

**STUDENT WARNING:** This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

**Course Summary Course:** RELS270

**Title:** Hope and Resilience

**Length of Course :** 8

**Prerequisites :**

**Credit Hours:** 3

### **Description Course Description:**

Difficult situations in life motivate us to think carefully about religion. The forms of religions are based on the well-being of human beings, and they have provided many ways to follow paths that are good for our mental and physical health. This course will deal with essential questions; do religions offer ways and techniques to support that are good for our well-being? What paths have been provided to lead a good life? How are our hope, contemplation, and resilience rooted in popular religions? What are the methods advised by religions to help practitioners? The course will include traditions that are isolated to a specific culture. However, they have their historical, cultural, and social context, in which they have been beneficial to the practitioners of these cultures. On American soil, they are coming together as a melting pot, and this course will investigate how their beneficial value can be used to manage current stresses. This course will investigate beneficial teachings from different religions that are becoming mainstream and are practiced in a non-traditional way without converting to a specific religion. The course will cover traditions from the major religions of the world. Ways to Stop and reflect and achieve tranquility. Not as a way of worship rather a way of living one's life with equanimity and hope.

### **Course Scope:**

This is a survey course that will investigate different religions and the techniques they offer to maintain physical and mental wellbeing. In this process, students will review various religious teachings, Sufi Dervish tradition, and Christian teaching of gratitude, Yoga, and Meditation from different religious traditions. We will go over contemporary applications of the religions with particular attention to the cultural, social, and political structuring of their practices.

### **Course learning outcomes:**

- Students will identify specific teachings related to hope in different religions.
- Students will develop a good understanding of contemplation practices to reduce stress.
- Students will study techniques for resilience in difficult times
- Students will present ways to prioritize their personal happiness and wellbeing. They will create an audio or video broadcast.

### **Objectives**

- 1: Students will learn about sacred spaces and their significance.
- 2: Students will identify specific teachings and significance of pilgrimage related to hope in different religions.

- 3: Students will develop a good understanding of contemplation practices to reduce stress.
- 4: Students will learn about Bhutan's GNH; the happiness goal country has created.
- 5: Students will study techniques for resilience through yoga, Darvish dancing and chanting.
- 6: Students will present ways to prioritize their personal happiness and well-being. Students will learn about hope and compassion through the teachings of the Dalai Lama.
- 7: To strengthen resilience through an understanding of meditation and self.
- 8: To understand the techniques of hope and resilience through popular culture.

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## **Week 1**

### **Week 1 Topic Title:**

What is a sacred space? How can it define us?

### **Outline Week 1:**

Hope and resilience are essential parts of human life, and Religion has played a vital role in this area. Sacred spaces are directly connected with human well-being. We have seen sacred spaces play an essential role in a practitioner's life. When religions emerged, they covered many different aspects, creating a connection with divinity, propagating spirituality, and taking charge of human well-being. They incorporated all those areas that brought peace and well-being to practitioners. This week, we will cover the sacred spaces of different religions and focus on their purpose.

These helped practitioners in being peaceful, relaxed, and resilient in their everyday life. This does not mean that an atheist cannot be peaceful, comfortable, and resilient without following a religion or using faith methods. We all can create such places in our lives, which work for us even outside of Religion. The effect will be the same. Any activity that introduces wellness in one's life should be encouraged and practiced with or without the faith factor.

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will understand holy space and what they mean.
2. To explore the strength that sacred spaces generate in the human mind.
3. Students will focus on the implications of sacred spaces and how it creates a meditative frame of mind.

## Readings and Resources

i.by [Eiman Al Zaabi](#) (Author), [Penny Peirce](#) (Contributor)

Subjective Well-Being : Measuring Happiness, Suffering, and Other Dimensions of Experience

by Arthur A. Stone, , Christopher Mackie, , Panel on Measuring Subjective Well-Being in a Policy-Relevant Framework, , Committee on National Statistics, , National Research Council, , and Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education

Publisher, National Academies Press Date 2014-01-18



### [Ancient Mysteries, Sacred Places](#)

produced by Filmroos Inc., in [Ancient Mysteries](#) (New York, NY: A&E Television Networks, 1997), 1 hour 2 mins



### [Angkor Wat](#)

produced by National Geographic Film & Television (District of Columbia: National Geographic, 2015)

