

Course Syllabus

Course Information

SOC 3333, Section 001: Religion and Society

(The Newest Immigrants and Their Religions in U.S. Society)

Fall 2008

Professor Contact Information

Bobby C. Alexander, Ph.D. 972-883-6898 bcalex@utdallas.edu [Please use Pipeline instead of WebCT to e-mail me.](#) GR 2.124

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:45-2:30 p.m. and by appointment

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

No pre-requisites or co-requisites.

Course Description

This course examines the “newest” immigrants – those arriving after 1965 – and their religions in U.S. society. Course themes include: religious congregations as important social institutions within U.S. society; their role as providers of social services to members of congregations; their role in assimilating members to basic U.S. social institutions and the dominant culture; their role in change in gender roles for women; reproducing ethnic identity as resistance to assimilation; immigrant religion and transnational migration; the second generation; and the future of immigrant religion. The course considers Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and other religions found among new immigrants coming to the U.S. from Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, the Middle East, and other parts of the world.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

The course objective is to understand the social and sociological applications of religions among the newest immigrants in the U.S., including their role as social institutions within the wider society, as providers of social services to members of congregations, as agents of adaptation and assimilation to U.S. society, as sources of the construction of social identity – particularly gender identity, as means of reproducing ethnic identity and resisting assimilation, and as conduits of transnational migration.

The course objective will be accomplished by students’ writing two essay exams on the course reading assignments as well as three short literature reviews of peer-reviewed journal articles on a sociological topic related to the newest immigrants and their religions in U.S. society.

Required Textbooks and Materials

Two texts are required: 1) Religion and Immigration: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Experiences in the United States, edited by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, Jane I. Smith, and John L. Esposito (AltaMira Press, 2003), and 2) Religion and the New Immigrants: Continuities and Adaptations in Immigrant Congregations, edited by Helen Rose Ebaugh and Janet Saltzman Chafetz (AltaMira Press, 2000). Both are available at the UTD Bookstore and Off Campus Books. The reading assignments are printed in the course calendar below. Students are required to read the assigned materials before class in order to contribute to class discussion. Students will supplement the required course reading materials with peer-reviewed journal articles on a topic related to the new immigrants and their religion that students will choose and is approved by the instructor. These will be the basis of short reviews of the published literature students will write. (See writing assignment below).

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Students will write two take-home exams. Both will be in essay format. Exam questions will be handed out in class one week before the exams are due. Each exam will cover material assigned after the preceding exam. Exam due dates are printed in the course calendar below. Students must submit hard copies of the exams in class; e-mailed electronic files of the exams are not accepted, with the exception of emergencies.

Students will write three two-page literature reviews on a single topic related to religion and the newest immigrants in U.S. society that interests them, and ideally one that is significant to U.S. society and/or of sociological importance. Topics must be approved by the instructor. Students will read and review three recent peer-reviewed journal articles on a single topic. At least one must come from a sociology journal or a journal in a related field. The instructor will provide detailed instructions on how to review the literature. Due dates for the literature reviews are found in the course calendar. Students must submit hard copies of the literature reviews; e-mailed electronic files are not accepted, with the exception of emergencies.

Students will make informal, in-class presentations on their chosen topics based on the literature reviews. The instructor will provide instructions and will schedule the presentations for the second half of the course.

Guidelines for all course assignments will be distributed in class. The guidelines also will be made available on WebCT.

August 21

Orientation to the Course

August 26 and 28

New Immigrants and the Changing U.S. Religious and Demographic Landscape

Read: Religion and Immigration:

Introduction: “Becoming American—Religion, Identity, and Institution Building in the American Mosaic,” and

Chapter 12: “Exploring the Religious Preferences of Recent Immigrants

to the United States: Evidence from the New Immigrant Survey Pilot,” pages 217-228 and 241-242 only

September 2

**New Immigrants and the Changing U.S. Religious and Demographic Landscape
continued**

Read: Religion and the New Immigrants:

Chapter 3: “Environmental Impacts: Opportunities and Constraints” (on majority and minority faiths and their impact on society)

September 4 and 9

**Immigrant Congregations as Social Institutions, Social Service Providers, and Agents of
Adaptation to U.S. Society**

Read: Religion and the New Immigrants:

Chapter 4: “Structural Adaptations to the Immigrant Context”

Chapter 5: “Providing for the Needy: Social Services and Immigrant Adaptation”

