- 12 hours. Good news! That counts the three hours we are in class together.
- Why 12 hours? RC's Academic policy requires students to complete 12 hours of work each week per one-unit course.
- Why is this important for you? The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (RC's regional body that accredits courses as part of the U.S. Department of Education) recognizes this class as a valid college course.
- Every student reads and writes at a different pace. With that in mind, I've tried to keep reading assignments under 60 pages a week. It might take you a bit more or a bit less each week. If you consistently spend over 12 hours each week on this course, please let me know. I might have some tricks or tips to help you.

### What is Academic Integrity and why should I care about it?

- As a guiding principle in education, Academic Integrity (AI) enables instructors and learners (so, all of us) to practice honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. The International Center for Academic Integrity adds a sixth value: courage. Practicing AI allows us to appreciate others' works, recognize that work by citing it, eliminate cheating, and offers learners the ability to grow in confidence in their own work by responsibly acknowledging the work of others.
- Why should you care? As our VP and Dean of the College Kathy Wolfe writes, "Roanoke College is committed to producing resourceful, informed, and responsible citizens and sees an integral connection between the intellectual and ethical dimensions of our educational program. By valuing academic integrity and by practicing the virtue of honesty in all that we do, we honor those who have gone before us at Roanoke College, and we help strengthen the character of those here now and those who will come after us ("Letter from the Dean," RC AI Handbook)." That means RC officially requires everyone to practice AI; AI is my responsibility and yours.
- Why should you care on a personal level? You'll need to act with integrity throughout your life. Your family or friends will ask you to make hard decisions in the future; you'll need integrity for your friends and family to trust you to make those choices. A future employer will assign you a task that requires honesty, genuine work and effort. Building AI skills now will prepare you for a lifetime of future tasks and responsibilities.





## How do I practice Academic Integrity in this class?

- Individually complete all written assignments. Turn in your own work.
- For the Critical Reflections and the Peacemaking Report, I encourage you to ask others to read and provide feedback. Ask others if your paper is clear, if the thesis is strong and well-supported, or if they see grammar or similar mistakes. Everyone's writing is improved by such feedback. But do not let others write for you or correct your errors. That would undermine your learning and integrity, and is a violation of Academic Integrity.
- Acknowledge the work of others by citing your sources. In written work, we'll use MLA. Citing might challenge or even confuse you at times. I've provided examples of how to cite in MLA format in your I/O folder. In discussion, say the name of the person whose idea you mention or want to enhance. We'll practice both of these together all semester. Don't worry.
- If you have any questions, please ask. I'm happy to assist.

## What if I cannot turn my work in on time?

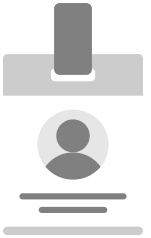
How to handle late work is a difficult part of I/O courses given where we meet (the Roanoke County jail) and how infrequent we meet (once a week). That said, my plan for late work:

- Critical Reflection #1: I will accept this CR one week late if you just cannot get it completed in time for class. If you do turn it in late, you forfeit 10 points on the final score. Why? You'll benefit from hearing our conversations on day one and I want to be equitable to the students who did not get to hear our conversations.
- Critical Reflections #2-#6: I will not accept late CRs #2-#6. Why? First, the CRs help you prepare for class and make you a stronger active learner. Accepting late CRs does not ultimately help you. Second, you can skip two CRs. If you cannot turn one in on time, you'll not impact your larger grade in the class.
- Final Critical Reflection: I will not accept this late. Why? The final CR includes a letter to your classmates. I need time to get everyone's letters, type them, and print a booklet for everyone. I need your Final CR in hand on December 1 to make that happen.
- Peacemaking Report: I will accept this up to one week late. Why? You need this report to contribute to the group presentation and to be a responsible group member. If you do turn it in late, you forfeit 15 points.
- Final Exam: I will not offer a late final exam. Why? There is not another time to schedule it. The semester ends on December 16 and RC requires me to submit grades no later than December 19. If you get sick, please contact me ASAP and I'll work with you to figure out a possible option for your success to the best of my ability.

Overall: If you struggle to meet deadlines for submitting work, please talk with me as soon as you can. I will do all I can to help you given the uniqueness of our class. You can complete this class, and I'm confident you can do that well.

## What do we call each other in this class?

- We will use first names only in our classroom. Why? We want to remain semi-anonymous and confidential (what is said in class, stays in class; if you do share something about the class, do so in a way that does not identify the speaker). The policy of semi-anonymous and confidential aims to protect students' privacy and safety. Make sure that you only label your I/O folders and papers with your first name, too.
- I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.



## What happens when the class finishes? Can students contact each other?

- No. Beyond the classroom, we do not contact each other. That includes no letters, phone calls, or visiting. When the class ends, our contact ends. As difficult as that is, we want to honor the fundamental rules of Inside-Out about no contact because we want the I/O program to continue for years to come.



# Academic Integrity and Syllabus Agreement

## Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with Roanoke College's Academic Integrity Policy. As members of an academic community, we enjoy intellectual freedoms but also have responsibilities. Doing your own work and properly acknowledging the work of others are bedrock values in an academic community. Therefore, Roanoke College expects to adhere to all of the policies outlined in the Roanoke College Academic Integrity Handbook. Please sign below to indicate you understand the Academic Integrity policies of the College and pledge to uphold those policies this semester.

## Syllabus Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the HNRS 271: Peacemaking in World Religions syllabus. My signature below indicates that I understand all policies associated with this program, and that I pledge to respect and abide by the rules of the Roanoke County Jail, Roanoke College, the Roanoke College Academic Integrity Policy, the Inside-Out Program, and the HNRS 271: Peacemaking in World Religions Course.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please read, sign, date, detach, and return to Dr. Trexler on September 1



## Course Schedule

\*Read assignments for the day they are due. Assignments are submitted in class on the day they are due.

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Read Before Coming to Class</b>	<b>Due in Class</b>
TR	8/25	What is Inside-Out?	Inside Student Orientation	
T	8/30	What is Inside-Out?	Outside Student Orientation (2:00–4:00 pm)	
TR	9/1	What is Inside-Out?	Orientation to Roanoke County Jail with administration (1:00–4:00 pm)	Academic Integrity and Syllabus Agreement
TR	9/8	How do we think about religion in American correctional facilities?	<p><u>Folder:</u> Dammer, Harry. "Religion in Corrections." <i>The Encyclopedia of Crime and Punishment, Vol. 3.</i> (2002), <a href="https://www.scranton.edu/faculty/dammer/ency-religion.shtml">https://www.scranton.edu/faculty/dammer/ency-religion.shtml</a>. Accessed August 4, 2022.</p> <p>Irfan A. Omar and Michael K. Duffy, "Introduction." <i>Peacemaking and the Challenge of Violence in World Religions</i>, edited by Irfan A. Omar and Michael K. Duffey, Wiley &amp; Sons, Ltd, 2015, 1–8.</p>	<p>Critical Reflection #1</p> <p>*Everyone is required to do this reflection.</p>
TR	9/15	What is an Islamic position on nonviolence and peace?	<p><u>Book:</u> Irfan Omar, "Jihad and Nonviolence in the Islamic Tradition," <i>Peacemaking and the Challenge of Violence in World Religions</i>, Wiley &amp; Sons, Ltd, 2015, 9–35.</p> <p><u>Folder:</u> Bailey, Pam. "Islam in prison: menace or savior?" <i>The Medium</i>, February 15, 2020. <a href="https://medium.com/@PamInProgress/islam-in-prison-menace-or-savior-bc4263ab82e3">https://medium.com/@PamInProgress/islam-in-prison-menace-or-savior-bc4263ab82e3</a>. Accessed August 3, 2022.</p> <p><u>Folder:</u> "Primary Sources – Strategies for Peace in Islam"</p>	Critical Reflection #2
TR	9/22	What is a Christian position on nonviolence and peace?	<p>Michael K. Duffy, "Christianity: <i>From Peacemaking to Violence and Home Again</i>," <i>Peacemaking and the Challenge of Violence</i>, Wiley &amp; Sons, Ltd, 2015, 47–70.</p> <p><u>Folder:</u> Moore, Lee A. "Stealing Grace." <i>Christianity Today</i>, October 2018, pp. 59–61.</p> <p><u>Folder:</u> "Primary Sources – Strategies for Peace in Christianity"</p>	Critical Reflection #3
TR	9/29	What is a Jewish position on nonviolence and peace?	<p>Joshua Ezra Burns, "Jewish Ideologies of Peace and Peacemaking," <i>Peacemaking and the Challenge of Violence</i>, Wiley &amp; Sons, Ltd, 2015, 83–106.</p> <p><u>Folder:</u> Rapfogel, William. "My Passover in Prison: Celebrating freedom in a place of bondage." <i>The Marshall Project</i>, April 18, 2019. <a href="https://www.themarshallproject.org/2019/04/18/my-passover-in-prison">https://www.themarshallproject.org/2019/04/18/my-passover-in-prison</a>. Accessed July 21, 2022.</p> <p><u>Folder:</u> "Primary Sources – Strategies for Peace in Judaism"</p>	Critical Reflection #4

