

## Department of Sociology

SOCI 3700: Sociology of Religion

Monday/Wednesday 2:00-3:20 pm

Wooten Hall 116

Instructor: Kevin McCaffree, PhD

**Office**: 288b Sycamore Hall

**Office Hours**: Monday 4-6

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## Course Description

This course will describe and discuss the current issues, empirical findings, and theoretical controversies in the sociology of religion. Among other things, this course will focus on religious *belief* (e.g., in God), *behavior* (e.g., prayer) and *belonging* (e.g., affiliation with a church) as well as the supposed, widespread, modern decline of religiosity.

**Books**

We will be using two texts for this course:

1. Johnstone, R. (2015). *Religion in society: A sociology of religion*. Routledge. (8th edition).
2. Kasselstrand, I., Zuckerman, P., & Cragun, R. T. (2023). *Beyond doubt: The secularization of society*. NYU Press.

Assignments and Grading:

Your grade in this course will be determined by four multiple choice/short answer exams. All testing will be done (and all grades will be posted) on the CANVAS site for this course: <https://unt.instructure.com>

Attendance:

Class attendance is not mandatory. However, a significant portion of exam questions will be drawn from lecture material. It is therefore in your interest to attend class regularly.

Participation in class (e.g., asking questions, sharing observations or experiences) is a valued component of this course. Frequent participation will make a student eligible for end-of-semester grade increases as determined by the instructor.

Exams:

There are four multiple-choice exams for this course that cover material from class lecture and assigned readings.

Exams will be administered online, via the CANVAS course site (visit [https://unt.instructure.com](https://unt.instructure.com/)), during the date and time we would normally meet for class (see course calendar below).

Each exam is worth 100 points for a total of 400 points possible.

No makeup exams will be administered without evidence of a documented—and verifiable—medical emergency.

Grading Scale:

A = 90 to 100% of 400 possible points

B = 80 to 89%

C = 70 to 79%

D = 60 to 69%

F = Below 60%

**Academic Integrity:**

It is the responsibility of each student to be familiar with UNT’s Policy on Academic Integrity. Plagiarism, copying, cheating, or giving assistance to other students during examinations is a violation of academic integrity. Cases of suspected cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students office. Note that any and all work submitted in order to meet the requirements of this course must be originally created for this course. In other words, you may not turn in anything submitted for another course and/or section of this course you have previously taken.

University Policy 06.003 states, “UNT promotes the integrity of learning processed and embraces the core values of trust and honesty. Academic integrity is based on educational principles and procedures that protect the rights of all participants in the educational process and validate the legitimacy of degrees awarded by the university. In the investigation and resolution of allegations of student academic dishonesty, the university’s actions are intended to be corrective, educationally sound, fundamentally fair, and based on reliable evidence.”

For more information on what constitutes plagiarism, as well as tips on citing your resources, visit [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org/). If you require clarification on what counts as academic dishonesty, it is your responsibility to ask the instructor of the course.

**Academic Accommodations:**

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at [http://disability.unt.edu](http://disability.unt.edu/). You may also contact them by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Course Schedule\*:

**Week 1:** 1/13, 1/15 **Topic:** Introduction and Overview

* Introductions
* Syllabus and Course Structure

**Week 2:** 1/20, 1/22 **Topic:** Religion in America Today

* Class Monday Canceled (MLK Jr. Day)
* Johnstone, chp. 1
* The State of (Traditional) Religion in America

**Week 3:** 1/27, 1/29 **Topic:** Religion as a Group Phenomenon

* Johnstone, chps. 3-4

**Week 4:** 2/3, 2/5 **Topic:** Development of a Religious Identity

* Johnstone, chps. 5-6

**Week 5:** 2/10, 2/12 **Topic:** Review + Exam One

* Exam One on 2/12 during class

**Week 6:** 2/17, 2/19 **Topic:** Religion and Politics

* Johnstone, chps. 7-8

**Week 7:** 2/24, 2/26 **Topic:** Religion and Social Class

* Johnstone, chps. 9-10

**Week 8:** 3/3, 3/5 **Topic:** Review + Exam Two

* Exam Two on 3/5 during class

**Week 9:** 3/10, 3/12 **Topic:** SPRING BREAK

**Week 10:** 3/17, 3/19 **Topic:** Contemporary Trends

* Johnstone, chps. 14-15

**Week 11:** 3/24, 3/26 **Topic:** Secularization Theory

* Kasselstrand et al., chp 1

**Week 12:** 3/31, 4/2 **Topic:** Review + Exam Three

* Exam Three on 4/2 in class

**Week 13:** 4/7, 4/9 **Topic:** Evidence for Secularization

* Kasselstrand et al., chp 2,3

**Week 14:** 4/14, 4/16 **Topic:** Is Secularization Possible?

* Kasselstrand et al., chp. 4

**Week 15:** 4/21, 4/23 **Topic:** The Future of Religion

* Kasselstrand et al., chp. 5-6

**Week 16:** 4/28, 4/30 **Topic:** Review + Exam Four

* Exam Four on 4/30 in class

**Week 17:** **FINALS Week**

* No exam during Finals

\*This syllabus, with its course schedule, is based on the most recent information about the course content and schedule planned for this course. Its content is subject to revision as needed to adapt to new knowledge or unanticipated events. Updates will remain focused on achieving the course objectives and students will receive notification of such changes. Students are responsible for attending to such changes or modifications posted on the CANVAS site ([https://unt.instructure.com](https://unt.instructure.com/)) for this course.