

# (REL) 1100-07 Understandings of Religion

## Fall 2020

TR 8:00-9:40 am, 09/02/20-12/09/20

**Instructor:** Susan Jensen. **Email:** [sjensen4@carthage.edu](mailto:sjensen4@carthage.edu). **Office:** LH 226

**Office hours:** Wednesdays and Thursdays, 12:00 pm- 2:00 pm, or by appointment.

**Virtual hours:** by appointment only.

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

*Special thanks to Professor Andrea Ng'weshemi for allowing me to adapt his syllabus for the planning of this course.*

### Course Materials

Amore, Roy C. *A Concise Introduction to World Religions, 4e*. Oxford University Press.

\*\*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 one religious tradition over another. The goals of this class are:

1. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the ubiquity of religion throughout human history as a vehicle to understand the human experience.
2. The student will be able to identify how religion and society mutually influence each other.
3. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the similarities and differences of the major world religions.
4. The student will develop an understanding of how religion can and has been used for both peaceful and violent purposes.

5. The student will develop an awareness and appreciation of global religious pluralism, but also that religions themselves are internally diverse.

## Course Method and Structure

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this course will be fully online. Every effort will be made to ensure that every student has access to the course content. Optimally, students should plan to attend class at the scheduled days and times via Zoom. A link and password will be emailed to students prior to class. Within the Zoom format, the first portion of class will be a prerecorded lecture. The second portion of class will allow for class discussion and/or student questions. To ensure student privacy, only the lecture portion of class will be available as a link on Schoology.

## Schoology

This course utilizes *Schoology*—an online course management system located under “Tools” on the main Carthage College website, and in the my.carthage.edu portal. 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.

To enable further discussion, **each week** students will be required to participate on the **Discussion Board** on Schoology. 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. It will be helpful if you have completed the week’s readings by the Tuesday of that week. Your initial post on the Discussion Board should be made by Thursday at midnight; your response should be made by Friday at midnight. This will allow me time to read the posts and respond (at my discretion) before the next week’s classes.

**Quiz** dates will be announced.

## Final Paper

-Students will write a 12-page paper on a topic of their choosing regarding World Religions, to be approved by the instructor.

-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.

-Please 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.

-If works outside of the course are used, a Works Cited page must be included.

**Students must provide their chosen topic to the instructor** by Week 6 of the course (10.06.20). By Week 10 (11.03.20) 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 the end of Week 14, midnight on Friday 12.04.20.

Criteria for evaluating the final paper will be provided at a later date.

## Grading and Course Evaluations

### Criteria for Evaluation

#### Rubric for Discussion Board Entries:

Contributions	Description	Points Assigned
Exceptional	Evidence of serious attention put towards assignment; all requirements fulfilled; goes beyond simply answering the prompts; attempt to stimulate further thought & discussion; submitted on time.	4
Satisfactory	Entry provides obvious information without further analysis of the concept(s); assignment called for more work or intellectual investment than demonstrated; lacks depth of knowledge or reasoning; on-time submission.	3
Underdeveloped	Entry does not accurately address the requirements/prompt; rambling and/or without consistency.	2
Limited	Entry is late and/or does not demonstrate an adequate engagement with the assignment; no evidence of replies to questions; does not contribute to ongoing conversations or respond to peers' postings.	1
None	No entry provided to the prompt within the associated timeframe.	0

## Class Assessment

Self-Introduction	1%
Quizzes	24%
In-Class Participation (begin week 3)	20%
On-Line Participation	30%
Final Paper	25%

### Per the Registrar: Grading policy for Fall 2020

*All classes currently awarding credit with a letter grade will shift to the updated scale of A/B/C/D/W (including all + and - options for each letter grade). There will be no F grades issued in Fall 2020. Letter grades will have the same weight in GPA calculations this semester as in typical semesters. W grades will not earn credit and will not influence GPA.*

*Students will also have the option to change a Fall 2020 letter grade to an S (Satisfactory) grade through the end of the add/drop period in Spring 2020. S grades will earn credits but will not influence GPA calculations. Students wishing to make this change will need the approval of their academic advisor or department chair. If you are interested in this option please contact your academic advisor for additional information on whether or not this is right for your circumstances. Students in pre-professional programs, attempting repeat-deletes, or completing prerequisites for major-specific courses may not find this option advantageous.*

*The deadline to withdraw from a specific course in Fall 2020 has also been extended through the add/drop period in Spring 2020. This will allow students time to assess their success during this challenging semester and remove a course that they may have earned credit in but did not achieve the grade needed for a variety of reasons. Withdrawal from a course after October 28th (original withdrawal deadline) will require the approval of a student's academic advisor or department chair.*

*Finally, students who receive an I (Incomplete) grade in a Fall 2020 course will have until February 17th to complete the coursework before the I is transitioned to a W. An incomplete is given by faculty when a student has specific and unavoidable circumstances that have prevented them from completing the coursework during the current term. While we all find*

*ourselves in difficult circumstances currently there are members of our community impacted more than others and faculty are prepared to offer options to students whenever possible.*

*These changes are for the Fall 2020 term only as we expect to return to the grading policy outlined in the Carthage College catalog.*

### 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

W Withdrawn

S Satisfactory, criteria to be determined by academic advisor or department chair.

### Tentative Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Learning Activities & Assignments
One			
	09.03.20 Thursday	Introductions Syllabus Review	- <b>Post</b> your self-introduction before class meets.  - <b>Read</b> the course syllabus.
Two	09.08.20 Tuesday	The academic study of religion.	- <b>Read</b> Chapter 1
	09.10.20 Thursday		
Three	09.15.20 Tuesday	Indigenous Traditions	- <b>Read</b> Chapter 2
	09.17.20 Thursday		
Four	09.22.20 Tuesday	Religions of Antiquity	- <b>Read</b> Chapter 3
	09.24.20 Thursday		
Five	09.29.20 Tuesday	Jewish Traditions	- <b>Read</b> Chapter 4

	10.01.20 Thursday		
Six	10.06.20 Tuesday	Christian Traditions	-Read Chapter 5 -Paper topic due
	10.08.20 Thursday		
Seven	10.13.20 Monday	Muslim Traditions	-Read Chapter 6
	10.15.20 Thursday		
Eight	10.20.20 Tuesday	Hindu Traditions	-Read Chapter 7
	10.22.20 Thursday		
Nine	10.27.20 Tuesday	Sikh Traditions	-Read Chapter 8
	10.29.20 Thursday		
Ten	11.03.20 Tuesday	Jaina Traditions	-Read Chapter 9 -Paper rough draft due
	11.05.20 Thursday		
Eleven	11.10.20 Tuesday	Buddhist Traditions	-Read Chapter 10
	11.12.20 Thursday		
Twelve	11.17.20 Tuesday	Chinese and Korean Traditions Japanese Traditions	-Read Chapter 11
	11.19.20 Thursday		
Thirteen	11.24.20 Tuesday	NO CLASS Thanksgiving Break	-Read Chapter 12
	11.26.20 Thursday		
Fourteen	12.01.20 Tuesday	New Religions and Movements	-Read Chapter 13 -Submit Final Paper by midnight 12.03.20 Thursday
	12.03.20 Thursday		
Fifteen	12.08.20 Tuesday	End of Fall Semester (12.09.20)	

## Course Policies

An online course poses unique challenges but also offers a degree of flexibility. 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. **(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 4-5 times per week.

## 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/>.

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.

### **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.

### **Student Support Services**

#### **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](mailto:csabbar@carthage.edu) for assistance with your library and research needs. You can access all of 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 Writing Center and Tutoring are available to assist you with this class including understanding readings, preparing for quizzes, studying for exams, and writing papers. These resources are not engineered especially for struggling students, they are for everyone to maximize your academic growth potentials. Please take advantage of them. For information and to book an appointment visit [carthage.edu/tutoring](http://carthage.edu/tutoring) or [carthage.edu/writing-center](http://carthage.edu/writing-center).

#### **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](mailto:dschowalter1@carthage.edu)).*