TR	10/6	What is a Buddhist position on nonviolence and peace?	<p>Eleanor Rosch, “ ‘Peace is the Strongest Force in the World.’ <i>Buddhist Paths to Peacemaking and Nonviolence</i>,” Wiley &amp; Sons, Ltd, 2015, 142–172.</p> <p><u>Folder</u>: Alsop, Peter. “The Prison Monk: An interview with Buddhist activist and former prisoner Fleet Maull.” <i>Tricycle Magazine</i>, Spring 2004. <a href="https://tricycle.org/magazine/fleet-maull/">https://tricycle.org/magazine/fleet-maull/</a>. Accessed August 4, 2022 and “Free in Captivity.” <i>Tricycle Magazine</i>, Winter 2017. <a href="https://tricycle.org/magazine/free-in-captivity/">https://tricycle.org/magazine/free-in-captivity/</a>. Accessed July 21, 2022.</p> <p><u>Folder</u>: “Primary Sources – Strategies for Peace in Buddhism”</p>	Critical Reflection #5
TR	10/13	What is a Hindu position on nonviolence and peace?	<p>Kalpna Mohanty, “Peacemaking and Nonviolence in the Hindu Tradition,” <i>Peacemaking and the Challenge of Violence</i>, Wiley &amp; Sons, Ltd, 2015, 178–199.</p> <p><u>Folder</u>: Excerpts from Satchidananda Ashram Yogaville, “Satchidananda Prison Project – Testimonials.” <i>Yogaville.org</i>. <a href="https://www.yogaville.org/discover/satchidananda-ashram-prison-project/satchidananda-prison-project-testimonials/">https://www.yogaville.org/discover/satchidananda-ashram-prison-project/satchidananda-prison-project-testimonials/</a>. Accessed August 5, 2022.</p> <p><u>Folder</u>: “Primary Sources – Strategies for Peace in Hinduism” and Skim Satchindananda, Sri Swami. “Converting Prison Life into Ashram Life,” <i>Bound to Be Free: The Liberating Power of Prison Yoga</i>, Integral Yoga Publications, 2010, pp. 195–220.</p>	Critical Reflection #6
<b>Fall Break</b>				
TR	10/27	Peer Review	<u>In Class</u> : Peer Revision + Group Work + Final Ceremony Design	Rough Draft: Peacemaking Report
TR	11/3	How to give a presentation	<p><u>Folder</u>: “How to give a presentation”</p> <p><u>In Class</u>: Group Work + Final Ceremony Design</p>	Final Peacemaking Report
TR	11/10	Group Work	<u>In Class</u> : Group Work + Final Ceremony Design	
TR	11/17	Group Presentations	Group Presentations	Group Presentations
<b>Thanksgiving</b>				
TR	12/1	The Celebration	In Class: Final Ceremony	Final Reflection
TR	12/8	Final Things	Saying Goodbye	
M	12/12	Final Exam	Outside Students – 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm (Block 11 Exam Time)	
TR	12/15	Final Exam	Inside Students – 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	

## **Ceremony of Completion: Inside-Out**

**I: Welcome:** Dr. Trexler

\*Sheriff Orange

**II: Introduction- Zach, Devin**

Devin: Good afternoon my name is Devin.

Zach: And my name is Zach

Devin: We would like to welcome you to the final ceremony for our class on peacemaking in world religions. Thank you all for being here today.

Zach: During this ceremony, we want to share some peacemaking practices that we have learned about and done together as a class with you. And we also want to share what this class and the Inside-Out experience has meant to us.

Devin: To get us started, Nade, Devin, Zachary, and Bolt will lead us through some yoga poses.

Zach: I know what you are thinking – yoga poses?

Devin: We invite you to try it to the best of your ability. We do have a point with this activity.

**III: Yoga - Nade, Devin, Zachary, Bolt**

Nade: Yoga is a physical practice used by many Hindus to promote peace. Yoga involves the use of movement and breathing techniques to express teachings and stories. One example of a set of yoga poses is the Warrior poses, which relates to the story of the Hindu god Shiva. Shiva learned that it is best for us to transcend our anger, rather than letting it grow and take on a life of its own.

We will begin with the sun salutation as it will help warm up our muscles. Warming up is important because it helps prevent muscles from tearing or ripping. Please stand up and spread out as much as you can around the room. (pause)

1. For the sun salutation, start by placing your feet parallel, either together or a comfortable distance apart. Join your palms and raise in front of your chest. Exhale.
2. Inhale. Lock your thumbs, stretch your arms out and up alongside your ears. Stretch up and gently bend back from just below the shoulder blades.

3. Exhale. Hinge forward from the hips, keeping the back flat, arms alongside the ears, knees soft. Lengthen the spine, and relax the head and arms towards the floor.

Now for the warrior poses:

For Warrior I, begin by standing up straight. Now step your right foot four feet in front of you, toes pointing to the front of the room. Bend your right knee into a lunge, with your ankle stacked over your heel. Your left leg should be straight behind you with the left foot turned in at approximately 45 degrees. Raise both arms above your head, keeping them straight. Squeeze shoulder blades down and together, lifting your chin and gazing at your palms overhead. Stay here for two to four deep breathes. [3 deep breaths later] Lower your arms and bring your feet back together.

Now repeat on the left side. Step your left foot forward, and bend your left knee, making sure your ankle is over your heel and your right foot is turned in. Now raise both arms and squeeze your shoulder blades down and together. Look up at your palms and focus on maintaining this position for two to four deep breathes. [3 deep breaths later] Now lower your arms and come back to standing.

For Warrior Two, make sure you have enough room to stretch your arms out without hitting your neighbor. Stand with your legs wide, feet parallel and about three feet apart. Raise both arms out from your sides, keeping them straight and parallel to the ground. Keeping your shoulders down and back, turn your left foot out about 90 degrees. Bend the left leg into a lunge so your knee is stacked above your ankle. Turn your head to the left in line with your left arm to gaze over your hand. Stay here for three to six deep breathes. [3-6 breaths later]

Now, keeping your arms out straight, come back to standing and turn your left foot to the front of the room and your right foot out 90 degrees. Bend your right leg into a lunge, making sure your knee is above your ankle, and turn your head to the right to gaze over your right hand. Stay in this position for three to six deep breathes. [3-6 deep breaths later]. Slowly come back to center and lower your arms.

