

(REL) 1000-1 Understandings of Religion

Fall 2021

MW 4:10pm-5:50pm, 09/08/21-12/13/21

Lentz Hall Room 230

Instructor: Susan Jensen. **Email:** sjensen4@carthage.edu. Office: LH 226

Office hours: Lentz Hall Room 226, MWF 10:30am-12:30pm or by appointment.

Virtual hours: Meetings via Zoom by appointment.

This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

Course Materials

A Concise Introduction to World Religions, 4th Ed. Amore, Roy C., Amir Hussain, Willard G. Oxtoby, editors.

2020, Oxford University Press

ISBN: 978-0-19-091902-3

****Additional readings and digital materials such as video and PowerPoint slides will be posted on Schoology. To access these materials, you need to have an active Carthage College Access Account use ID and password**

Catalogue Description

A study of the religious dimension in the lives of individuals, communities, and cultures. Students will explore understandings of religion and roles of religion, along with commonalities and differences in expression of religion. This will be accomplished by examining topics such as God, scripture, ritual, values, ethical issues, and cosmology, as expressed within several specific religious traditions, including Judaism and Christianity.

Course Learning Outcomes

This course is the academic study of religion and does not make truth claims or privilege any religious tradition over another. The goals of this class are:

1. The student will consider the category of "religion" from an academic standpoint, the rationale for such a distinction, the terminology employed in the discipline, and reasons why this type of inquiry is an important part of undergraduate education.

2. The student will appreciate how many events unfolding on the world stage today often have historic roots in the major religious traditions.
3. The student will use various formats to hone their analytical skills: reading and reading journal entries, in-class and on-line discussion, a group research project, quizzes, and a final written assignment.
4. To complete the course assignments, the student will gain experience using various computer applications that may be used in future employment, such as Hypothesis, Excel, Google Suite (Docs, Forms, Sites, etc.).

Course Method and Structure

This class will be held in-person at Lentz Hall, room 230. Due to COVID-19, the school requires **face masks must be worn in the classroom at all times.**

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class session.

Be prepared: come to class with the course textbook and your laptop.

Schoology

This course utilizes *Schoology*—an online course management system. On Schoology, you can find the course syllabus and schedule, course requirements and assignments, readings, grades, and announcements or reminders. **It is the student's responsibility to check and make sure you are up to date with the information.** If you have difficulty accessing the site, please contact Library and Information Services for help.

Assignments

Readings for the following week will be announced in class and posted on Schoology each Wednesday. We will try to get through as much of textbook as time allows.

Discussion is an important component of a liberal arts education. While we will have time to talk about the course material in the classroom, we can also engage in discussion outside of the classroom. **Each week** students will be required to participate on the **Discussion Board** on Schoology *or* to use the **Hypothes.is** app to engage in social annotation. For the **Discussion Board** assignments, a question or prompt will be provided. Students will post a minimum of 250 words for their initial post before being able to see other posts, will then be required to respond to at least two other students, with a minimum of 100 words. For the **Hypothes.is** assignments, a link to an article will be shared with the class; students will annotate on their own and then be

able to view each other's annotations, respond and ask questions. The instructor will have more information in class regarding this application.

While this is an introductory course and not a senior research course, students will participate in a **group research assignment** involving current ideas about religion (more information will be provided in class). Professor Nora Nickels from the Psychology Department will visit the class and share her ideas about creating poll questions and subsequent data analysis. Working in groups, students will come up with their own questionnaires poll their classmates, analyze their findings, write a summary, and finally, create a Google Site to present their work.

Classes will be a mixture of instructor presentation/lecture and **student presentation**. There will be two student presentations each week: One student will lead in-class discussion on the textbook reading for the week. Another student will present/lead the discussion on a current news item relevant to the week's religion topic. A sign-up sheet will be posted on Schoology. Presentations will begin on Week Three.

Students maintain a written **journal** on the material covered in the course. Each week, students will submit their entry on a dedicated Google File that will be shared with the instructor. Each weekly submission will be graded. Successful submissions will contain detailed information, as well as student reflection. Submissions will be due by the following Sunday at 11:59pm.

Quiz dates to be determined, contingent on the level of class participation and level of information reflected in the writing journals.

Final Project

Students will have several options to choose from:

1. Write a 5-page paper on a topic of their choosing that relates in some way to world religions, to be approved by the instructor. This could be, for example, a biography, or an in-depth analysis of an historical event.

-The paper will be written in **Times New Roman, 12-pt. font**, page size 8/12 X 11, double-spaced, and is to be submitted as a Microsoft Word document.

-You must use MLA **in-text citations** style (Author's last name and page number(s) from the text the citation is taken from. For example: (Amore: 51), where Amore is the author, and 51 is the page number the quote or paper is taken from.

-Quotes should not exceed 2 sentences.

-A Works Cited page must be included.

2. Create a character that belongs to a specific religious tradition, and/or lives in a specific era in the history, and write a “day in the life,” diary entry, letter, or other document that incorporates your research of the pertinent issues and events.
3. Use a template, such as can found on **Canva**, to create an e-magazine or newspaper that includes a variety of articles and images around a genre/topic/event of your choosing. For instance: Create an issue of along the lines of National Geographic, The Economist, or Time.
4. Read a book of your choosing (to be approved by the instructor) and write a paper with your analysis. The book must relate to the course in some way.
5. Come up with your own idea (a video, for example) You can be creative!

Students must provide their chosen topic to the instructor by Week 6 of the course (10.11.21). By Week 10 (11.08.21) students will turn in a rough draft for the instructor to review. Students will need to provide documentation that they consulted with the Writing Center a minimum of two times. A final draft will be submitted by Week 14, midnight on Monday 12.06.21.

IMPORTANT: All options will need in-text citations and a Works Cited page! Failure to do so will result in an automatic F for the assignment.

Academic Honesty

Carthage College takes plagiarism very seriously. There is a zero-tolerance policy towards plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty in this course. Any student caught using the works of others as their own, including cheating, will receive a failing grade for the course. Please familiarize yourself with the school’s policy at <https://www.carthage.edu/community-code/academic-concerns/academic-honesty-guidelines>. Penalties for academic dishonesty are found at <https://www.carthage.edu/community-code/academic-concerns/penalties/>.

Grading and Course Evaluations

Class Assessment

Self-Introduction	1%
Group Research Project	10%
Weekly Written Summaries	19%
In-Class Participation (Presentations, Begin week 3)	15%
On-Line Participation (Discussion Boards, Hypothes.is annotation)	25%
Final Project (see break-down below)	30%
<i>Final Project Topic</i>	1%
<i>Final Project Rough Draft</i>	5%
<i>Final Project Writing Center Visit #1</i>	2%
<i>Final Project Writing Center Visit #2</i>	2%
<i>Final Project Submission</i>	20%

Grading Scale

A+	97-100	A	93-96.99	A-	90-92.99
B+	87-89.99	B	83-86.99	B-	80-82.99
C+	77-79.99	C	73-76.99	C-	70-72.99
D+	67-69.99	D	63-66.99	D-	60-62.99
F	<60				

W Withdrawn, requires approval of academic advisor or department chair.

Tentative Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Learning Activities & Assignments
One			
	09.08.21 Wednesday	Introductions Syllabus Review	- Post your self-introduction before class meets. - Read the course syllabus. - Read Chapter 1 "Studying Religion" -for next week: Read PDF "Definition"
Two	09.13.21 Monday		
	09.15.21 Wednesday		
Three	09.20.21 Monday	Indigenous Traditions	- Read Chapter 2, Indigenous Traditions
	09.22.21 Wednesday	Visit from Prof. Nora Nickels to discuss group research project	
Four	09.27.21 Monday	Religions of Antiquity	- Read Chapter 3

	09.29.21 Wednesday		
	10.01.21 Friday		
Five	10.04.21 Monday	The West: Abrahamic Faiths	-Read Chapter 4, Jewish Traditions
	10.06.21 Wednesday		
Six	10.11.21 Monday		- Read Chapter 5, Christian Traditions - Paper topic due
	10.13.21 Wednesday		
Seven	10.18.21 Monday		- Read Chapter 6, Muslim Traditions
	10.20.21 Wednesday		
Eight	10.25.21 Monday	NO CLASS Fall Break	
	10.27.21 Wednesday	Faiths of the East	- Read Chapter 7, Hindu Traditions
Nine	11.01.21 Monday		
	11.03.21 Wednesday		
	11.04.21	Religion Department Special Event "Out of Hatred" 7pm Student Union	All students are encouraged to attend this event.
Ten	11.08.21 Monday		- Read Chapter 8 & 9, Sikh Traditions, Jaina Traditions - Paper rough draft due
	11.10.21 Wednesday		
Eleven	11.15.21 Monday		- Read Chapter 10, Buddhist Traditions
	11.17.21 Wednesday		
Twelve	11.22.21 Monday		- Read Chapter 11, Chinese and Korean Traditions

	11.24.21 Wednesday	NO CLASS Thanksgiving Break	
Thirteen	11.29.21 Monday	Classes resume	
	12.01.21 Wednesday		- Read Chapter 12, Japanese Traditions
Fourteen	12.06.21 Monday		- Submit Final Paper by midnight 12.06.21
	12.08.21 Wednesday		
Fifteen	12.13.21 Monday	Last day of class	
	12.15.21 & 12.17.21 Wednesday/Friday	Final Exams	

Course Policies

The Syllabus as Our Contract

If you do not or cannot agree to the conditions and requirements stated in this syllabus, you must contact me by the end of the second week of the semester to discuss and/or make alternate plans. Failure to do so by this time indicates that you understand and agree to abide by the conditions of this course as described in the syllabus.

Students are expected to be self-motivated and to have the necessary technology to participate fully. If students are having any difficulties keeping up with the assigned work, please make an appointment with me or email me @ sjensen4@carthage.edu. (**When emailing me, make sure to indicate which class you are in. It will be especially helpful if students contact me through the Schoology course message feature.**) Additionally, students are encouraged to make use of the robust support services that are available for an array of issues.

