

Sociology of Religion

Course Description

This course examines the structure and functions of organized religions in traditional and modern societies with an emphasis on reciprocal relations among religion, economic, family, educational, and political systems. Also, various patterns of cults, sects, and denominations will be examined.

Getting Started

In addition to being an overview of anthropological and sociological theoretical discourse concerning the study of religion and religious constructs, this course will also work towards building strength in three basic requirements of any student of culture: 1) understanding the historical development and relationship of the ideas of classical cultural theorists and how they can remain relevant and useful, 2) gaining ethnographic fieldwork experience, and 3) practicing concise reading comprehension and expository writing in the social sciences..

Course Information

Course Title	Sociology of Religion
Course Prefix	SOCI 309
Course Number	31399
Course Section	01
Semester	Fall
Year	2016
Class Location	Online course
Class Meeting Time	Online: No set meeting time (coursework to be completed online)
Credit Hours	3.000 semester hour credits
Course Format/Delivery	Online: Prerecorded lectures, reading, research and evaluation
Instructor Name	Patrick Farris
Instructor's Office Location	Online, or by arranged location on campus
Instructor's Contact Info	pfarris@shepherd.edu / (304) 876-5332
Instructor's Office Hours	Online: Mondays, 8:00pm – 10:00pm

Course Requirements

Text

The Anthropology of Religion, Magic and Witchcraft, by Rebecca L. Stein
ISBN-13: 9780205718115

[Copies available in the Shepherd University Bookstore.]

Attendance & Participation

As an online course, attendance will not be assessed, but online participation is expected.

10% of course grade

Assignments

Assignments will be detailed by the instructor on Sakai, based on readings and discussion points in the syllabus, and will be submitted by students through Sakai. Non-text reading assignments are all available in the public domain.

60% of course grade

Class Paper

A topic selected by the student and approved by the instructor will serve as the research topic for the class paper. The guidelines for the class paper and deadlines for submitting a draft will be covered in class during the second half of the course. The paper requirements will be described on Sakai, and the paper may be submitted on Sakai.

20% of course grade

Midterm Exam & Final Exam

The midterm and final exams will each count 5% of the total grade, and will be made available by the instructor on Sakai and submitted by students through Sakai.

10% of course grade

Grading Policy, Late Work Policy, Exam Make-up Policy

A (90-100) Superior; **B** (80-89) Good; **C** (70-79) Average; **D** (60-69) Below Average, lowest passing grade; **F** (below 60) Failure; **I** - Incomplete; **W** - Withdraw; **P** - Pass; **IF** - Failure due to irregular withdrawal from college or from a single class; **AU** - Audit; **CR** - Credit only awarded. Grade changes must be made prior to the first day of registration for a regular semester or a summer term, or such change will not be affected during the first three weeks of a semester or the first week of a summer term. Declaration of a change in a course from credit status to audit status must be processed within the first 15 class days (M-F) of a fall or spring academic session or within the first 3 class days of a summer session. Any later change must be appealed to the Admissions and Credits Committee. Late work may be accepted only upon request by the student of the instructor, and exams may be made up only by prearrangements made between the student and the instructor.

Course Schedule

Week of August 22

Lecture/Discussion: Concepts and practices of culture, religion, anthropology, sociology, ethnography, theology and the scientific method; case studies in religious communities

Writing Assignment: Essay: Explain the similarities and differences between the approach of social science from that of religion to the explanation of perceived phenomena

Fieldwork Assignment: (Introspective) Create two lists of your own analytical traits, trends and abilities subjective, one leaning towards the objective and one leaning towards the subjective

Week of August 29

Lecture/Discussion: The Anthropological Study of Religion

Reading Assignment: Text Chapter 1

Writing Assignment: Text Study Questions, Chapter 1

Fieldwork Assignment: (Introspective) Explain, given your background, experience and education, how