Well done. Give yourselves a round of applause.

Devin: One translation of the word “yoga” is “unity.” By performing yoga together, we can achieve unity with each other. We decided to include this peacemaking practice at the beginning of our ceremony today because it reminds us of the Inside-Out goal of seeing each other as equals.

Bolt: When we did this activity in class, we found that we felt a stronger sense of community as we all were doing the same actions together. Doing yoga also requires vulnerability and trusting each other, being willing to fail and laugh with each other. We wanted to invite you all into this space with us.

Zachary: Yoga can also be a peacemaking practice for individuals. It requires physical and mental discipline, as we have seen. But it also encourages us to center ourselves, breathe,

and focus on being in the moment. Yoga requires that we concentrate on what we're doing, not other concerns or worries we might have.

Zach: Nice job. I think we all have found that yoga is a little more peaceful for some of us than others. Next we'll share a bit more about how we've discussed the concept of peace this semester.

#### **IV: What is Peace? - Devin, Quantez, Joe, Bolt, Maryam, Zach, Nade**

Devin: In our first assignment, a critical reflection, Dr. T asked us what we thought peace meant. We spent our first full class together sharing ideas and defining the term for us as a class. Some of the students will share excerpts of their individual responses:

Q: Peace is getting along and being able to agree to disagree with your family or partner or colleague. Also peace is when all is happiness for and being- if only momentarily- carefree.

[Religion] can contribute to peace by allowing one to know it's okay to go outside tradition sometimes. We pull up Joyce Myers on YouTube every Sunday and Chromecast it to our television and listen to her preach that way.

Joe: Most people consider talking about politics and religion a taboo subject. Usually, keeping quiet about these subjects is often smart to maintain peace. However, in this class, I have found that discussing religion in class has actually increased peace. People in the class are very civil about it and have been willing to discuss topics even when we disagree. I have been peaceful in class and feel closer to my classmates after discussing peace.

Bolt: "Peace" conjures a safe place or a quiet place in my mind's eye. As I chew on the definition I think that I have been conditioned to think of it (peace) in a passive sense, non aggressive. So I'm not sure that that part of the definition is totally mine. Also, a sense of "getting along" the word gives me.

I think that religious traditions *can* contribute to peace, or at least my definition of it. I'm not sure that it is a certitude that religious traditions can contribute to peace in and of themselves. I do know that bits of knowledge that are handed down from generation to generation, whether true or false, can be received as true by the receiving generation, and lived out in such a way by that generation that it contributes to the peace of others.

Maryam: Growing up in Pakistan, Eid has been one of my favorite holidays. Let's be clear, Eid - ul - fitr is one of my favorite holidays, not Eid - ul - azha. Eid - ul - azha is not fun for a five-year-old who has gotten attached to the goat she's been taking care of for a month for it to be slaughtered. It is especially not fun to hold the insides of the goat and ration them into zip-lock bags. This is not a peaceful holiday, and it is certainly an Islamic tradition that ruins peace. Blood stains the driveway for weeks and is a constant reminder of my beloved goat. People on social media hate on Islam for this tradition and I cannot help but feel



shame at the role I have played in disrupting the peace of the goat, the community, and the world. Although...

When the doorbell rings, I run out to give meat-filled zip-lock bags to the group of unhoused people, people living in slums, and underpaid workers. Their smiles seem to brighten up the world and the blood-stained driveway brings nothing but peace. Even those who are not Muslims bless us for the weeks full of food they will have. When we go to offer Eid prayers, everyone is a peaceful community, full of love, smiles, and invitations to Eid parties. One day in the future, the realization will hit me that a singular goat brought so much peace into the world and had a painless death. On this day, I know how everyone can do their part in bringing a little bit of peace into the world – they can ask for help and shut down their egos. It is simply the realization of accepting others as they are and not taking offense when someone is different than us.

Zach: In summary, the main ideas that emerged from our individual reflections were:

1. Peace is a state of mind that involves everyone coming together and agreeing to listen, communicate, understand, and be compassionate toward all.
2. There are two types of peace: personal and interpersonal. Personal peace refers to the peace inside you that makes you happy and where you feel on top of the world. Interpersonal peace refers to a lack of conflict between people, families, faiths, and countries. It is the security that comes from this that we defined as "peace."
3. Peace is a state of unification and harmony with oneself, the community, and the environment that is open and accepting of differences.

Nade: Once we realized how we understood peace on our own, Dr. T shared with us a theory of peace as described by the founder of peace and conflict studies, John Galtung.

"Peace, like violence, is a relation between two or more parties. The parties may be persons, groups, states or nations, regions, or civilizations pulling in different directions—or causing conflict inside them—as dilemmas. Peace is a property of the relation, not of the parties.

*Negative peace* is the absence of violence... *Positive peace* involves moving from indifferent to positive, harmonious relations..... Violence breeds violence in a vicious circle, the task being to create an alternative, virtuous circle with peace breeding peace."

