

**SOCI 3334/W01**  
**RELIGION AND SOCIETY**  
**Fall 2012**

(subject to change)

**This is an online class but students are required to conduct field trips\* to various religious services around the Atlanta area. Please do not take this class if you do not have access to the Internet, if you do not have your own transportation, or if you are unable to attend religious/spiritual services of religions different than your own.**

**Your first mandatory field trip will be to meet with me on a field event in September. Please see schedule of field events for times and dates. This list will be posted by first day of class and is subject to change so check it frequently.**

Miriam W. Boeri, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Sociology  
Office Hours: Online Wednesday and Friday morning  
Please use WebCT VISTA email for all class communication  
I read and respond to email on Wed and Friday  
Email [mboeri@kennesaw.edu](mailto:mboeri@kennesaw.edu) for emergencies

**Catalogue Description:** Examination of religion as a social institution in historical, comparative, and contemporary terms. World religions and new religious movements are studied as sociocultural processes involving the need to know, to deal with problems and to adapt to change.

**Overview:**

This course provides students with a sociological understanding of religion. We will be looking at the diversity of religious groups, but the truth or falsity of given religions will not be discussed. Being a believer or unbeliever is irrelevant to this sociological study of religion. The sociological view requires objectivity on the part of the observer, and while the insider's view must be respected and considered, our focus is sociological and not doctrinal. The interaction between society and religion is central in our exploration of religion as a cultural phenomenon.

The major part of this course is online at a time that is convenient for you. Course requirements include weekly online discussions, tests, a research paper, fieldtrips and field notes. Weekly discussions and field assignments should take approximately 2-3 hours a week, not including reading, writing and studying time.

This course requires individual fieldwork\*, which includes visiting religious and spiritual services that are new to you. For example, if you refuse to visit a gay or lesbian service, a Muslim service, or a Wiccan event, you do not want to take this class. You must visit at least four services or events from a list I provide. Please check the VISTA event weekly (on Friday) to verify that the service has not been changed. Sometimes the services or events change due to circumstances beyond my control, and I post this information on Friday. Fieldwork will be conducted individually or in groups, but not as a class. This means you will go to the services you choose to attend on your own or form your own carpool. Carpools are organized by students online. I will post protocol for you to follow in all your trips and waiver forms you must sign

and turn in at the first mandatory meeting. You will not get a grade for field notes if I do not have a signed waiver from you.

\* If you are unable to attend a field trip you should email me immediately so we can discuss possible options.

All assignments are due on Thursday by 10 pm. Every Friday from 9-12 am, I will check VISTA for any assignments that are due, discussion board postings, new emails, and to answer your emailed questions. Every Wednesday I will check before 12 noon to update and read the discussion board. I will be on the board periodically during the week at other times to update the course material and check on the discussion boards but I only answer questions on Wednesday and Friday. It is your responsibility to check VISTA sometime during the week and specifically on Friday after 12 noon for all details and updates. Please see my standard process for late tests, field notes and papers below.

### **Course Objectives**

1. Describe how sociology contributes to a liberal arts understanding of social reality.
2. Describe and apply some basic theories or theoretical orientations in at least one area of social reality.
3. Write a research paper in an area of choice related to religion.
4. Define, give examples, and demonstrate the relevance of the following: culture, social change, socialization, stratification, social structure, institutions, and differentiation by race/ethnicity, gender, age, and class.
5. Identify underlying assumptions in particular theoretical orientations or arguments.

The course objectives are measured through the unit learning objectives using an iterative model. Learning objectives are learned in the first unit (module), reinforced and learned more in-depth in the next unit, and applied in the third unit. Week 1 is for introducing the course and Q&A.

### **Resources and Materials**

Textbook: Zuckerman, Phil. 2003. *Invitation to the Sociology of Religion*. New York: Routledge.

Textbook: Manning, Christel and Phil Zuckerman *Sex and Religion* Thomson Wadsworth: Belmont, CA.

Journal Articles (posted on VISTA)

Instructor Notes and Templates (posted on VISTA)

### **Course Technology**

Websites (linked on VISTA)

Instructional video clips (downloaded or linked on VISTA)

### **Learner Engagement**

You will engage to learn in this class in the following ways:

1. Reading the assigned books
2. Writing papers.
3. Conducting field trips

4. Writing field notes
5. Online activities

<b>Assessment and Measurement</b>	<b>Points</b>
Exams (2 open book exams at 25 pts each)	50
Field notes* (4 at 25 points each)	100
Discussions (average or above average rates for posting and reading)	50
Research Paper	100
Total Points	300

**Grading System: A=270-300; B=240-269; C=210-239; D=180-209 F=below 180**

**Expectations for each assessment/assignment are below. More detailed instructions and grading rubrics will be posted on VISTA when assignments are to be completed.**

**Exams** will be open-book and submitted in multiple choice and essay format. Please submit everything online through VISTA link for exams (assessments) and upload in Word (.doc). **All papers must be in Word (not wdp or any other format).** If you are unable to attach a Word document, copy and paste your document in the comment/message box. It is your responsibility to make sure your paper upload it properly. Check you email on VISTA on Friday morning. I will send you a message of I cannot open your paper and read it, and you are responsible to re-send the field notes in a format I can read within 24 hours.

