SOC 4381 Sociology of Religion (Spring 2019)
ONLINE

Campus Office Hours: W 1-5p & by Appointment

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Virtual Contact Hours: TR 9-12p (use email or BB Connect)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This online course examines the functions of religion in society from a social scientific perspective. It is not a forum to debate the veracity of any religious beliefs, but rather to examine what role those beliefs may play in structuring various societies, forming institutions, socializing individuals, creating culture, and so forth. Students will be asked to consider both the unifying and divisive forces of religious beliefs & practices and how religion has changed over time.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS
- Computer with MAC or Windows Operating System
- High Speed Internet Access
- Access to a Webcam, Digital Camera or other recording device

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assignment(s) or activity(ies) best validating outcome achievement:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By completing all course requirements, students will be able to:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Gaining factual knowledge</td>
<td>1-4 Text, Learning Modules, Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Learning to apply course material</td>
<td>3 Quizzes</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Students are encouraged to stay current on the readings and turn assignments in on time. This will benefit them and others as they seek to participate meaningfully in the course.
- Students are expected to be “active learners.” It is a basic assumption of the instructor that students will be involved (beyond the materials and lectures presented in the course) discovering, processing, and applying the course information using peer-review journal articles, researching additional information and examples on the Internet, and discussing course material and experiences with their peers.
- Students are asked to seek help early if they have problems, questions, or concerns during the semester. Every student has something unique to offer to the discourse. If students don’t come to class or refuse to engage others while in class, that decreases the diversity of the dialog for everyone.

GRADING SYSTEM

Course grades will be dependent upon completing course requirements and meeting the student learning outcomes. The following grading scale is in use for this course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>500-450 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>449-400 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>399-350 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>349-300 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-299 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades are not rounded up.

EVALUATION AND GRADES

All points are equally weighted. Graded assignments, discussions and test points are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests/Quizzes</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL COURSE GRADE</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OTHER GRADE-RELATED TOPICS

EXTRA CREDIT: Extra credit, if available at all, will only be given in the form of bonus questions on tests.

PENALTIES: Attendance/Participation is MANDATORY. Log in regularly and don’t fall behind. You have plenty of time to complete assignments, but it is easy to miss a deadline and get a zero if you drop out for a few days.

ASSIGNMENT/ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

**Learning Modules/Textbook** are designed to give you an opportunity to learn, engage, clarify, and grapple with the basic concepts & principles of sociology.

**Videos** are presented to help clarify and enrich your understanding of sociology and supplement.

**Homework** is designed to make you think critically about how course concepts relate to one another and to you. What forces have shaped who you are, what you believe, and how you live? How might your perspective differ
from others? Do you strongly agree or disagree with this or that statement? Explain why you (dis)agree and support your own statements with good data, not just personal experience.

**Tests/Quizzes** are designed to test your competence in the essential concepts & principles of sociology AND your ability to apply those concepts & principles to real world situations.

**COMMUNICATING WITH THE PROFESSOR**
In most cases, Dr. Simpson will respond to your email within 24-48 hours during working hours Monday through Friday. Weekend messages may not be returned until Monday.

*Written communication via Blackboard:* There is a discussion on the forum to ask questions.

*Written communication via email:* All private communication will be done exclusively through your ASU email address. Check frequently for announcements and policy changes. Please start your subject line with “SOC Religion” so your message does not get buried. I can search by that term instead of sifting through 300-400 emails.

*Virtual communication:* Contact hours will be via Blackboard’s Connect! (as needed).

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY & ATTENDANCE**
Students are expected to engage in course activities and submit work by due dates and times. The hope is that students will make substantive contributions which reflect integration of assigned materials as well as any outside readings as appropriate. Scholarly contribution is an expectation. For planning purposes, this class will probably require a minimum of 6-9 study hours per week on average.

**ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION**
In this class, all assignments will be submitted through the Assignments link in the Blackboard course site. The professor will not accept work via email. Period.

