

**INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY-220-601**  
Red Rocks Community College  
Fall 2015

**INSTRUCTORS:** Sally Stablein, M.A., Sociology & Kelli Gilbert, M.S., Human Development & Family Studies

**COURSE: Sociology 220, Section 601, meets 10/30/15 – 11/14/15**

3 credit hours, room: West 2531

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**OFFICE HOURS** (Sally's office 2638), Tuesdays 7:30AM – 8:30AM, Wednesdays 3PM-6PM, and Thursdays 7:30AM – 8:30 AM and on; Mondays, and Fridays I am available by appointment. I will be happy to meet with you anytime, just email me and we can arrange something or just come by during office hours. I will check class emails daily (except Saturday & Sunday☺). You will most likely get a quick response from me when emailing. If D2L is down you may email me at [sally.stablein@rrcc.edu](mailto:sally.stablein@rrcc.edu).

**Communication:** Please get in the habit of checking D2L while we are in this class. It's the fastest way for us to communicate any possible changes to you.

**BOOKS:**

All required readings will be posted in D2L

Recommended: Writing @ Red Rocks 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

**IMPORTANT DATE:**

Last day to withdraw for a refund October 30

**WHAT IS Sociology of Religion?**

In sociology of religion, we will examine world religions by focusing on sociological interpretation and explanation of the role of religion in human culture. In addition to culture, we will examine the interaction between society and religion, and a wide variety of religious beliefs and practices.

**HOW WILL WE STUDY Sociology of Religion?**

We will study the sociology of religion by laying the groundwork for understanding religion from a sociological perspective, taking several field trips, documenting our experiences, as well as through lecture, videos, and other thought-provoking assignments.

**COURSE CONTENT, OBJECTIVES, & OUTCOMES**

- Examine what sociology can tell us about religion.
- Identify types of religious beliefs among humans, including the origins of religion.
- Define terms related to religion from a sociological perspective.
- Analyze classical theories of religion.

- Explore the reasons that religious practices vary so greatly.
- Understand the difference between churches, sects, and cults.
- Articulate the way that religion interacts with politics.
- Critique the resurgence of fundamentalism worldwide.
- Differentiate the variables that promote secularization in some societies more than others.
- Discuss the role of religion in social control including behavior, thinking, and beliefs.
- Evaluate the role of religion in the distribution of power and inequality in society.
- Analyze how race, class, and gender are crucial variables in the consideration of religious practices.
- Examine the role of religion in the development of mores, norms, folkways, and values.
- Explore the convergence of religion and ethics.

**The major objectives of this course**, therefore, are to stimulate your sociological imagination, acquaint you with the discipline, and help you gain insight into the nature and operation of societies. In order to accomplish this task, we will examine many of the fundamental concepts, principles, and issues of concern to sociologists.

#### **IV. COURSE WORK**

##### Attendance

Regular attendance at all class meetings is required. We meet for a very short time. It is very important to be at all class meetings.

##### Reading Assignments

Please stay on top of the reading assignments. We will be discussing the reading material in most classes and you will be expected to actively participate in class discussion. All readings will be posted in D2L.

##### Class Participation, Homework, & Exams

We expect everyone to participate in class discussions. There will be one final exam that will be handed out weekend 2 and will be due on Saturday, November 14. There will be other homework or in-class assignments that will be discussed.

##### Written Work/Oral Presentation

There will be one assignment that requires you to present with a group. This will be discussed the first night in class.

**You will be expected to** read, think, write, and contribute to class discussions; analyze, evaluate, and draw conclusions from readings and other course material; do introductory research using sociological methods and language; contribute ideas and effort; and compare and contrast facts, concepts, perspectives, language, and theories related to the course.

### Grade Breakdown

Exam	100 points
Presentation	100 points
Attendance	100 points
Homework	100 points
Reflection papers on field trips	100 points

450-500	A
400-449	B
350-399	C
300-349	D
Under 300	F

### V. FINAL COMMENTS

Late work will not be accepted

#### **RRCC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:**

**Student Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity:** Admission to the Red Rocks Community College implies that you agree to respect the rights of others and observe moral and civil laws. Interference with the normal processes of education in the classroom or elsewhere on the campus will be regarded as unacceptable conduct, warranting suspension or dismissal. Complete Student Code of Conduct is at this web site:

<http://www.rrcc.edu/handbook/codeofconduct.pdf>.

**Special Needs Notification:** Red Rocks Community College in compliance with federal guidelines, is committed to equal educational opportunity by assuring otherwise qualified students with disabilities equal access to RRCC programs and activities that are provided to students without disabilities. An otherwise qualified person with a disability is a student who meets the academic and technical standards required for admission or participation in all educational programs and activities.

#### **Eligibility**

Red Rocks Community College will provide accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To request accommodations, contact the Office of Disability Services at your earliest convenience. The Office of Disability Services is located in the Learning Commons Room 1185. Please contact the office at

303.914.6733, V/TDD at 303.914.6737, or email at [ODS@rrcc.edu](mailto:ODS@rrcc.edu) if you have any questions.