Please use 12-pont font and double space. Be sure your name is on the paper in the upper left-hand corner. (Points will be deducted if you name is not on the paper) You will be given a choice of questions to answer. The questions may come from text book material, journal articles or assigned films. Exam papers will be graded for content, clarity, grammar and evidence of your understanding of the issues.

### **Discussion Board Postings**

There are three boards; only the student discussion board has requirements for your grade.

**Student Discussion Board:** I will post ten discussion questions throughout the semester relating to our readings and/or field trips. You are required to post a substantial answer to each question that reflects your reading and understanding of the text. You may post questions and/or responses and comments to other student postings. You get between 30-40 points if your have an average rate and 41-50 for above average.

**“Ask the Professor” Board:** If you have any questions regarding the class, the assignments or other class-related questions, please post them here. If you email me a question that I think all the class needs to know the answer, I will copy it and post it on this board.

**Carpooling Board:** Students may form teams or carpools on this board. Carpools and teams are NOT required. This board is for your convenience.

### **Participant Observation Fieldwork and Field notes**

You are required to attend four religious services or events chosen from of services/events that I provide. Please choose these events early so you have time to complete your four mandatory religious fieldwork and field notes. The first event should be one of the events in September that I attend. Please bring me your signed waivers for all events at this time.

I provide a tentative schedule, so you can plan ahead. Sometimes events change that are beyond my control. Each Friday, I will post any changes or additions to the service/events and any updates for the following week.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY REGARDING FIELD OBSERVATIONS

It is your responsibility to:

- check for changes BEFORE you go on the trip
- turn in your waiver before going on field trip
- be sure you know the directions (do not be late because you got lost)
- be sure you know the time of the event/service and can stay until it is over
- call first to confirm if my instructions say to
- park in a place where you are allowed to park
- dress appropriately
- submit your paper on time in VISTA using the assignment tool
- check to see I received it the next day

You will take notes according to guidelines I will provide. It is preferable to take your notes immediately after you leave the service (not during the service), but notes should be written as soon as possible. Be ready to answer the questions I ask about your observation your field notes.

Field notes are uploaded on the assignment link through VISTA. I will upload your paper with my feedback and comments within a week for all papers submitted on time (not counting breaks). You can use this to help you write field notes for your graded notes in the future. Please read all my edits and comments and follow this advice for the remaining field notes.

You may conduct the field trip alone or in a car pool group organized by you on VISTA. Field notes are due on schedule due date (always a Thursday) BY 10 PM. You may submit only one field notes each time they are due (see schedule). After I have graded four field notes for you, I will grade no more field notes (i.e. you cannot continue to send more field notes to increase or replace your grade).

Check you email on VISTA on Friday morning. I will send you a message of I cannot open your paper and read it, and you are responsible to re-send the field notes in a format I can read within 24 hours.

If you do not live in the Atlanta GA area and need to visit other field sites, please contact me early so I can arrange for other sites in your area. Documentation is needed.

Signed WAIVERS are required. If I do not send a waiver before you attend the event, you will NOT receive a grade for your field notes.

### **Research Paper**

You will conduct research on a particular aspect (topic) of social life and compare two religions (or religious groups) on this topic. Follow the format in the Manning and Zuckerman book on “sex and religion” using at least two different religions to compare on a topic of your choice. For

example, if you want to study “alcohol use and religion,” you will research at least two religions and explain their views on alcohol.

**You must use the guidelines I post. There are three parts of the paper: (1) research on the two religions (2) research on how the religions view the topic (3) a sociological perspective on why or how these views were affected by society and how these views affect social life for the members of the religion.** You need to include a minimum of five references (at least three should be academic journal articles). I will provide further guidelines for the paper and references. Papers will be a minimum of five pages double spaced.

I suggest you choose your topic very early in the semester. I will provide a list of topics that were well-done in the past in this course. Look up your topic and various religions on Galileo and Library resources to see if there is much written about this topic. If you cannot find at least three good journal articles on this topic and different religions, then choose another topic. It is your responsibility to choose a topic that allows you to find research papers. I need to approve of your topic (see schedule for approval below). You have plenty of time to do this if you start early. You might also need to read some books, so give yourself some time for research work. Please email me privately to discuss your topic if you are having difficulty. I will probably suggest you change the topic.

Final research reports are uploaded on the assignment link through VISTA. It is your responsibility to make sure your paper arrives on time. I will send you a message via the assignment link on VISTA when I receive your paper and can open it and read it. If you do not get this message, you are responsible to let me know on time. When you get the message, you have an allotted amount of time to re-send the paper in a format I can read. Please use 12-pont font and double space. Be sure your name is on the first page.

The Reading Schedule posted on the course content page will be followed for reading assignments, test dates, field assignments and research paper due dates. These are also on your calendar.

**Late Papers:** I will not accept late papers without official documentation of illness or other emergency. Approved excuse will have no points deducted; unexcused late papers will have 10% deducted for each day late, including weekend days..

