**Sociology of Religion**

Fall 2013

SOCY 4121-001

Glenda Walden

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Office hours: 11-11:30, 2-2:45, and by appointment

**Course description**

This course explores religion from a sociological perspective. This will involve examination and analysis of religion as an institution, identity, cultural meaning system, and experience. We will look at how religion is connected with other social structures, history, culture, conditions of modernity, late/post modernity, social change, globalization, and identity politics. However, this is NOT a philosophy or comparative religions course. The emphasis will be on applying a sociological imagination to the place of religion in contemporary US society (within a global and historical framework) rather than the relative merits or validity of any religious tradition and theological school of thought.

# Course Policies and Environment:

* Please show respect for beliefs that are different from your own. This is not the place to argue for or against any religion. We will be practicing examination and analysis of religion from a sociological perspective, taking into account our own starting perspective and biases, and doing our best to understand its place in people’s lives (including our own) and our global political and social arena.

# When you email me please use Socy 4121 as your subject header. I delete or don’t respond to emails that do not have this as the subject heading. I check email throughout the morning Monday through Friday. If you email after this time, you can expect a response by the next work day.

# You are responsible for material and announcements presented during all lectures and recitation meetings. It is your responsibility to get missed notes and updates from fellow students-NOT the instructor. If a due date or other administrative changes are announced, that will supersede the “tentative schedule” found in this syllabus.

* Please do not arrive late or leave early or begin to pack up prior to the end of lecture or discussion. This inhibits other students’ ability to hear and understand the material.
* Please turn off cell phone ringers, and avoid engaging in side talking, reading, sleeping, texting, or surfing while in class.This is disrespectful of other students and the instructors and disruptive to the learning community. If I notice you doing any of these things the possible reactions range from polite requests to cease to light public ridiD2Le to being asked to leave the room.
* Please do the assigned readings for the week before the first class meeting of the week. This makes class more enjoyable for everyone and more useful for you. Many of the readings come from scholarly journals and books, and you may find them more difficult than textbooks and other sources. They require time and focused attention for deep comprehension and retention. While we may not cover each reading in class you are responsible for the content. If something is unclear in the reading or you are unsure how it relates to that week’s topic, it is your responsibility to bring that question up in class if you want it discussed in more detail.
* No early or late exams will be given. If you know you will be unable to take an exam on the day scheduled for any reason (religious, university event, or any other reason), please let me know as soon as possible to arrange for the essay makeup or other alternative. If you miss an exam, you have 24 hours to inform your instructor and then you will be given a take-home essay exam that typically takes 8-10 hours to complete. If you do not inform your instructor within 24 hours of missing an exam you will be given a zero for that score. It is in your best interest to be at scheduled exams. Please check the syllabus now to determine if there are any conflicts you need to discuss with me.
* Late papers are not accepted. That is the official policy. Please plan your life accordingly. I have been known to make exceptions to this policy for out of the ordinary circumstances (more sympathetic in advance), but only with point penalties.
* If you have any schedule conflicts with the final exam, please let your instructor know by Friday, November 22. If you have time conflicts with other tests, due dates, or known absences let your instructor know by e-mail as soon as possible.
* If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: [303-492-8671](tel:303-492-8671), Center for Community N200, and <http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices>.
* If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see guidelines at  
  <http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/go.cgi?select=temporary.html>
* Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance.  In this class, you will be offered a take-home essay due after religious observances are over or given extension of due date for religious observances. The take-home essay is designed to be completed in the amount of time I feel is necessary to study for and complete the in class exam. See full details at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html>
* Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities.  Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in  
  the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.  See policies at  
  <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html>   and at  
  <http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code>
* The University of Colorado at Boulder Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures, the University of Colorado Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures, and the University of Colorado Conflict of Interest in Cases of Amorous Relationships policy apply to all students, staff, and faculty. Any student, staff, or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of sexual harassment or discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at [303-492-2127](tel:303-492-2127) or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at [303-492-5550](tel:303-492-5550). Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>
* 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, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior.  All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu); [303-735-2273](tel:303-735-2273)). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html>  and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>
* Please keep all returned exams (and other returned work) in the event that you have a grade dispute at the end of the semester.  If your calculation of your grade does not match our records, it is your responsibility to provide proof of graded work.

