



**SO 350 Religious Diversity in North America
Fall 2011**

Instructor: Joel Thiessen, Ph.D.

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

Class Times: TUE 6:30-9:15pm

Office Hours: TUE/THU 1:00-2:15pm or by appointment

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Location: RE LL120

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REQUIRED TEXTS

Bramadat, Paul, and David Seljak, ed. 2005. *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada*. Toronto, ON: Pearson.

Wuthnow, Robert. 2005. *America and the Challenges of Religious Diversity*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

ON RESERVE

Albanese, Catherine. 2007. *America: Religions & Religion. 4th Edition*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Choquette, Robert. 2004. *Canada's Religions*. Ottawa, ON: University of Ottawa Press.

Ebaugh, Helen Rose and Janet Saltzman Chafetz. 2000. *Religion and the New Immigrant: Continuities and Adaptations in Immigrant Congregations*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Eck, Diana. 2001. *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publisher.

Johnson, William A., Jr., et al. 2010. *The Sociology Student Writer's Manual. 6th Edition*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the growing prevalence of religious diversity in North America, including the similarities and differences between Canadian and American approaches and responses to religious diversity. Emphasis is given to how non-Christian groups adapt and negotiate their religious beliefs and practices, how Christian groups respond to religious diversity, and how the larger society responds to religious diversity in North America.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. To understand the similarities and differences between Canadian and American approaches and responses to religious diversity.
2. To appreciate how those in religious minority groups adapt and negotiate their religious beliefs and practices in North America.
3. To be aware of how Christian groups respond to religious diversity in North America.
4. To make sense of how the larger society responds to religious diversity in North America.
5. To gain first-hand methodological experience studying the religious beliefs and behaviours of those in religious minority traditions.
6. To integrate sociological theory and Christian thought to inform one's personal reflections about religious diversity.

COURSE OUTLINE

Date	Topic
<i>September 13</i>	Syllabus and Introduction (No Assigned Reading)
<i>September 20</i>	Historical and Conceptual Overview (Bramadat & Seljak, Chapter 1 <u>and</u> Wuthnow, Chapter 1)
<i>September 27</i>	Hindus and Sikhs in North America (Bramadat & Seljak, Chapters 2-3 <u>and</u> Wuthnow, pp.37-47)
<i>October 4</i>	Buddhists and Jews in North America (Bramadat & Seljak, Chapters 4 & 6 <u>and</u> Wuthnow, pp.47-56)
<i>October 11</i>	Chinese and Muslims in North America (Bramadat & Seljak, Chapters 5 & 7 <u>and</u> Wuthnow, pp.56-63)
<i>October 18</i>	Religious Leader Discussion (No Assigned Reading)
<i>October 25</i>	Class Presentations (No Assigned Reading)
<i>November 1</i>	Class Presentations (No Assigned Reading)
<i>November 8</i>	Responding to Religious Diversity: Society and Christianity (Part 1) (Wuthnow, pp.63-74 <u>and</u> Chapters 3-5) & Richelle Wiseman
<i>November 15</i>	Responding to Religious Diversity: Society and Christianity (Part 2) (Wuthnow, Chapters 6-8)
<i>November 22</i>	Implications of Religious Diversity: Multiculturalism and Education (Bramadat & Seljak, Chapters 8-9)
<i>November 29</i>	Implications of Religious Diversity: Family and Health (Bramadat & Seljak, Chapter 10 <u>and</u> Wuthnow, Chapter 9)
<i>December 6</i>	The Future of Religious Diversity in North America (Bramadat & Seljak, Chapter 11 <u>and</u> Wuthnow, Chapter 10)

LEARNING AND CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

In the Behavioural Science Department we believe that learning is an active and interactive process, a joint venture between student and teacher and between student and student (i.e., learning is not just “downloading” information from teacher to student). Therefore, it is expected that professors will come to each class well read and prepared to engage students on the topic at hand, giving students the utmost attention and respect. In turn, it is expected that students will take an active role in the learning process. This includes: (a) regular class attendance, (b) reading course material in advance of class, (c) showing up to class on time, and (d) attentively and proactively being “present” at class (i.e., not on the internet, not texting, not conversing with the person beside you). Committing to this type of "active learning" significantly increases the learning experience for both teacher and student, and reflects the Christian ethos of excellence and respect that lies at the heart of the Ambrose educational experience. Therefore, students will receive an automatic 10% deduction from their final grade each time that they violate any of the above offenses after the 2nd offense, and the professor has the right to ask the student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

* Failure to submit all assignments will result in an automatic failing final grade.

