

Religion in Modern Society
SOCI4209
CUHK Department of Sociology
Fall 2022
Andrew Junker

Instructor: Andrew Junker, PhD

Dr. Junker is Hong Kong Director for the Yale-China Association located at New Asia College and is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology

Contact E-mail: andrew.junker@yale.edu Pronouns: he, him, his
Office: New Asia College, Chengming Building G07 (Yale-China Association)
Office hours by appointment
Language of instruction: English

Meeting Details: NAH 11 (New Asia Humanities Building) on Wednesday AM 9:30 to 11:15
Tutorial location and Time: TBA

Tutor: Aikins Asiama

Contact E-mail: aikins.asiama@link.cuhk.edu.hk

Tutorial Locations: TBA. First tutorial meeting in week 2.

Course Description:

Modernity has long been imagined as a kind of a secular space and time, empty of religion. Yet, religion is found in modern societies everywhere, often thriving and influencing politics, culture, and civil society. In this course, students will study how sociologists have theorized and investigated religion and modernity together. We will not focus on any particular faith, doctrine, or systems of beliefs and ritual. Instead, we will emphasize the differential historical pathways of religion in modern societies and what factors have determined outcomes. We will also examine the relationship of “religion” – broadly defined – to other social formations, such as cultural solidarity, gender, capitalism, democracy and authoritarianism. Students will be asked to think, discuss, and produce arguments about theories and empirical cases.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

At the completion of this course, you will be able to...

1. Critically appreciate and apply theoretical debates about religion and its significance for contemporary sociology.
2. Understand differences in the European, American (US), and Chinese historical trajectories for religion in modernity.
3. Be able to describe sociological characteristics of religion in Chinese societies, especially in contrast to the European classical models based on Christianity.
4. Use concepts from the course to examine contemporary issues in China, Hong Kong, and elsewhere.
5. Conduct independent research, analysis, and argumentation with an improved degree of fluency and intellectual complexity.
6. Better use social science reasoning to consider and discuss fundamental questions about religion in society.

Assessment:

Your grade for this course will be based on the following:

One tutorial presentation	10%
One response paper	20%
In-class mid-term quiz	20%
Final project proposal	5%
Final paper or film	35%
Participation	10%

Tutorial Presentation

You must make one presentation in tutorial section on the additional discussion reading. You may do this with a partner by permission of instructor.

Response Paper due October 3

Format: Maximum 5-page (double spaced) response paper to the lectures and readings of weeks 1-4. Submission to VeriGuide required. Details will be announced.

In-class Mid-term Quiz on November 2

Format: multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, identify terms, short questions, etc.

Final Paper or Film due on December 5

Theme: Field research report based on firsthand study of a religious site in Hong Kong

Format: essay or film

You can do this individually or in a group, with maximum group size of 4 persons. Individuals may only write papers. Paper length: 5 pages per participant. Film length: maximum 10 minutes. Details will be announced. Papers must be submitted to VeriGuide.

Participation:

Regular, active attendance in class is expected for lecture and tutorials. All reading must be completed prior to the tutorial sessions in which those readings will be discussed. Unexcused absences to tutorials will result in loss of points, and students with more than 2 unexcused absences will receive no points for class participation (10% of your final grade). Mild late arrival will be given 70% points for attendance, but extreme lateness will be counted as absence.

Late submissions of assignments lose a full letter grade for every 24 hours late (every 8 hour increment is a single step down, as in B+ to B) until F (60%). After that, I accept the assignments until the final class (50% credit is better than a zero, and learning from the assignment is best of all); I will accept late final papers up until midnight on December 12. In exceptional circumstances, extensions will be granted if arranged in advance of the due date.

Grade Descriptors

- A Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
- A- Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
- B Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
- C Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
- D Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.
- F Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Schedule and Readings

All readings are posted to Blackboard or can be read online through the library website. Readings labelled “Lecture” are required for all students. Readings labeled “Discussion” are strongly recommended for all and required for the assigned presenters in tutorial that week. Readings should be completed before tutorial sessions in which readings will be discussed.

Week 1: Introduction

September 7

Course goals and expectations. Introduction to themes.

CLASSIC THEORIES

Week 2: What is Religion?

