

Joseph Washington, Jr., Religious Studies

NOVEMBER 12, 2024 | VOL 71 ISSUE 14 ([HTTPS://ALMANAC.UPENN.EDU/VOLUME-71-NUMBER-14](https://almanac.upenn.edu/volume-71-number-14)) | DEATHS |

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Joseph Washington, Jr., a professor emeritus of religious studies in the School of Arts & Sciences, died on October 7, 2024. He was 93.

Dr. Washington graduated from the University of Wisconsin and Andover Newton Theological School. He received a ThD (doctor of theology) in social ethics from Boston University. In the 1960s, he served as a chaplain and professor of religion at Dillard University, Dickinson College, Albion College, and Beloit College. He then moved into roles as chair of African American studies at several universities, including the University of Virginia, the University of California-Riverside, and, starting in 1977, the University of Pennsylvania. That year, Dr. Washington came to Penn as a professor of religious thought and as the new director of what was then called the Afro-American studies program in

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the School of Arts & Sciences. During his time at Penn, he also taught in the department of English and in the College of Liberal & Professional Studies. He retired from Penn in 1997 and took emeritus status. In 2002, he was inducted into Penn's 25-Year Club.

Throughout his career, Dr. Washington made significant scholarly contributions to the study of Black religion. He authored books such as *Black Religion: The Negro and Christianity in the United States*, *Black Sects and Cults*, and *Anti-Blackness in English Religion, 1500-1800*.

He is survived by his son, David; David's partner, Christine; and other family members and friends.