Sociology of Religion
CURE 2114

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Course Description

From the beginning of the sociological endeavor, the study of religion has been central to the understanding of modern societies. This course will continue in the tradition of sociology founded by Max Weber and Emile Durkheim who made inquiries into religion the foundations of their larger research agendas. This course is designed to survey the interactions between religion and society while developing the sociological approach to the study of religion as a social institution. In particular, we will look at the ways in which religion is transformed by, and plays a role in the transformation of, a global society.

Student Contribution and Evaluation

1. Tutorial hours: Participation in tutorial hours is mandatory.
2. Group Project Presentation: The group project presentation is meant to stimulate the discussion by presenting the preliminary reports of field trips. You will work, in a group of 3-4 students, on a project of field study on a religious phenomenon using the theories and concepts learned in the course. Each group is required to discuss their research proposal (with a one-page outline) with the tutors. Each group will give a presentation on the result of their research project in the tutorial period.
3. Final Paper: The term paper (8-10 pages) which is due on __________ 2015. Choose a specific theory or theme covered by the course that is of interest of you, review the relevant existing literature, derive expectations from existing theories, and propose data and methods that would allow settling controversial issues.

Note: All written work should be submitted in Times New Roman 12pt., double spaced, standard margins.

Assessment Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation and discussion</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutorial Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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Required Readings:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
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Class & Tutorial Participation

The success of this course depends on the participation of all of us. You will be permitted 2 unexcused absences during the course. You are also encouraged to actively participate in the discussion both in the class and in tutorials.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Workshop: How to do a group study project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussing the Presentation Outline with the tutor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Further discussing the presentation materials with the tutor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Discussing the Presentation Outline with the tutor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Discussing the Presentation Outline with the tutor.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Discussing the Presentation Outline with the tutor.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Student Conference</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Student Conference</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Student Conference</td>
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Course Schedule

***5 Jan
Introduction and Overview
- Berger, Peter. “The Invitation to Sociology”

***12 Jan
Religion as the a field of Sociological Knowledge
- Berger, Peter. “The Invitation to Sociology”
- Wuthnow, Robert. “Studying Religion, Making it Sociological.” (Dillon, Chapter 2.)

***19 Jan Classical Theories I.
• Nielsen, Donald. “Transformation of Society and the Sacred in Durkheim’s Religious Sociology”. (Fenn, Chapter 7.)
• Bellah, Robert N. “The Ritual Roots of Society and Culture” (Dillon, Chapter 3)

Recommended:
• Durkheim, Elementary Forms of Religious Life, “Introduction”.

***26 Jan
Religion and
• Special Guest Speaker: Dr. Angie HOE (Assistant Professor, University of Chicago, June 1st-date)

***3 Feb
Classical Theories II.
• Martin, David. “Personal Reflection in the Mirror of Halevy and Weber”

Recommended:
• Weber, The Sociology of Religion. (Chapters 1-2)

***10 Feb
Contemporary Theories I: Secularization
• Wilson, Bryan. “Salvation, Secularization and De-moralization”
• Glorski, Philip. “Historicalize the Secularization Debate – An Agenda for Research.” (Dillon, Chapter 9)

Recommended:
• Casanova, Public Religions in the Modern World, chapter. 1 and 2.

***17 Feb
Contemporary Theories II: Gender
• Woodhead, Linda. “Feminism and the Sociology of Religion: From Gender-Blindness to Gendered Difference” (Fenn, Chapter 4.)

Recommended:

*** 24 Feb, the Lunar New Year Vacation.
***3 March

**Individuals, Rituals, and Practices**
- Hervieu-Leger, Daniele. “Individualism, the Validation of Faith, and the Social Nature of Religion in Sociology.” (Fenn, chapter 9.)

***10 March

**Organizations and Collectivities**
- Warner, Stephen. "The Place of the Congregation in the Contemporary American Religious Configuration" in *American Congregations* (pp. 54-99).

***17 March

**New Economic Ethics of Religion**

Recommended:
- Weber, *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*

***24 March

**Sociology of Religion and Related Areas of Inquiry**
- Bell, Catherine. “Acting Ritually: Evidence from the Social Life of Chinese Rites.” (Fenn)

***31 March

**Religion and Global Societies**
- Beyer, Peter. “Social Forms of Religion and Religion in Contemporary Global Society” (Dillon, Handbook Chapter 5.)
- Demerath, Nicholas J. III. “Civil Society and Civil Religion as Mutually Dependent.” (Dillon, Chapter 24.)

***7 April, the Public Holiday.
***14 April
**Contemporary Trends in the Relation of Religion to Society**

- Demerath, Nicholas J. III. “Secularization Extended: From Religious ‘Myth’ to Cultural Commonplace.” (Fenn, Chapter 11)
- Beckford, James A. “Social Movements as Free-floating Religious Phenomena.” (Fenn, Chapter 12)

***21 April***
Student Conference

***28 April***
Conclusion:
- Davie, Grace. “The Evolution of Sociology of Religion” (Dillon, Chapter 5.)