

Guy Welbon, Religious Studies and South Asia Studies

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DEATHS

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Guy Welbon, an associate professor emeritus of religious studies and South Asia studies in the School of Arts & Sciences, died on September 26, 2024. He was 87.

Dr. Welbon received his bachelor of science in journalism (BSJ) with highest distinction from Northwestern University in 1958, followed by a master of arts, also from Northwestern, in 1960. He then earned his PhD from the University of Chicago in 1963. After earning his PhD, he took a faculty position at the University of Minnesota, where he became chair of the department of South Asian languages and literatures and director of its National Resource Center for South Asia.

Guy Welbon

In 1972, Dr. Welbon joined Penn's faculty as an associate professor of religious studies. In 1978, he took on a secondary role as associate professor in the College of General Studies (now the College of Liberal & Professional Studies). He later became chair of the religious studies department in 1984, a position he held until 1989. In 1995, Dr. Welbon was appointed chair of the department of South Asia studies and director of the South Asia Center, where he served until 2002. He also served as graduate chair of the religious studies department from 2003 until his retirement in 2005. While at Penn, Dr. Welbon taught, mentored students, and conducted research on the religious and cultural traditions of pre-modern South India and Southeast Asia. He specialized in Hindu and Buddhist ritual practices, the agama and South Indian "temple Hinduism," the history of Burma and Cambodia, and Pali Buddhist texts.