

Sociology 3342ACE: Sociology of Religion
Sec. 1: Mon/Wed: 2:00 to 3:20; CHSS, Room 226
Spring 2018; 3 credit hours

Instructor: Dr. Douglas H. Constance **Office Hours:** M/W: 10:00 – 12:00;
Office: CHSS 270W or by appointment
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Required Texts:

Gods in the Global Village (4th. Edition), Lester R. Kurtz: Sage Publications.

Book Review Texts: (pick one)

Sigmund Freud, Future of an Illusion

Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

Course Description: Religion is a central institution of human societies. It provides both positive and negative functions for human societies. This class begins by covering the functions of religion through the lens of a sociological perspective. The major religions are investigated, as well as the impacts of trends toward modernization, secularization, multiculturalism and globalization in society. A major dimension of the course is students' participation in religious organizations with Huntsville or other nearby communities. Students' participation in religious community organizations will provide an applied experience to apply the academic concepts learned in the course. In this course you will not only learn knowledge and skills, but also actively use your knowledge and skills to improve the quality of life for people in the community. This experience is designed to help you see yourself as a positive force in this world as you apply the Sociological Imagination to your community. This is a "W" course which means that at least 50 percent of your course grade will be derived from writing activities designed to help you master course objectives. Prerequisite: SOC 1301.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students will:

- 1) have a working knowledge of sociological concepts and principles related to the study of religion;
- 2) be able to interpret changes in religion from a sociological perspective;
- 3) better understand the impact modernization, multiculturalism, and the globalization of society on the structure and function of religion; and,
- 4) have completed a community service learning activity that helps students see the role of active citizenship in religious organizations and communities.

Grading: Grades for the class consist of two exams worth 100 points each that cover the readings and lectures, one book review worth 100 points, one term paper worth 100 points, and the Academic Community Engagement component worth 100 points. A total of 500 points are possible for the semester: an A is 450 or greater points; B is 400-449 points; C is 350-399 points; D is 300-349 points; and F is less than 300 points. There is no curve for this class.

Exams: The exams are true/false, multiple-guess, and essays. Students may make-up missed exams if they notify the professor ahead of the exam date and provide documentation regarding his/her absence for the exam.

Book Review: A book review of either “Future of an Illusion” by Freud or “The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism” by Weber worth 100 points is also required. Students should obtain their selected book immediately. A book review guideline will be posted early in the semester in Blackboard. A penalty of 10 points per day will be assessed for late submission. After two late days, the book review will not be accepted. Students are encouraged to visit the SHSU Writing Center to help them improve the quality of their writing assignments.

Term Paper: A term paper of 10 -12 pages (not including references and title page) is required. The term paper will be based on research conducted on a televised church program and organized using the conceptual framework developed by Kurtz. The timetable for completion of the paper will be staggered over the semester with points assigned to each assignment. A paper guideline is posted in Blackboard. A penalty of 10% per day of the assigned grade will be assessed for late submission. No late submissions accepted after two late days. Students are encouraged to visit the SHSU Writing Center to help them improve the quality of their writing assignments.

Extra Credit: Students are allowed to do 3 of the 5 TEN point extra credit opportunities during the semester. These extra credit opportunities are sociological papers (3 pages) and class discussions on the extra credits. Specific instructions for the extra credits are posted in Blackboard.

Academic Community Engagement: Students who live in Huntsville will be divided into groups and complete their community engagement activities at the Good Shepherd Mission or another church institution in Huntsville. Each student will volunteer at the church for a minimum of 10 hours per semester. The student must provide a contact name and number for the religious organization. Students who commute will coordinate with Dr. Constance to arrange a similar experience in their home community. Students will keep individual activity log and reflection portfolio of their community volunteer activities. Students will make group class presentations of their activities at the end of the semester. The log and portfolio is worth 80 points; the presentation is worth 20 points. The format for the logs, portfolio, and presentations will be distributed in class and posted on Blackboard. Community partners will verify participation and be asked to provide feedback on the ACE experience at the end of the semester.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all classes and participate fully in class activities. A record of attendance will be maintained by the instructor. Punctual attendance is also expected of each student. Please be respectful and arrive to class on time. Students are expected to show appropriate cause for both absences and tardiness and are also expected to initiate action to satisfy all missed class work. Failure to do so will affect grades.