Sacred Space in Judaism after the Temple by, Gary A. Rendsburg

<https://jewishstudies.rutgers.edu/docman/rendersburg/725-sacred-space-in-judaism-after-the-temple/file>

Sacred Spaces in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=469KqdCT0ww>

Shinto: Nature, Gods, and Man in Japan (1977)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5PsNjG5CTgU>

Sacred Space: Temple and Ritual in Hindu Tradition  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAIOQ8AziHY>

Sacred Space in Secular Terms  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AequEqC5Fec>

Holistic and sacred spaces: Phillip Daffara at TEDxNoosa 2014  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K77a6TxEl18>

Navigating Sacred Spaces | Pamay Bassey | TEDxLincolnSquare  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2qDysxKK\\_fk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2qDysxKK_fk)

### **Week 1 Assignments:**

Week 1 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday Week 1  
Assignment: Introductory Discussion, due Sunday

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### **Week 2**

**Week 2:** Teaching the significance of pilgrimage.

### **Outline Week 2:**

In week 2 we shift our focus from the sacred spaces to sacred pilgrimages. We will explore the significant benefits practitioners get from taking arduous journeys of pilgrimages. People of different cultural and geographical backgrounds visit these places since it is dictated by their religion and is an act of devotion. Even non-religious people or people who do not follow a specific religion often participate in a religious pilgrimage due to its benefits towards building hope and resilience.

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will understand the significance of pilgrimage.
2. Why a pilgrimage is considered important and why people want to go through such hardship.
3. Implications of pilgrimage, and its impact on human well-being.

### **Readings and Recourses:**

Article

The Way to Gyo: Priestly Asceticism on the Shikoku Henro

Shultz, John A

Japanese journal of religious studies, 2016-09-22, Vol.43 (2), p.275-305

The Shikoku henro is arguably the most literary pilgrimage of the contemporary world...

Peer Reviewed

Open Access

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Book Chapter

Pilgrim Leadership Rendered in HTML: Bloggers and the Shikoku Henro

Baffelli, Erica ; Reader, Ian ; Staemmler, Birgit

Japanese Religions on the Internet, 2011, p.115-131

Article

The Way to Gyo: Priestly Asceticism on the Shikoku Henro

Shultz, John A

Japanese journal of religious studies, 2016-09-22, Vol.43 (2), p.275-305

The Shikoku henro is arguably the most literary pilgrimage of the contemporary world...

Peer Reviewed

Open Access

Sacred journeys with Bruce Feiler. Episode 5, Kumbh Mela

Feiler, Bruce S ; Jeffs, Jeremy ; Thomas, Sally

2014

Video

The great gathering

Connolly, Mary Sue ; Ehrlich, David

2003

Tracking Individual Targets in High Density Crowd Scenes Analysis of a Video Recording in Hajj 2009

Dridi, Mohamed H

2014

Newspaper Article

Raw Video: Muslims Prepare for Annual Hajj  
Herald-journal (Spartanburg, S.C.), 2008-12-06

Soundscapes of Pilgrimage: European and American Christians in Jerusalem's Old City  
Wood, Abigail  
Ethnomusicology Forum, 2014-09-02, Vol.23 (3), p.285-305

### **Assignments:**

Week 2 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday

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### **Week 3**

**Week 3:** Resilience and Emotions

### **Outline Week 3:**

With the start of Week 3, we focus our attention on the meaningful aspects of life. That makes each day fulfilling and purposeful. This week, you will understand the various elements that play an essential role in making our lives worth living, how our behavior and attitude generates our well-being, and create well-being for others. In this process, you will identify some of the key concepts of gratitude, kindness, awe, and happiness that make human life meaningful.

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will explore the concept of happiness.
2. Students will understand how gratitude can be fulfilling.
3. Students will expand their understanding of kindness.
4. Students will explore the significance of awe.

### **Readings and Recourses:**

Happiness:

[Religion and wellbeing around the world: Social purpose, social time, or social insurance?](#)

Graham, Carol; Crown, Sarah

International journal of wellbeing, 2014-06-05, Vol.4 (1), p.1-27

Happiness and Faith An Overview

<http://shared.web.emory.edu/emory/news/releases/2010/10/happiness-world-religions-take-different-paths-to-same-destination.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0fkfsk3mCk>

Getting stuck in the negatives (and how to get unstuck) | Alison Ledgerwood | TEDxUCDavis

<https://projecthotmess.com/ted-talks-about-happiness/>

Gratitude:

Oprah's Super Soul Conversations - Brother David Steindl-Rast: Happiness Begins with Gratitude

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YxT-mZi1bU>

Brother David Steindl-Rast, a Benedictine monk, meditates and writes on "the gentle power" of gratefulness

[https://www.ted.com/speakers/br\\_david\\_steindl\\_rast](https://www.ted.com/speakers/br_david_steindl_rast)

Resilience:

Powerful Practices for Bouncing Back from Disappointment, Difficulty, and Even Disaster

**By:** Linda Graham

**Book:** 304 pages

Kindness:

[TED Talk - Kindness - Orly Wahba](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yn9VxUPIC5g>

How one act of kindness a day can change your life | Mark Kelly | TEDxTallaght

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGgnyj8Oyvo>

The power of kindness | Orly Wahba | TEDxStPeterPort

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_DawgEK9muY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DawgEK9muY)

Awe:

Rob Legato creates movie effects so good they (sometimes) trump the real thing. In this warm and funny talk, he shares his vision for enhancing reality on-screen in movies like Apollo 13, Titanic and Hugo.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/rob\\_legato\\_the\\_art\\_of\\_creating\\_awe](https://www.ted.com/talks/rob_legato_the_art_of_creating_awe)

**Assignments:**

Week 3 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday

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#### Week 4

#### Week 4: Gross National Happiness

##### Outline Week 4:

Bhutan has not focused on military power or material wealth, but rather the spiritual, emotional, physical, and environmental well-being of its people. This is a small Himalayan kingdom on India's eastern boundary. It has adopted the Gross National Happiness [GNH] as its national policy in the Constitution in July 2008. It constitutes an index that measures the collective happiness and well-being of the population. The term Gross National Happiness (GNH) presents a sharp contrast to the Gross Domestic Product [GDP]. The United Nations also adopted a resolution urging member nations to adopt this as a policy for their people and called happiness as a fundamental human goal for the world.

##### Learning Objectives:

1. Students will learn about the happiness project in Bhutan.
2. Students will get a different world view about the pursuit of happiness.
3. Student will learn how to cultivate happiness.

##### Readings and Recourses:

1. Gross National Happiness and Macro Indicators in Bhutan

Timothy Taylor

Conversable Economist [BLOG], 2019-02-25

2.

Healthcare and happiness in the Kingdom of Bhutan

Adhikari, Deepika

Singapore medical journal, 2016-03, Vol.57 (3), p.107-109

3. TEDxHalifax - Silver Donald Cameron - Bhutan: The Pursuit of Gross National Happiness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CLJwYW6-Ao>

4. Bhutan: The Kingdom Where GDP Is Measured In Happiness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXJwNSkdTH0>

## **Assignments:**

Week 4 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday  
Week 4 Assignment: Presentation due Sunday

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## **Week 5**

### **Week 5: Yoga and Well-being**

#### **Outline Week 5:**

This week we will look into a few methods and practices beneficial for our physical and mental well-being. This is Yoga's practice; it is similar to meditation; a practitioner gets the benefit of body stretches and meditation at the same time. It focuses on inhale and exhale as one performs different postures with slow and steady breathing. Therefore, it brings meditation benefits; people have found it easier to observe their breath with physical postures, compared to sitting down in meditation. Currently, Yoga has become popular in the US due to its physical benefits. Besides this, many other religions have traditions that brought solace in people's lives, for example, Sufi dancing, Tibetan Buddhist singing, Gospel singing, and bhajan chanting.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Describe and evaluate the key beliefs and characteristics of Yoga.
2. Examine and summarize the benefits of relaxation methods.
3. Distinguish the basic concepts that make up meditation and Yoga, along with its benefits.

