

RSOC99: Sociology of Religion
Fall 2015
T-TH 3:50—5:30 pm

Professor: Dr. Socorro Castañeda-Liles
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:00-5:00 pm
Class: Kenna 214

REQUIRED READINGS: Our readings are uploaded on Camino/Canvas

This course fulfills Santa Clara University's Core Requirement for RTC 2 and ELSJ.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The study of religion from a sociological perspective is the study of religious practices, customs, beliefs, and rituals in the context of social structures such as religious institutions, politics, education, community, and family. In this class students will learn about the dialectical processes by which religion affects societies and societies affect religion by addressing the following three questions: 1) How do social scientists approach the study of religion? 2) What can religion tell us about a particular group or society? 3) Why is it important to study religion within the socio-historical context in which it is produced, reproduced, and reconfigured? This class will center on Santa Clara University's commitment to help create a more just and humane world. Therefore, we will give special attention to the importance of doing research in the Sociology of Religion for the sake of social transformation.

The course will introduce students to classic and contemporary theorists and approaches to the sociological study of religion. Through the use of case studies students will learn about the benefits and challenges of using sociological methods such as survey research, case studies, and ethnography. Students will approach the sociological study of religion from the perspectives of popular culture, media, gender, sexuality, and immigration, among other topics. Given the increasingly diverse and multicultural landscape of the United States, students will learn how race/ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality interlock and shape the ways we interpret, understand, and live out our religious worlds.

COURSE GOALS: Rather than providing students with an exhaustive exposure to all topics related to the sociology of religion and to religion in society, this course introduces students to the analysis of religion as a social phenomenon, and provides students with select theoretical approaches and case studies. These will help students develop sociologically informed questions about religion that can serve as the basis for further intellectual inquiry in and beyond SCU. Sociology of religion is not only an interesting and important field of investigation: it can also be an exciting way to understand the religious worlds that make up the very essence of people's everyday search to bridge heaven and earth.

RTC2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1) "Analyze complex and diverse religious phenomena" in the context of social structures, including race/ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality;



- 2) "Integrate and compare several different disciplinary methods to a coherent set of religious phenomena;"
- 3) "Clarify and express beliefs in light of [your] critical inquiry into the socio-religious dimensions of human existence."¹

ELSJ LEARNING OBJECTIVES—By the end of class you will be able to:

- 1) "Recognize the benefits of life-long responsible citizenship and civic engagement in personal and professional activities." (*Civic Life*)
- 2) "Interact appropriately, sensitively, and self-critically with people in the communities in which they work and appreciate the formal and informal knowledge, wisdom, and skills that individuals in these communities possess." (*Perspective*)
- 3) "Recognize, analyze, and understand social reality and injustices in contemporary society, including recognizing the relative privilege or marginalization of their own and other groups." (*Social Justice*)
- 4) "Be able to make vocational choices both in light of your greatest gifts and the world's greatest needs." (*Civic Engagement*)²

○ Attendance and Participation.....	10 Points Total
○ 1 In-Class Group Presentation	5 Points Total
○ 5 Journal Entries each worth 4 points.....	20 Points Total
○ Exam 1	15 Points Total
○ 1 Research Paper.....	20 Points Total
○ One Arrupe Visual Ethnographic Oral Presentation	15 Points Total
○ Exam 2	15 Points Total
TOTAL POINTS.....	100

¹ The RTC Learning Objectives are taken from "What to do to get your course approved for RTC2" information sheet, page 1. Website address: Website: <http://www.scu.edu/provost/ugst/core2009/Learning-Objectives.cfm>.

² The ELSJ objects listed are directly taken from the "Experiential Learning for Social Justice Overview," which can be found at: <http://www.scu.edu/provost/ugst/core2009/Learning-Objectives.cfm>

Grading Scale:

- 94 and above = A
- 90-93 = A-
- 87-89 = B+
- 84-86 = B
- 80-83 = B-
- 77-79 = C+
- 74-76 = C
- 70-73 = C-
- 67-69 = D+
- 64-66 = D
- 61-63 = D-
- 60 and below = F

Feedback: Students will receive feedback from the professor through comments on papers. You are also encouraged to attend office hours if you have any further questions.

