**Fall 2013: UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS at ARLINGTON**

SOCI 3343, Section 001: Sociology of Religion

Professor: Jason E. Shelton, Ph.D.

Faculty Profile: <https://www.uta.edu/mentis/public/#profile/profile/edit/id/2556>

Office: University Hall #419

Telephone: x2661

Office Hours: From 2pm to 4pm on M & W, or by appointment

Email: jeshelton@uta.edu

Time and Place of Class Meetings: MWF from 10am to 10:50am in COBA 348

**Course Description:** This course provides an overview of the scientific study of religion from a sociological perspective. While theology and history are important, we will focus on theories, research, and trends concerning religion in the contemporary United States. Some of the topics to be addressed include (but are not limited to) understanding the rich variety of religious traditions and affiliations, religious practices and beliefs, as well as the role that religion plays in facilitating and limiting social change and conflict in society. We will also examine differences within various religious traditions such as “mainline” versus “fundamentalist” believers, secularization, and the often controversial ways that religion intersects with other spheres of society such as science, morality, politics, race relations, sex and gender

**Required Texts:**

**Books**

1. Chaves, Mark. 2011. *American Religion: Contemporary Trends*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
2. Emerson, Michael O., William Mirola, and Susanne C. Monahan. 2011. *Religion Matters: What Sociology Teaches Us About Religion in Our World*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
3. Monahan, Susanne C., William Mirola, and Michael O. Emerson. 2001. *Sociology of Religion: A Reader*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

**Articles on Electronic Reserve**

1. Lindsay, D. Michael. 2007. *Faith in the Halls of Power: How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite*. New York: Oxford University Press.
2. Roof, Wade Clark and William McKinney. 1987. *American Mainline Religion: Its Changing Shape and Future*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
3. Shelton, Jason E. and Michael O. Emerson. 2012. *Blacks and Whites in Christian America: How Racial Discrimination Shapes Religious Convictions*. New York: New York University Press.

**Course Requirements:** This course will consist of three scantron multiple choice exams. Each exam is worth 100 points. Your final grade will be calculated by simply dividing your point total by 300.

No work for extra credit is necessary, and none will be accepted in lieu of missed requirements or to raise grades. I randomly give out bonus points on particular days during the semester (mainly as a reward for attendance). Students are expected to have read the course materials **before** coming to class. Also, out of respect for our scholarly goals, I ask that you place your electronic devices (e.g., cell phone) on silent or vibrate.

Students are expected to keep track of their performance via Blackboard throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels.

**Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**: Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least 3 additional hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

**Attendance Policy:** This course does not have an attendance policy. However, be here on the exam days because I **do not** give make-ups (unless you have an incredibly valid reason that can be substantiated with evidence).

**Final Grading Scale**

A= 90 to 100%

B= 80 to 89%

C= 70 to 79%

D= 60 to 69%

F= 0 to 59%

**Academic Integrity:** All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

Instructors may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

In this course, scholastic dishonesty automatically results in an **F** for the assignment in question, and possibly even an **F** in the course overall. (I highly recommend that you take this policy very seriously; I have no sympathy for students who attempt to cheat on tests or plagiarize papers.) For more information, please refer to the Student Judicial Affairs website at: <http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/academicintegrity.html>

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or add classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more information. The final drop date for the **Fall 2013** semester is **October 30th for undergraduates.**

**Americans With Disabilities Act:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and the letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide me with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by staff in the Office of Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Student with Disabilities at (817)-272-3364.

**Student Support Services:** UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

**Electronic Communication Policy:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Recording Lectures:** Please see me if you feel that you need to record class lectures. Also, taking notes for distribution outside the classroom (e.g., for companies that sell lecture notes to students) is strictly prohibited and will be met with very stiff penalties.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit/emergency exit, which varies depending on where you choose to sit within the classroom. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.

**Important Dates for the Fall 2013 Term**

Friday August 23rd Class Begins

 Monday September 2nd NO CLASS (Labor Day)

Monday September 23rd EXAM #1

 Monday October 28th EXAM #2

 Wednesday October 30th Last Day to Drop Classes

 Friday November 29th NO CLASS

(Thanksgiving Break)

 Wednesday December 4th Last Day of the Semester

 Monday December 9th  EXAM #3

**Tentative Course Schedule**

**Section 1: Classical Theory & An Overview of Religious Traditions**

Week 1 (Aug 23rd): F= Welcome: Aims & Expectations

Week 2 (Aug 26th): M= Emerson et al, Ch. 1

 W= (continued)

 F = Monahan et al, Chs. 1 & 2

Week 3 (Sep 2nd): M= NO CLASS (Labor Day)

W= Emerson et al, Ch 2

F= (continued)

Week 4 (Sep 9th): M= Emerson et al, Ch 3

 W= Monahan et al, Chs. 31 & 32

F= \*Roof and McKinney, pgs. 11-41

Week 5 (Sep 16th): M= \*Roof and McKinney, pgs. 40-71

 W= Emerson et al, Ch 4

F= TBA

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**Section 2: Secularization, Social Change, & Politics**

Week 6 (Sep 23rd): M= **EXAM #1**

W= TBA

F= Emerson et al, Ch 5

Week 7 (Sep 30th): M= Monahan et al, Chs 24 & 25

 W= Emerson et al, Ch 6

F= Monahan et al, Chs 40 & 41

Week 8 (Oct 7th): M= Chaves, pgs. 1-32

 W= Chaves, pgs. 33-54

 F= Chaves, pgs. 55-80

Week 9 (Oct 14th): M= Chaves, pgs. 81-114

W= TBA

F= Emerson et al, Ch 7

Week 10 (Oct 21st): M= Emerson et al, Ch 8

W=\*Lindsay, Ch 1

 F= TBA

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**Section 3: Race Relations, Sex and Gender, Science and Morality**

Week 11 (Oct 28th): M= **EXAM #2**

 W= TBA

 F= Emerson et al, Ch 12

Week 12 (Nov 4th): M= (continued)

 W= Emerson et al, Ch 9

 F= Monahan et al, Chs 13, 15, & 21

Week 13 (Nov 11th): M= Emerson et al, Ch 10

W= \*Shelton and Emerson, Ch 1

F= \*Shelton and Emerson, Ch 7

Week 14 (Nov 18th): M= \*Shelton and Emerson, Ch 8

W= TBA

F= Emerson et al, Ch 11

Week 15 (Nov 25th): M= Emerson et al, Ch 13

W= TBA

F= NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

Week 16 (Dec 2nd): M= Emerson et al, Ch 14

W= TBA

**EXAM #3: Monday, December 9th from 8am-10:30am**