

Sociology of Religion: SOC 480-001

Spring 2022

CRN 64552

MWF 10:15-11:20

Engineering Building 92

Office Hours: MW 11:30 & by appointment

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Health and self care will be our first priority. Do not prioritize this class over your health and well being. Communication will be extra important this quarter. We're all going to have to be flexible under these quarantine conditions. This syllabus establishes a set of goals we're going to work toward, but we might have to change things as new situations emerge and as the concept of this class becomes a reality.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK: Religion in Sociological Perspective, 7th ed, by Keith Roberts & David Yamane. This is the newest edition, but the 6th edition will also work, although the chapters are different.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will provide students with an introduction to the sociology of religion. We will look at the different roles that religion plays in society. This will include looking at religion as a system of beliefs, identification, worldview, symbols, and social organization. We will investigate different sociological theories of religion, including the sacred and profane. We will look at religion as a micro, meso, and macro level social process. We will cover religion and inequality, looking at how religion intersects with race, class, and gender.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION: This course is heavily dependent on reading. Students should complete the assigned readings prior to each class, bring the textbook to class and be prepared to engage in thoughtful discussion regarding the readings. Regular attendance will benefit the dedicated student since exams will cover lecture material not included in the texts. We will use Canvas for turning in assignments.

CLASS CONDUCT: In an effort to make this class a learning environment for everyone, please be considerate of the other students in class. Please try to get to class on time and refrain from leaving before class is done. Turn off all electronic devices. This includes iPods, phones, and

laptops. If you want to have a chat with your classmates, do it outside. We will be discussing topics that may be controversial, so it is very important that we all maintain respect for the diversity of opinions represented in the class. This is an educational environment, so ideas may be questioned and critiqued but personal attacks will not be tolerated.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Academic honesty is a cornerstone of meaningful education and a reflection of maturity and integrity. Portland State University is committed to the highest standards of academic honesty. The Student Conduct Code prohibits all forms of academic cheating, fraud, and dishonesty, but not limited to plagiarism, buying and selling of assignments for others, unauthorized disclosure and receipt of academic information and other practices understood to academically dishonor. Copies of the Student Conduct Code may be obtained by contacting 503-725-4422, or by visiting room 433 in Smith Memorial Center. Any assignment or exam found to be academically dishonest will receive no points for the whole exam/assignment *and* a referral to the appropriate authority.

ACCESS & INCLUSION: PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, usable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, <https://www.pdx.edu/drc>.

- If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations.
- Students who need accommodations for tests and quizzes are expected to schedule their tests to overlap with the time the class is taking the test.
- Please be aware that the accessible tables or chairs in the room should remain available for students who find that standard classroom seating is not useable.
- For information about emergency preparedness, please go to the [Fire and Life Safety webpage](https://www.pdx.edu/environmental-health-safety/fire-and-life-safety)(<https://www.pdx.edu/environmental-health-safety/fire-and-life-safety>) for information.

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment for my students and for the campus as a whole. Please be aware that federal, state, and PSU policies require faculty members to report any instances of sexual harassment, sexual violence and/or other forms of prohibited discrimination. Similarly, PSU faculty are required to file a report if they have reasonable cause to believe that a child with whom they come into contact has suffered abuse, or that any person with whom they come into contact has abused a child. If you would

rather share information about these experiences with an employee who does not have these reporting responsibilities and can keep the information confidential, please contact one of the following campus resources (or visit this [link](#)):

- Women's Resource Center (503-725-5672)
- Queer Resource Center (503-725-9742)
- Center for Student Health and Counseling (SHAC): 1880 SW 6th Ave, (503) 725-2800
- Student Legal Services: 1825 SW Broadway, (SMSU) M343, (503) 725-4556

CONTACT INFO: The best way to contact me is via email. Please be sure to put "Soc 480" in the subject line so I can find your email amidst the spam. If you do not put that in the subject line, I might not read your email. I have a great many students so don't expect an instant reply. Please send me an email with a picture of your pet, your child, or something else cute or interesting.

ASSIGNMENTS: There will be two short papers (4-5 pages) and one long paper as class assignments. The long paper (8+ pages) will be an ethnography based on participant/observation in religious activity out in the world. This will be more of a qualitative research project than a research paper, although some research will be part of the project. This will be an opportunity to use your sociological imagination to engage with religion as it is lived, not only as it is theorized. The long paper will be due in Week 10. Everyone will do a short (5 minute) presentation on their research.

GRADES: Grades will be based on the following:

- Short Papers = 20 points each
- Long Paper = 100 points
- Participation = 20 points

Final grades will be based on the standard curve. You start the quarter with 0 points and accumulate them with each successful project.

READING SCHEDULE: (a work in progress, subject to change)

WEEK 1: Ch1 & Ch 2: "What do we mean by the term *Religion*?" & Historical Development of the Sociology of Religion

WEEK 2: Ch 3: A Social Scientific Approach to Studying Religion

WEEK 3: Ch 4: Becoming and Being Religious. **Short Paper 1 assigned on Friday**

WEEK 4: Ch 5: Conversion, Switching, and Apostasy. **Short Paper 1 due Friday**

WEEK 5: Ch 6 & Ch 7: Churches, Sects, Denominations, and 'Cults' & Congregationalism & Congregations

WEEK 6: Ch 8: Religion, Economics, and Social Class, **Short Paper 2 assigned on Friday**

WEEK 7: Ch 9: Religion and Race, **SP2 due Friday**

WEEK 8: Ch 10 & Ch 11: Religion and Gender & Religion and Sexuality

WEEK 9: Ch 12: Religion Outside the (God) Box

WEEK 10: Ch 13 & 14: Religion, Social Stability, and Social Conflict & Globalization and Religion. **Long Paper due Friday**

Final Meeting is Wednesday, June 8th at 10:15.