Reading Responses (<u>Weekly</u>)	20%
Interview and Presentation (<u>October 25 and November 1</u>)	20%
Research Paper (<u>Due December 2</u>)	30%
Final Exam (<u>Tuesday, December 13 @ 6:30pm – A2133</u>)	30%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

(1) Reading Responses (20%) – Weekly on Moodle

For every week where readings are assigned, students will submit a minimum 250 word response on Moodle to those readings (due by 12:00pm on the day we discuss those readings). In addition, students will submit a response to the “religious leader discussion” (due by 12:00pm on October 25). Each response must demonstrate critical engagement with the course material, addressing questions like (for example), what thoughts are stirred up for you in light of what you learned? What do you agree with? What do you disagree with? What questions do you have and how might you answer those questions? For each response that is either submitted late or does not adequately reflect critical engagement with the course material, a deduction of 2% (from the total possible 20%) will take place.

(2) Interview & Presentation (20%) – Sign-Up for Date

This exercise requires that you interview an individual from one of the six non-Christian traditions explored in this course and account for your observations. The interview questions should focus on: (a) how they believe members of their religious group have adapted and negotiated their religious beliefs and practices in Canada (and how they themselves have adapted), (b) how they think Christian groups in Canada have responded to members of their religious group, and (c) how they think the larger Canadian society responds to members of their religious group. All standard social scientific ethical protocol applies to this interview experience (i.e., consent form - sample included on Moodle).

Students will then give a 30 minute presentation, based on the findings of their interview experience. In the presentation, students should: (a) account for the data that they collected (e.g., highlight some of the questions that were asked and what their responses were), and (b) offer some preliminary sociological analysis of the interview data based on class readings and lectures. Students will be graded on their ability (a) to fulfill the above two objectives; (b) to communicate things logically and coherently from beginning to end; and (c) to creatively and confidently communicate their ideas throughout. The grade for this assignment will come from your peers (average of class evaluations, worth 30% of the grade) and the professor (worth 70% of the grade). More details about grading will come in class.

(3) Research Paper (30%) - December 2 at 11:55pm on Moodle

Students will write an 8 page research paper (plus title page and bibliography) on one of the following topics:

1. You have been asked to inform the Canadian or American government about the presence of religious diversity in their country. What information would be important to present to them, and why? Be sure to contextualize your response to the nation that you select.
2. The topic of religious diversity is grounded in larger conversations about immigration, assimilation, and multiculturalism. Some argue that Canada and America should cease to allow non-Christian immigrants into their countries. Others argue that immigrants from anywhere in the world should be allowed, but that they should either assimilate or preserve their unique identity as part of a melting pot. What is your response to this debate? Should non-Christian immigrants be allowed into Canada or the United States, and if so, should they assimilate or should they preserve their unique identity?
3. Compare and contrast two non-Christian religious groups and the ways that they adapt and negotiate their religious beliefs in North America.

Papers should be double spaced, with 1" (2.54cm) margins on all sides, 12 point font, and ASA formatting (see Johnson book on reserve). Students will be graded for grammar and writing and social scientific content. Therefore, ensure that your document is well-written, clearly and logically organized, and explicitly draws on lecture notes, course readings, and external resources. This means that all theories and concepts should be clearly defined and explained prior to using them as an explanatory and analytical tool, and all statements must be supported with empirical and rational evidence. Late assignments will lose 10% per day.

