



**SO 340/CS 645 Religion and Culture in Canada
Winter 2011**

Instructor: Joel Thiessen, Ph.D.

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

Class Times: FEB 22-26 8:30-4:30pm

Office Hours: TUE/THUR 1:00-2:15pm

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REQUIRED TEXT

Bibby, Reginald W. 2011. *Beyond the Gods and Back: Religion in a Post-Religious and Pre-Spiritual Canada*. Lethbridge, AB: Project Canada.

(*CS 645 Only) Kinnaman, David, and Gabe Lyons. 2007. *unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity . . . and Why it Matters*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Lyon, David and Marguerite Van Die, eds. 2000. *Rethinking Church, State and Modernity: Canada Between Europe and America*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

(*CS 645 Only) Reimer, Sam. 2003. *Evangelicals and the Continental Divide: The Conservative Protestant Subculture in Canada and the United States*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press.

ON RESERVE

Noll, Mark. 1992. "His Dominion: 'Christian Canada.'" Pp. 245-285 in *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Bowen, Kurt. 2004. "Secularization and its Discontents: Theoretical and Historical Preliminaries." Pp. 3-22 in *Christians in a Secular World: The Canadian Experience*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Thiessen, Joel, and Lorne Dawson. 2008. "Is There a 'Renaissance' of Religion in Canada? A Critical Look at Bibby and Beyond." *Studies in Religion* 37 (3-4): 389-415.

Bibby, Reginald. 2008. "The Perils of Pioneering and Prophecy: A Response to Thiessen and Dawson." *Studies in Religion* 37 (3-4): 417-425.

Thiessen, Joel. 2010. "Churches are not Necessarily the Problem: Lessons Learned from Christmas and Easter Affiliates." *Church and Faith Trends* 3 (3): 1-24. Available at http://files.efc-canada.net/min/rc/cft/V03I03/Christmas_and_Easter_Affiliates.pdf.

Bramadat, Paul, and David Seljak. 2005. "Beyond Christian Canada: Religion and Ethnicity in a Multicultural Society" and "Toward a new Story about Religion and Ethnicity in

Canada.” Pp.1-19 and 222-233 in *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada*. Toronto, ON: Pearson.

Peelman, Achiel. 1995. “The Amerindian Religious Experience: Past and Present.” Pp.39-60 in *Christ Is a Native American*. Ottawa, ON: Novalis.

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

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the relationship between religion and culture in Canada from a sociological perspective. This examination will include a look at the past, present, and potential future relationship between religion and culture in Canada.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. To understand the historical landscape of religion in Canada up to the present
2. To apply sociological theory to the study of religion in Canada
3. To grapple with the social realities of religious individuals, religious groups, and the broader culture and to examine how each influences the other
4. To become familiar with the presence and impact of religious diversity in Canada
5. To consider the possible future trajectory for religion in Canada
6. To think theologically and practically about the implications of a sociological understanding of religion in Canada for ministry in Canada

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Reading
<u>Feb.22</u>	Course Introduction	Syllabus
	“Renewed Religion: Is the Church in Canada Relevant Today?”	Video and Discussion
	Historical Outline of Religion in Canada	Bibby (Ch.1); Noll Article; Lyon & Van Die (Ch.1-2 & 7-9)
	Organized Religion versus Private Spirituality	Bibby (Ch.6); Lyon & Van Die (Ch.3, 10, & 11)
	“In Search of Church: What is Church?”	Video and Discussion
<u>Feb.23</u>	Secularization Thesis in Canada	Bibby (Ch.2 & 3); Bowen Article
	Revitalization Thesis in Canada	Bibby (Ch.2 & 3)
	“In Search of Church: The Emergent Church”	Video and Discussion
	Critiquing the Revitalization Thesis in Canada	Thiessen & Dawson Article; Bibby Article; Thiessen Article
<u>Feb.24</u>	Polarization Thesis in Canada	Bibby (Ch.3)
	Who Cares about Religion in Canada?	Bibby (Ch.5, 7, & 8)
	“In Search of Church: The House Church”	Video and Discussion
	Polarization and Pluralism	Bibby (Ch.4)
	Religious Diversity in Canada	Bramadat and Seljak Articles

