Summer 2016 Syllabus SOCY 4121-400 (Online)

Sociology of Religion

This is an online course that runs for a single ten-week semester, in keeping with the Continuing Education Department class calendar (see academic calendar found on the CU Home Page). It will be delivered online using the Desire2Learn (D2L) platform. The main course material, which is available within the learning management system, is comprised of readings, video mini-lectures, films and film clips, and online discussions. This course is ideal for students who can commit to checking in (online) daily Mondays through Fridays, can schedule about 90 minutes during the designated 12 hour periods in which the exams will be available online, and who also benefit from the flexibility of choosing the specific dates and times (on all but exam days) in which to work on the course. The exams will be available to students for one hour and can be accessed any time during the 12 hour window on exam days (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Mountain Daylight Savings Time). Exams are timed and the “clock begins” for individual students when they choose to log-on (within the designated windows of time).

# **Course Description & Outcomes**

This course examines complex interactions between religious and other social structures, such as the economy, government, and the family, and how globalization is affecting religious traditions across the globe. Includes discussion of how various religions are used or misused to justify terrorism and other acts of violence. Prerequisites: SOCY 1001, and SOCY 3001 or 3011. Approved for arts and sciences core curriculum: ideals and values. Prerequisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Junior or Senior) Sociology (SOCY) majors only.

Students will learn about the social forms and functions of religious organizations, including the social dynamics that enliven, challenge, and shape participation in religious social activities. The successful student will come to understand normative religious actions in a sociological context and learn to recognize social factors and dynamics in religious institutions and actions.

By the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

* Describe and discuss specific sociological theories of religion
* Apply sociological theory to analyses of contemporary controversial issues such as globalized religion and religiously-inspired terrorism.

**Required Texts**

Roberts, Keith A. and Yamane, David, *Religion in Sociological Perspective 5*th Edition*,* Pine Forge Press, Los Angeles, 2012. 978-1-4129-8298-6 *(This is the main textbook for the course, most of it will be assigned.)*

Prothero, Stephen, *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know—and Doesn’t,* Harper Collins, San Francisco, 2007. 978-0-06-084670-1. *(About half of this book will be assigned reading.)*

Juergensmeyer, Mark, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2003. 0-520-24011-1 *(Selected chapters from this book will be assigned.)*

# **Instructor Information**

**Contact Information**

Telephone: 303-818-4839

On-campus Office: Ketchum 169

Email: [liane.gallegos@colorado.edu](mailto:liane.gallegos@colorado.edu)

The preferred method of communication is email. Please, no text messages.

**Instructor Biography**

Liane Pedersen-Gallegos earned a Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Dr. Pedersen-Gallegos (also known as “Dr. Li” by many students) earned a M.A. in Sociology at the University of Colorado at Boulder and a B.A. in Sociology/Psychology (double major) at the Metropolitan State College of Denver.

Dr. Li’s research interests are the Sociology of Thanatology (the study of death and dying) and the Sociology of Religion. Dr. Li has been teaching at the University of Colorado since 1985. She has taught 105 classes since then (as of June 2016), the majority of which were at the University of Colorado. Of these, 51 classes were Sociology of Death and Dying classes and 30 were Sociology of Religion classes.

In addition, Dr. Li worked 12 years as a research associate at the University of Colorado at Boulder. The focus of her research was the evaluation of pedagogical innovations in the teaching of physical sciences at the undergraduate and graduate levels, with an emphasis on student career development. Dr. Li was the co-director of Ethnography & Evaluation Research for 7 years and was the director for 3 years.

At this time Dr. Li devotes full-time to teaching through the Sociology Department and the Department of Continuing Education at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

**Communication with the Instructor**

***Students are expected to check both their individual CU email and the Desire2Learn course site a minimum of every two days, Monday through Friday.***

You may contact Dr. Li via email at: [liane.gallegos@colorado.edu](mailto:liane.gallegos@colorado.edu) or by phone at: (303) 818 4839. Her preferred method of contact is email. The best time to reach her is during “virtual office hours” (Mondays noon – 2 PM and by appointment). She will make every attempt to respond to questions/messages within 48 hours Monday through Fridays. Saturdays and Sundays are “off-line” days for Dr. Li when she will not be available. She will still check email and phone messages a minimum of every two weekdays.