(4) Final Exam (30%) - Tuesday, December 13 @ 6:30pm – A2133

Students will answer four of six essay questions, based on course readings, lectures, and presentations.

Students may request revised final exams if they have three exams in one 24-hour period or two exams at the same time. Final exam schedule revision request forms are available at the Registrar's Office and must be handed in by Monday, November 28, 2011 (Fall semester) or Monday, April 9, 2012 (winter semester). If you do not have your request in by this date, all exams within a 24-hour period will have to be written as scheduled. If you have two exams at the same time, you will be given four hours to write both exams.

Graded final examinations will be available for supervised review at the request of the student. Please contact your instructor. Please note that final grades will be available on the student portal. Printed grade sheets are no longer mailed out.

GRADING ASSIGNMENTS

The available letter grades and percentages for course grades are as follows. A detailed chart of what constitutes an 'A,' 'B,' or 'C,' etc. is also included below:

A	96% and above	(GPA – 4.0)	C	63 - 67%	(GPA – 2.0)
A	91 - 95%	(GPA – 4.0)	C-	60 - 62%	(GPA – 1.7)
A-	86 - 90%	(GPA – 3.7)	D+	56 - 59%	(GPA – 1.3)
B+	82 - 85%	(GPA – 3.3)	D	50 - 55%	(GPA – 1.0)
B	75 - 81%	(GPA – 3.0)	F	Below 50%	
B-	72 - 74%	(GPA – 2.7)			
C+	68 - 71%	(GPA – 2.3)			

IMPORTANT NOTES

- The last day to enter a course without permission and /or voluntary withdrawal from a course without financial penalty (**drop**) – Sunday, September 18, 2011 (Fall semester) or Sunday, January 22, 2011 (winter semester). These courses will not appear on the student’s transcript. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date.
- Students may change the designation of any class from credit to audit, or drop out of the “audit” up to the “drop” date indicated above. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees. Please note that this is a **new policy**, beginning in the 2010-2011 academic year.
- Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. The last day to voluntarily withdraw from a course without academic penalty (**withdraw**) – Monday, November 14, 2010 (Fall semester) or Friday, March 23, 2011 (Winter semester). A grade of “W” will appear on the student’s transcript.
- Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.
- An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.
- It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.
- Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a “Course Extension” from the Registrar’s Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the appropriate deadline (as listed in the Academic Calendar <http://www.ambrose.edu/publications/academiccalendar>). Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise “due to circumstances beyond the student’s control.”
- We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it

undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

- Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

	Articulation of sociological thinking that is clear, precise, and well-reasoned (i.e. accurate use of paradigms in analysis)	Correctly employs key sociological paradigms, theories, concepts, and research	Clear demonstration of important implications and consequences	Logical and coherent argument that flows from beginning to end	Grammar and spelling
A	Consistently achieved	Consistently achieved – paradigms, theories, concepts, and research are used accurately and in relevant ways	Can clearly state how the chosen topic bears on the development of sociological thought Incorporates a balance of sociological description and sociological analysis	Clearly states central thesis and purpose of paper Good knowledge of topic with considerable originality of thought Carefully selected details which support general statements and central thesis	No spelling, grammar, or other writing errors. Words, sentences, and paragraphs flow smoothly
B	Mostly achieved	Mostly achieved - paradigms, theories, concepts, and research are used fairly accurately.	Some idea of how chosen topic bears on the development of sociological thought Some elements of sociological description or analysis	Clear central thesis Adequate engagement with topic, but some originality Appropriate details most of the time. Adequate synthesis evident	Some spelling, grammar, and writing errors Some awkward transitions between words, sentences, and paragraphs
C	Inconsistently achieved <i>And so on....</i>	Inconsistently achieved - paradigms, theories, concepts, and research are often used inaccurately	Little connection made to the development of sociological thought No balance between sociological description and analysis	Adequately limited central thesis Adequate knowledge; ideas are conventional Details may be repetitious. Little synthesis evident	Several spelling, grammar, and writing errors Several awkward transitions between words, sentences, and paragraphs