Course Description and Learning Goals

In this course, we will examine how key aspects of religion and the social influence one another. Through our interrogation of hermeneutics, context, ritual, identity, and power, we will untangle the complex interplay between experience and institution as it manifests in religious participation and rhetoric. Together we will compare both foundational and contemporary perspectives on religion in society and will use these lenses to understand faith-based influences on historical and current events.

By the end of this course:

1. Students will understand and be able to articulate the complex differences and similarities among major global religions.
2. Students will be proficient in the ideas of both foundational and contemporary scholars in the sociology of religion.
3. Students will interrogate the role of religion in shaping society and society in shaping religion.
4. Students will gain first-hand experience attending a service in a tradition that is unfamiliar to them, and will analyze this experience using a sociological imagination.
5. Students will apply perspectives on religion developed by marginalized groups.
6. Students will critically interrogate the deployment of religious rhetoric in a current news media event.

Course Assignments and Evaluation
(full guidelines and rubrics available on Canvas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mini-proposal</td>
<td>4-5 pages</td>
<td>50 points</td>
<td>10 Feb by 5PM via Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldnotes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>10 points</td>
<td>14 March in class and via Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldwork Paper</td>
<td>6-8 pages</td>
<td>75 points</td>
<td>31 March by 5PM via Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take-home Essay Exam</td>
<td>4-5 pages</td>
<td>50 points</td>
<td>25 April by 5PM via Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Events Briefing</td>
<td>500 words</td>
<td>35 points</td>
<td>varies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Engagement</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>30 points</td>
<td>Entire semester</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL POINTS: 250
Mini-proposal (50 points; 20% of grade)
After our class discussion on studying religion, you will design a proposal for research that you would like to carry out related to the sociological study of religion, faith, or spirituality and drawing on one of the methods we cover in the class.

Fieldnotes (10 points; 4% of grade) and Fieldwork Paper (75 points; 30% of grade)
Your major assignment for the course will be an exploratory ethnography of a religious site that you are unfamiliar with. It will be completed in the following stages across the course: identifying site and planning visits; visiting services and writing fieldnotes; peer reviewing fieldnotes in class; returning to field site for further visits; and analyzing fieldnotes and writing final product.

Take-home Essay Exam (50 points; 20% of grade)
You will complete a final paper that synthesizes information from across the course, using multiple course readings to make your argument in response to the provided prompt. The prompt and guidelines will be released via Canvas at least one week prior to the due date.

Current Events Briefing (35 points; 14% of grade)
You will give a 5-minute class briefing on the use of faith-based rhetoric in a current event of your choice and will submit an accompanying 500-word memo analyzing the rhetoric and its function in news coverage of the event. You must choose your briefing date via Canvas under the “People” tab before the end of add/drop (10 January).

Class Engagement (30 points; 12% of grade)
You are expected to attend class regularly and keep up with the course readings. You are also encouraged to ask questions and raise issues that you find important, both in the materials and in the social world, and share these issues in class and on the Canvas discussion boards. Quality, not only frequency, is most important in class participation. The attendance portion will be calculated as follows: 0-1 unexcused absences will receive full credit; 2-3 unexcused absences will receive a 5-point deduction; 4+ unexcused absences will forfeit 10 attendance points. In some instances, class activities and pop quizzes will substitute for attendance check-ins. Lateness (within 15 minutes) counts as half an absence – after 15 minutes you will be marked absent. Anyone found to be signing the attendance sheet for another student will automatically forfeit attendance points. **Athletes must submit their schedules to me ASAP in order to be excused for their game-related absences.

Course Grading Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100 to 94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>&lt; 94 to 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&lt; 94 to 90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>&lt; 94 to 90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>&lt; 90 to 87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>&lt; 87 to 84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>&lt; 84 to 80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>&lt; 80 to 77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>&lt; 77 to 74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>&lt; 74 to 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>&lt; 70 to 67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>&lt; 67 to 64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>&lt; 64 to 61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing</td>
<td>&lt; 61 to 0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Updated 12-15-16
Required Materials


Other required readings marked (C) that are available as .pdf files on the course Canvas site.

Classroom Policies

**Technology:** At times we may use laptops, cell phones, or tablets to complete group activities. Students are permitted to use laptops or tablets to take class notes; however, you may *at any time* be called upon to share your notes with the class and/or on our Canvas site. Please be advised that you will be asked to leave class and will be marked absent for the day if your use of technology is inappropriate or becomes disruptive to the class.