Devin: Throughout our class, we've based our conversations around these main concepts of peace – both positive and negative, personal and communal. Specifically, we've considered the ways religious traditions aid or hinder personal and communal, negative and positive peace.

Zach: On that note of personal and communal peace, Lily, Regino, Halie, and Quantez will share a Jewish practice that we discussed.

## **V. Mussar- Lily, Regino, Halie, Quantez**

[Big sticky notes up at the front; one for “struggled with,” one for “shown,” one for list of traits]

Lily: Mussar is a peacemaking practice in Judaism. Specifically, it is a Jewish spiritual practice that gives concrete instructions on how to live a meaningful and ethical life. It aims to cultivate inner virtues. Mussar involves overcoming inner obstacles in order to become your best self for the sake of others.

Halie: In class, we read about how some Jewish chaplains in California prisons are teaching Mussar to Jewish and non-Jewish people to help them cultivate peace. You’ll see that we did this as a class. We would like to invite you to participate in a modified version with us as well.

Regino: One way to practice Mussar is spiritual journaling. Take a look at these characteristics, as central to creating peace: self-love, truthfulness, generosity, patience, humility, empathy, helping your enemy, commitment to change

Quantez: Take a minute to reflect on these characteristics. Which have you shown in the last week? Which have you struggled with?

[Sharing- from the 4 members of this group]

Quantez: Write one trait you have shown on the first sticky note and one you have struggled with on the other. After you’ve written the words down, stick the one you’ve struggled with on this wall, and the one you’ve shown on this wall.

Lily: As you can see, we have all struggled with a wide range of things. Seeing that everyone is struggling with something can help us foster empathy and understanding. But we also struggled with a lot of the same things. Acknowledging this can help us see ourselves reflected in others.

Halie: Another important aspect of Mussar is that it encourages us to look at the good as well as the bad. By reflecting on what we’ve struggled with we can try to improve our behavior or be more purposeful in our actions. But it is also important to acknowledge when we do good or show these traits. We can celebrate our accomplishments and when we acknowledge our positive actions we become more aware of that behavior and try to continue embodying that trait.

Regino: Mussar contributes to peace by encouraging us to start being more aware of and modifying our individual behavior. The more we can cultivate virtues, the more we can contribute to building a better society for us all.

Zach: Inside-Out invites participants to think about what it means to live in a society together.

Devin: We thought it might be helpful for some of us to share with you our reflections on what we thought about each other before we started this class and what we think now.

## **VI. Interlude: Before I thought ..... Now, I think .....- Johnny, Taylor**

### Johnny

In the beginning, I was in a defense mode. I felt as if I was there to be judged by everyone from the outside. Or even as an exhibit to be looked upon as if “this is what can happen to you if you make the wrong choices.” But after the very first class, I felt a genuine kindness from Lydia and Dr. Trexler that began to break down my walls. Then after a few classes I realized that I was wrong about the class altogether, that these ladies and gentlemen are very kind, intelligent, open-minded individuals that are here for the same reasons we all are. Education and the experience of something a little different than most. I believe we have all profited and grown from this experience as human beings and for that I thank you all.

### Taylor

Before I started this class, I honestly experienced some apprehension. I get nervous every semester when starting new classes and interacting with new peers, however, this was a class that extends far beyond the normal classroom experience to say the least. When it came time for our first class and meeting our inside classmates, I was excited, but a little anxious and of course our first task was one despised by almost every single student I’ve ever met: ice breakers. I feel like I can speak for everyone when I say it was definitely uncomfortable at first. Personally, I feared that it would be difficult to connect with my inside classmates and that I would say something wrong or offensive, and initially, I censored my questions and responses as a result of this. But, as the conversations went along with each of my classmates, I felt more comfortable and as if the elephant in the room had drifted away, and we were just normal people interacting and having a conversation. As this semester has progressed, I have found myself getting more comfortable with my classmates, which may come as a surprise considering that I do not talk much in class. And trust me, this has been joked about with my peers. However, despite my lack of talking, I am always observing and listening to the words and mannerisms of my classmates. After every class, I find myself reflecting on the various conversations that take place, and there is always one concept that sticks with me, and it is the misconceptions of incarcerated individuals constructed by society. As I have previously mentioned, I spend most of my time in class observing. Therefore, I have seen firsthand how this misconception is false. In all honesty, I have never experienced a more equal and open-minded classroom environment. Additionally, one that is as meaningful, full of revelations, respectful conversations, and genuine interactions as this one. I have always been one to believe in second chances and forgiveness, but this experience has shown me that my inside classmates are just people who made a mistake...and this mistake does not make them bad people. My inside classmates do not lack morality, intellectual ability, kindness, and the other qualities associated with us outside students. As outsiders, we are automatically

presumed to possess these qualities. However, I have seen that my inside classmates possess these qualities and express them in a more genuine manner than I have ever experienced on the outside. Overall, this class has changed me not only in the regard of peacemaking, but also as a person. It has made me reconsider how I want to live my life and treat other people and for that, I am forever grateful to my inside classmates. Thank you for making me a better person.

Zach: Thank you for those reflections. It *is* really easy to have misperceptions about people – and religions. To demonstrate, Zach, Devin, John, and Taylor will discuss the #myjihad campaign.

