

CARLETON UNIVERSITY**Department of Sociology and Anthropology
and the College of the Humanities: Religion****ANTH2550B / RELI 2736B Religion and Society
Spring Term (May-June) 2015**

Time	Tuesday & Thursday 13:05-15:55.	Credit	0.5
Place	517 SA	Email	tom.sherwood@carleton.ca
Instructor	Tom Sherwood	Office hours	Tuesday & Thursday TBA
Office	A711 Loeb		

Description (as in the Undergraduate Calendar)

Cross-cultural survey of religious institutions, focusing on theories and methodologies in the study of religion. Topics may include myth, totemism, cults, ritual, belief systems, altered states of consciousness, new religious and/or new age movements and the relationship of religion with other social institutions and processes.

Rationale This course is an introductory survey of anthropological and sociological approaches to the study of religion. It traces the historical development of the subdiscipline, reviews the major theoretical perspectives, reviews the basic conceptual vocabulary, and discusses some of the issues and problems in research methodology.

Prerequisite ANTH 1001 or ANTH1002 or ANTH 1003 or 1.0 credit at the 1000-level in AFRI, JOUR, SOCI, ENGL, GEOG, HIST, HUMR, INDG, PSCI, RELI or WGST.

Instruments of Evaluation

The Evaluation Procedures of the university are described in the Undergraduate Calendar. Final grades are subject to the Dean's approval and are not official until that approval has been received. There are five instruments of evaluation. As stated in the Academic Regulations of the University, Section 2.1, students must complete all term papers and examinations to obtain credit for this course.

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|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Assignment One | 5% of the Final Grade, due by May 12 |
| 2. Term Test 1 | 15% of the FG, in class on May 21 |
| 3. Essay on Research | 40% of the FG, due by Wednesday June 3 |
| 4. Term Test 2 | 20% of the FG, in class on June 9 |
| 5. Take-home Examination | 20% of the FG, assigned June 11, due by June 25 |

Separate postings on cuLearn will describe the requirements for Assignment One and the Essay on Research.

Text – Required Reading

Stein, Rebecca L. and Philip L. Stein

2011 The Anthropology of Religion, Magic and Witchcraft, 3rd edition

Allyn and Bacon, Boston.

This text was designed for courses like this. It is very strong in ethnography, case studies, and the presentation of the conceptual vocabulary of anthropology of religion. It is weak in its presentation of theory and issues of methodology. The lectures will compensate for this and add a Canadian perspective.

Lectures – Required “Reading”

The First-Hour Lectures review the major theoretical understandings of religion and society, a number of methodological issues and other essential material not contained in the text. The lectures serve several necessary functions:

1. to summarize material from multiple sources;
2. to clarify difficult concepts;
3. to put the textbook content into a broader context and to add Canadian perspective;
4. to allow for the inclusion of material not yet published or not easily accessible;
5. to allow for varied, multimedia teaching and learning, which will include videos, slides, discussion and in-class exercises.

Class Time

The course is presented in 12 three-hour classes, one break per class. Normally the “First Hour” will be a lecture, 75 to 90 minutes long. After the break, the “Second Hour” will normally be a discussion of that week’s readings, although students may use the time to ask questions about the lectures or the research essay they are working on. There is a positive relationship between class attendance and success in this course.

SCHEDULE of CLASSES, READINGS and ASSIGNMENTS**INTRODUCTION – THE SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF RELIGION**

1. May 5
 - Introduction, orientation, organizational matters
 - Review of the Course Outline and Instruments of Evaluation
 - Introduction of the textbook and lectures.
 - What is religion? – the problems and opportunities of definition
 - What is anthropology of religion? – anthropological approaches to religion
 - Stein & Stein chapter 1 – “The Anthropological Study of Religion”
 - ASSIGNMENT ONE** – Exercise toward “Methodological Agnosticism”
 - (Stein & Stein, p 26) – short essay due by the 3rd class – 5% of Final Grade

PART ONE – DEVELOPMENT OF MAJOR THEORETICAL APPROACHES

2. May 7
 - 1st Hour Theory the historical development of the anthropology of religion, “from armchair

Anthropology to the front porch;" Comte and positivism; Spencer, Muller, Tylor, Marett, Frazer; origins-of-religion theories

2nd Hour Method **Stein & Stein chapters 1 & 2** – introductory and basic material