POLICIES:

- You are expected to attend every class session; participate in classroom and small group discussions; and demonstrate respect to your peers, people at your community placement, and the professor.
- **Assignments that are handed in late will be penalized ONE-THIRD GRADE per day (i.e. from an A to an A-, an A- to a B+, a B+ to a B, etc).**
- You must do well in all assignments to pass the course. The dates and material in this syllabus may be subject to change, so listen carefully to announcements in class.
- I **do not** accept e-mailed submissions of written work.
- Santa Clara University strongly believes in academic integrity and honesty; therefore, cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course and the student may receive a failing grade. Please visit the following website for further information on Santa Clara University's policy regarding academic integrity:

<http://www.scu.edu/academics/bulletins/undergraduate/Academic-Integrity.cfm>

- **No cell phones.** If you are caught texting I will mark you absent for that day.
- **No Talking in class.** If you are caught talking in class you will forfeit your attendance grade for the day.
- **No laptops, electronic notebooks or i-pads allowed in class.**
- You are allowed to bring a drink and a snack as long as it does not disrupt classroom lectures and your participation in class discussions.
- Students requiring accommodations for disabilities must let the professor know on the first week of class. To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must be registered with Disabilities Resources, located in Benson 216. If you would like to register with Disabilities Resources, please visit their office in Benson 216 or call at 408-554-4109. You will need to register and provide documentation of a disability prior to receiving academic accommodations. For further instructions about the process to receive accommodations visit:
<http://www.scu.edu/advising/learning/disabilities/>

STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT & GRADING DETAILED DESCRIPTION

ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION IS WORTH 10 POINTS (10% of total grade): I will take roll at random times during the quarter. Each time that you are absent on any one of those days you will lose a 1/2-point. Participation in class is an important component of the learning process. Therefore, **you will be evaluated on the extent to which you participate in class.** Students must come to class ready to participate in discussion and engaged everyday. Students who consistently do not participate, play on their electronic devices or are unengaged will lose ½ point from their “Attendance & Participation” grade. Students may be eligible for excused absences (no more than 2) should an emergency arise, but you must give the professor 24-hour notice.

Persistent tardiness and early departure from class will hurt your participation grade. **Staring out the window, sleeping in class, chattering with neighbors when not in group discussion, and or putting your head down means you will get no credit for attendance.**

If you miss class, you are responsible for getting the notes and hand-outs from a fellow student who is part of your group. Only if you have contacted all team members and no one has responded to you should you ask me for the material.

COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING ENGAGEMENT (Participation in community-based learning engagement is one component of the “class participation.”)

This class is designed according to Paulo Freire’s popular education model, in which theory and action have a dialectical relationship that is articulated in praxis. Therefore, this course requires students to participate in a community-based learning engagement (through Arrupe Partnerships for Community-based Learning.) Throughout the quarter students will meet to share what they have learned at their community placement in light of the readings and class lectures. To facilitate discussion, students will be provided with some initial questions. These small groups will then combine into one large class group to share their insights with one another.

The purpose of participating in the community-based learning engagement is first, to provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their own beliefs in light of the beliefs of people at their community site; second, to expand students’ learning environment beyond the classroom; third, to complement their course work in the sociology of religion with the opportunity to learn from the experiences of economically disadvantaged people. Students will be assessed on their active participation in the small groups and class discussions, and on their ability to bridge what they learn in class and at their placements. Students are required to spend 16 contact hours at the community-based learning placement site over the quarter. Students are also expected to integrate and engage with the people at their placement and keep a weekly journal. (RTC2 *Learning Objective 3*)

Note to Students: Based on their rich life experiences, the people at your placement have much to teach you, so take maximum advantage of this valuable learning opportunity. On the first day of class we will go over the various community-based learning sites that complement the course objectives.