## **VII. #myjihad – Zach, Devin, John, Taylor**

Devin: A misperception that people have about Islam centers on the word jihad. A lot of people think this word means “holy war.” Extremist groups claim that they are engaging in a jihad, which is why many people think “holy war” is the definition of jihad.

John: But it is not. In Arabic, the word jihad just means “struggle” or “to strive or exert effort.” Professor Abu Al Fadl explains that jihad is a broad Islamic concept that includes struggle against evil inclinations within oneself, struggle to improve the quality of life in society, struggle in the battlefield for self-defense, or fighting against oppression. Many of the things people value like “knowledge, health, beauty, truth, and justice are not possible without jihad – without sustained and diligent hard work (7).”

Taylor: American Muslims are alarmed that groups like ISIS have hijacked the term jihad. American Muslims are also concerned with growing anti-Muslim sentiment in the U.S.

In response, some American Muslims with the Council for American-Islamic Relations are trying to reclaim the word from extremists and anti-Muslim groups. In 2013, they launched the #myjihad campaign. Their goal was to demonstrate that jihad is a nuanced concept and to build stronger relationships with Americans of other or no faiths.

Zach: Across major cities, #myjihad images ran on billboards and public transportation. Some of the ads said things like ““My Jihad is to build friendships across the aisle. What's yours?”. Another said, “My Jihad is to not take the simple things in life for granted. What's yours?”

Devin: Many Muslims today see their struggle, their jihad, as cultivating peace within themselves and in their communities by building relationships. The Council for American-Islamic Relations chose to run #my jihad pictures on public transportation to reach people and better educate communities about the term. They also wanted to invite other people to think about what their struggle, or their jihad, was.

John: Per the campaign invitation, Dr. Trexler asked us to think what our jihad was. We made our own #myjihad posters that you’ll see around the room today. We now invite you to write your own #myjihad.

Taylor: For many Muslims, jihad is actually a peacemaking practice because they struggle to be their best selves by living physically, mentally, and spiritually healthy lives. They also strive to live well with others, building communities where everyone can live well together.

Devin: We also talked about how salat, or prayer, is a peacemaking practice in Islam.

John: Most people know that Muslims pray five times a day. But there are a lot of different ways that Muslims can pray. One of them is called Tasbih (tas-be-ha). A Tasbih (tas-be-ha) prayer aims to glorify God.

Taylor: To recite the Tasbih (tas-be-ha), a person says three specific phrases. Each phrase is repeated 33 times, in reference to the 99 names for God recorded in the Qur'an.

Devin:

Subhan Allah (Glory to Allah)

Al-hamdu lillah (Praise be to God)

Allahu Akbar (God is the greatest)

John: To keep track of how many times you recite a line, Muslims count using prayer beads. Some prayer beads have 33 beads. Others have 99.

Zach: Islam is a monotheistic religion focused on Allah who is the giver of life. Islam means "submission," so Muslims are people who submit to God. Through prayer, Muslims demonstrate they submit to Allah with their bodies through physical motions and through their words.

Taylor: For many Muslims, prayer is a peacemaking act because the individual is submitting to the will of Allah and making sure their relationship with Allah is on what the Qur'an calls "the straight path."

Zach: When Muslims prayer together, they stand in lines, reciting the same words directed toward the same God. They create a community, moving together in the same way. These physical motions and words mimic the kind of global, harmonious, just community they strive to create in the world with all of humanity.

Devin Just like Muslims create a sense of community in united prayer, our class has created a community this semester as we learned to listen to and trust each other.

Zach: While we might live on different sides of these walls, we all got a great deal out of this experience. Several of our students will share what this experience has meant to them.

### **VIII. Interlude: What has the Inside-Out experience meant to you? – Halie, Bolt, John, Lily, Devin, Zach**

Halie: Inside/Out is one of the most worthwhile experiences to be a part of, and allows for a new perspective. The class allows for a push, outside of your comfort zone, while having in-depth personal discussions with new people.

Bolt: It made learning an enjoyable experience.

John: This class does mean a lot to me. I have enjoyed learning about all the religions we have discussed. It has also brought a sense of normalcy by breaking up and disrupting our everyday incarcerated living standard. So, I have enjoyed my time with the class and I appreciate being able to join you guys.

Lily: The Inside-Out experience has been life-changing for me. It's hard to envision what life will be like after this class. Not spending 1-4 with this group on Thursdays will absolutely rock my world when it happens. This experience has been something I look forward to every week. It's broadened my understanding, not only with how we create peace in the world, but also provided insight about the prison experience that is shielded from the public. This class will serve as a foundation for the rest of the work I will do in my life. When I started this semester, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. But I genuinely wouldn't give this experience for the world.

Zach: It has made me more appreciative of hearing different ideas from those with different experiences.

Devin: I've changed my perspective on accepting others' beliefs that are different than my own. I've opened my mind to different cultures as well as expanded my awareness towards the men and women who will lead our communities.

(pause)

In thinking about communal peace, Bobby, Maryam, and Eric will share the Christian practice of Taizé .

### **IX. Taizé – Bobby, Maryam, Eric**

Bobby: In the Christian tradition, Jesus lives out *shalom*, the Hebrew word for peace. Christian ethics professor Michael Duffey explains that shalom means an inner peace and a collective, communal peace.

Maryam: In John 14:27, Jesus shows inner peace in saying “Peace is my parting gift to you, my peace, such as the world cannot give. Set your troubled hearts at rest and banish your fears.”

Eric: Jesus also lives out a commitment to communal peace. As the messiah, Christians believe that Jesus aimed to bring about a universal peace between humanity and God.

Bobby: We talked about a variety of ways that Christians practice peacemaking – Personal acceptance that Jesus the Christ is the savior, Communion/Eucharist, reading the Bible, prayer, interfaith dialogue, and music. In class, Dr. T asked us to participate in a peacemaking practice most of us did not know about – Taizé. Taizé is a form of music known for its simple, meditative character.

Maryam: This form of music started at the Taizé Community, an ecumenical religious community in France founded in 1940. This community welcomes people from all Christian traditions all over the world to come live together in prayer, hospitality, and peace.

Eric: Today, over 100 thousand pilgrims come annually for prayer, mediation, Bible study, and community work. Their goal is to live in kindness, simplicity, reconciliation, and peace.

Maryam: One way they do that is by chanting or singing Taizé. Dr. T let us listen to some Taizé so we would have some examples. Some Taizé are based on biblical verses like John 14:27. “My peace, I give you. My peace I give you. Trouble not your hearts. My peace I give you. My peace I give you. Be not afraid.”

Bobby: Other Taizé are just one sentence. For example, “Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

Maryam: Dr. T asked us to write a one to three line Taizé that might help us to cultivate peace:

God grant me understanding

I need to know how my actions make them feel

God gave me my standing

I want to show my friends how to heal

Eric: Taizé is a form of meditative music that encourages people to concentrate on God and not the world around us. The music and repetition of the words establishes a rhythm that helps some Christians focus on what is most important to them – God. Through the practice of Taizé, some Christians experience an inner peace by focusing on the divine and the spiritual connection they have with God. When practiced in community, Christians can also experience a connection to each other as their voices unite. Singing in the same rhythm and harmony offers Christians hope for the unity and peace that they want to create in the world

Devin: Now some students will share how Inside-Out has changed them.

## **X. How has Inside-Out changed you? – Evan, Devin, Ethan, Quantez, Regino, Zachary**

Evan: It has helped me with self confidence, a positive reflection of self, outlook on a better life.

Devin: It has changed my way of thinking about different religions and has helped me with anxiety and social problems.

Ethan: I have become more comfortable around people I haven't met before. I am more outgoing. I have become more aware of how everyone can be a good person, even if they were unlucky or made a mistake.

Quantez: It's changed my outlook on viewing or how I view other religions. I'm more open to things I don't know or understand.

Regino: I can see everyone as a group.

Zachary: I think it has given me a great appreciation for the inside students and it has validated my belief that we are so much more similar than we are different, which I found really powerful.

Zach: Thank you for those reflections. For our final peacemaking practice, Evan, Ethan, Johnny, and Joe will be explaining and leading us through meditation.

## **XI. Meditation – Evan, Ethan, Johnny, Joe**

Joe: One peacemaking practice in Buddhism is meditation. You might think it is easy; but some variations are easier than others. We tried a breathing meditation where we just focused on our breath for 20 minutes. We did like laying on yoga mats, but just thinking about breathing did not work for me. I could not stop my thoughts from jumping around! That meditation was not at all peaceful for a lot of us.

Evan: The Buddha teaches that we have “monkey-minds.” By this he meant that our minds are always filled with thoughts and feelings like monkeys that jump around, screech, and chatter endlessly. All these monkeys try to get our attention all the time. Desire – especially desire for what we want and what we fear dominate our thoughts.

Ethan: Buddha taught that meditating could help people calm the mind. By meditating, people can find personal peace. By helping us focus on the present, meditation enables people to be here in this specific moment rather than letting the mind control you.

Johnny: In class, Lydia also asked us to try a kindness meditation. We found this meditation a bit more peaceful than the breathing meditation. We also practiced a third form of meditation focusing on a specific mantra or poem. Dr. Trexler shared a mantra from the monk Thich Nhat Hanh, the founder of Engaged Buddhism.



Breathing in, I calm my body.

Breathing out, I smile.

Dwelling in the present moment I know this is a wonderful moment.

Joe: In *Being Peace*, Hanh shares that through this meditation, he focuses on being present in the moment. Taking a deep breath helps Hanh to pause and focus. He can calm his body and his mind.

Evan: Smiles might seem weird in meditation. But smiling lets you relax your face and your nervous system. It lets you take control over the moment.

Ethan: If we can be present right now, in this moment, then we are not thinking about the future or the past. We can know where we are. For many of us, we are always thinking about the future. We worry about our jobs, our families, our schoolwork. We never really live because we are never present. Hanh asks us to dwell in the moment so we can be fully alive.

Johnny: The only moment is this one. Being present, truly present, creates peace. Calming. Smiling. Present moment. Wonderful moment.

Joe: Dr. T invited us to write our own meditative poem in small groups.