<u>Feb.25</u>	Interview Assignment Presentations	Discussion
	Aboriginal Spirituality in Canada (Ray Aldred)	Peelman Article
	Religion and Politics	Lyon & Van Die (Ch.4-6)
	Evangelicals and “Revealed: Hip 2B Holy”	Lyon & Van Die (Ch.12); Video and Discussion
<u>Feb.26</u>	Panel Discussion with Church Leaders	Discussion
	“In Search of Church: The Radical Church”	Video and Discussion
	Interview Assignment Presentations	Discussion
	Future of Religion in Canada	Bibby (Ch.9 & Conclusion)
5:30pm	Dinner at Professor’s House	Mmmmmmmmm . . . ☺

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.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

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

Daily Responses (<u>every day</u>)	15%
Interview Presentation (<u>February 25 or 26</u>) - *SO 340 students only	20%
Take Home Exam (<u>March 3</u>)	30%
Evangelicals and Ministry in Canada Assignment (<u>March 28</u>) - *CS 645 students only	20%
Research Paper (<u>April 4</u>)	<u>35%</u>
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

(1) Daily Responses (15%) – Due daily at 8:00am on Moodle

Each day, students will submit a response on Moodle to material from the previous day, which must demonstrate critical engagement with the course material (five in total). On the first day of the course (February 22), students should show up having already posted a response to the

Reginald Bibby lecture held at Ambrose on Wednesday, February 2 (recording is available on Moodle). In your responses you should address 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? Responses must be at least 250 words and are due at 8:00am each day. For each response that is either submitted late or does not adequately reflect critical engagement with the course material, a deduction of 3% (from the total possible 15%) will take place.

(2) Interview Exercise (20%) – Due February 25 or 26 (*SO 340 Students Only)

This exercise requires that you interview a person from a tradition different than your own (or even a person who is not particularly religious), and account for your observations. The interview questions should cover: (a) Demographics (age, gender, marital status, level of education, and occupation); (b) Current religious beliefs, practices, and involvements; (c) Importance of religion to their life, and reasons for this; and (d) Perception of the role of religion in society today. All standard social scientific ethical protocol applies to this interview experience (i.e., consent form - sample included on Moodle).

Students will then give a 15 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.

(3) Take Home Exam (30%) - Due March 3 @ 11:55pm on Moodle

At the end of the course, students will be given four essay questions, and must answer three of them, based on the readings and lectures in the course. More details to follow in class. The exams are due on Thursday, March 3 at 11:55pm on Moodle. This exam 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, draws on empirical and rational evidence where warranted, and explicitly draws on lecture notes and course readings. Late assignments will lose 10% per day.

(4) Evangelicals and Ministry in Canada Assignment (20%) - Due March 28 @ 11:55 on Moodle (*CS 645 Students Only)

Students will write a 6 page assignment (plus title page and bibliography) on the following topic: You are involved in ministry in an evangelical setting in Canada. Drawing on the readings, lectures, and discussion in this course, what pieces of information or knowledge do you think would be helpful to know and why, and what implications are there for ministry in light of your observations?

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.

(4) Research Paper (35%) – Due April 4 @ 11:55pm on Moodle

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

1. How should we evaluate the secularization thesis in the current Canadian context? Provide specific evidence to support your position.
2. When it comes to religion, Canada has been described as falling between the religious life of the United States and Europe. After outlining this debate, discuss whether you agree with this claim (drawing on specific evidence to support your position) and comment on what trajectory religion in Canada might take in the future.
3. Many believe that religious diversity is a growing phenomenon in Canada. Presuming that this is true, address the following three questions: (a) What are some of the challenges that religious minority groups face in coming to Canada, and how have they adapted and negotiated their religious beliefs and practices? (b) Given the historical place of Christianity in Canada, how have Christian groups responded to religious diversity? (c) How has the larger society responded to religious diversity?

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.

GRADING ASSIGNMENTS

The available letter grades and percentages for course grades are as follows.

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

IMPORTANT NOTES

- The last day to enter a course without permission and /or voluntary withdrawal from a course without financial penalty (drop) is Friday, January 21, 2011. These courses will not appear on the student's transcript.
- 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.
- 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) is Friday, March 18, 2011. 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.
- Graded final examinations will be available for supervised review at the request of the student. Please contact your instructor.
- 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 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