

Sociology of Religion

Code: 101133
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2500262 Sociology	OB	3	1

The proposed teaching and assessment methodology that appear in the guide may be subject to changes as a result of the restrictions to face-to-face class attendance imposed by the health authorities.

Contact

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Use of Languages

Principal working language: spanish (spa)
Some groups entirely in English: Yes
Some groups entirely in Catalan: No
Some groups entirely in Spanish: Yes

Other comments on languages

It is possible to complete course assignments and exams in Spanish, Catalan, or English.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The aim of this course is to familiarize students with major sociological debates around religion and to provide them with a qualitative methodological foundation for studying religious phenomena empirically. The course surveys classical approaches to studying religion from a sociological perspective, critically examines theories of secularization, and explores a range of sub-topics currently of interest in the field, including religious diversity, religion and nationalism, globalization and religious fundamentalism, conversion, and new age spiritualities. It also includes seminars dedicated to ethnographic methods, and qualitative research more generally.

The course is divided into three main sections:

1. "SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON RELIGION: A CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION." This section introduces students to sociological approaches to studying religion and clarifies the differences between sociology and theology. The focus is primarily on the classics (e.g., Marx, Weber, and Durkheim), and the ongoing relevance of their ideas to contemporary dynamics surrounding religion.
2. "MODERNIZATION AND SECULARIZATION: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS." In this section, we examine theories of secularization, as well as various extensions and criticisms of such theories.
3. "GLOBALIZATION, PLURALISM, AND RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION." This section is structured around several current research topics in the sociology of religion related to globalization, pluralism, and religious transformation, including conversion, religious fundamentalism, the governance of religious diversity, 'lived religion', and new age spiritualities.

Competences

- Analysing the problems arising from the implementation of public policies and conflict situations by recognising the complexity of the social phenomena and political decisions affecting democracy, human rights, social justice and sustainable development.
- Applying the concepts and approaches of the sociological theory, specially the explanations of social inequalities between classes, between genders and between ethnic groups, to the implementation of public policies and to the resolution of conflict situations.
- Assessing the contributions of sociological approaches to the study of culture, education, interaction between society and environment, social policy, and work.
- Demonstrating a comprehension of the approaches of the sociological theory in its different aspects, interpretations and historical context.
- Describing social phenomena in a theoretically relevant way, bearing in mind the complexity of the involved factors, its causes and its effects.
- Developing self-learning strategies.
- Respecting the diversity and plurality of ideas, people and situations.
- Students must be capable of managing their own time, planning their own study, managing the relationship with their tutor or adviser, as well as setting and meeting deadlines for a work project.

Learning Outcomes

1. Comparing the different theoretical approaches about culture.
2. Comparing the reading of cultural phenomena from several ideologies of the social reality of Spain and Catalonia.
3. Defining the sociological concepts that interpret the cultural phenomena.
4. Defining the underlying social phenomena of cultural policies and conflicts.
5. Developing self-learning strategies.
6. Distinguishing the explanations of cultural inequalities between classes, between genders and between ethnic groups that these actors take for granted.
7. Distinguishing the sociological concepts about culture adopted by the actors involved in these policies and conflicts.
8. Distinguishing the sociological concepts, as well as the methods and techniques of social investigation commonly used to analyse culture.
9. Distinguishing the underlying cultural phenomena of specific policies or conflicts.
10. Explaining the social interpretations of culture according to these approaches.
11. Expressing the debates regarding these approaches, that refer to culture.
12. Relating the concepts, methods and techniques used to analyse culture with general theoretical and methodological debates.
13. Relating the debates regarding these approaches, that refer to culture, with the historical context in which they emerged.
14. Relating the explanations of cultural inequalities with general theoretical and methodological debates.
15. Relating the theoretical approaches with debates about social order and action.
16. Respecting the diversity and plurality of ideas, people and situations.
17. Students must be capable of managing their own time, planning their own study, managing the relationship with their tutor or adviser, as well as setting and meeting deadlines for a work project.