**Grade of Incomplete:** Incomplete: An "I" indicates that the course objectives are not yet fulfilled. It is the responsibility of the student to request, if needed, the assignment of an incomplete grade. The instructor's decision to authorize or not authorize an incomplete grade is final. The student must have completed 75% of the class with a C or better, and must complete the rest of the work with the same instructor. Arrangement for the completion of the course must be made with the instructor prior to the assignment of the "I" grade. This agreement must be written on a Contract for Incomplete Grade Form. The instructor may allow up to one full semester for the student to complete missing requirements. "I" grades not changed by the end of the following semester will automatically become failing grades (F). **This instructor rarely gives incompletes.**

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is grounds for failing an assignment or course and/or disciplinary action from RRCC. DO NOT PLAGIARIZE. Plagiarism means copying passages **directly** from the text or any other source, without quotation marks and citations. Summarize or paraphrase the information. If you paraphrase by rearranging the order of a sentence or words, then give credit for the source. **No credit will be given for plagiarized papers and may be grounds for failure from the class.**

**IMPORTANT:**

This syllabus is the essential road map and cornerstone for this course. Because you are responsible for the requirements of this syllabus, please clarify any information, which you do not understand with the instructor as soon as possible.

**VI. ANTICIPATED READING CALENDAR**

**WEEKEND 1: We will meet Friday from 5PM-10PM and Saturday from 8AM-5:30 PM**

**10/30**

- Introductions; review of syllabus, class assignments, & class field trips.
- Introduction to Sociology and to the Sociology of Religion.
- How sociologists study religion.
- Do reading in D2L on basic sociological concepts on Religion (The Sociology of Religion & Soc Perspectives)
- Conceptual and theoretical basics (see list of topics under "Course Content, Objectives, & Outcomes," above)

**10/31**

- Lecture and discussion of readings
- Lunch from 12:30-1:15

**WEEKEND 2: We will meet Friday from 5PM-10PM and Saturday from**

## **8AM-5:30 PM**

### **11/06**

We will meet from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm at Colorado Muslim Society,  
2071 S. Parker Road Denver, CO 80231.

**Please do not be late and dress appropriately. This will be discussed in class.**

### **11/07**

- Lecture and discussion of readings
- Lunch from 12:30-1:15

**WEEKEND 3: We will meet Friday from 5PM-10PM and Saturday from 8AM to 5:30 PM.**

### **11/13**

We will meet Friday, November 13, at 6:45 pm at Denver Temple Sinai  
3509 S. Glencoe Street, Denver, CO 80237 – please dress appropriately.

### **11/14**

We will meet Saturday, November 14, at 10:30 am at Scientology of Denver,  
2340 Blake St. Denver, CO 80205.

Afterward, we will return to campus for:

- Lunch
- Final Presentations

## **VII. ASSIGNMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION**

Assignments are worth 25 pts. each, for a total of 100 pts.

Assignment #1 (due Saturday, 11/7): Go to npr.org and put “afterlife” in the search box (top, right on the screen); Click on the story “What Comes Next? Conversations On The Afterlife,” then listen to one of the following:

- “For Rabbi, a Just God...”
- “A Philosopher’s Afterlife...”
- “To Pastor, Afterlife is Where We Learn...”
- “Imam: ‘We Can’t Imagine the Beauty...”

- Heaven is waiting: Hell is a different question

Write a short paper (min. 2 pages) that analyzes the speaker's view of the afterlife from each of the 4 main sociological perspectives discussed the first night of class—Structural Functional, Conflict, Symbolic Interaction, and Narrative. For example, how does this view “function” for its society of believers? (Structural Functionalism); are there elements of power and social control? (Conflict); what are the symbols, rituals, and (in general) elements of social construction involved? (Symbol Interaction); and what is the power of the story being told (Narrative)?

Assignment #2 (due Saturday, 11/07): Conduct some research on the internet looking at (a) the number and availability of religious-related sites, (b) the diversity of religious-related sites, that is, to what extent are “main-line” denominations represented, relative to the smaller ones; and (c) the audience to which various sites seem to be speaking, and the message being conveyed (2-page minimum, and be sure to include URLs for all sites visited).

Assignment #3 (due Saturday, 11/14): Briefly outline the “pro” and “con” arguments regarding allowing (or even requiring) prayer in public schools. For each of these opposing positions, analyze the potential benefits to society as a whole. What would allowing or requiring prayer in schools do for society, according to those who support this position? On the flip side, what would the outlawing of prayer in public schools do for society? (2-3 pp.; be sure to include citations for any sources you access in researching the basic arguments)

Assignment #4 (due Saturday, 11/14): Imagine a religion that was dominated by women. How might it differ from male-dominated religion? Let your creativity run wild here: how might it be organized? Who would do what? What might the ceremonies or rituals look like? What would the message be? Is there a heaven or hell? Are there symbols and/or sacred objects? (3-page min).