September 11

Immigrant Religion, Social Identity, Assimilation, and Reproducing Ethnicity

Read: Religion and the New Immigrants:

Chapter 6: “Reproducing Ethnicity”

Topic for literature reviews due September 11th

September 16 and 18

Immigrant Religion and Resistance to Assimilation

Read: Religion and Immigration:

Chapter 3: “Crossing the Borders: Evangelicalism and Migration”

Chapter 4: “Colonization versus Immigration in the Integration and Identification of Hispanics in the United States”

September 23

Immigrant Religion and Transnational Migration

Read: On Electronic Reserve: Chapter 2 in Religion Across Borders:
“The *Santa Cena* of the *Luz Del Mundo* Church: A Case of
Contemporary Transnationalism”

September 25 and 30

Jewish Immigrant Religion

Read: Religion and Immigration:

Chapter 6: “Immigration and Religion in America: the Experience of
Judaism”

October 2

Jewish Immigrant Religion continued

Read: Religion and Immigration:

Chapter 7: “American Jews in the New Millennium”

First Literature Review due October 2nd

First Exam questions handed out October 2nd

October 7 and 9

Muslim Immigrant Religion

Read: Religion and Immigration:

Chapter 10: “Constructing the American Muslim Community”
Handout on Middle Eastern Americans

First Exam due October 9th

October 14

Muslim Immigrant Religion continued

Read: Religion and Immigration:

Chapter 9: “Islam in America: The Mosaic”

October 16

The Baha’i

Guest Speaker: Ms. Minoo Nasser

October 21

Voluntary Field Trip to the Muslim Youth Center in Plano during class time

October 23

Other Patterns: Asian Immigrant Religion

Read: Religion and the New Immigrants:

Chapter 10: “Jyothi Hindu Temple: One Religion, Many Practices”

Second Literature Review due October 23rd

October 28 and 30

Other Patterns: Asian Immigrant Religion continued

Read: Religion and the New Immigrants:

Chapter 11: “Center for Vietnamese Buddhism: Recreating Home”

Chapter 12: “Chinese Gospel Church: The Sinicization of Christianity”

November 4 and 6

The Second Generation

Read: Religion and the New Immigrants:

Chapter 8: “Passing it On: The Second Generation”

November 11 and 13

The Future of Immigrant Religion

Read: Religion and the New Immigrants:

Chapter 9: “Is the Past Prologue to the Future?”

November 18 and 20

In-Class Presentations

Third Literature Review due November 20th

November 25 and December 2

In-Class Presentations

December 4

In-Class Presentations

Second Exam questions handed out in class December 4th

December 11

Second Exam due in the instructor's office (GR 2.124) during the scheduled final exam period (2:30 p.m.)

Grading Policy

The percentage distribution (total equals 100%) for the course grade follows.

65%: the two essay exams combined

20%: the three literature reviews combined

5%: in-class presentation

10%: attendance

Note: Students automatically will be excused from two classes. Students who miss more than two classes will be excused if they have legitimate reasons (for example, illness and death in the family) and provide proper documentation.

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 & Instructor Policies

Students must submit hard copies of all assignments in class on the due dates; late papers will not be accepted without a legitimate reason (for example, illness and death in the family). Students need to provide proper documentation for late work. This requirement is intended to help

students stay on track in submitting written work and to be fair to students who submit work on time.

Class attendance is required. The intent of this policy is to help students keep up with lectures and discussion and perform well on assignments.

Technical Support

If you experience any problems with your UTD account you may send an email to: assist@utdallas.edu or call the UTD Computer Helpdesk at 972-883-2911.

Field Trip Policies

Off-campus Instruction and Course Activities

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD printed publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Series 50000, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391) and online at <http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-HOPV.html>

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the

student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic Dishonesty, any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials, including music and software. Copying, displaying, reproducing, or distributing copyrighted works may infringe the copyright owner's rights and such infringement is subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as criminal penalties provided by federal law. Usage of such material is only appropriate when that usage constitutes "fair use" under the Copyright Act. As a UT Dallas student, you are required to follow the institution's copyright policy (Policy Memorandum 84-I.3-46). For more information about the fair use exemption, see <http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/copypol2.htm>

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain

primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22
PO Box 830688
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)
disabilityservice@utdallas.edu

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with the Coordinator of Disability Services. The Coordinator is available to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with Disability Services to notify them of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Disability Services can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of

the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.