3. May 12 **ASSIGNMENT ONE is due.**

1st Hour Theory Durkheim's theory of religion and society
positivism, functionalism and social cohesion

2nd Hour Method **Stein & Stein chapter 2 & 3** – "Mythology" (video "The Power of Myth" with Joseph Campbell) and "Religious Symbols"

4. May 14 **Assignment One** will be returned (5% of Final Grade)

1st Hour Theory Weber's contributions to understanding religion and society
Weber's sociology, Protestant ethic thesis, disenchantment, Verstehen, leadership, authority, Ideal-type, church-sect typology

2nd Hour Method **Stein & Stein chapters 3 & 4** – "Religious Symbols" and "Ritual"
sacred art, space and time; music and dance

5. May 19

1st Hour Theory Marx and Freud

2nd Hour Method **Stein & Stein chapter 4** – "Ritual" – rites of passage

6. May 21

1st Hour Method **Stein & Stein chapters 5 & 6** – "Altered States of Consciousness"
and "Religious Specialists" – shamanism

2nd Hour **TERM TEST** (at 2:30 pm, 45 minutes, 15% of FG)

PART TWO THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF BEING RELIGIOUS

7. May 26

1st Hour The **Term Test** will be returned (15% of Final Grade)
In-class workshop on the **ESSAY on RESEARCH** (40% of Final Grade) – This is the deadline for choosing a topic for the research essay, either pre-approved or an original topic approved by the instructor.

Video on Huichol shamanism and pilgrimage

Stein & Stein chapter 7 – "Magic and Divination"

2nd Hour Theory Institutionalization of religion: typologies of religious organization; religious forms in contemporary society; from church-sect to NRMs

8. May 28

1st Hour Theory Religiosity: measuring the religious variable; religion as a social variable
Becoming religious: socialization and conversion, considering the individual

2nd Hour Method **Stein & Stein chapter 8** – "Souls, Ghosts, and Death"

PART THREE

RELIGION, SOCIAL CHANGE, TRADITION, MODERNITY

9. June 2

The **ESSAY is DUE** either in class or by 4 pm Wednesday June 3

1st Hour Theory

Religion and social integration – beyond Durkheim

Robert N. Bellah and the Civil Religion thesis

2nd Hour Method

Stein & Stein chapter 9 – “Gods and Spirits”

10. June 4

1st Hour Theory

Religion and social transformation – beyond Marx and Weber

liberation theology, social gospel, civil rights, apartheid; politics, economics, stratification, etc. Video on liberation theology

2nd Hour Method

Stein & Stein chapter 10 – “Witchcraft”

Stein & Stein chapter 11 – “The Search for New Meaning”

11. June 9

1st Hour Theory

Religion and Modernity: Fundamentalisms, Secularization, Spirituality

Fundamentalism, Secularization: a typology of theories, the decline thesis, the transformation thesis, spirituality, NRMs. Video on fundamentalism

2nd Hour Method

Term Test 2 administered in class

CONCLUSION

SUMMARIZING AND LOOKING AHEAD

12. June 11

The "First Hour Lecture" series will be completed, the Essay and Term Test 2 will be returned, and students will know their “Term Marks” – 60% of the Final Grade.

FAQs

1. Do I have to attend the lectures?

The content of the lectures constitutes “required reading”; so students need to attend or form partnerships. The instructor posts point form notes, quotations, and definitions on cuLearn, but not the pictures or videos. The lectures add essential theoretical and methodological material to the textbook. The lectures include discussion of issues, answers to questions and references to current events that will not be posted. For many students, the lectures also resource the Essay on Research. They do not duplicate the textbook. The last hour of each class will allow for questions and discussion related to that week’s readings.

2. Do I need the textbook? Yes.

3. Is there a Term Test? Yes. Two, both in class – May 21 (15%) and June 9 (20%)

4. Is there a Final Exam? Yes, a take home exam (20%) posted on June 11 will be due June 25.

5. Are there any Essays? Yes. Two. More information is provided on separate Handouts.

6. Can I have an extension on the Research Essay, the one worth 40%?

No. As the Handout will say, “The late penalty for this assignment is 5% per day. If you are late due to illness, staple your medical form to your assignment and late charges will not be enforced.

7. Where is your office? A711 Loeb

8. What is the best way to reach you? Class time, office hours, and email.