## **VIII. THE SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION: OULINE FOR GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

### Details

- You will work in groups of at least 3
- Presentations are scheduled for the last day of class
- Plan for a 25-30 minute presentation (leave 5 minutes at the end for questions)
- Groups will choose their topics on the first day of the course

### How to get started

- Start with [bbc.co.uk/religion/religions](http://bbc.co.uk/religion/religions); another good general site is [religions.pewforums.org](http://religions.pewforums.org) (use the search box at upper right)
- Do some individual searching
- Share your information and narrow it down to a “doable” level

- Divide up tasks according to interest and talent (e.g., primary writer, editor/finisher, research, media, speaker[s])—you do not all have to speak during the presentation

## Components

### PRESENTATION

Criteria for a good presentation include:

- Good preparation: Is each person clearly prepared for their part of the presentation? Does each know what the other is planning to do? Are handouts made and passed out at the beginning? Are overheads or other teaching tools ready to go and well prepared—be sure to proofread!
- Clarity: Is it understandable? Is it organized well, so that ideas are clearly connected and flow smoothly?
- Does it provide useful information?
- Is it interesting? Does it make you think?
- Is it creative? You have full reign in terms of format: you can use overheads or any other media our classroom can support; you can act out a scene and then analyze or discuss it; you can have the class participate in your presentation in some way. We strongly recommend providing handouts: they help you to organize your presentation and help the class to follow along; they allow you to cover the basics in print, and add items of additional interest to the presentation itself; and they allow your audience to take something tangible away from your presentation.
- If you plan to use the A/V equipment (for Powerpoint, etc.), please try it out sometime before your presentation to make sure you have worked out any potential technological glitches.

### GRADING OF PRESENTATION

- 50% (50 pts.) of the grade is the Instructors' assessment of your presentation
- 25% (25 pts.) of the grade comes from a combination of: (1) your peers' assessments (we will have forms for the "audience," i.e., your fellow students, to fill out after your presentation); (2) an assessment from each of your fellow group members (a short form for each group member to fill out); and (3) a self-assessment
- 25% (25 pts.) of the grade is based on a short report

### SHORT REPORT

This is not meant to be a formal paper, but rather a written "record" of your presentation. It should include:

- 1 or 2 paragraphs detailing how you put the presentation together (how you researched your topic, narrowed it down, etc.; who was responsible for which parts of the presentation; any difficulties you may have run into, etc.—basically, what was your process?)
- A thorough outline of the presentation

- A Resources or Works Cited page
- Copies of overheads, handouts, etc. (the Appendix)

#### GRADING OF REPORT

- Graded on thoroughness, appearance, and style. It should: have a title page listing all group members; have numbered pages; be in a standard format (e.g., APA style, Chicago Manual, etc.); be free of spelling and grammatical errors, visible corrections, etc. (in other words, a “clean” copy); be stapled or bound in some way

In the presentation, please cover the following: Major components of the religion (i.e., history, structure, beliefs, and practices). Include anything you find especially sociologically interesting, such as the role of women, views on inequality or how best to relate to others, etc. This part of your presentation should take up no more than half your time (i.e., 15 minutes, max). The rest of the presentation should relate the religion to the 4 main theories we discussed: Structural Functionalism, Conflict, Symbolic Interaction, and Narrative. If it would help you to move through the basic tenets of the religion quickly, please provide an outline/handout for the class. Please note that you will lose points for your presentation if you spend too much time on details of the religion itself; we want you to focus on the broad sociological aspects, not minute details.

#### IV. FIELD TRIP/OBSERVATIONS/JOURNALING

We have 3 field trips assigned for this class during class time. You will need to write a 1-2 page paper on your experience at each trip.

What you should include in your paper:

- Expectations – was it what you expected? Explain.
- What did you learn about the religion?
- Apply Sociology to your observation
- Freely discuss how you felt about the experience

In addition to the above you will need to watch or attend a Flatirons Church sermon or a New Life Church sermon and write a 1-2 page paper answering the same questions.

<http://www.newlifechurch.org/>

<https://www.youtube.com/results?q=flatirons+church+sermon>

Also, before each trip you are to read about each place we will attend (go to their websites and read about each religion). Do the same for the sermons you watch. This assignment is worth 100 points (25 points for each paper). In order to get full points you will need to answer my questions and give me sources/websites, etc... on what you read before each field trip and sermon.



ALL four papers are due Sunday November 14, by midnight. You can certainly turn them in earlier (I would recommend). You will drop them in the dropbox by midnight on 11/14 in D2L.

Enjoy!

### **Sociology of Religion Calendar**

Weekend 2 – November 14

We will meet from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm at Colorado Muslim Society on Friday, November 14, 2071 S Parker road Denver, CO 80231

Please dress appropriately!!! No jeans, no skin, no cleavage, and ladies you will need a scarf to cover your head/face area. I have several I will bring for us.

Weekend 3 - November 21

We will meet Friday, October 25, at 6:45 pm at Denver at Temple Sinai 3509 S Glencoe Street, Denver, CO 80237 – please dress appropriate

- Nice casual will work

November 22

We will meet Saturday, October 26 at 10:30 Scientology of Denver 2340 Blake St Denver, CO 80205

Please do not hesitate to ask me and ask me questions if you need to.

