Course Syllabus

Course Information
SOC 4388 Religions in Global Societies
Section 001

Fall 2017

Professor Contact Information

Bobby C. Alexander, Ph.D.

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PLEASE use regular UTD e-mail instead of eLearning to reach me. Thank you.

Office: GR 2.532
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:45-5:00 p.m., and by appointment if these times do not fit your schedule

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

None

Course Description

This course examines how religions in global societies, and their adherents, reflect and help shape globalization processes. These processes include: interconnectivity of the local and global as well as locales that are truly global; migration and immigration of people (“transnationals”); structural/institutional and cultural pluralism, along with diversity. The course demonstrates how globalization process make an impact on social institutions these religious adherents participate in, including the economy (workforce), government (law/legislation), education, healthcare, and others.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

The course objective is to gain a sociological understanding of how adherents of religions in global societies and their religious organizations mirror and shape the above processes of globalization. Specifically, the course will help us gain an understanding of how adherents and their religions are motivated by globalization to migrate and immgrate, and by their religions and religious organizations becoming workers in nations’ economies and carrying their religions and religious networks to other parts of the world; contribute to diversification and structural and cultural pluralism as they settle, assimilate, and integrate into social institutions; participate in both democratization and political/armed conflict influenced by globalization, and by their religions; and do other things related to globalization.
Required Textbooks and Other Readings

Course readings include God Needs No Passport: Immigrants and the Changing American Religious Landscape, by Peggy Levitt (New Press, 2007), which is available at the UTD Bookstore and Off Campus Books, and other readings placed on Electronic Reserve in the UTD McDermott Library.

The password for E-Reserve is societies.


Students will select further readings from scholarly sources for course assignments.

Assignments and Academic Calendar

- Written Reports. Students also will write two 1½-page reports on a single topic related to religions in global societies incorporating a review of scholarly literature on the topic. Students will submit a proposed topic to the Instructor for approval.

- Class Exercises. Students will participate in Class Exercises, which will be written and turned in for a grade. Students must be present to receive credit for Class Exercises, with the exception of students who absence is excused. See policy on excused absences below.

- Class Presentations. Students will make two brief Class Presentations based on their Written Reports.

- Exams. Students will write two 4-to-5-page take-home exams, one a Mid-Term Exam and the other a Final Exam. The first exam will cover the first half of the course and the second the second half. Both exams will be short answer and essay. Exam questions will be handed out one week before the exams are due.

I will provide and go over all instructions. All instructions will be posted on eLearning.

August 22

Orientation to the Course

August 24

Globalization Defined


Class Exercise #1
August 29

Globalization Defined continued


Class Exercise #2

August 31

Globalization Defined continued


Due August 31st: Topic for Written Reports due September 1st

September 5

Globalization Defined continued


Class Exercise #3

September 7 and 12

Considering Religions in Global Societies


Class Exercise #4

September 14 and 19

Religions, Globalization, and Politics


Class Exercise #5
Due September 19th: First Written Report

September 21 and 26

Religions, Globalization, and Politics


Class Exercise #6

September 28 and October 3


Mid-Term Exam handed out September 28th; due October 5th

October 5 and 10

Class Presentations

Due October 5th: Mid-Term Exam

October 12 and 17

Class Presentations

October 19 and 24

Immigrant Religions in Global Societies

Read: Levitt, Prologue and Chapter 1 “Redefining the Boundaries of Belonging” from God Needs No Passport: Immigrants and the Changing Religious Landscape

Class Exercise #7

October 26 and October 31

Immigrant Religions in Global Societies continued

Read: Levitt, Chapter 2 “Transnational Ties” and Chapter 3 “Between the Nation, the World, and God” from God Needs No Passport: Immigrants and the Changing Religious Landscape

November 2 and 7

Immigrant Religions in Global Societies continued
Read:  Levitt, Chapter 4 “Values and Practices: ‘You Do Your Best and You Leave the Rest’”
and Chapter 5 “A New Religious Architecture” from God Needs No Passport: Immigrants and the Changing Religious Landscape

Class Exercise #8

Due November 7th:  Second Written Report

November 9 and 14

Immigrant Religions in Global Societies continued

Read:  Levitt, Chapter 6: “Getting to the Other Side of the Rainbow with Faith as the Car” and Conclusion: “Tolerance in the Face of Terrorism” from God Needs No Passport: Immigrants and the Changing Religious Landscape

Class Exercise #9

November 16

Class Presentations

November 21 and 23: NO CLASS: Fall Break / Thanksgiving

November 28 and November 30

Class Presentations

December 5

Class Exercise #10

Final Exam handed out December 5th; due December 12th

December 12

Final Exam due

NOTE: Students will turn in their exams in the Instructor’s office (GR 2.532) at 2:30 p.m. during the scheduled final exam period.

Grading Policy

The percentage distribution for each of the graded assignments and attendance (total equals 100%) for the course grade follows.

25%: the two Written Reports combined
25%: the Class Exercises combined
20%: the two Class Presentations combined
20%: the two Exams combined
10%: Attendance and Class Participation

The grading scale follows.

A+ = 97-100
A  = 94-96
A- = 90-93
B+ = 87-89
B  = 84-86
B- = 80-83
C+ = 77-79
C  = 74-76
C- = 70-73
D+ = 67-69
D  = 64-66
D- = 60-63
F  = 59 and below

Course and Instructor Policies

Attendance is required. Students automatically will be excused from two classes; no documentation is required if students miss only two classes. Students who miss more than two classes will be excused if they have a legitimate reason (for example, being out sick) and provide documentation.

The intent of this policy is to help students perform well on assignments by keeping up with lectures and discussion.

Students must submit hard copies of all assignments on the due dates. Electronic submissions will not be accepted, unless the student has a legitimate reason for being absent from class to turn in assignments. Late papers will not be accepted without the prior approval of the instructor, with the exception of emergencies. This requirement is intended to help students turn in their work on time and to promote fairness among students who submit their work on time.

University Policies

To view university policies on Student Conduct, Grade Appeals, Disability Services, Religious Holy Days, Campus Carry, Resources to Help You Succeed, and others, please go to the link that follows.

http://coursebook.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies