

## **RELIGION AND SOCIETY (REL 3140; ANT 3930)**

**M W F 10:40 – 11:30 MAT 105**

**Dr. Robin M. Wright & T.A. Jeyoul Choul**

**Office hours: Dr. Wright, MWF 1 – 4 pm**

**Office Locations: Dr. Wright, Anderson 107; TA, Anderson Hall**

**Readings:** copies or reprints of all articles have been uploaded to the Canvas website. The hard copies of the course books are on reserve at Smathers library.

Required books are:

- *Eight Theories of Religion*, second ed., by Daniel Pals (Oxford, 2006); (pdf on website)
- *Global Rebellion. Religious Challenges to the Secular State*, by Mark Juergensmeyer (UC Press, 2008);
- *Habits of the Heart. Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, by Robert Bellah et al. (UC Press, 1996)

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

This course brings together theory of religion, history, sociology, and anthropology to understand how religious processes have contributed to the formation, change, and re-creation of society. The course is organized in three main Parts, corresponding to the Readings in the 3 principal books.

In Part I, we will be studying and discussing readings from major theorists and their ideas. Each theory of religion illustrates a fundamental aspect of the relations between religion and society:

1. French sociologist Emile Durkheim, his theory of social categories and sentiments generated by ceremonial and ritual forms; 2. historian and philosopher Karl Marx' theories of socio-economic change and religion; 3. psychologist's Sigmund Freud's theories of religion and the personality; 4. sociologist Max Weber's theory of the relations of religion and social action; 5. anthropologist Clifford Geertz' cultural analysis; 6. Victor Turner's notions of liminality and communitas as essential to the regeneration of social structure and process;

In Part II, we will be looking closely at the global rise of religious rebellions, politics, violence, and activism, in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century due to the demise of secular national identities and the continued rise of globalization. Part III then focuses on an interpretation of North American society and religion through the lens of the classic *Habits of the Heart* by Robert Bellah. In that work, the authors probe national identity through the dialectic of American individualism and commitment to public life. In both Part II and III, we will be attentive to the usefulness, in part or entirely, of the theories discussed in Part I

### **CALENDAR OF READINGS AND CLASSES:**

01/06: Course Presentation and Introduction to the Readings;

01/08: Overview of course themes

01/11: Emil Durkheim

Pals, pp. 85-117

01/13: “ “

01/15: Discussion of Durkheim

01/18: **NO CLASS – Martin Luther King Day;**

01/20: Karl Marx

Pals, pp. 118-48

01/22: Discussion of Marx

01/25: Max Weber

Pals, pp. 149-42

01/27: “ “

01/29: Discussion of Weber

02/01: Clifford Geertz

Pals, pp. 260-291

02/03: “ “

02/05: Discussion of Geertz

02/08: Victor Turner

“Liminality and Communitas”, pdf on course website

02/10: “ “

02/12: Discussion of Turner

02/15: Concluding Review of All Theorists

02/17: Film:

02/19: TBD

02/22: Juergensmayer, *Global Rebellion*

Introduction, pp. 1-9; Ch. 1 “The Religious challenge to the Secular State”, pp. 9-38;

02/24: “ “

02/26: Discussion Groups

**02/27 – 03/05: SPRING BREAK, NO CLASSES.**

03.07: Juergensmayer, *Global Rebellion*

Ch. 2 “The Front Line of Religious Rebellion”, pp. 39-83;

03/09: “ “

03/11: Discussion Groups

03/14: Juergensmayer, *Global Rebellion*

Ch. 5 “Transnational Networks”, pp. 193-211; Ch. 6 “The Enduring Problems of Violence...”, pp. 212-243

03/16: “ “

03/18: Discussion Groups

03/21: Juergensmayer, *Global Rebellion*

Conclusion, pp. 244-263;

03/23: “ “

03/25: Discussion Groups

03/28: Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart*

“The House Divided” (Introduction to the second edition), pp. vii-xxxv; Ch. 7, “Getting Involved”, pp. 167-195;

03/30: “ “

04/01: Discussion Groups

04/04: Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart*

Ch. 8, "Citizenship", pp. 196-218; Ch. 9, "Religion"

04/06: " "

04/08: Discussion Groups

04/11: Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart*

Ch. 10, "The National Society", pp. 250-74; Ch. 11, "Transforming American Culture", 275-96.

04/13: " "

04/15: Discussion Groups

04/18: Final Wrap-up

04/20: Final Wrap-up

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Students are expected to attend all classes and complete assigned readings prior to each class meeting. Class participation does count in final grade evaluation. Discussion sections will be established after the first class. Continued absence will not be tolerated; **following the third unexcused absence, 3 grade points will be taken off the final grade for each day of absence. More than 6 absences will lead to administrative withdrawal from the course;**

2) Three written papers, one on each of the three main Parts of the course, on topics that emerge from the readings, each 3-5 pages in length, to be handed in shortly after the conclusion of each Part. A list of possible paper topics will be distributed well in advance;

3) Reaction papers to two films, each 500 words in length. Papers should seek to establish links to the readings and answer specific questions. Papers are due no more than two class-days following the showing of the film. Papers should be typed in format Times New Roman 12. Feedback will be provided on all written assignments.

4) Pop-quizzes will be administered whenever the Professor and T.A. consider them necessary.

### **GRADE DISTRIBUTION:**

20% for the first paper; 20% for the second paper; 20% for the third paper; 25% for the 2 reaction papers; and 15% for class participation, discussion, and pop-quizzes.

## RULES

1. **Plagiarism or cheating:** Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Students caught plagiarizing or cheating will automatically receive a grade of zero on the assignment in question and will fail the course. In addition, they will be reported to the appropriate university authorities. Please keep in mind that plagiarism does not consist only in copying verbatim someone else's material and presenting it as if it were yours. It also includes taking ideas (even paraphrased!) from an author without according him/her proper recognition (through a footnote, for instance). Other forms of cheating (particularly downloading material from the Internet and presenting as if it were yours) will also be subject to the same action. See <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honestybrochure.htm><http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.htm> for more information on UF policies.
2. **Incompletes are strongly discouraged** and will be given only when students who have finished most of the assignments satisfactorily cannot complete the final requirements due to unforeseen events. If this is the case, students must arrange for the incomplete **before** the end of the semester.
3. **Make-up exams and quizzes** will be given only under very special circumstances, such as a medical emergency. In that case, students must bring a doctor's note.
4. Students engaging in disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the classroom. **Please turn phones and pagers off during class. In-class use of the Internet for reasons that have nothing to do with the course is not allowed and will be penalized appropriately in the Participation grade.**
5. **Students with Disabilities.** Students requesting classroom accommodation or special consideration must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation or special consideration.