Academic Dishonesty: All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be

submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students caught cheating will receive an F for that assignment with more severe sanctions as appropriate. <http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/728eec25-f780-4dcf-932c-03d68cade002.pdf>

Americans with Disabilities Act: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities must register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center and then arrange a conference with the instructor in order that accommodations can be made to assure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. <http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/9edd8433-cad5-40d1-b4bf-6a91b08f90e4.pdf> SSD Office Location: Lee Drain Annex (next to the Farrington Building); Ph. 936-294-3512; TDD: 936-294-3786; E-mail: disability@shsu.edu; Web Address: www.shsu.edu/disability

Religious Holidays: The Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. Religious Holy Day means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation. Students should contact the instructor as soon as possible regarding any missed classes or exams due to Religious Holy Days.

<http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/0953c7d0-7c04-4b29-a3fc-3bf0738e87d8.pdf>

University Code of Conduct: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Students shall arrive to class on time and be respectful to their other students. If a student needs to arrive to class late or leave class early the student will make the professor aware of these needs prior to class time. All cell phones and beepers must be turned off and stowed away while in the classroom. If a cell phone is out during an exam, the student will receive an F for that exam. Students who disrupt the class will be contacted by the professor to adjust their behaviors. In extreme cases students who cannot comply with these requirements can be removed and resigned from the class. <https://netreg.shsu.edu/mirror/codeofconduct.html>

Instructor Evaluations: Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.

Visitors to the Classroom: Unannounced visitors to the class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor is allowed to remain in the classroom.

Schedule of Assignments: Week of:

Jan. 15: Chapter 1: Religious Life in the Global Village

Jan. 22: Chapter 1: Religious Life in the Global Village

- Jan. 29: Chapter 2: A Sociological Tour: Turning East
ACE: group assignments and overview on Wednesday
- Feb. 5: Chapter 2: A Sociological Tour: Turning East
Extra Credit #1: Atheists due Wednesday
- Feb. 12: Chapter 3: The Tour: Western Religions - Judaism, Christianity, and Islam
ACE: log and portfolio due Monday
- Feb. 19: Chapter 3: The Tour: Western Religions - Judaism, Christianity, and Islam
Extra Credit #2: The Rastafarians due on Monday
- Feb. 26: Chapter 4: Indigenous Religions
Extra Credit #3: The Lakota Creation Myth due on Wednesday
ACE: log and portfolio due Monday
- March 5: **Exam 1** on Monday the 5th.
Chapter 5: The Religious Ethos
- March: 12: **Spring Break**
- March 19: Chapter 5: The Religious Ethos
Term Paper Topic Due on Monday (5 pts)
Book Review Due on Wednesday
- March 26: Chapter 6: Modernism and Multiculturalism
ACE: Log and Portfolio due Monday
- April 2: Chapter 6: Modernism and Multiculturalism
Term Paper: Title page and 2 Data Logs due Monday (10 pts)
Extra Credit #4: Sports as Religion due Wednesday
- April 9: Chapter 7: Religious Movements for a New Century
Term paper: Title Page, Introduction, Annotated Bibliography and 3 Data Logs due Monday (15 pts)
ACE: Log and Portfolio due Wednesday
- April 16: Chapter 7: Religious Movements for a New Century
Extra Credit #5: Wicca due Wednesday
Term Paper: Title Page, Introduction, Lit. Review, Data Section and 4 Data Logs due Monday (20 pts)
- April 23: Chapter 8: Religion and Social Conflict
Term Paper Draft Due on Wednesday (20 pts)
ACE: Presentations

April 30: Chapter 8: Religion and Social Conflict
ACE: Presentations
ACE: Final log and portfolios: Monday
Exam 2: Wednesday

May 7: Paper Due on Monday (30 pts)