FIVE WEEKLY JOURNAL ENTRIES each entry is worth 4 points for a total of 20 points—20% of grade): You are required to write a journal entry on your community-based learning placement. You will write a total of five entries, **each worth 4 points**. On selected days you will be turning in a two-page typed journal entry. Unless there are unforeseen changes, on the days that the entries are due you will have a small group and class reflection based on the entry. At the end of the exercise you will be turning in your entry to the professor. Think of the journal entry as your opportunity to document your experience at the site. The professor will provide the question/s to be addressed ahead of time.

GROUP PRESENTATION (5 points—5% of grade): In this class we critically analyze the types of influence religion has in U.S. society. We do this through our readings, lectures, films, and class discussions. On assigned days we will begin our class with a ten-minute student presentation on the topic for the day. The ten minutes allowed includes both, your presentation and the Q&A. One of your main objectives is to engage the class in your presentation. Have extra questions prepared in case you have trouble engaging students in a class discussion. **REMEMBER EACH GROUP MEMBER MUST PARTICIPATE EQUALLY and ASK A QUESTION.** (Department Objectives 1 & 2) **Presentation format will be given on Thursday**

EXAM 1 Worth 15 points

EXAM 2 Worth 15 points

ONE ARRUPPE VISUAL ETHNOGRAPHIC ORAL PRESENTATION worth 15 points.
Professor will provide the guidelines.

ONE RESEARCH PAPER worth 20 points. Professor will provide the guidelines for this paper.

PAPER EXPECTATIONS:

An A Paper is of high quality; that is, the student engages in a critical analysis by demonstrating knowledge of the **concepts** and **topics** covered in class. It introduces the reader to the topic before the in-depth analysis. **Every paper should have a thesis statement.** It integrates class readings and lectures in a clear, comprehensive, and creative way. The paper addresses **ALL** the points. It is spell-checked and all works are cited properly. It also has a separate page with the bibliography of the works cited. To save paper, you can have the bibliography on the back of the last page of your paper.

NOTE: Wikipedia, websites, magazines (i.e., Times Magazine, News Week, and the National Geographic), and newspapers **ARE NOT** considered scholarly sources and will not be counted as such. You may choose to use the above material **ONLY** as additional supportive evidence. By scholarly sources I refer to academic journal articles and books. Email me if you are not sure you are using the right sources. **You are required to use** Chicago Manual Citation Style. Follow guidelines provided at the link below.

In-text and Reference/Bibliographic citation style:

http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&oe=UTF-8&gs_sm=e&gs_upl=127751178441011809412121010101232141910.1.11210&hl=en&q=cache:-sm6Mf6M5coJ:http://www.lib.subr.edu/Chicago.pdf+Chicago+style+%22in-text+citation%22&ct=clnk

YOU WILL LOSE POINTS IF I SEE THE FOLLOWING:

- **No thesis statement**
- Some of the statements are too general.
- Arguments are not complex and/or the student spends more time analyzing one aspect over the other.
- Outside sources are not fully integrated.
- **The paper consists of mainly quotes from scholars and the student's voice is lost.**
- Student relies on Internet sources and not on academic material.
- Sentences are circular and vague.
- Incomplete sentences.
- The analysis seems rushed and circular.
- Some arguments need further development.
- Personal opinions are not supported by academic evidence.
- The sources listed in the bibliography do not appear in the main text.
- Incomplete citations.
- The paper has no name.
- Paper is not stapled.
- Student waits until the end of the paper to integrate readings. This is not acceptable. **Remember you must weave your readings/academic sources throughout the paper.**
- Questions on the assignments **ARE NOT "FOOD FOR THOUGHT."** I expect you to answer every question.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

- I have come across many emails from students that begin with:
 - **"Hey Prof."**
 - **"Hey Professor" or "Mrs./Ms./Mr."**
 - **Or the message is not addressed at all.**

As a general rule, if you email your professors your message should start with: **"Dear Professor [Name of Professor],"** and make sure you spell the professor's name correctly.