**Course goals and opportunities**

* This course will introduce you to sociological perspectives on religion. You will gain familiarity with the key concepts and theories through some original sources and explore how these have been applied to understand current conditions.
* You will develop the capacity to see how these perspectives, conditions, and ideas show up in everyday life and larger social life and how a sociological perspective can be utilized as you make sense of current discussions and debates about religious, political, and social matters, your own beliefs and internal states, interactions with others, and as you make important decisions.
* You will have the opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of course material and get feedback regarding your level of understanding and communication of such according to academic standards through class participation, group projects, papers, and exams. This also gives you some practice developing skills that will support your success in other academic and professional pursuits.

**Course Materials (required)**

Roberts, Keith and David Yamane. 2011. *Religion in Sociological Perspective* 5th edition.

Wadsworth: Belmont CA.

Additional required readings are available on D2L in folders by week.

There are also several optional readings available on reserve in Norlin Library

**Evaluation Components**

We will discuss this in further detail in the first week of class, but here is the foundation on which we will collectively create assignments, test formats, and activities.

In class participation: 40 points

Exams 200 points

Papers: 160 points

This gives a total of 400 points.

**Final Grade Scale**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A: 93-100% | B: 83-86% | C: 73-76% | D: 63-66% |
| A-: 90-92% | B-: 80-82% | C-: 70-72 | D-: 60-62% |
| B+: 87-89% | C+: 77-79% | D+: 67-69 | F: 59% or less |

**Classroom engagement:** Each absence deducts 1 pt from your score. This is a small way of rewarding just making it through the door, which is itself a contribution to class culture and environment at a basic level. The overall score will reflect your level of engagement and participation in classroom discussion and activities.

**Exams:**  Two exams and a final will be given. These will be mixed format exams completed in class.

**Papers:** These will be a collaborative effort. Two papers will be due throughout the semester on topics relative to that section of the course. They will ask you and your partner to apply course concepts, ideas, and terms to a specific situation or issue in conventional academic style with proper citations. Details for each on D2L.

**Tentative Course Schedule-subject to change announced in class**

Please complete each day’s reading before class. Text is Roberts and Yamane. Readings week are in that folder on D2L

**Topic and assignments due**

**Week One** Religion, Sociology-Definitions

**8/26** Syllabus, D2L Documents

**8/28** text ch 1

**8/30** D2L week 1 readings

**Week Two** Macro and Micro Perspectives

**9/4** text ch 3

**9/6** Text ch 4

**Week Three** Social Constructionist Perspectives

**9/9** D2L week 3 Berger readings

**9/11** D2L week 3 other readings

**Week Four** Religious Experience

**9/16** Text 5

**9/18** D2L week 4 readings

**Week Five** Touching the Holy through Entheogens

**9/23** D2L week 5

**9/25** Optional: Doors of Perception

**9/27 Test One-bring #2 pencil**

**Week Six** US Trends, Identity, and Experience

**9/30** Text 6

**10/2** D2L readings week 6

**Week Seven** US Trends in context

**10/7** D2L Prothero readings week 7

**10/9** D2L other readings week 7

**10/11 Paper One due in class**

**Week Eight** Stratification

**10/14** D2L readings week 8

**10/16** Text 9

**10/18**  Text 10

**Week Nine** Stratification

**10/21** Text 11

**10/23** Text 12

**10/25** D2L readings week 9

**Week Ten** Secularization?

**10/28** wrap

**10/30 Test 2-bring a #2 pencil**

**11/1** text chapter 13

**Week Eleven** Secularization?

**11/4** Berger on D2L week 11

**11/6** Kurtz 7 on D2L week 11

**11/8** Wilbur on D2L week 11

**Week Twelve** Technology and Change

**11/11** text ch 14 and text pgs 206-213

**11/13** D2L readings week 12

**Week Thirteen** Globalization

**11/18** Text 15

**11/20** D2L readings week 13

**11/22 Paper Two Due in class**

**Fall Break Fall Break Fall Break**

**Week Fourteen** Inequality, Violence, Peace, Religion

**12/2** D2L readings week 14

**Week Fifteen** Social Transformation

**12/9** D2L readings week 15

**Final Exam TBA**