you approach as a researcher topics concerning religion

Week of September 5

Lecture/Discussion: Mythology

Reading Assignment: Text Chapter 2

Writing Assignment: Text Study Questions, Chapter 2

Fieldwork Assignment: TBA

Week of September 12

Lecture/Discussion: Religious Symbols

Reading Assignment: Text Chapter 3

Writing Assignment: Text Study Questions, Chapter 3

Fieldwork Assignment: TBA

Week of September 19

Lecture/Discussion: Ritual

Reading Assignment: Text Chapter 4

Writing Assignment: Text Study Questions, Chapter 4

Fieldwork Assignment: TBA

Week of September 26

Lecture/Discussion: Altered States of Consciousness

Reading Assignment: Text Chapter 5

Writing Assignment: Text Study Questions, Chapter 5

Fieldwork Assignment: TBA

Week of October 3

Midterm Exam

Week of October 10

Lecture/Discussion: Religious Specialists

Reading Assignment: Text Chapter 6

Writing Assignment: Text Study Questions, Chapter 6

Fieldwork Assignment: TBA

Week of October 17

Lecture/Discussion: Magic and Divination

Reading Assignment: Text Chapter 7

Writing Assignment: Text Study Questions, Chapter 7

Fieldwork Assignment: TBA

Week of October 24

Lecture/Discussion: Souls, Ghosts and Death

Reading Assignment: Text Chapter 8

Writing Assignment: Text Study Questions, Chapter 8

Fieldwork Assignment: TBA

Week of October 31

Lecture/Discussion: Gods and Spirits

Reading Assignment: Text Chapter 9

Writing Assignment: Text Study Questions, Chapter 9

Fieldwork Assignment: TBA

November 7

Lecture/Discussion: Witchcraft

Reading Assignment: Text Chapter 10

Writing Assignment: Text Study Questions, Chapter 10

Fieldwork Assignment: TBA

November 14

Lecture/Discussion: The Search for New Meaning

Reading Assignment: Chapter 11

Writing Assignment: Text Study Questions, Chapter 11

November 21

THANKSGIVING RECESS: NO CLASS

November 16

Special Topic: The Abrahamic tradition: Judaism, Christianity, Islam

November 23

Special Topic: The Vedic tradition: Hinduism, Buddhism

November 28

Special Topic: The Zen tradition: Taoism, Confucianism,

December 5

Final Exam

Class Project due

Class Attendance Policy

You **MUST** attend your classes regularly and engage in the requirements for each class; otherwise, **your financial aid may be revoked** either partially or in full. This would result in an amount due by you to the University immediately. Please refer to shepherd.edu/faoweb for more details. As this is an online course, your attendance will be determined through your participation in coursework.

Services

Disability Support Services

Michelle S. Lawson

Senior Administrative Secretary

Disability Support Services

PO Box 5000

Shepherdstown, WV 25443

mlawson@shepherd.edu

(304)876-5689

Monday - Friday 8:00am – 4:30pm

Tutoring

Academic Support Center, Tutoring Services (Writing)

http://www.shepherd.edu/ascweb/tutor_faq.html

(304) 876-5221

Department of Sociology, Geography & Criminal Justice

White Hall

(304) 876-5332

<http://www.shepherd.edu/socweb/>

Sakai Learning System

<http://www.shepherd.edu/ctl/edutechcenter/sakai.html>

RAVE Alert System

<http://www.shepherd.edu/university/rave/>

Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP)

Goals

1. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
2. Intellectual and Practical Skills throughout the Curriculum
3. Personal and Social Responsibility
4. Integrative Learning

Competencies

1. Critical thinking
2. Creative thinking
3. Oral communication
4. Written communication
5. Quantitative literacy
6. Information literacy
7. Collaboration/teamwork
8. Problem solving
9. Lifelong learning
10. Civic knowledge and engagement
11. Global understanding and respect
12. Multiculturalism and diversity
13. Ethical practice and ethical reasoning
14. Experiential learning
15. Wellness

Shepherd University

Mission Statement and Statement of Core Values

Shepherd University, a West Virginia public university, is a diverse community of learners and a gateway to the world of opportunities and ideas. We are the regional center for academic, cultural and economic opportunity. Our mission of service succeeds because we are dedicated to our core values: learning, engagement, integrity, accessibility, and community.

Core Values

Committed to excellence, Shepherd University embraces the following five core values:

Learning

Shepherd University creates a community of learners who integrate teaching, scholarship, and learning into their lives. In order to create challenging, relevant experiences, inside and outside of the classroom, the University continually evaluates and assesses student learning. We recognize and accommodate diverse learning styles and perspectives necessary for global understanding.

Engagement

Shepherd University fosters environments in which students, faculty, staff, and members of the community engage with each other to form mutually beneficial relationships. We believe that meaningful engagement, with ideas and with people, promotes deep learning and nurtures critical thought.