**A note on writing:**

Your grade depends on how well you provide what is instructed for the assignments and paper. Some writing in this class is low-stakes writing (discussion board and field notes). This means that I am focusing on one or two areas and the writing is a method to reinforce your learning in this area. Others are high-stakes writing (research paper), which implies a well-written paper. Grammar, spelling, organization, and structure, as well as content are graded. Please refer to The Writing Center if you need help with writing.

**The Writing Center**  
Room 242 Humanities  
(770) 423-6380

<http://www.kennesaw.edu/english/WritingCenter/index.shtml>

**Netiquette Rules:**

- Avoid writing messages in all capital letters. THIS IS GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD AS SHOUTING.
- Be careful what you put in writing. Even if you are writing an e-mail message to one person, assume that anyone could read it. Though you may send an e-mail to a single person, it is very easy to forward your message to hundreds or thousands of people.
- Grammar and spelling matter. Online courses demand the same standard of academic communication and use of grammar as face-to-face courses.
- Never use profanity in any area of an online course. The transcripts of online course bulletin boards, e-mail, and chat sessions are savable.
- When responding to messages, only use "Reply to All" when you really intend to reply to all.
- Avoid unkindly public criticism of others. Publicly criticizing others in an inappropriate way is known as "flaming."
- Use sarcasm cautiously. In the absence of nonverbal cues such as facial expressions and voice inflections, the context for your sarcasm may be lost, and your message may thus be misinterpreted.
- Please become familiar with all instructional material regarding online learning at: <http://www.distancelearning.org/howtosucceed.html>

**Academic Integrity Statement:** Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University's policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an "informal" resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct's minimum one semester suspension requirement.

**Disability Clause:** Kennesaw State University provides support for students with disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to identify himself/herself as an individual with a disability. A qualified individual in the area of the identified disability must provide the documentation of the disability. This documentation must show how the disability creates a significant impact on the individual's academic performance; it should include suggested accommodations that are reasonable to provide in an academic setting.

For more information on KSU's institutional policies for disability services visit:

[http://www.kennesaw.edu/stu\\_dev/dsss/policies.html](http://www.kennesaw.edu/stu_dev/dsss/policies.html)

**Please email professor privately for all personal hardships.**

Week/Due Dates	Reading, Assignments, Due Dates
<b>WEEK 1</b>	<b>Best Book on Deviance</b>
<b>8/18-8/24</b>	Read First Power Point (PPT)
	Read syllabus: Q&A posting
	Introduce yourself; sign and upload "I Agree and Understand" statement
	Read Zuckerman Ch 1
<b>WEEK 2</b>	
<b>8/25-8/31</b>	Read Zuckerman Ch 2&3; Participate in discussion online
<b>WEEK 3</b>	
<b>9/1-9/7</b>	Read Zuckerman 4; Participate in discussion online
	Watch field trip video and look over list of field trips
	Choose a September field trip to attend to meet professor;
	Bring completed waiver to professor on first field trip
<b>WEEK 4</b>	
<b>9/8-9/14</b>	Read Zuckerman 5; Participate in discussion online
<b>WEEK 5</b>	
<b>9/15-9/21</b>	Read Zuckerman 6; Participate in discussion online
<b>Module 6</b>	
<b>9/22-9/28</b>	You should have gone on at least one field trip to meet professor by end of September
<b>9/28</b>	<a href="#">Take Online test on Zuckerman book</a>
	Email or fax waivers for all field trips for semester to professor if you did not yet
<b>WEEK 7</b>	
<b>9/29-10/5</b>	Read Manning & Zuckerman Ch 1&2; Participate in discussion online
<b>10/5</b>	<a href="#">Field Notes 1 due</a>
<b>WEEK 8</b>	
<b>10/6-10/12</b>	Read Manning & Zuckerman Ch 3&4; Participate in discussion online
<b>WEEK 9</b>	
<b>10/13-10/19</b>	Read Manning & Zuckerman Ch 5&6; Participate in discussion online
<b>WEEK 10</b>	
<b>10/20-10/26</b>	Read Manning & Zuckerman Ch 7-9 Participate in discussion online
<b>11/26</b>	<a href="#">Field Notes 2 due</a>
<b>WEEK 11</b>	
<b>10/27-11/2</b>	Read all Research paper material
<b>11/2</b>	<a href="#">Take Online test on Manning &amp; Zuckerman book</a>
<b>WEEK 12</b>	
<b>11/3-11/9</b>	Q&A on Field notes and research papers
<b>11/9</b>	<a href="#">Field Notes 3 due</a>
<b>WEEK 13</b>	
<b>11/10-11/16</b>	Q&A on Field notes and research papers
<b>11/16</b>	<a href="#">Field Notes 4 due</a>
<b>WEEK 14</b>	
<b>11/17-11/20</b>	Q&A on research papers
<b>11/21-11/25</b>	FALL BREAK
<b>WEEK 15</b>	
<b>11/24-11/30</b>	Q&A on research papers
<b>11/30</b>	<a href="#">Research Papers Due</a>
<b>12/1-12/5</b>	late papers due by 12/5 online

