Department of Religious Studies
Discussion Guide

The courses in the Department of Religious Studies have been constructed to depend heavily upon student discussion. Students who do not participate fully in online course discussions will receive a failing grade. You will be unable to pass the course without a strong presence in the discussion area.

Whenever you participate in a discussion it is essential that you follow these guidelines:

1. Make sure that your initial posting to any discussion question is your answer to the question. Your instructor needs to know that you are thinking, analyzing, and concluding. It must be a substantive comment.
2. Your discussion posting should reflect “deep thought” and not be done without deliberation.
3. Always be respectful of other students; this does not mean you have to agree. Far from it. But you must always address each other with civility.
4. Although agreeing with others is fine, you must state your own opinion clearly and with the proper amount of information. You must explain your own point of view, even if you are agreeing with another student.
5. Short comments are acceptable in a discussion but they are not sufficient in themselves to constitute “participation.” You are participating when you express an idea or point of view and provide a detailed, well thought out response.
6. Discussion postings must be timely but cannot reflect a “one and done” approach. You should be reviewing the discussion section at least twice for each assignment.