Course Syllabus

Course Information

SOC 4388 Religions in Global Societies

Section 001

Spring 2015

Professor Contact Information

Bobby C. Alexander, Ph.D.

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PLEASE use regular UTD e-mail instead of eLearning to reach me. Thank you.

Office: GR 2.532
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:30-3:15 p.m., and by appointment if these times do not fit your schedule

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

None

Course Description

This course examines how religions in global societies, where cultural and institutional pluralism are prominent, reflect and help shape globalization processes related to the economy, government, communication, and other areas.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

The course objective is to gain a sociological understanding of how adherents of world religions in global societies interact with processes of globalization related to the economy (transnational migration, settlement, labor, and consumption encouraged by networks of religious organizations), politics (both democratization and political/armed conflict), and other areas, such as communication (through technology, including the Internet and transportation, shared across global religious communities) and social and cultural change (demographic, cultural, and religious pluralism).

Required Textbooks and Other Readings

Course readings include God Needs No Passport: Immigrants and the Changing American Religious Landscape, by Peggy Levitt (New Press, 2007), which is available at the UTD Bookstore and Off Campus Books, and other readings placed on Electronic Reserve in the UTD
Assignments and Academic Calendar

- Exams. Students will write two 4-to-5-page take-home exams, one a Mid-Term Exam and the other a Final Exam. The first exam will cover the first half of the course and the second the second half. Both exams will be short answer and essay. Exam questions will be handed out one week before the exams are due.

- Written Reports. Students also will write two 2-2½-page reports on a single topic related to religions in global societies incorporating a review of scholarly literature on the topic. Students will submit a proposed topic to the Instructor for approval.

- Class Exercises. Students will participate in Class Exercises, which will be written and turned in for a grade. Students must be present to receive credit for Class Exercises, with the exception of students who absence is excused. See policy on excused absences below.

- Class Presentations. Students will make two brief Class Presentations based on their Written Reports.

The Instructor will provide and go over all instructions. All instructions will be posted on eLearning.

January 12

Orientation to the Course

January 14

Globalization Defined


Class Exercise #1

January 19: No Class: University Holiday: Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

January 21

Globalization Defined continued

Class Exercise #2

January 26

Globalization Defined continued


Proposed Topic for Written Reports due January 26th

January 28

Globalization Defined continued


Class Exercise #3

February 2 and 4

Considering Religions in Global Societies


Class Exercise #4

February 9 and 11

Religions, Globalization, and Politics


Class Exercise #5

First Written Report due February 11th

February 16 and 18

Religions, Globalization, and Politics

**Class Exercise #6**
February 23 and 25


**Mid-Term Exam handed out February 23rd**
March 2 and 4

**Class Presentations**

**Mid-Term Exam due March 2nd**
March 9 and 11

**Class Presentations**

**March 16 and 18: No Class: Spring Break**
March 23 and 25

**Immigrant Religions in Global Societies**

**Read:** Levitt, Prologue and
Chapter 1 “Redefining the Boundaries of Belonging” from *God Needs No Passport: Immigrants and the Changing Religious Landscape*

**Class Exercise #7**
March 30 and April 1

**Immigrant Religions in Global Societies continued**

**Read:** Levitt, Chapter 2 “Transnational Ties” and
Chapter 3 “Between the Nation, the World, and God” from *God Needs No Passport: Immigrants and the Changing Religious Landscape*

**April 6 and 8**

**Immigrant Religions in Global Societies continued**

**Read:** Levitt, Chapter 4 “Values and Practices: ‘You Do Your Best and You Leave the Rest’” and Chapter 5 “A New Religious Architecture” from *God Needs No Passport: Immigrants and the Changing Religious Landscape*
Class Exercise #8

Second Written Report due April 8th

April 13 and 15

Immigrant Religions in Global Societies continued

Read: Levitt, Chapter 6: “Getting to the Other Side of the Rainbow with Faith as the Car” and Conclusion: “Tolerance in the Face of Terrorism” from God Needs No Passport: Immigrants and the Changing Religious Landscape

Class Exercise #9

April 20 and 22

Class Presentations

April 27 and 29

Class Presentations

Class Exercise #10

Final Exam handed out April 29th

May 6

Final Exam due

Note: Students will turn in their exams in the Instructor’s office (GR 2.532) at 1:00 p.m. during the scheduled final exam period.

Grading Policy

The percentage distribution for each of the graded assignments and attendance (total equals 100%) for the course grade follows.

40%: the two Exams combined
20%: the two Written Reports combined
15%: Class Exercises combined
15%: Two Class Presentations combined
10%: Attendance

The grading scale follows.

A+ = 97-100
A   = 94-96
A-  = 90-93
B+  = 87-89
B  = 84-86
B- = 80-83
C+  = 77-79
C    = 74-76
C-   = 70-73
D+  = 67-69
D    = 64-66
D-   = 60-63
F    = 59 and below

Course and Instructor Policies

Attendance is required. Students automatically will be excused from two classes; no documentation is required if students miss only two classes. Students who miss more than two classes will be excused if they have a legitimate reason (for example, being out sick) and provide documentation.

The intent of this policy is to help students perform well on assignments by keeping up with lectures and discussion.

Students must submit hard copies of all assignments on the due dates. Electronic submissions will not be accepted, unless the student has a legitimate reason for being absent from class to turn in assignments. Late papers will not be accepted without the prior approval of the instructor, with the exception of emergencies. This requirement is intended to help students turn in their work on time and to promote fairness among students who submit their work on time.

University Policies

To view university policies on Student Conduct, Grade Appeals, Disability Services, Religious Holy Days, and others, please go to the link that follows.

http://coursebook.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies