

Course Expectation Resource Sheet - REL 100

“What can students expect if they choose this course?”

Course: REL 100 - Introduction to Religion

Department: Languages, Cultures, & Religions

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisite: None

Catalog Description: Investigates what religion is and does, compares culturally diverse religious ideas and practices. This course explores how religion influences the relationship between individual and community by examining religious ethical systems, and providing community engagement opportunities.

Catalog: 2025-2026 **Last Updated:** 12/9/2025

Gen Ed Course: Yes

Gen Ed Area: PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Gen Ed Requirement: Cultural Competence
(GEC 115)

CORE-42 Course: Yes

CORE-42 Area: Humanities & Fine Arts

MOTR Code - MOTR Title: RELG 100 - World
Religion

Is credit also available through:

[Advanced Placement \(AP\)?](#): No

[College Level Exam Program \(CLEP\)?](#): No

[International Baccalaureate \(IB\)?](#): No

(click link for more information and required scores)

Responses and Advice from Department Representatives

Last Updated: 12/9/2025

The following responses apply to: Both seated and online courses

What expectations do you have for students in this course?

Display intellectual curiosity.

Recognize that studying religion academically is not the same as practicing it.

Be open to learning about traditions that may differ from your own beliefs.

Ask thoughtful questions and engage genuinely with unfamiliar ideas.

Attend each class and take notes. For online classes, it is expected that students will watch posted lectures carefully and take notes.

There is some reading expected, although the reading load is light compared to upper-level courses.

What types of study skills do you expect students to use in this course?

Basic reading skills: students should be able to identify key points in relatively short readings.

Basic note-taking skills.

Students are expected to keep track of due dates and to manage their time accordingly.

The class provides an excellent opportunity to develop study skills. Students are asked to do short readings before class; in class we review key information and work to deepen our understanding.

What study techniques seem to work best for students who do well in this course?

There is a strong correlation between attendance and overall performance in the class. Students who attend and take notes are well-positioned to succeed on assessments and other work. In every section, students have access to PowerPoint presentations or other documents outlining lectures and/or key points from class discussion. Study guides, questions, or vocabulary words are provided in advance of assessments. Many students create notecards to study.

What behaviors or habits seem to cause students to struggle in this course?

Absence is the most common reason that students struggle in seated classes. In online classes, students struggle because they do not watch lectures and take notes on them. Sometimes students who fall behind on assignments or miss multiple classes cease to attend entirely. Students should always be in touch with their instructor if they are struggling for any reason—whether because they find course content difficult or because circumstances are preventing their full participation in the course. Your instructor is here to help you succeed, and we take pride in student support in the department. This applies to online and seated courses.

What types of struggles do you see most often? What recommendations do you give to students who struggle in this course? What other advice do you offer to students for success in this course?

Students who are struggling for any reason should reach out to the instructor, regardless of whether the course is seated or online. Do not assume that because you have missed several classes or an assignment that your instructor will not work with you. We will.

How do you describe the course to students when they ask “What is this class about?” (without using the catalog description)?

This course is about something—religion—that is at the heart of how many people understand themselves and their world. It is about a force that shapes global, national, and local affairs, and a force that, for many, influences their most important and personal life decisions: whom they marry, whether they have children, how they raise their children, how they spend their work time and free time, how they face suffering and death, and more. The course involves big discussions about what religion is, where it comes from, and how it shapes, helps, and/or harms human beings. We also learn about, compare, and contrast a variety of religious traditions, and we think about how this learning changes our own self-understanding and how we interact with others (whatever religion or non-religion we or they may hold). You do not have to be religious to take, enjoy, or benefit from this course.

Beyond meeting a General Education requirement, what benefits can students realize from choosing this course?

This course provides you with a wide range of practical skills that will help you succeed in your future studies and career: students learn to identify key information in readings and lectures and to communicate effectively both in writing and orally. Students learn to question assumptions and to reach conclusions driven by reason and evidence. Students also learn about a widespread and powerful phenomenon that shapes the behavior of human groups and individuals.

Other than your major/minor/certificate students, what groups of students could find this course relevant to their degree program or career path?

Anyone! But especially those whose career paths will involve working with individuals or groups who think and act in ways shaped by religion. This includes anyone working in healthcare, mental health, counseling, psychology, education, social work, the nonprofit world, law, government, and international relations. Anyone who plans to work in an international field, including in business, will also benefit and will be able to use their knowledge and skills to appeal to potential employers.

*Prepared by the Reynolds College Center for Student Success
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