#### **Readings and Recourses:**

15 Min. Full Body Stretch | Daily Routine for Flexibility, Mobility & Relaxation | DAY 7  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g\\_tea8ZNk5A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_tea8ZNk5A)

Morning Routine for Beginners (Stretching & Meditation Follow Along)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6cRWRaawg>

Yoga – Benefits Beyond the Mat  
<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/yoga-benefits-beyond-the-mat>

Yoga for Everyone  
<https://www.nytimes.com/guides/well/beginner-yoga>

The Sufi Whirling Dervishes of Konya - ritual dance, Turkey

The Art of Surrender: A Practical Guide to Enlightened Happiness and Well-Being Paperback – May 15, 2019

3 HOURS Relaxation Powerful Meditation | Tibetan Monks Chanting | Singing Bowls | Background Yoga

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BIRJMES14U8>

OM Chanting @417 Hz | Removes All Negative Blocks

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sYK7lm3UKg>

The Sufi Whirling Dervishes of Konya - ritual dance, Turkey

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_h1wayIgn8o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_h1wayIgn8o)

Whirling Dervish: The mystical dance of the Sufis: Ora and Ihab Balha at TEDxJaffa

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jglf7N5RXQ>

Whitney Houston - I Look to You (Official Video)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Pze\\_mdbOK8&list=PLi7ihgkEws7T4pgoO2GOKTx5zalJl8p8A&index=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Pze_mdbOK8&list=PLi7ihgkEws7T4pgoO2GOKTx5zalJl8p8A&index=1)

**Zacardi Cortez- You Don't know**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RagW-RcY\\_Go&list=PLi7ihgkEws7T4pgoO2GOKTx5zalJl8p8A&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RagW-RcY_Go&list=PLi7ihgkEws7T4pgoO2GOKTx5zalJl8p8A&index=2)

Om Gan Ganpataye Namoh Namah | Ganesh Mantra

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYVV0k63T4o&list=RDpYVV0k63T4o&start\\_radio=1&t=44](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYVV0k63T4o&list=RDpYVV0k63T4o&start_radio=1&t=44)

**Creation of a sand mandala**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ga5s\\_qYgJS8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ga5s_qYgJS8)

Sand Mandala Time Lapse [Extended Version] - Asheville, NC - Urban Dharma – 2012

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdUFqkX2d6I>

Relax with a Tibetan singing bowl meditation session

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VsoN\\_IWQ1Ac](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VsoN_IWQ1Ac)

## **Assignments:**

Week 5 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday

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## **Week 6**

**Week 6:** What is meditation?

### **Outline Week 6:**

We have all heard about the 14th Dalai Lama; his work towards generating compassion is well known. He has made a constant effort towards scientific research where a meditating yogi, who usually live-in mountains, their brain activity is studied by psychologists and scientists now. There is enough proof that meditation changes the functioning of the brain considerably and is beneficial for our well-being. This is the reason why Tibetan Buddhist monk Matthieu Ricard is considered the happiest man on earth.

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will look into Dalai Lama's perspective towards well-being.
2. Students will learn how meditation practice can cultivate compassion and happiness.
3. Students will learn about the scientific research being done about meditation and its benefits.

### **Readings and Recourses:**

Meditation Research: A Comprehensive Review

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280312741\\_Meditation\\_Research\\_A\\_Comprehensive\\_Review](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280312741_Meditation_Research_A_Comprehensive_Review)

### **Conference on Mind**

<https://www.dalailama.com/videos/conference-on-mind>

### **The 26th Mind & Life Conference**

<http://dalailamatrustindia.org/science/projects/mind-life-conference/>

The habits of happiness

[https://www.ted.com/talks/matthieu\\_ricard\\_the\\_habits\\_of\\_happiness](https://www.ted.com/talks/matthieu_ricard_the_habits_of_happiness)

How to let altruism be your guide

[https://www.ted.com/talks/matthieu\\_ricard\\_how\\_to\\_let\\_altruism\\_be\\_your\\_guide](https://www.ted.com/talks/matthieu_ricard_how_to_let_altruism_be_your_guide)

## **Dalai Lama And Science: His Holiness' Scientific Side, Now Streaming**

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/fernandezelizabeth/2020/05/20/dalai-lama-and-science-his-holiness-scientific-side-now-streaming/?sh=18598afa4484>

Scientists Meditate on Happiness

<https://www.wired.com/2003/09/scientists-meditate-on-happiness/>

ML11 | Session 1 | Attention & Cognitive Control

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAEuEGA7XoY>

Mind and Life XIV - Day 1 am - with the Dalai Lama

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dmlnk-iLiYc>

A 69-year-old monk who scientists call the 'world's happiest man' says the secret to being happy takes just 15 minutes a day

