

SOCIOLOGY 6143: SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

Fall Semester, 2012

CRN 15257

T 5:30-8:15

MH 3.03.14

Instructor: Christopher Ellison, Ph.D.

Office: MS 4.02.44

E-mail: christopher.ellison@utsa.edu

Office hours: R 1-2:30 (and by appointment)

OVERVIEW:

Since the classical sociological treatises of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim, scholars have widely assumed that the vitality and social power of religion are being steadily eroded by the forces of modernity. However, contemporary developments call into question these time-honored notions of secularization. Indeed, many social scientists are embracing a more dynamic, market-oriented perspective on individual and collective religious life, especially (but not exclusively) in the United States. This debate between classic secularization approaches --the "old" paradigm-- and the "new" market-focused paradigm has also reinvigorated the academic study of religion and spirituality, and has fostered fresh scholarly interest in the role of religious organizations, practices, and beliefs in American society.

In this course, we will examine the dominant theories of religion and look at the way sociologists use multiple types of empirical data --quantitative and qualitative-- to study religion as a social institution. We will begin the course by focusing squarely on the debate between "old" and "new" paradigms in the sociology of religion. The next phase of the course explores the dynamics religious affiliation and disaffiliation, and the reasons for the growth and decline of specific religious groups and communities, as well as the varied factors that influence individual religious and spiritual practices. Subsequent segments of the course will address such topics as: (a) the links between religion, ethnicity, and immigration; (b) religion, gender, and family life; (c) religion, health, and well-being; (d) religion and socioeconomic stratification; and (e) religion and politics.

READINGS:

In lieu of books, readings for this course will consist of academic journal articles and book chapters. Information about how to access these materials will be provided in class.

GRADES:

Grades will be based on the following components: two short (4-6 pages, single-spaced) response papers addressing specific segments of course materials (15% each); one class paper due at the end of the semester (50% total; 5% prospectus due at midterm, 45% final deliverable); and regular class attendance and participation, as described at the first class meeting (20%).

The term project should be of sufficient breadth as to demonstrate the student's knowledge of the course content, and may take the form of a research proposal, empirical study, or critical review of the scholarly literature on a particular topic or issue relevant to the course. All specific project ideas must be summarized in a brief (2-3 page) prospectus, which must be submitted to the instructor for approval no later than Fri., 10/12. Students will then be expected to present their papers (as "works in progress" for group discussion) to the class during the latter part of the semester (i.e., 11/6, 11/13, 11/27, or 12/4). Additional details on this arrangement will be provided in class.



The two shorter papers noted above will focus on specific segments of course materials. They should be more than summaries of the relevant materials; rather, they should strive to integrate and synthesize these readings, to provide the respondent's insights and to raise questions, and (where appropriate) to integrate small numbers of additional materials to supplement course readings. Here, too, additional details will be provided in class.

Seminar meetings will consist of a combination of lecture and student-led discussion. Therefore, it is essential that students come to class prepared to discuss the readings in detail. Each student will be expected to facilitate (that is, to lead) at least one class discussion over the course of the semester. Attendance at all class sessions is mandatory, per the policy outlined below.

A = 90-100%, B = 80-89%, C = 70-79%, D = 60-69%, F = below 60

OTHER POLICIES TO NOTE:

Late Assignments:

The option of making up exams is available only to students with excused absences, i.e., those whose absences are due to Holy Days or official university functions, or for which sufficient documentation is presented to the instructor. Examples of the latter include doctor's notes, court documents, and the like. Otherwise missed exams are scheduled at the discretion of the instructor, and only under unusual circumstances. Without sufficient documentation, students can expect to receive a grade of 0 for the missed exam.

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to attend every class meeting, unless they fall into the "excused" category defined by UTSA policy, or except in cases of documented illness or family emergency. The instructor reserves the right to deduct points from the final grade of any student who is deemed to have an excessive number of absences.

Excused Absences (UTSA Policy):

Any student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious Holy Day (this means a Holy Day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20 of the Tax Code) shall be allowed to take an examination for that day within a reasonable time (normally within 20 school days) after the absence if, not later than the 15th day after the first day of the semester, the student notifies the instructor of each class the student had scheduled on that date that the student would be absent for a religious Holy Day. Notification of the planned absences must be in writing and must be delivered by the student either (a) personally to the instructor of each class or (b) by certified mail, return receipt requested, addressed to the instructor of each class. An instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to satisfactorily complete the assignment or examination within a reasonable time (normally 20 school days) after the absence. Each instructor should inform the student, at the time the student notifies the instructor of a planned absence, of the deadline for completion of the missed examination.

