Indian Institute of Technology Mandi  
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Course Proposal

Course Name: Sociology of Religion  
Course Number: HS 636  
Credit: 3-0-0-3  
Pre-requisite: None  
Intended For: PhD students, SHSS  
Distribution: Elective  
Semester: Odd/Even

Preamble:

This course on religion equips students with necessary theoretical and empirical insights to understand religion in a historical perspective. After having built the much-needed theoretical and empirical base upon which the contemporary debates of religion, in various social science disciplines, would be thoroughly examined in the light of prominent and compelling scholarly works of recent past. Given the standard of this course, it is meant for PG students, preferably PhD students, in the school of humanities and social sciences.

Module – I (6 Hours)  
Introduction

a) Berger, Peter. *The Sacred Canopy* chapters 1-4 (pp. 3-101).


d) Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*

e) Geertz Clifford, "Religion as a Cultural System" in *Interpretation of Cultures*.  

Approved: 10th Senate
Module – II (8 Hours)

Rituals and Practices

a) Durkheim, Elementary Forms of Religious Life, selections
e) Rosaldo, Renato. "Grief and the Headhunter's Rage" Introduction to Culture and Truth.
g) Radway, Janice. "Interpretive Communities and Variable Literacies: The Functions of Romance Reading" pp. 465-486 in Rethinking Popular Culture

Module – III (10 Hours)

Authority and Legitimation

b) Berger, Peter The Sacred Canopy chs. 5-7
c) Casanova, Jose, Public Religions in the Modern World, chs.1, 2, 6, 7.

Module – IV (10 Hours)

Approaches to the study of religion:

a) Classical approach: Durkheim, Marx, and Weber
b) Contemporary approach: Phenomenological, Neo Marxist, Freudian, New Functional, Anthropological
c) The insiders view: theologians and religious believers
d) Religions of the World: organized and non-organized
e) Religious, economic, social, Cultural movements
Module – V (8 Hours)

Religion and Contemporary Debates:

a) Religion and Modernity: Secularization Approaches to the Study of Religion

b) Methods of Studying Religion

c) Issues of Power and Control in Religious Organizations

d) In Indian context: Communalism and Religious Mobilizations- Broadly Religion and Politics

e) Globalization and Religion

Essential Readings

• Peter van der Veer, Gods on Earth: The management of Religious Experience and Identity in a North Indian Pilgrimage Centre, Oxford, Delhi, 1989.

• Mark Jurgensmeyer, Religion Nationalism confronts a Secular State, OUP, Delhi, 1993.

• A. Nandy, Trivedy, Mayaram and Yagnik, Creating a Nationality: The Ramjanmabhoomi Movement and the Fear of the Self, OUP, Delhi, 1987


• T. N. Madan, Religion in India, OUP, New Delhi, 1991.


• Beckford, James A. and Demerath III, N. J. The SAGE Handbook of the Sociology of