Evan: One of our groups created this meditation:

No thoughts, head empty

Wash away suffering

Breathe peace into us

Ethan: Ultimately, the Buddha taught his students how to meditate to tame the monkeys in their minds. It is useless to fight them or try to ignore them. Instead, Buddha asks people to meditate and be present by focusing on breathing, or a mantra, or kindness. By doing that, you can start to make peace for yourself because you quiet the mind. If we all can do that individually, then collectively we can start to treat each other in more peaceful, kind ways.

Johnny: We would like to do the kindness meditation activity with you now. Get comfortable and close your eyes.

\*pause – count to ten silently\*

Johnny: First, concentrate on yourself. Specifically, think about your good qualities and to think positively about yourself.

\*pause – count to ten silently\*

Joe: Next, think about somebody you like. Think kind thoughts about the person.

\*pause – count to ten silently\*

Evan: Think about someone you haven't talked to in a while. Think about how you could reconnect.

\*pause – count to ten silently\*

Ethan: Finally, think about someone you feel negatively toward. Think about their good qualities.

\*pause – count to ten silently\*

Johnny: After participating in active learning like this, we reflect on how the practice might create peace for religious and non-religious practitioners. We invite you to reflect with us. Please raise your hand if you'd like to share aloud. How did this exercise make you think about yourself and others?

\*Pause for people to share\*

Joe: Why might a meditation like this cultivate peace?

\*Pause for people to share\*

Dr. Trexler: We appreciate the opportunity to share with you some of the various ways we've explored peacemaking practices in world religions. I hope you can tell that we've spent a lot of time this semester laughing, listening, and learning together.

It is with honor that I present the President of Roanoke College, Dr. Frank Shushok, to share a few words of congratulations and to present certificates of completion.

## **XII. Presentation of Certificates**

Words of Encouragement and Congratulations: President Shushok

Certificate Presentation

\*Shake Hands: President Shushok, Dr. T, Dean Wolfe, Lydia

Dr. Trexler: Congratulations, students! We are so proud of your accomplishments this semester.

Zach: We understand that a closing ceremony would not be complete without some spoken word. Bobby and Eric will share what they thought before this experience, and how they feel now.

### **XIII. What I thought then ..... what I think now ..... Bobby, Eric**

#### Bobby

I went into this class with excitement about outside the class learning. I was all on board with the liberal arts perspective, and I saw this class as the epitome of a philosophy. This was my chance to use the personal skills that truly mattered to me.

I was a kid who grew up in the 'burbs of New Jersey. That company was great, but my worldview was a little blurry. My town, it was a bubble to the truth. Kids didn't watch for cars when they chased balls across the street, nor did they stick to the sidewalk when riding bikes. I grew up protected but still wanting to know more. This trend continued when I came to college, my bubble expanded but I was still inside. That New Hall bed protected me at night.

That first day of class went about as well as we all could have hoped. We put our guards up as the guards stood by. People were closed off on all sides. We tried to break the ice by playing nice, but we lacked depth so we didn't take any steps.

I took a leap of faith in week three when I asked Dr. Trexler, "Can you give me this chance to open up and express?" At that moment I took my first step, I locked myself in for social obligation.

The next week I came back with my paper in hand and I expressed. I jumped with the hope that these strangers would catch me. That very same class, someone else saw me leap and I helped them progress. They showed faith and opened up to the class about something personal, and for that I am grateful for them. Pretty soon everyone else jumped too! Our cannon balls broke that ice and we caught ourselves swimming.

A couple of classes later, we had some new students, but the vibe was different. The energy the room emitted was captivating, and those initial conversations were some of the most open talks I have ever had.

Beyond the ideological debates, besides the educational, barring the graded assignments, lies the cornerstone of this class.

This class succeeds not because of religious content, it succeeds because we are a collective. After this class we will go back to being strangers with these people. If we ever see the around we are told to not approach. But for this one brief stint of time, we made room for each other. We allowed each other to be vulnerable about the good and the bad, about what gets us out of bed and what drives us.

This class gives me hope not because of what I learned about religion, but what I have learned about people. People that I love and respect. This class made me better at being human, at connecting and expressing.

I thank all my friends for accepting me for who I am, and for listening to my story. I have truly loved hearing all of yours and I wish you the best even if we don't meet again. What we have is temporary but it is beautiful and I am so glad this happened.

Eric:

The first day of class, I gave you all the "judge's smile"  
The one I give to let you know your character is on trial

I thought...who were you to come in here looking down on me?  
If I'd have had a good life like y'all, we'd all be free

I bet y'all think I'm crazy, being covered in these tattoos?  
But, don't judge me, 'til you've walked a mile in my shoes

After a while I started to notice my own thoughts, being expressed through your voices  
I started sincerely hoping you'll never suffer my life's choices

Every week, I found that I admire and respect you all;  
And that building peace has definitely been fun with y'all

By our last day of class, I think I found what I truly came to find!  
So, I thank you all for helping me find...my peace of mind

I hope the benefits of this experience forever and always lingers  
And you'll always remember you can find peace with those Spirit Fingers

#### **XIV. Closing – Lydia and Dr. T**

Lydia: Hurray students!

Dr. T: Thank you. Let's eat.