As a student in this course, you are expected to:

- Study the syllabus carefully.
- Introduce yourself to the class on the appropriate discussion board during the first day of class.
- Complete the course readings and related material in a timely manner.

- Complete the weekly expectations prior to your discussion boards each week so you can discuss the concepts with others in the course.
- Interact online with the instructor and peers.
- Log into the course on Schoology 4-5 times per week.
- Communicate with me. I'm here to help you!

As the instructor, I will:

- Log in to the course at least 5 days per week.
- Respond to emails within 1 day.
- Grade assignments and supply feedback within 7 days of the assignment deadline. If I am unable to respond within this timeframe, I will do my best to let you know when you can expect feedback from me.

Basic Needs Policy

Your safety and well-being are more important than anything in this class. Please feel free to reach out to me if you are struggling for any reason – including issues securing food, housing, or personal safety. In addition to any support I can provide, I will work hard to help you find every resource available to you at Carthage.

Inclusive Learning Environment

Regardless of ethnicity, race, color, age, sex, religion, national origin, disability, veteran status, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, and socioeconomical background, you will be treated and respected as a human being. Carthage College recognizes that our individual differences can deepen our understanding of one another and the world around us, rather than divide us. As such, we as a group must cultivate mutual respect for ideas, freedom/ability to speak in class, and a professional tone. Consequently, in this class, any form of harassment of a student i.e., a pattern of behavior directed against a particular student with the intent of humiliating or intimidating that student, or any form of disrespect geared toward me will not be tolerated at all. Spirited engagement and exciting disagreement, however, are encouraged.

Student Support Services

Health and Counseling Services

The Health and Counseling Center (HCC) supports students by addressing physical, mental, and emotional well-being. All services are free and confidential and are available to currently enrolled, full-time undergraduate students. Health services include the assessment and treatment of minor illness and injury. Diagnostic testing, complimentary over-the-counter medications, and referrals to off-campus providers are all available. Our licensed counselors help students with challenges that can be resolved with short-term, solution-focused counseling. Some topics discussed during counseling include depression and anxiety, traumatic experiences, gender and sexuality, relationship concerns, stress management, and academic challenges. More details - including info about appointments - can be found at carthage.edu/health-counseling.

[Uwill](#) is a free teletherapy platform for Carthage students. Uwill connects students with licensed therapists from all 50 states. Support is available in a variety of formats -- video, chat, messaging, or phone. Counselors are available nights, weekends, and during holidays. Access is quick and easy: app.uwill.com.

Suggested email signature: Students receive free, immediate access to teletherapy through Uwill. It's private, secure & confidential. Click [here](#) to get started.

HCC Hours and Location

TARC 2240 / 262-551-5710

M-F 8:30-4:00

Health Services (in-person): Call to schedule a same-day appointment; walk-ins accepted

Counseling Services (in-person): Call to schedule an appointment; walk-ins accepted M-F 11:30-1:00

**Services, hours, and walk-in availability are subject to change*

Additional Info

--Nurse Practitioner: Wednesdays 2pm-4pm (appointment required; NP services are provided by a third party and billed to student's insurance)

--HCC is a Title IX confidential resource for students.

--We provide consultation for faculty and staff. If you need to talk to a provider, call our office at 262-551-5710.

--COVID-19 Testing is available for students with signs or symptoms of illness. Please call to be screened and to schedule a testing time.

--Carthage's vaccine requirement and associated testing is not administered by HCC. Visit the [COVID-19 Update Page](#) for more information.

Learning Accessibility Services

Carthage College strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to your disability (including mental health, learning disorders and chronic medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, you also need to register with Diane Schowalter in Learning Accessibility Services (dschowalter1@carthage.edu).

Library Services

The librarians at Hedberg Library are available to assist you with any research questions you may have. The librarian for this class is Carol Sabbar. You can email Dr. Sabbar at csabbar@carthage.edu for assistance with your library and research needs. You can access the library's resources at <https://carthage.libguides.com>. The subject guide for this course is located at <https://carthage.libguides.com/religion>.

Writing Center

The **Brainard Writing Center** is a free resource for student writers. The center is staffed by undergraduate Writing Fellows who have been recommended by Carthage faculty and trained to work with other students on their writing. They can work with you at all stages of the writing process, including understanding the assignment, brainstorming ideas, drafting, revising, and proofreading. This semester they are offering in-person, Zoom live virtual, and written feedback consultations.

In order to book Peer Tutoring, Writing Center, and Testing Center appointments, you will need a [WCOonline](#) account. Creating an account is easy to do. Please follow these steps:

1. Go to www.carthage.mywconline.com.
2. Click "Register for an Account"
3. Complete the registration form using your @carthage.edu email address
4. We suggest you use the same password you use for email and other Carthage programs to make it easy to remember but it is important to know they are not linked.
5. You are now able to log in and book appointments

[This video](#) will walk you through the steps for creating an account.

If you need additional assistance, please stop by the Writing Center or the Hedberg Library Information Desk during open hours.

A note to continuing students: WCOonline is not linked to your Carthage/Onelogin username and password. It uses your Carthage email and whatever password you set. It may or may not match your Carthage credentials. If you have forgotten your password, please use the link to reset it.