Integrity

Shepherd University strives for an environment of honesty and fairness in its actions. University officials seek input from students, faculty, and staff and make informed and objective decisions. We expect all members of the community to act in accordance with this value.

Accessibility

Shepherd University provides services to all qualified students. Our staff and faculty are available to students and are committed to respecting and meeting individual needs. University governance and budgeting structures reflect our commitment to transparent processes and public access to information.

Community

Shepherd University comprises a community that includes students, faculty, staff, alumni, and involved citizens. We meet the needs of this community through assessment, development, and implementation of innovative programs and initiatives. We strive to create a safe environment based on mutual respect and acceptance of differences.

Department of Sociology & Geography

Mission Statement

The sociology and geography programs offer students a behavioral education which is based in the liberal arts and which is designed to encourage and develop scientific inquiry and an understanding of human behavior, culture, and society. Competencies within these programs assist students in recognizing their total college experiences as cumulative, coherent, and unified. The programs help students develop as individuals and as responsible citizens in a democratic society. Students are encouraged and prepared to pursue graduate work in the social sciences. Aided by a location with superior resources, the program is an integral part of the overall University curriculum and of several specific degree offerings within and outside the Division of Business and Social Sciences. The programs do not focus on specific career-related training, but provides a solid basis for students to develop skills applicable to a wide range of employment opportunities.

Class Honor Code

On my honor as a student, I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid on assignments, projects, tests or on any other assessment or expectation of a fellow student enrolled in this class.

Fall 2016 Academic Calendar

Date	Day	Event
8/17/16	Wed	Academic Advisement; Registration/Payment for New First-Year Students
8/18/16	Thu	Academic Advisement; Registration/Payment for New Readmit/Transfer Students; Faculty Report for Fall Semester; Faculty Meetings
8/19/16	Fri	Orientation, Academic Advisement; Registration/Payment for All New Students
8/19/16	Fri	Add/Drop and Late Registration (Late Fee Applies) via RAIL begins at 5:00 pm (All hours except 4:00 am-8:00 am)
8/19/16	Fri	New Student Convocation
8/22/16	Mon	Classes Begin
8/22/16	Mon	Add/Drop and Late Registration (Late Fee Applies), via RAIL or at Ikenberry Hall, 9:00 am-4:00 pm -- Consult Advisor
8/26/16	Fri	Last Day to Add/Drop or Late Register via RAIL or at Ikenberry Hall, 9:00

		am-4:00 pm -- Consult Advisor
9/2/16	Fri	Last Day for Instructor-Approved Late Adds via RAIL
9/2/16	Fri	Last Day to Change a Course from Credit to Pass/Fail Status
9/5/16	Mon	Labor Day – Holiday
9/9/16	Fri	Last Day to Change a Course from Credit to Audit Status
9/23/16	Fri	Last Day to Withdraw from first-half semester class -- See Advisor by Noon
10/3/16	Mon	First Day of Midterm Exams
10/7/16	Fri	Last Day of Mid-Term Exams; Last Day to Apply for May 2017 Graduation (Registrar's Office)
10/10/16	Mon	Mid-term Grades Due -- 9:00 am; second-half semester classes begin
10/12/16	Wed	Mid-term Grades Available on RAIL (tentative)
10/13/16	Thu	Fall Break (as needed, make-up days for inclement weather)
10/14/16	Fri	Fall Break (as needed, make-up days for inclement weather)
10/19/16	Wed	First Day of Academic Advisement for Continuing Students for Spring 2017
10/21/16	Fri	Last Day to Withdraw from a Full Semester Class -- See Advisor by Noon
10/31/16	Mon	First Day of Spring 2017 RAIL Registration for Continuing Students; 9:00 am-4:00 pm
11/2/16	Wed	Last Day of Academic Advisement for Continuing Students for Spring 2017
11/18/16	Fri	Last Day to Withdraw from second-half semester class -- See Advisor by Noon
11/20/16	Sun	First Day of Thanksgiving Recess
11/27/16	Sun	Last Day of Thanksgiving Recess
12/2/16	Fri	Last Day of Classes; Last Day for Complete Withdrawal from Semester
12/5/16	Mon	First Day of Final Exams
12/9/16	Fri	Last Day of Final Exams
12/12/16	Mon	First Semester Grades Due 9:00 am -- End of First Semester
12/13/16	Tues	Grades will be available via RAIL (tentative)