Students shall be excused without penalty from class to participate in an official University sanctioned student activity, such as intercollegiate athletic competition, forensics, music tours, and other similarly approved events. Students are responsible for the coursework for any time they are absent from class. Faculty or the University employee in charge of such activities shall file a list of students and the dates they request the students be excused from class with the Office of the Provost and the Vice President for Student Affairs. Deans, Division Directors, and faculty may check any names against the list by contacting the Office of the Provost.

Scholastic Dishonesty:

Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, giving inaccurate or misleading information in order to obtain an extension or delay in completing examinations, or any other act designed to give unfair advantage to a student, or the attempt to commit such an act.

Students with Disabilities:

The instructor will make every reasonable effort to accommodate students with documented disabilities. However, students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services (MS 2.03.18; 458-4157) in order to receive consideration and support services.

Additional Note:

Students are encouraged to utilize the academic support services available through the Tomas Rivera Center (TRC) to assist with building study skills and for tutoring in course content. These services are available at no additional cost to you. The TRC has several locations on the Main Campus. For more information, visit the web site at www.utsa.edu/trcss, or call 458-4694.

COURSE ORGANIZATION:

[NOTE: Dates for specific topics are approximate, and may vary depending on the rate of progress throughout the semester. Students are responsible for any announcements regarding changes in such dates.]

9/4: Introduction to Course

Readings:

*Ellison, Christopher G., and Michael J. McFarland. 2012. *The Social Context of Religion and Spirituality in the United States*. Draft manuscript.

9/11: Secularization and its Discontents

Readings:

*Hadden, Jeffrey. 1987. *Toward Desacralizing Secularization Theory*. *Social Forces* 65: 587-611.

*Crippen, Timothy. 1988. *Old and New Gods in the Modern World: Toward a Theory of Religious Transformation*. *Social Forces* 67: 316-336.

*Chaves, Mark. 1994. *Secularization as Declining Religious Authority*. *Social Forces* 72: 749-774.

*Stark, Rodney. 1999. *Secularization, R.I.P.* *Sociology of Religion* 60: 249-273.

*Warner, R. Stephen. 1993. *Work in Progress toward a New Paradigm for the Sociological Study of American Religion*. *American Journal of Sociology* 98: 1044-1093.

9/18: The Growth and Decline of Religious Collectivities

[NOTE: 9/14 is the Fall 2012 Census date]

Readings:

*Finke, Roger, and Rodney Stark. 1989. *How the Upstart Sects Won America: 1776-1850*. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 28: 27-44.

*Iannaccone, Laurence R. 1994. *Why Strict Churches are Strong*. *American Journal of Sociology* 99: 1180-1211.

- *Thomas, Jeremy N., and Daniel V.A. Olson. 2010. Testing the Strictness Thesis and Competing Theories of Congregational Growth. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 49: 619-639.
- *Scheitle, Christopher P., and Roger Finke 2008. Measuring Congregational Resources: Selection versus Production. *Social Science Research* 37: 815-827.
- *Finke, Roger, and Laurence R. Iannaccone. 1993. Supply-Side Explanations for Religious Change. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 527(1): 27-39.
- *Wilde, Melissa J. 2001. From Excommunication to Nullification: Testing and Extending Supply-Side Theories of Religious Marketing with the Case of Catholic Marital Annulments. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 40: 235-249.
- 9/25: The Growth and Decline of Religious Collectivities, continued
Readings:
- *Hout, Michael, Andrew Greeley, and Melissa J. Wilde. 2001. The Demographic Imperative in Religious Change in the United States. *American Journal of Sociology* 107: 468-500.
- *Scheitle, Christopher P., Jennifer B. Kane, and Jennifer Van Hook. 2011. Demographic Imperatives and Religious Markets: Considering the Individual and Interactive Roles of Fertility and Switching on Religious Group Growth. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 50: 470-482.
- *Chaves, Mark. 2006. All Creatures Great and Small: Megachurches in Context. *Review of Religious Research* 47: 329-346.
- *Hadaway, C. Kirk. 1990. The Impact of New Church Development on Southern Baptist Growth. *Review of Religious Research* 31: 370-379.
- *Callahan, Kennon L. 1983. *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, chs. 1-2.
- *Hout, Michael, and Claude S. Fischer. 2002. Explaining the Rise of Americans with No Religious Preference: Generations and Politics. *American Sociological Review* 67: 165-190.
- *Skirbekk, Vegard, Eric Kaufmann, and Anne Goujon. 2010. Secularism, Fundamentalism, or Catholicism? The Religious Composition of the United States to 2043. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 49: 293-310.
- 10/2: Patterns and Social Sources of Individual Religious Affiliation, Belief, and Practice
[NOTE: Response paper option #1 due]
Readings:
- *Iannaccone, Laurence R. 1990. Religious Practice: A Human Capital Approach. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 29: 297-314.
- *Sherkat, Darren E., and John Wilson. 1995. Preferences, Choices, and Constraints in Religious Markets: An Examination of Religious Switching and Apostasy. *Social Forces* 73: 993-1025.
- *Uecker, Jeremy E., Mark D. Regnerus, and Margaret L. Vaaler. 2007. Losing my Religion: The Social Sources of Religious Decline in Early Adulthood. *Social Forces* 85: 1667-1692.
- *Schwadel, Philip. 2011. Age, Period, and Cohort Effects on Religious Activities and Beliefs. *Social Science Research* 40: 181-192.

*Collett, Jessica L., and Omar Lizardo. 2009. A Power-Control Theory of Gender and Religiosity. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 48: 213-231. [NOTE: See also comments by Hoffmann, Bradshaw and Ellison, and Cornwall, and response by Collett and Lizardo, all in same issue.]

*Williams, Andrea, and James D. Davidson. 1996. Catholic Conceptions of Faith: A Generational Analysis. *Sociological Analysis* 57: 273-290.

*Smith, Jesse M. 2011. Becoming an Atheist in America: Constructing Identity and Meaning from the Rejection of Theism. *Sociology of Religion* 72: 215-237.

10/9: Religion, Ethnicity, and Immigration
Readings:

*Patillo-McCoy, Mary. 1998. Church Culture as a Strategy of Action in the Black Community. *American Sociological Review* 63: 767-784.

*Ellison, Christopher G., and Darren E. Sherkat. 1995. The Semi-Involuntary Institution Revisited: Regional Variations in Church Participation among Black Americans. *Social Forces* 73: 1415-1437.

*Cadge, Wendy, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. 2007. Immigration and Religion. *Annual Review of Sociology* 33.

*Hagan, Jacqueline, and Helen Rose Ebaugh. 2003. Calling Upon the Sacred: Migrants' Use of Religion in the Migration Process. *International Migration Review* 37: 1145-1162.

*Chen, Carolyn. 2006. From Filial Piety to Religious Piety: Evangelical Christianity Reconstructing Taiwanese Immigrant Families in the United States. *International Migration Review* 40: 573-602.

*Yang, Fenggang, and Helen Rose Ebaugh. 2001. Transformations in New Immigrant Religions and their Global Implications. *American Sociological Review* 66: 269-289.

*Moore, Kathleen M. 2007. Visible through the Veil: The Regulation of Islam in American Law. *Sociology of Religion* 68: 237-251.

10/16 Religion, Gender, and Family Life
Readings:

*Bartkowski, John P., and Jennan Ghazal Read. 2003. Veiled Submission: Gender, Power, and Identity among Evangelical and Muslim Women in the United States. *Qualitative Sociology* 26: 71-92.

*Sherkat, Darren E. 2004. Religious Intermarriage in the United States: Trends, Patterns, and Predictors. *Social Science Research* 33: 606-625.

*Ellison, Christopher G., Amy M. Burdette, and W. Bradford Wilcox. 2010. The Couple that Prays Together: Race, Ethnicity, Couples' Religion, and Relationship Quality. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 72: 963-975.

*Ellison, Christopher G., Nicholas H. Wolfinger, and Aida I. Ramos-Wada. 2012. Attitudes toward Casual Sex, Marriage, Divorce, and Cohabitation among Working-age Latinos: Does Religion Matter? *Journal of Family Issues*.

*Jenkins, Kathleen E. 2010. In Concert or Alone: Divorce and Congregational Experience. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 49: 278-292.

*Stokes, Charles E., and Mark D. Regnerus. 2009. When Faith Divides Family: Religious Discord and Adolescent Reports of Parent-Child Relations. *Social Science Research* 38: 155-167.