September 14

Lecture: Beyer, Peter. 2001. “Contemporary Social Theory as it Applies to the Understanding of Religion in Cross-cultural Perspective”

Discussion: Spiro, Melford. 1966. “Religion: Problems of Definition and Explanation”

Week 3: Emile Durkheim

September 21

Lecture: Pages **1-8, 207-231** in Durkheim, Emile. 1995. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Trans. Karen Fields. New York: Free Press.
https://monoskop.org/images/a/a2/Durkheim_Emile_The_Elementary_Forms_of_Religious_life_1995.pdf

Discussion: Bellah, Robert. 1970. "Civil Religion in America." Pp. 168-92 in *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World*. New York: Harper & Row.

Week 4: Max Weber

September 28

Lecture: (1) Chapter 2, “The Spirit of Capitalism,” (pp. **13-38**) in Weber, Max. 2005 [1930]. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Translated by T. Parsons.
(2) Selection on “Charismatic Authority” from Weber, Max. 1978. *Economy & Society*

Discussion: Junker, Andrew. 2014. "Follower Agency and Charismatic Mobilization in Falun Gong." *Sociology of Religion* 75(3):418-41.

Recommended: Joosse, Paul. 2018. "Countering Trump: Toward a Theory of Charismatic Counter-Roles." *Social Forces* 97(2):921-44.

*OCTOBER 3, (MONDAY) 5PM: RESPONSE PAPER DUE

WESTERN RELIGION IN MODERNITY

Week 5: Religion, the Modern, and the Post-modern

October 5

Lecture: Davie, Grace. 2013. "Modernity: a Single or Plural Construct?" from *The Sociology of Religion: a Critical Agenda*. 2nd ed.

Discussion: Eisenstadt, S. N. 2000. "Multiple Modernities." *Daedalus* 129(1):1-29.

Week 6: European Experience and Secularization

October 12

Lecture: Chapter 1 (pp. 11-39) in Casanova, José. 1994. *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago: U of Chicago, 1994.

Discussion: Bruce. 2003. "The Social Processes of Secularization," *The Blackwell Companion to Sociology of Religion*

Week 7: American (USA) Experience: Denominationalism and Activism

October 19

Lecture: Mead, Sydney. 1954. "Denominationalism: The Shape of Protestantism in America"

Discussion: Wuthnow, Robert. 1988. "Special Purpose Groups," *The Restructuring of American Religion*

Week 8: Evangelicalism, Fundamentalism, Pentecostalism, and the Charismatic Movement

October 26

Lecture: Woodhead, Linda. 2009. Pp. 210-229 of "Christianity" from *Religions in the Modern World*

Discussion: *The Argument* podcast "What has God got to do with it?"
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/4rVoj77tI9xxYvzawPtR0?si=tHQHvNzOQIS1z0niCeeddQ>

CHINESE RELIGION IN MODERNITY

Week 9: Quiz / Introduction to Chinese Religion

November 2

IN-CLASS MID-TERM QUIZ

Lecture: "The Late Qing Religious Landscape" Goossaert, V., and Palmer, D. A. (2011). The religious question in modern china. University of Chicago Press. Pp. 19-41.

Discussion: Joseph Bosco (2015) "Chinese popular religion and Hong Kong identity," *Asian Anthropology*, 14:1, 8-20.

Week 10: Secularization as State Building Project

November 9

Lecture: (1) Goossaert, V. 2005. "The concept of religion in China and the West." *Diogenes*, 52(1), 13-20.

(2) Laliberte 2011 "Contemporary Issues in State-Religion Relations" from *Chinese religious life*. Edited by Palmer, D. A., Shive, G., & Wickeri, P. L. Oxford University Press, Inc.

Discussion: Howlett, Zachary. 2022. "Performative Secularism: school-sponsored prayer in China's National College Entrance Exam." *Critical Asian Studies*.

NOVEMBER 14 (MONDAY), 5PM: FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE

Week 11: Religious Economies, Rational Choice, and Reform Era China

November 16

Lecture: Yang, Fenggang. 2006. "The Red, Black, and Gray Markets of Religion in China." *The Sociological Quarterly* 47:93-122.

Discussion: Iannaccone, Larry. "Chapter 2: Economy"

Week 12: Gender, Patriarchy, and Religion in Confucian East Asia

November 23

Reading: Selection from Chong, Kelly. 2008. *Deliverance and Submission: Evangelical Women and the Negotiation of Patriarchy in South Korea*

Discussion: Pomfret, John. 2016. "Bible Wives" from Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom

Week 13: Final Discussion

November 30

Reading TBA

DECEMBER 5, 5PM: FIELD RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Note on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

If you are entitled to an accommodation or suspect you may need one, please contact Support Services for Students with Disabilities (<https://www2.osa.cuhk.edu.hk/disability/>) and discuss with me as needed.