# **Support and Technical Information**

This course includes embedded and streaming audio and video resources. Most modern browsers should be able to display this content. However, in some circumstances you may need to install the Flash or Quicktime media player. Should you have any difficulty accessing any of your course contents please contact the on campus IT help line at 303-735-HELP (4357).

# **Reading Assignments**

There will be a brief introduction/mini-lecture for each week’s reading assignment designed to optimize learning. This introduction will establish the context for the particular readings, maintaining the common threads that tie the coursework into a meaningful whole. The total amount of reading assigned each week is comparable, although it may be made up of several shorter, individual reading assignments or fewer, more in-depth assignments.

Every student is expected to read all of the assignments.  ***It is necessary to keep up with the readings and the assignments in order to succeed in the class.*** While there is flexibility in the schedule for students to read and prepare the assignments up to a week ahead of time, the posting sites for each week will be “open” for a 48 hour period, closing at midnight on the day assignments are due. A suggested weekly assignment routine, which includes ***firm*** due dates for weekly posts is as follows:

# Suggested Class Work Schedule

Mondays: An introductory lecture and/or written introduction is provided for each week’s unit. Ideally, this is watched/read first, followed by the reading assignment.

The reading assignment for each week should be finished by midnight on the Monday of each week.

Tuesdays: ***The first of two weekly posts is due by Tuesday 11:59 PM***. The Tuesday posts are to include a direct quote from each of the assigned readings (see full directions on the discussions page). No quotes are to be repeated, so you will need to make sure that you are not repeating those chosen by others who have posted ahead of you. ***No credit will be given for repeated quotes***.

Wednesdays: Read all students’ Tuesday posts. Watch any assigned films for the week (films do not need to be quoted in the posts, but may be discussed on the Thursday posts and will be reflected in the quizzes).

Thursdays: ***The second of the two weekly posts is due by Thursday 11:59 PM.*** No direct quotes are required this time. Thursday posts are intended to provide a discussion forum for students to respond to the Tuesday round of posts, ongoing Thursday posts and/or assigned films.

Fridays: Read all students’ Thursday posts. There is an exam scheduled for three of the Fridays (see the syllabus). On exam Fridays the quizzes will be available during the 12 hour period from 8 AM to 8 PM Mountain Daylight Savings Time. Students will each have one hour for the exam, which will begin when students log in to the quiz page (see full directions for quizzes in the quiz section of the syllabus). Fridays are a good time to begin the readings due on the following Monday, particularly on those Fridays on which a quiz is not scheduled.

# **Discussion Posts**

The purpose of the post assignments is two-fold: to demonstrate that the reading assignments have been done and to provide a forum for students to apply critical thinking to the topic at hand. The criteria for each of the two weekly posts are different. For the first post students are to select a direct quote—not already posted by another student-- from the reading assignment (if there are two or more reading assignments, a direct quote must be included from each), along with student commentary on the quote. The **Tuesday posts** will ideally be comprised of three to five sentences to include: 1) the quote itself, which may be part of a sentence or a whole sentence, but should be no longer than one sentence, and must include an author and page reference so the readers can easily find the quote; 2) the student’s reaction to the quote, indicating why it was chosen; and 3) student commentary that indicates that the student understands the quote in context, having read the whole article from which the quote was chosen.

The **Thursday, posts** are due by 11:59 PM on the respective Thursday. Thursday posts do **not** require a direct quote from the readings, but are instead to be contributions to an ongoing, threaded online discussion. Thursday discussions may include multiple threads of discussion, as arise organically as the topics are addressed. These second posts need to reflect the students’ engagement in the online discussion(s), including critical thinking applied to at least one of the weekly discussion threads that emerge. The second post for the week may include observations, questions, suggestions and/or general feedback—the main criterion is that the post contribute to the ongoing discussion in a meaningful way, reflecting critical thought in response to the topic of the week. As with the first post for the week, the second post should be brief, in consideration to the other students, all of whom are required to read all of the week’s posts. The ideal post will be between two and five sentences long, not to exceed 100 words each. The limits placed on the posts are intended to keep the workload manageable for all students, while ensuring everyone has a voice in the on-line discussion.

