**Spring 2017: UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS at ARLINGTON**

SOCI 3343, Section 001: Sociology of Religion

Professor: Dr. Jason E. Shelton

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Time and Place of Class Meetings: T & Th from 12:30pm to 1:50pm in LS #100

**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, faith-based practices and beliefs, as well as the dynamic role that religion plays in both facilitating and limiting social change as well as conflict in society. We will also examine differences *within* various religious traditions such as “mainline” and “fundamentalist” believers, secularization processes, and the often controversial ways in which 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* (Second Edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

**Articles on BlackBoard**

1. Roof, Wade Clark and William McKinney. 1987. *American Mainline Religion: Its Changing Shape and Future*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
2. 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. Near the end of the semester, students may have the opportunity to submit a two-page essay for 10 bonus points.

**Grading:** Students are expected to keep track of their performance via Blackboard throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (such as myself and the TA) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels. The final grading scale is as follows:

A= 90 to 100%

B= 80 to 89%

C= 70 to 79%

D= 60 to 69%

F= 0 to 59%

**Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**: Students are expected to have read the course materials **before** coming to class. 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 engaging in course-related activities such as reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

**Attendance Policy:** At the University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator of student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students’ academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, I **will not** take attendance. 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).

**Academic Integrity:** All students enrolled in UT Arlington courses 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.*

UT Arlington faculty members 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.)

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) 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. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>). The final drop date for the **Spring 2017** semester is **March 31st** **for undergraduates.**

**Disability Accommodations:** UTArlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA),* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* 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 disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of **a letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

**The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** [www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364](http://www.uta.edu/disability%20or%20calling%20817-272-3364).

**Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)** [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671.

**Non-Discrimination Policy and Title IX:** UT Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [www.uta.edu/eos](http://www.uta.edu/eos). For more information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX).

**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 (go to [www.uta.edu/startstrong](http://www.uta.edu/startstrong) for more information), 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).

Some important campus phone numbers include:

* Counseling Services: 817-272-3671
* Relationship Violence & Sexual Assault Prevention: 817-272-9250
* UTA Police Department: 817-272-3003 (Emergencies) and 817-272-3381 (Non-Emergencies)

**Electronic Communication:** 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:** Some classrooms are equipped with technology to record our course lectures. Under such circumstances, it is my discretion (a) whether to make such videos available to students, and (b) when to make them available. **In short, I reserve the right to not release them at all.** Otherwise, 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. Finally, out of respect for our scholarly goals, I ask that you place your electronic devices (e.g., cell phone) on silent or vibrate.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” are directed to complete an online 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 via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students’ anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. 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.

**Campus Carry:** Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

**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 individuals with disabilities.

**Important Dates for the Spring 2016 Term**

Tuesday January 17th Class Begins

Thursday February 23rd EXAM #1

 Mon-Fri March 13th – 17th NO CLASS (Spring Break)

 Tuesday April 4th EXAM #2

 Friday March 31st Last Day to Drop Classes

 Thursday May 4th Last Day of Class

 Thursday May 11th EXAM #3

**Tentative Course Schedule**

**Section 1:**

Week 1 (Jan 17th): T = Welcome: Aims & Expectations; Emerson (Ch. 1)

 H = (continued)

Week 2 (Jan 24th): T = Emerson (Ch 2)

 H = (continued)

Week 3 (Jan 31st): T = (continued) AND Monahan (Ch. 1 by Durkheim)

 H = Emerson (Ch 3) AND Monahan (Ch 31 by Olson)

Week 4 (Feb 7th): T = Roof and McKinney, pgs. 11-41

 H = Roof and McKinney, pgs. 40-71

Week 5 (Feb 14th): T = Chaves (pgs. 1-54)

H = Chaves (pgs. 55- 114)

Week 6 (Feb 21st): T = TBA

H = **EXAM #1**

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**Section 2:**

Week 7 (Feb 28th): T = Emerson (Ch 4)

 H = Emerson (Ch 5)

Week 8 (Mar 7th): T = TBA

 H = Monahan (Ch 32 by Tabor AND 25 by Finke)

Week 9 (Mar 14th): T = NO CLASS (Spring Break)

 H = NO CLASS (Spring Break)

Week 10 (Mar 21st): T = Emerson (Ch 6)

H =Monahan (Ch 40 by Fine AND Ch 41 by Juergensmeyer)

Week 11 (Mar 28th): T = Emerson (Ch 7 AND 8)

 H = TBA

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**Section 3:**

Week 12 (Apr 4th): T = **EXAM#2**

 H = TBA

Week 13 (Apr 11th): T = Emerson (Ch 12)

 H = Emerson (Ch 9)

Week 14 (Apr 18th): T = Monahan (Ch 13 by Sechzer AND Ch 21 by Olson)

 H = Emerson (Ch 11)

Week 15 (Apr 25th): T = TBA

 H= Shelton and Emerson (Ch 1)

Week 16 (May 2nd): T = Shelton and Emerson (Ch 7)

 H = TBA

**EXAM #3: Thursday, May 11th at 11am**

**\*I do NOT keep office hours during Final Exam Week!**