**Safe space:** Each of us brings a unique perspective to the classroom that enriches the learning experience for everyone. This classroom will be constructed as a safe space where all voices are heard and respected. Language and actions that compromise this goal by harassing, disrespecting, or promoting violence against any group or individual will not be tolerated. This includes blatant rudeness or ignorance directed towards the professor or any other student, present or not. To that end, I will ask anyone who disrupts the safe space to leave the classroom. I encourage any student who witnesses a violation of our classroom space to bring it to my attention immediately. It is everyone’s responsibility to co-create a productive space.

**Communications:** Please use my UF email to communicate with me (sschnable@ufl.edu). All emails must include a subject line and your full name, and be formatted in a professional manner. I will return your emails within 24 hours, excluding holidays, and expect you to do the same. You are required to check your UF email and the Canvas site regularly during this course. Please see me in person to discuss grades, as *I cannot give them out via email.*

**Late work:** *No late work will be accepted without prior approval from the professor.* I reserve the right to grant extensions on a case-by-case basis as I see fit and only in exceptional circumstances. If you miss an assignment, you will receive a grade of 0 points.

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of this course based on a standard set of criteria. These evaluations are conducted online ([evaluations.ufl.edu](http://evaluations.ufl.edu)) and are typically available at the end of every semester. More specific information will follow.
University Policies and Resources

Academic services: If you struggle with classroom skills like taking notes or writing papers, please take advantage of the University’s resources early in the semester. You can obtain free tutoring services from the Teaching Center (teachingcenter.ufl.edu) online, by appointment, and by walk-in. Please also take advantage of the Writing Studio (writing.ufl.edu/writing-center/) as you work on your papers.

Disability services: Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (dso.ufl.edu/drc/). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. **You must present this documentation to me prior to submitting assignments. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

Academic integrity: Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community and of this classroom. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code (dso.ufl.edu/sscr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/). I expect its spirit and its provisions to be respected in this course.

Technical support: Technological issues are not an excuse for late or missed work! For assistance with Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk:
- lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml
- learning-support@ufl.edu
- 352-392-HELP – select option 2

COURSE SCHEDULE

Section 1: Defining, Understanding, and Studying Religion
Thursday, 5 January
Introduction
  - What do you know about religion? How do you know it?

Tuesday, 10 January
Locating the conversation

Thursday, 12 January
Locating the conversation
Tuesday, 17 January
Methods for studying religion

Thursday, 19 January
Methods for studying religion

Section 2: Religion and Society
Tuesday, 24 January
Religion as a reflection of the social

Thursday, 26 January
The state and migration

Tuesday, 31 January
The state and migration

Thursday, 2 February
Racial formation

Tuesday, 7 February
Contemporary hermeneutics
Thursday, 9 February
Case study – Satanism

Friday, 10 February
MINI PROPOSAL DUE by 5PM via Canvas

Section 3: Religion as Lived Experience
Tuesday, 14 February
The social as religious experience

Thursday, 16 February
Ritual

Tuesday, 21 February
Identity and embodiment

Thursday, 23 February
Identity and embodiment

Tuesday, 28 February
Identity and embodiment

Thursday, 2 March
Learning and socialization

Adamczyk, Amy. 2009. “Socialization and Selection in the Link between Friends’ Religiosity and the Transition to Sexual Intercourse.” Pgs. 5-27. (C)

Tuesday, 7 March – Spring Break

Thursday, 9 March – Spring Break

Tuesday, 14 March

Fieldnote peer review

FIELDNOTES DUE both in class and via Canvas before class


Thursday, 16 March

Case study – unsynagogued Jews


Hicks, Allison M. 2008. “Role Fusion: The Occupational Socialization of Prison Chaplains.” Pgs. 400-421. (C)

Section 4: Religion, Power, and Movement

Tuesday, 21 March

Religion and power


Thursday, 23 March

Movements and mobilization


Tuesday, 28 March

Movements and mobilization


Thursday, 30 March

Movements and mobilization


Friday, 31 March
FIELDWORK PAPER DUE by 5PM via Canvas

Tuesday, 4 April
Feminist and queer interventions in religion
— Diefendorf, Sarah. 2015. “After the Wedding Night: Sexual Abstinence and Masculinities over the Life Course.” Pgs. 647-669. (C)

Thursday, 6 April
Feminist and queer interventions in religion

Tuesday, 11 April
Feminist and queer interventions in religion
— Harvey, Jennifer. 2015. “Disrupting the Normal: Queer Family Life as Sacred Work.” In Queer Christianities. Pgs. 103-114. (C)

Thursday, 13 April
Feminist and queer interventions in religion

Tuesday, 18 April
Case study – “restructuring” and political activism

Tuesday, 25 April
TAKE-HOME ESSAY EXAM DUE by 5PM via Canvas

*This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning experience. Such changes are not unusual and, if necessary, will be communicated clearly via email and in class.*