The tenor of the posts is to remain collegial. This is not to say that everyone must agree with what others post—in fact a range of ideas and opinions is ideal—it is to say that the tone of the interchange is to be considerate.

## Grading Criteria for Discussion Posts

The first weekly post will be worth up to 6 points and the second weekly post will be worth up to 4 points. Credit is earned by adhering to the assignment guidelines: using an original quotation in the case of the first weekly post, placing the quote in context sufficient to demonstrate that one has read the whole assignment, relevance of commentary in the case of the second weekly post that indicates that the other posts have been read; and the application of insight/critical thinking in all cases. The second posts need to be substantial, in that they are more than a statement of agreement or disagreement with positions others have stated—critical thinking is the key here. The occasional misspelling and grammatical error will be overlooked, but points will be deducted if too little attention is given to the quality of one’s post. That is to say, that correct grammar and spelling are social courtesies writers extend to their readers, and reflect a level of self-respect the writer has for their own thinking and writing. Inattention to spelling and grammar (other than the occasional, minor error, of course) demonstrates a careless attitude toward one’s readers, and obvious disregard for or disinterest in the project at hand and those engaged in it. For this reason, significant lapses in attention to the quality of one’s contributions will result in the loss of points.

Late posts will not be accepted, as the timeliness of the online discussion is key. The discussion pages will be open for a limited time, closing at 11:59 PM on the respective due dates. Similarly, the instructor will make every effort to provide timely grading for weekly discussion posts, available to students via the online gradebook.

In summary, the posts will constitute an online “discussion” among the class members. Every student is to post two responses to each week’s summary (in the event of additional posts, only the first post for a given post assignment will be graded). The instructor will provide guidance to facilitate discussions and students’ comprehension of the material as appropriate. Students’ responses to the readings should be about a paragraph in length—and limited to 100 words. Grades for discussion contributions will be based on the following: indication that the student has read and understands all of the readings for the week and contributions to the online discussion reflect insight (See *Bloom’s Taxonomy* on D2L for more information regarding grading work, both on quizzes and discussion submissions).

# **Exams**

There will be three exams over the ten week semester, as noted in the course calendar: Friday, June 17; Friday, July 15; and Friday, August 5. Each is worth 30 points. The exams will be short-answer and essay format. Answer questions as completely as possible, explaining your answers. Your explanation of your answers is the heart of your answer—points are awarded for complete answers, including context provided. Tests are open-note in format; comprehensive answers are expected. Exams are to be taken individually, without consultation with other students. Refer to the CU Honor Code for guidance.

# **Course Calendar**

The course is designed for topics to be studied in sequential order. Readings can be started and/or finished up to two weeks ahead of time, but all posts must be submitted during the two days up to and including the due date and time, in the interest of keeping the discussions current. Dr. Li reserves the right to adjust the course calendar, and will alert students if there are any adjustments.

**1 Week of May 29 (first day of class is Tuesday, May 31) Introduction: The Social Costs of Religious Illiteracy**

Reading Assignment: Prothero Parts 1 and 2 (Chapters 1 through 4)

Initial Discussion Post due Wednesday, June 1 (Tues/Thurs post schedule starts 2nd week of class)

Second Discussion Post due Friday, June 3

Film Assignment

* Prothero u-tube

**2 Week of June 5 Sociological Perspectives of Religion**

Reading Assignment: Roberts & Yamane Chapters 1 and 2

Initial Discussion Post due Tuesday **June 7**

Second Discussion Post due Thursday **June 9**

Film Assignment

* Astronomy Picture of the Day: Scale of the Universe

**3 Week of June 12 Religious Experience and Religious Ritual**

Reading Assignment: Roberts & Yamane Chapters 3 and 4

Initial Discussion Post due Tuesday **June 14**

Second Discussion Post due Thursday **June 16**

Film Assignment

* “Sufi Soul”

**Quiz #1 Friday, June 17**

**4 Week of June 19 Becoming and Being Religious: Socialization, Conversion, and Switching**

Reading Assignment: Roberts & Yamane Chapters 5 and 6

Film Assignment

* “Jesus Camp”

Initial Discussion Post due Tuesday **June 21**

Second Discussion Post due Thursday **June 23**

**5 Week of June 26 Forms of Religion (Cult, Sect, Denomination, Ecclesia) and the Protestant Reformation**

Reading Assignment: Roberts & Yamane Chapters 7 and 9

Film Assignment

* “Luther”