Content

PART A: SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON RELIGION: A CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

- A.1. Course introduction: How do sociologists think about religion?
- A.2. Studying religion ethnographically
- A.3. Classical views on religion: Marx

A.4. Classical views on religion: Weber

A.5. Classical views on religion: Durkheim

PART B: MODERNIZATION AND SECULARIZATION: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

B.1. Theories of secularization

B.2. Multiple secularities

B.3. Secularization in Spain and Catalonia

PART C: GLOBALIZATION, PLURALISM, AND RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION

C.1. Conversion

C.2. Globalization and religious fundamentalism

C.3. Religious pluralism

C.4. 'Lived religion'

C.5. New age spiritualities

Methodology

The subject is organized around three activities:

- a) Lectures that outline the main approach to the subject
- b) "Practical classes" where readings are discussed and / or joint work is carried out around specific issues
- c) The students carry out an ethnographic project that the teacher supervises during student meetings and during designated class times

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures	35	1.4	1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15
Type: Supervised			
Empirical project and essay on readings	10	0.4	1, 3, 11, 13
Type: Autonomous			
Assignments	55	2.2	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 12, 13, 15, 14

Assessment

The subject will be evaluated on the basis of the following:

- 1) Attendance and participation (10%): Class attendance is mandatory, and level of participation will be taken into consideration for purposes of evaluation.

2) Mid-term exam (30%): The exam will consist of several short essays on topics to be specified during the course. Students must demonstrate that they have correctly understood the main contents of the first half of the course, and that they are able to argue theoretical positions in a rigorous way.

3) Ethnographic project (25%): The project will involve studying a religious community ethnographically. It will be done in groups of 2-4 students and will include various assignments to be handed in over the duration of the course.

4) Final exam (35%): The exam will consist of several short essays on topics to be specified during the course. Students must demonstrate that they have correctly understood the main contents of the entire course, and that they can engage critically and creatively with lectures and assigned readings.

In addition, it is important to consider the following issues:

- Students who have not completed the course assignments will receive a grade of "Did Not Attend."
- If a student does not pass, there is the possibility of taking a 'recovery' exam. In accordance with Article 112 ter. of the UAB Academic Regulations, to participate in the recovery exam, students must have been previously assessed in a set of activities whose evaluation comprises a minimum of two thirds of the total grade of the course. Students must also have obtained a minimum grade of 3,5.
- In accordance with article 117.2 of the UAB Academic Regulations, the assessment of repeat students may consist of a single synthesis test. Repeating students who wish to take advantage of this possibility will need to contact the professor at the beginning of the course.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is to use the work of others as if it were your own. When using books, articles, websites or any other material, it is mandatory to reference the original work, clearly indicating within the text which references correspond to which phrases or sentences. When quoting a text word by word, it is essential to put the fragment quoted in quotation marks. Plagiarism is a serious infraction, equivalent to copying on an exam. It will result in a grade of zero.

For more information on plagiarism, you can look at the guide on "How to cite and how to avoid plagiarism": <<https://www.uab.cat/doc/GuiaCitesiPlagiEstudiants>>. See also: <<https://www.uab.cat/web/study-and-research/how-to-cite-and-create-your-bibliography-1345738248581.html>>.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Attendance and participation	10%	20	0.8	1, 2, 3, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, 14, 16
Ethnographic project	25%	10	0.4	2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 16
Final exam	35%	10	0.4	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 12, 13, 15, 14
Mid-term exam	30%	10	0.4	1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 17, 12, 13, 14

Bibliography

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Websites of interest

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/>
- <http://www.thearda.com/> (theassociation of religious data archives)
- <http://www.kent.ac.uk/religionmethods/index.html>
- <http://hrr.hartsem.edu/sociology/disciplineresources.html>
- <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/>