Since technology issues do arise from time to time, be prepared. Keeping copies of your work and upload assignments early, rather than waiting until the last minute on the day of the deadline. Double check to be sure the assignment you just uploaded is there even after you get a confirmation from Turnitin. Check the gradebook often. If an issue arises, contact a lab attendant or IT support first. If all else fails, email the professor at shirley.simpson@angelo.edu explaining the problem.

Remember though, it is your responsibility to upload your paper to Blackboard when the problem has been resolved. If it is not on Blackboard, you will get a zero.
LATE WORK OR MISSED ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

The course is divided into several modules that follow the structure of the material we will cover (classical, contemporary, and so forth). For the purpose of clarity, a week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday. Assignment due dates are shown on the calendar/schedule and/or posted within Blackboard. **Turnitin will allow students to submit work after the deadline, but late assignments will be penalized as follows:**

- Late work can only earn up to half the original points
- Work submitted more than five days after the deadline will receive a zero
- Work missing from Blackboard will be considered late for grading purposes

It is your responsibility to do your work, turn it in on time, and be sure your grades are in order as we go through the semester.

*Note: Keep in mind that missed assignments, even one for 5 or 10 points, can mean the difference between one grade and a lower one at the end of the semester. It happens a LOT. Don’t ask to do extra credit to make up for required work you did not complete. Do not wait until the last week of the semester to scour the grade book for missing or incorrect grades. You should check grades as you go along. If you get a zero for an assignment you did or get a score you think is incorrect, you only have five days to point it out. After that, the grade becomes permanent. This policy is to prevent point “fishing” at the end of the semester when some students realize how close they were to a higher grade and are desperate to find points.*

PROBLEM WITH A BLACKBOARD GRADE?

Check your grades regularly. If you do not have a score within a week of submission, receive a zero on an assignment you completed, or get a score you think is in error, please do NOT wait until the end of the semester to point it out. Send an email or speak to me in class so I can check it for you.

*Note: Since your assignments in this course will be digitally submitted, it is unlikely you will find errors on graded homework. Occasionally, though, computer-graded fill-in and short answer questions on quizzes need to be double checked, esp. if you misspell a word or use alternate terminology.*

GENERAL POLICIES RELATED TO THIS COURSE

All students are required to follow the policies and procedures presented in the following documents:

- ASU Undergraduate Catalog located on the ASU website [https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/16795-201213-undergraduate-catalog](https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/16795-201213-undergraduate-catalog)

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic honesty is expected on all work. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their online experiences. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU.

The Psychology & Sociology Department adheres to the academic honesty statement as set forth in the Angelo State University Student Handbook (2011-2012) [http://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/code-of-student-conduct/misconduct.php](http://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/code-of-student-conduct/misconduct.php). The University "faculty expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experience both in and out of the classroom setting and may initiate disciplinary proceedings..."
against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials."

PLAGIARISM
Plagiarism at ASU is a serious topic. The Angelo State University’s Honor Code gives specific details on plagiarism and what it encompasses. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else's work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one's own. Plagiarism is literary theft.

In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word for word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. We use the *APA Style Manual of the American Psychological Association* as a guide for all writing assignments. Quotes should be used sparingly. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list. Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality via Bb Safe Assignment or Turnitin. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the ASU Writing Center [http://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php](http://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
1. “Angelo State University is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAA), and subsequent legislation.”

2. The Office of Student Affairs is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting the Office of Student Affairs, University Center, Room 112 at (325) 942-2047 or (325) 942-2211 (TDD/FAX) or by e-mail at studentservices@angelo.edu to begin the process. The Office of Student Affairs will establish the particular documentation requirements necessary for the various types of disabilities.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students determined to be disabled or who have documented disabilities.

INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY (OP 10.11 Grading Procedures)
It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work. Documentation may be required.

STUDENT ABSENCE FOR OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS
“A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence.” Please see ASU Operating Policy 10.19.

COPYRIGHT POLICY
Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

SYLLABUS CHANGES
The faculty member reserves the option to make changes as necessary to this syllabus and the course content. If changes become necessary during this course, the faculty will notify students of such changes by email, course announcements and/or via a discussion board announcement. It is the student’s responsibility to look for such communications about the course on a daily basis.