Initial Discussion Post due Tuesday **June 28**

Second Discussion Post due Thursday **June 30**

**6 Week of July 3 Religion, Inequality, and Social Action**

Reading Assignment Roberts & Yamane Chapters 10 and 12

Initial Discussion Post due Tuesday **July 5**

Second Discussion Post due Thursday **July 7**

Film Assignment

* “Romero”

**7 Week of July 10 Secularization and Globalization**

Reading Assignment Roberts & Yamane Chapters 13 and 15

Initial Discussion Post due Tuesday **July 12**

Second Discussion Post due Thursday **July 14**

Film Assignment

* “A History of God”

**Quiz #2 Friday, July 15**

**8**  **Week of July 17 Religion and Terrorism**

Reading Assignment Juergensmeyer Chapters 1 and 7

Initial Discussion Post due Tuesday **July 19**

Second Discussion Post due Thursday **July 21**

**9 Week of July 24 Religion and Terrorism**

Reading Assignment Juergensmeyer Chapters 8 and one to be announced

Film Assignment

* TedTalk re a school for terrorist suicide bombers

Initial Discussion Post due Tuesday **July 26**

Second Discussion Post due Thursday **July 28**

**10 Week of July 31 Religion and Terrorism**

Reading Assignment Juergensmeyer Chapters 9 and 10

Film Assignment

* Two TedTalk Videos, links on D2L

Initial Discussion Post due Tuesday **August 2**

Second Discussion Post due Thursday **August 4**

**Final Exam Friday, August 5**

# **Grading Criteria**

Letter grades are assigned only at the end of the semester as final grades for the course. Individual assignments and exams will receive points and the final letter grade will be based on points accumulated, as indicated below. The instructor will make every effort to grade assignments and exams within one week of the date submitted. The instructor reserves the right to curve the final grades in the event of lower-than-expected average points accumulated.

Discussion Postings 100 points 171 – 190 A

Quiz #1 30 points 152 – 170 B

Quiz #2 30 points 133 – 151 C

Final Exam 30 points 114 – 132 D

*190 Total Points Possible*

Discussion posting grades will be determined by the instructor and recorded only in the student’s own grade book, which are available only to that specific student. Likewise, exams will be administered and submitted online, and students’ individual feedback and grades will be available only to the specific student whose work is being evaluated.

Online tests will be in short answer/essay format. Study guides will be provided prior to the exams, and the test questions will be based on the study guides, reading and film assignments, and on-line lectures.

# **Student Responsibilities**

Students are expected to participate in assigned online discussions. This is where the majority of student and instructor interaction will occur. The substance of student participation will be graded. ***It is necessary to keep up with reading and all other assignments to succeed in the class.*** The workload for students is comparable to that of students enrolled in the corresponding face-to-face class. In sum, this is made up of:

* weekly readings and occasionally films or film clips,
* participation in weekly online threaded discussions with the class, and
* three exams (two quizzes and one final exam)

As in face-to-face classes, students are responsible for keeping up with postings and other class announcements. ***Students are expected to check both their individual CU email and the Desire2Learn course material a minimum of every two days, Monday through Thursday.***

# **Class Policies**

**Late and Missing Assignments**

Assignments must be submitted sequentially (in the order assigned). Missing assignments will receive zero points.

**Plagiarism Policy**

Class policy regarding plagiarism is in keeping with the university policies. Assignments turned in via Desire2Learn are routinely submitted to an anti-plagiarism soft-ware program. Appropriate citation of all sources used is required on all assignments. Failure to accurately and adequately cite sources is considered plagiarism.

# **University Policies**

*Disabilities:* If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter from Disability Services tome in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities.   
Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, or [www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices](http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices).

*Honor Code:* All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include cheating, plagiarism, academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. I will report all incidents of academic misconduct to the Honor Code Council. Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). The honor code:

On my honor, as a

University of Colorado

at Boulder student,

I have neither

given nor received

unauthorized assistance

on this work.

See www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/.

*Discrimination and sexual harassment*: The University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff member, or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. For information and campus resources see [www.colorado.edu/odh](http://www.colorado.edu/odh).