*Alwin, Duane F., and Jacob L. Felson. 2010. Religion and Childrearing. Pp. 40-60 in Religion, Families, and Health: Population-based Research in the United States, edited by C.G. Ellison and R.A. Hummer. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

10/23: Religion, Health, and Well-being

Readings:

[NOTE: Response paper option #2 due]

*Ellison, Christopher G., and Andrea K. Henderson. 2011. Religion and Mental Health: Through the Lens of the Stress Process. Pp. 11-44 in Toward a Sociological Theory of Religion and Health, edited by A. Blasi. Leiden: Brill.

*Exline, Julie. 2002. Stumbling Blocks on the Religious Road: Fractured Relationships, Nagging Vices, and the Inner Struggle to Believe. Psychological Inquiry 13: 182-189.

*Hummer, Robert A., Richard G. Rogers, Charles B. Nam, and Christopher G. Ellison. 1999. Religious Involvement and U.S. Adult Mortality. Demography 36: 272-285.

*Blanchard, Troy C., John P. Bartkowski, Todd L. Matthews, and Kent R. Kerley. 2008. Faith, Morality, and Mortality: The Ecological Impact of Religion on Population Health. Social Forces 86: 1591-1620.

*Trinitapoli, Jenny A., Jason D. Boardman, and Christopher G. Ellison. 2009. U.S. Religious Congregations and the Sponsorship of Health-Related Programs. Social Science and Medicine 68: 2231-2239.

*Schietle, Christopher P., and Amy Adamczyk. 2010. High-Cost Religion, Religious Switching, and Health. Journal of Health and Social Behavior 51: 325-342.

*Elliott, Marta, and R. David Hayward. 2009. Religion and Life Satisfaction Worldwide: The Role of Government Regulation. Sociology of Religion 70: 285-310.

10/30: Religion and Socioeconomic Stratification

Readings:

*Sherkat, Darren E. 2010. Religion and Verbal Ability. Social Science Research 39: 2-13.

*Massengill, Rebekah P. 2008. Educational Attainment and Cohort Change among Conservative Protestants, 1972-2004. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 47: 545-562.

*Mooney, Margarita. 2010. Religion, College Grades, and Satisfaction among Students at Elite Colleges and Universities. Sociology of Religion 71: 197-215.

*Keister, Lisa A. 2008. Conservative Protestants and Wealth: How Religion Perpetuates Asset Poverty. American Journal of Sociology 113: 1237-1271.

*Keister, Lisa A. 2007. Upward Wealth Mobility: Exploring the Roman Catholic Advantage. Social Forces 85: 1195-1226.

*Glass, Jennifer, and Jerry Jacobs. 2005. Childhood Religious Conservatism and Adult Attainment among Black and White Women. Social Forces 84: 555-579.

11/6: Religion, Politics, and Social Movements

Readings:

*Smith, Christian. 1996. Correcting a Curious Neglect, or Bringing Religion Back In. Pp. 1-26 in *Disruptive Religion*, edited by C. Smith. New York: Routledge.

*Sherkat, Darren E., and Christopher G. Ellison. 1997. The Cognitive Structure of a Moral Crusade: Conservative Protestantism and Opposition to Pornography. *Social Forces* 75: 957-980.

*McDaniel, Eric L., and Christopher G. Ellison. 2008. God's Party? Race, Religion, and Partisanship over Time. *Political Research Quarterly* 61: 180-191.

*Young, Michael P. 2002. Confessional Protest: The Religious Birth of U.S. National Social Movements. *American Sociological Review* 67: 660-688.

*Espinosa, Gaston. 2005. Latino Clergy and Churches in Faith-based Political and Social Activity in the United States. Pp. 279-305 in *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States*, edited by G. Espinosa, V. Elizondo, and J. Miranda. New York: Oxford University Press.

*Djupe, Paul A., and Christopher P. Gilbert. 2006. The Resourceful Believer: Generating Civic Skills in the Church. *Journal of Politics* 68: 116-127.

*Beyerlein, Kraig, and John R. Hipp. 2006. From Pews to Participation: The Effect of Congregational Activity and Context on Bridging Civic Engagement. *Social Problems* 53: 97-117.

11/13: Class presentations

[NOTE: Response paper option #3 due]

11/20: No class (Thanksgiving)

11/27: Class presentations

12/4: Class presentations

[NOTE: Final class paper due on 12/4]

NOTE: All students are expected to be familiar with, and to abide by, the UTSA Roadrunner Creed. For more information, see www.utsa.edu/about/creed.