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/69-year-old-monk-who-scientists-call-world-s-happiest-man-says-secret-being-happy-takes-just-15-minutes-day-a7869166.html>

The Universe in a Single Atom: The Convergence of Science and Spirituality

by Dalai Lama

Chapter 6 The Question of Consciousness

Chapter 7 Toward a Science of Consciousness

Chapter 8 The Spectrum of Consciousness

### **Assignments:**

Week 6 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday

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### **Week 7**

**Week 7:** What is mindfulness?

### **Outline Week 7:**

What is Mindfulness? How Can it be attained? Hope and resilience are essential parts of human life, and Religion has played a vital role in this area. Human understanding of Self is directly related to ego. The question here is how our eighteen years old Self is the same when we are fifty years old. Therefore, the continuity of memories, beliefs, habits, and mental traits create an

understanding of the Self. Anything unique to the experience of the world appears amid the content of consciousness. To be mindful, one needs to understand Self and consciousness.

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will learn about the understanding of self.
2. Students will learn about the relationship between self and consciousness.
3. Students will comprehend mindfulness and learn ways to minimize anxiety and optimize resilience.

**Readings and Recourses:**

Waking Up: A Guide to Spirituality Without Religion  
Sam Harris. (Chapter 4 and the last three chapters)

How To NEVER Be Anxious Again & Stay Calm | Sam Harris (eye-opening advice)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldRx7ZJBwqI>

How to Instantly Achieve a Calm State | Sam Harris on Impact Theory

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=StzNIYXnCm4>

Sam Harris: Mindfulness vs. Happiness Part 1 with Lewis Howes

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0M1ycc\\_8Hg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0M1ycc_8Hg)

How mindfulness changes the emotional life of our brains | Richard J. Davidson | TEDxSanFrancisco

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CBfCW67xT8>

Master Shi Heng Yi – 5 hindrances to self-mastery | Shi Heng YI | TEDxVitosha

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-079YIasck>

**Assignments:**

Week 7 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday  
Week 7 Final Essay due Sunday

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**Week 8**

**Week 8:** Resilience through popular culture

## **Outline Week 8:**

What is the role of Mindfulness and how it can be attained? What is the larger appeal of meditation in our current world? These are important questions that need to be answered. We have explored many ways that religions have provided to create hope and resilience in our life. A few of these ways have become more prevalent in our culture than others. Now corporate America is also looking into these aspects and trying to incorporate these ideas for their employees. We will investigate it and figure out which particular path is best for our future well-being

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will comprehend the ways to cultivate happiness.
2. Students will learn the habits of basic well-being and how they are beneficial to society and are being focused on by corporate America.
3. Students will understand the resilience and benefits of meditation for themselves and in the community.

### **Readings and Recourses:**

Resilience: Powerful Practices for Bouncing Back from Disappointment, Difficulty, and Even Disaster

By: Linda Graham Last Chapter Eight, Caring for and nourishing your amazing Brain: Life Style Choices That Support Resilience

Chaplain's meditation PowerPoint: Mind Full to Mindful

[https://prezi.com/1de2fg\\_tb7nk/mind-full-to-mindfull/?utm\\_campaign=share&utm\\_medium=copy](https://prezi.com/1de2fg_tb7nk/mind-full-to-mindfull/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy)

Article

[Religion and wellbeing around the world: Social purpose, social time, or social insurance?](#)

Graham, Carol ; Crown, Sarah

International journal of wellbeing, 2014-06-05, Vol.4 (1), p.1-27

2.Happiness and Faith An Overview

<http://shared.web.emory.edu/emory/news/releases/2010/10/happiness-world-religions-take-different-paths-to-same-destination.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0fkfsk3mCk>

3. What I Learned While Making a Movie About Happiness: Roko Belic at TEDxClaremontCollege

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sM\\_xtk8aqh0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sM_xtk8aqh0)

4. Dan Gilbert, author of "Stumbling on Happiness,"

[https://www.ted.com/talks/dan\\_gilbert\\_the\\_surprising\\_science\\_of\\_happiness](https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_the_surprising_science_of_happiness)

5. The habit of Happiness, Matthieu Ricard

[https://www.ted.com/talks/matthieu\\_ricard\\_the\\_habits\\_of\\_happiness](https://www.ted.com/talks/matthieu_ricard_the_habits_of_happiness)

**Assignments:**

Week 8 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday

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