

SOCI 3334/01
RELIGION AND SOCIETY
Spring 2007

Tentative schedule is subject to change!

This is an online class but requires weekly field trip to various religious services around the Atlanta area. Please do not take this class if you do not have access to the Internet, if you do not have your own transportation, or if you are unable to attend religious/spiritual services of religions different than your own.

Miriam W. Boeri, Ph.D. Assistant Professor of Sociology

Office: Library Room 216

Office Hours: T/R 1-2 PM; 4-5 PM by appointment

Phone: (678) 797-2069

email: mboeri@kennesaw.edu

Please use WebCT email for all class communication

Catalogue Description: Examination of religion as a social institution in historical, comparative, and contemporary terms. World religions and new religious movements are studied as sociocultural processes involving the need to know, to deal with problems and to adapt to change.

Overview:

This course provides students with a sociological understanding of religion. We will be looking at the diversity of religious groups, but the truth or falsity of given religions will not be discussed. Being a believer or unbeliever is irrelevant to this sociological study of religion. The sociological view requires objectivity on the part of the observer, and while the insider's view must be respected and considered, our focus is sociological and not doctrinal. The interaction between society and religion is central in our exploration of religion as a cultural phenomenon.

This course requires weekly fieldwork, which includes visiting religious and spiritual services that are new to you. For example, if you refuse to visit a gay or lesbian service, a Muslim service, or a Wiccan event, you do not want to take this class. You must visit at least ten (10) services or events from a list I provide. Please check the WebCT event weekly (on Friday) to verify that the service has not been changed. Sometimes the services or events change due to circumstances beyond my control, and I post this information on Friday. Fieldwork will be conducted individually or in groups, but not as a class. This means you will go to the services you choose to attend (10 in total) on your own or carpool. Carpools are organized by students online. However I will be meeting you at the service or event. I will be attending all services or events, so I will get to know you. Weekly online discussions of fieldwork and written observations (field notes) are required.

I will attend all services and events. I will post detailed information regarding the service or event for each specific week on Fridays by 9 am. For example, if we are meeting at the Friends Meeting in Atlanta on Sunday, all details for the service will be posted on the Friday before that meeting. If something occurs, such as changes in the scheduled service or event, this will be posted on Friday. It is your responsibility to check WebCT sometime on Friday for all details

and updates. If you have questions, please ask them before 4PM to get an answer from me on time. I will not accept emails regarding excuses for not attending an event, such as car failure, sickness in family, work problems etc. Please see my standard process for excuses below. PLEASE DO NOT EMAIL any excuses.

Course Objectives:

1. Develop an understanding of the sociological perspective on religion
2. Develop the ability to apply sociological concepts to a range of religions
3. Develop the ability to observe, analyze and write objectively
4. Understand how religion is a social institution that both affects and is affected by society
5. Understand how religion meets some basic needs of individuals and groups.

Required Reading:

Zuckerman, Phil. 2003. *Invitation to the Sociology of Religion*. New York: Routledge.
Manning, Christel and Phil Zuckerman *Sex and Religion* Thomson Wadsworth: Belmont, CA.
Journal Articles posted on Vista.

Course Requirements and Grading System	Points
Exams/Short Papers (2 open book exams at 25 pts each)	50
Field notes (10 at 10 points each)	100
Research Paper (50 points)	50

200

Grading System: A=180-200; B=160-179; C=140-169; D=120-139 F=below 120

Exams will be open-book and submitted in essay format. Please submit everything online through WebCT VISTA in Word (.doc). **All papers must be in word (not wdp or any other format)**. If you are unable to attach a Word document, copy and paste your document in the email message space. It is your responsibility to make sure your paper arrives on time. I will send you a message when I receive your paper and can open it and read it. If you do not get this email message, you are responsible to re-send the paper in a format I can read within two days. **Please use 12-pont font and double space. Be sure your name is on the paper in the upper left-hand corner.** (Points will be deducted if you name is not on the PAPER or if not double-spaced.) You will be given a choice of questions to answer. The questions may come from text book material, journal articles or assigned films. Exam papers will be graded for content, clarity, grammar and evidence of your understanding of the issues.

Participant Observation and Field notes

You will attend 10 religious services or events chosen from at least 14 events that I will provide below. I will post a tentative schedule so you can plan ahead, but **places and events are subject to change depending on the circumstances of the event**. Each Friday, I will post more information about the service or events and any updates for the following week. I will post this information by 9 am in the morning. You will take notes according to guidelines I will provide. It is preferable to take your notes immediately after you leave the service, but notes should be written as soon as possible. Be ready to answer the questions I ask about your observation your field notes. Grades for field notes are posted on WebCT Vista each week. I will send back your

paper with my edits and comments using tracking. I will grade your first field notes much easier than the others so you can learn what I am looking for in the future. Please read all notes and comments I make on these field notes and follow this advice for the remaining field notes. You may conduct the field trip alone or in a car pool group organized by you on WebCT Vista. Field notes are due on schedule due date BY MIDNIGHT. There are more than 10 events, and you may replace any ONE event with a virtual online service. For example, if you can not attend an event one week, you can go to an online service I posted on Vista, and turn in the online field notes for that week. You can only do this ONE time. I will only count 10 field notes toward your grade. It is your responsibility to make sure your paper arrives on time (by midnight on due date). I will send you a message when I receive your paper and can open it and read it. If you do not get this email message, you are responsible to re-send the paper in a format I can read. **Please use 12-pont font and double space. Be sure your name is on the paper in the upper left-hand corner.** (Points will be deducted if you name is not on the PAPER or if not double-spaced.)

Research Paper

Conduct research on a particular aspect (topic) of social life and compare two religions (or religious groups) on this topic. Follow the format in the Manning and Zuckerman and book on “sex” and religions. For example, if you want to study “alcohol use and religion,” you will research at least two religions and explain their views on alcohol. **Be sure to use a sociological perspective on why or how these views were affected by society, and how these religious views affect social life for the members of the religion.** You need to include a minimum of five references (at least 3 should be academic journal articles). I will provide guidelines for the paper and references. Papers will be a minimum of 5 pages double spaced.

I suggest you choose your topic very early in the semester. Look up your topic and various religions on Galileo and Library resources to see if there is much written about this topic. If you cannot find at least 3 good journal articles on this topic and different religions, then choose another topic. It is your responsibility to choose a topic that allows you to find research papers. You have plenty of time to do this if you start early. You might also need to read some books, so give yourself some time for research work. Please email me privately to discuss your topic if you are having difficulty. I will probably suggest you change the topic.

Final research reports are emailed through Vista. It is your responsibility to make sure your paper arrives on time. I will send you a message when I receive your paper and can open it and read it. If you do not get this email message, you are responsible to re-send the paper in a format I can read. **Please use 12-pont font and double space. Be sure your name is on the paper in the upper left-hand corner.** (Points will be deducted if you name is not on the PAPER or if not double-spaced.)

The Reading Schedule below will be followed for reading assignments, test dates, and assignment due dates.

Late Papers: I will not accept late papers without official documentation of illness or other emergency. Official documentation and hard copy of late paper MUST be turned in to the

Sociology office in hard copy. Please do not email me your excuse or papers. They will be deleted.

ASA style guide is in your text and also on the department website and at

<http://www.calstatela.edu/library/styleman.htm>

If you plan to develop a previous paper you wrote for another class, you must give me a copy of the previous paper. You need to show significant improvement and advancement on the paper you write for this class. You will receive an F for your paper if it is the same as another paper you wrote or if it is plagiarized. You are also responsible for reading what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html> and <http://nutsandbolts.washcoll.edu/plagiarism.html>

Academic Integrity Statement: Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University's policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an "informal" resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct's minimum one semester suspension requirement.

Disability Clause: Kennesaw State University provides support for students with disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to identify himself/herself as an individual with a disability. A qualified individual in the area of the identified disability must provide the documentation of the disability. This documentation must show how the disability creates a significant impact on the individual's academic performance; it should include suggested accommodations that are reasonable to provide in an academic setting.

Please email professor privately for all personal hardships.

Since this is an online class I need to be assured that you have read and understand the syllabus and requirements above. Please send an email to me (using WebCT Vista) stating that you have read and understand all the requirements of this class. I will not give you a grade for any assignment until I receive this email.

March 2: Last day to withdraw from class without academic penalty.

SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE: Please check WebCT every Friday for changes.

Friday class	Online	Field	Due Dates
1/5	Read online syllabus and answer questions Email “understand and agree” statement	none	
1/12	Zuckerman Book Q&A	none	
1/19	Exam Questions on Zuckerman Book	none	
1/26	Zuckerman and Manning Book Q&A	none	Exam One due
2/2	Exam Questions on Zuckerman and Manning Book	none	
2/9	Field notes template & Discussion	Visit a service of your choice NOT on the list below and take field notes	Exam Two due
2/16	See instructions for field event	Friends Religious Society (Quaker) Sunday 2/18 10 am	Field Notes 1 due On service of your choice
2/23	See instructions for field event	The Atlanta Hare Krishna Temple Sunday 2/25 4:00 PM	Field Notes 2 due On Friends
3/2	See instructions for field event Guidelines for research papers posted	Ravenwood Church (Wiccan) Sunday 3/5 2 pm	Field Notes 3 due On Hare Krishna
3/9	Spring Break		
3/16	See instructions for field event	First Existentialist Church Sunday 3/18 11 am	Field notes 4 due On Ravenwood
3/23	See instructions for field event	Hindu Center of Atlanta Sunday 4/1 10 am	Field notes 5 due On Existential Church
3/30	See instructions for field event Sign up for research topic online	Mormon Chapel TBA OR Sahaj Marg Wednesday 4/4 7:30 pm	Field Notes 6 Due on Hindu Center
4/6	See instructions for field event	Family Federation/Unification Church Sunday 4/8 11:30 am OR	Field Notes 7 due on Mormon service or Sahaj Marg

		Peace Studies Conference Friday 4/13	
4/13	See instructions for field event	City of Refuge & Feeding Sunday 4/15 8:30 am Or Tibetan Buddhist Tuesday 4/17 7:30 pm	Field Notes 8 due on Peace Studies or Family Federation
4/20	See instructions for field event	Hebrew Synagogue Friday 4/13 at 7:30 pm	Field notes 9 due on City of Refuge or Buddhist event
4/27	See instructions for field event	Muslim Mosque TBA	Field notes 10 on Hebrew Synagogue due
5/4	Last day to email all papers. Late papers due in hard copy with documented proof.		Muslim Mosque notes due Research Papers due

* You may also replace ONE event with a virtual event online (see list of websites on Vista)
Turn in your notes for virtual event on the day field notes are due for the event you replace.
Clearly mark that this replaces the event on your paper.