- I AM AVAILABLE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PAPER, BUT UNFORTUNATELY I WILL NOT HAVE A CHANCE TO READ DRAFTS OF PAPERS BEFORE THEY ARE DUE. I ENCOURAGE YOU TO VISIT THE WRITING CENTER AT: <http://www.scu.edu/provost/writingcenter/about/> THE STAFF WILL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO READ DRAFTS AND GIVE YOU ADVICE.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1—Classical and Contemporary Theories in the Sociology of Religion

September 22: Introduction to the course, syllabus, and Arrupe placement.

September 24: READING: “Week 1 Day 2” on Camino

WEEK 2—Research Methods in the Sociology of Religion

September 29: READING: “From the Heart of my Laptop: Personal Passion and Research on Violence Against Women” by Nancy Nason-Clark (Canvas)

October 1: READING: “They Must Be Crazy:” Some of the Difficulties in Researching “Cults” by Maribeth Ayella (Chapter 34) in *Sociology of Religion a Reader* (Camino)

WEEK 3—Theoretical Application

October 6: Case Study #1 Jonestown

October 8 READING: Textbook—Chapter 32 “Apocalypse at Waco by James D. Tabor (Chapter 32) in *Sociology of Religion a Reader* (Camino)
Class Discussion cont...

Week 4— Religion and Film

October 13: READING: Who Does God Want Me to Invite to See The Passion of the Christ?: Marketing Movies to Evangelicals by James Y. Trammell (Camino/Canvas)

October 15: READING: Pages 273-283 “Mediating Meaning: Religion in – and as – Contemporary Culture in Sociology of Religion: Contemporary Developments by Kevin J. Christiano, William H. Swatos, Jr., and Peter Kivisto (Available on Canvas). (pp. 273-283)
Discussion Cont...

***Journal Entry #1

Week 5— Human Trafficking

October 20: READING: TBA

October 22: READING: TBA
Class Discussion continued...

***Journal Entry #2

Week 6— Mormons, Jews, Evangelicals, and Latina/o Catholic Families

October 27: EXAM #1

October 29 READING: “The Power of Community: Families of Mormons, Jews, and Evangelicals” by Vern L. Bengtson et. al. in *Families and Faith: How Religion is Passed Down Across Generations*. (Camino)

***JOURNAL ENTRY #3

WEEK 7— Sexuality, Religion, and College Life

November 3 READING: Spiritual but Not Religious (Camino)

November 5 READING “Hookups, Ho’s, and Losing It” (Camino)

***JOURNAL ENTRY #4

RESEARCH PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS

Week 8—Lived Religion in Minoritized Communities

November 10: READING: Church Culture as a Strategy of Action in the Black Community (Camino)

November 12: READING: Las Guadalupanas by Theresa L. Torres (Camino)
Class Discussion continued...

***JOURNAL ENTRY #5

Week 9—Arrupe Visual Ethnography Research Presentation

November 17

November 19

Week 10—Arrupe Visual Ethnography Research Presentation

December 1

December 3

Happy Holidays!

Dear Student,

You are enrolled in a course that integrates community-based learning and is facilitated through the Arrupe Weekly Engagement Program. This requirement will give you an opportunity to actively engage with the local community in a way that will be fully integrated into the course. The weekly engagement consists of an orientation at the community partner site, and a weekly 2-hour engagement with the local community for 8 consecutive weeks in the quarter.

Please visit the Sign Up Information page at www.scu.edu/arrupe/students:

1. **Watch** the SCU Experience video about community-based learning
2. **Review** the "Course Approved Placement Options" to determine which placements have been approved for your class
4. **Review** the "Engagement Opportunities" and **identify** a few 2-hour per week options that may work with your interests and schedule
5. **Sign-up** in person in Sobrato Hall during the first week of classes

Sign Up Hours and Location:

Monday 9/21 through Friday 9/25, 10am - 2pm in Sobrato Commons B.

You can sign-up as early as 10am on Monday,
September 21st, in Sobrato Hall Commons B.

Ignatian Center staff will be available to help you sign up for one of the approved placement options for your class.

Placements fill up quickly so sign up early
and come prepared with multiple options that work with your
schedule.

Please note, sign-ups close at 2pm on Friday and there are no late sign-ups past 2pm.