

# Religion & Society

Tuesdays & Thursdays

Section 001 :: 11:00 am – 12:15 pm :: Dey Hall 0208

Section 002 :: 2:00 pm – 3:15 pm :: Dey Hall 0305

Professor Lisa Pearce

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Office hours by appt

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Office hours:

M 2-3:30pm or by appt

What is religion? What does it do in society? How does religion work? Why are people religious? What is the future of religion in the world? In this class, we examine all these questions and more. We will study, critique, and produce social theory and research about religion in the lives of humans.

## Class Format

Class will primarily involve engaged discussion of the day's readings, especially in relation to the themes of that section. Some days we will have group activities, watch video, do writing exercises, learn how to collect social science data, or analyze data. I expect students to attend and actively participate in every class meeting. Active participation involves listening to others, thinking critically, contributing ideas, and respecting all perspectives shared in class.

## Preparing for Class

For each hour spent in class you should set aside about two-three hours for work outside the class session. This time will involve reading, thinking, writing, and producing and analyzing data. Readings are listed on the syllabus on the day by which you need to have them read. You are welcome to read ahead. Just make sure you are prepared for every class.



## Books

### ***Religion: What It Is, How It Works, and Why It Matters***

Christian Smith 2017

Princeton University Press

### ***Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn***

Karen McCarthy Brown 2001

University of California Press

### ***Keeping it Halal: The Everyday Lives of Muslim American Teenage Boys***

John O'Brien 2017

Princeton University Press

### ***Homies and Hermanos***

Robert Brennenman 2011

Oxford University Press

## Graded Requirements

Reading Notes	
Quantity	20
Quality	20
Class Participation	10
Interview #1	10
Interview #2	10
Group Project	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

### Course Requirements & Grading

**Reading Notes** (20 points for quantity; 20 points for quality)  
For every day of class that reading is assigned, there will be "reading notes" due by the start of class in Sakai under "Assignments." Reading notes will not be accepted late. Each set of notes submitted on time earns you 1 point. You can miss up to two with no penalty. After that, students will miss a point for each set of notes not submitted on time. Students can earn one extra point for each set of notes submitted over 20. Your reading notes should identify the key arguments found in each assigned reading as well as demonstrate thoughtful critique of the reading's main conclusions and implications. When possible, your notes should be in dialogue with other course readings or outside connections. Your notes will prepare you to contribute to class discussion. We will randomly select five reading notes to grade for five points each. Your lowest score will be dropped. If any of the randomly selected sets of notes is missing, your score will be zero for that one. A rubric for reading notes is available on Sakai.

### Class Participation (10 points)

Class participation points come from attendance and regular and informed participation in class discussion and activities. The TA and I will keep track of attendance and in-class participation over the semester. The use of cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices is not permitted in class except for when we indicate it as necessary for class purposes. Any unapproved use of technology in class will count against your participation grade.

### Interviews & Reflections (10 points each)

Due on Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> are two interview assignments. For these assignments you will each find another UNC undergraduate (demographics TBD) with whom you will conduct about a 30 minute semi-structured interview about the role of religion in their life, record it, and transcribe it. You will turn in the digital recording, transcript, and a one page, single-spaced written reflection. More details and a grading rubric will be available in class and on Sakai.

### Group Project Paper & Presentation (30 points)

Students will be divided into small groups to collaborate on an analysis of the interviews done by the whole class. The analysis will culminate in a group research paper and presentation due in the final exam period for your class section. More details and a grading rubric will be available in class and on Sakai.

### Grading Scale

A = 92-100; A- = 90-91; B+ = 88-89; B = 82-87; B- = 80-81; C+ = 78-79; C = 72-78; C- = 70-71; D+ = 68-69; D = 62-68; D- = 60-61; F < 60

### Getting in Touch

The most efficient line of communication with Ruy and me is email. We aim to reply within 24 hours. We are also available to meet in person by appointment. We would be happy to get to know you and talk about our fields or grad school, among other topics.

Also, we are committed to supporting all students in their efforts to succeed in this class. If you have difficulties limiting your ability to perform well in class, please come talk to us.

### Campus Resources

Please see the "Campus Resources" folder on Sakai under "Resources" for information about great resources on campus for learning, writing, safety, course accessibility, and other matters.

### Course Syllabus & Schedule

Prof Pearce reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus or course schedule, including readings and dues dates for assignments. These changes will be announced as early as possible in class and on Sakai.

### Honor Code

The University Honor Code is in effect for all written assignments. Please read the provisions of the Honor Code carefully, and make certain that you understand and follow them. Violations of the Code will not be tolerated. You can view the Honor Code online -- <http://honor.unc.edu/>.