

RELIGION 375

Disenchantment, Secularization, and Reenchantment

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Course description

The content of our course is a study of various attempts to define "modernity" in terms of the decline, transformation, and/or displacement of religious thought and practice in the west. We explore conceptions of secularity and formations of secularism from the perspective of a variety of disciplines, including some of the following: sociology, psychology, philosophy, and anthropology

However, the content of the course is a supplement to the larger goal, which is to provide students with the tools to incorporate the themes and histories of secularization into their research agenda. For example, you may have found Professor Kent's yoga class to be fascinating. Looking back on your paper you might find things that interested you, but which you could not investigate at length due to time/space constraints. The same could be for Prof. Overbey's tantra course, Onishi's course on death or God, sex, love, or Spinner's myth course.

The material on secularization is meant to introduce students to a theoretical lens for understanding how religious individuals and communities are reckoning with the secularization of government, culture, and related institutions. The course thus involves sociology, philosophy, and history. It touches on capitalism and democracy. It includes reflection on categories in the study of religion, such as ritual, community, and collectivity.

Objectives:

1. To understand the "secularization thesis," as it was articulated by philosophers and sociologists during the twentieth century.
2. To understand the related thesis that secularity entails disenchantment.
3. To be able to articulate different theories of religion in the context of modern culture.
4. To be able to articulate how and why the secularization thesis has been repudiated during the last twenty five years.
5. To be able to articulate how secularity, for some theorists, is the pathway to an inexhaustible enchantment, rather than the inherent cause of disenchantment.

Required Books to Buy

Jeffrey L. Kosky, *Arts of Wonder*.

Attendance

Attendance is important but our primary concern at this time is your health and well-being. In this difficult climate, I ask that you only miss class when necessary (no explanation is needed). If you do need to miss class, I will work with you to the extent possible. Such absences will not be counted against you.

Marco Polo

You can always reach out to me via email. We can setup individual Zoom meetings at any time in the semester. As you can see on the schedule, I have several days already planned for such meetings.

However, there will be times you have a quick question about something in the reading or about an assignment. In order to help facilitate efficient and accessible communication, I would ask that you download the Marco Polo app. You can sign up with an email address (phone number is not required).

Marco Polo allows for video messaging. It is essentially an easy way to send video text messages. You can record a short video of your question and I will respond with a similar video message. This will make asking questions “face-to-face” easier. You won’t always need a Zoom meeting or have to write out an email. It is as easy as hitting a button and asking your question. I will try to respond within 12 hours.

<https://www.marcopolo.me/>

Course requirements

1. Portfolio Assignment: 5%
2. Mind Map: 4%
3. Research Journal: 5%
4. Research Proposal: 5%
5. Annotated Bibliography: 5%
6. Discussion Board (x3) 6% (2% each)
7. Rough Draft: 10%
8. Midterm: 10%
9. Final Paper: 50%

Schedule

Week 1:

August 25: Introduction

August 27: Max Weber, “Science as a Vocation”
-Group Discussion

August 28: Portfolio Assignment Due

Week 2:

September 1: Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*

Individual Portfolio Meetings

September 3: Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion*, 69-109
-Group Discussion

Week 3:

Discussion Board #1 due September 6

September 8: Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*

September 10: Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*

Week 4:

September 15: José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*

September 17: Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular* 1-17; 181-201

Week 5:

Discussion Board #2 due September 20

September 22: Mahmood, *The Politics of Piety*

September 24: Mahmood, *The Politics of Piety*

Week 6:

September 29: Mayanthi Fernando, *Secularization and South Asia*

October 1: Mayanthi Fernando, *Secularization and South Asia*

Week 7:

Discussion Board #3 due October 5

October 6: Jeff Kosky, *Arts of Wonder*

October 8: Jeff Kosky, *Arts of Wonder*

Week 8:

October 12: Midterm Due

October 13: Mind Map Creation

October 15: Thinking Like a Researcher: Chart and Activity (fill out the chart with 3 questions)

October 16: Mind Map Due

Week 9:

October 20: Analyze a Source

October 21: Research Journal Due

October 22: Individual Meetings

Week 10:

October 27: Research Proposal Tutorial

October 29: Research Proposal Workshop (bring research proposal draft to meeting)

October 30: Research Proposal Due

Week 11:

November 3: How to do a Literature Review and Create an Annotated Bibliography

November 5: Individual Meetings

Week 12:

November 10: How to Incorporate Theory into Your Analysis

November 11: Annotated Bibliography Due

November 12: Theory in Religious Studies (Examples)

Week 13:

November 17: How to Conclude a Research Paper

November 18: Rough Draft Due

November 19: Individual Meetings

Final Draft Due: December 4, 5pm.

Academic Integrity:

Definitions and Guidelines for Penalties The following guidelines define for the Skidmore community the values that undergird individual and institutional decisions on academic integrity. The guidelines, developed by the Integrity Board and reviewed by the Appeals Board, the faculty at large, and the President's Office, reflect Skidmore's serious commitment to academic honesty. No set of guidelines can, of course, define all possible types or degrees of academic dishonesty; thus, the following descriptions should be understood as examples of infractions rather than as an exhaustive list, and the recommended penalties are presented as guiding examples, as well. The guidelines are intended as touchstones for complainants and for the judicial boards of the College and as a deterrent to potential offenders. Individual faculty members and the judicial boards will continue to judge each case according to its particular merits and demerits. It is every student's responsibility to become familiar with the standards of academic integrity at the College. Violations of the academic Honor Code will be reported on law school applications, transfer applications, etc., and are likely to render the student ineligible for membership in any Skidmore-sponsored academic honor societies, for participation in the First Year Experience as a Peer Mentor, and for academic and some leadership prizes awarded by the College.

Plagiarism

Presenting as one's own the work of another person (for example, the words, ideas, information, data, evidence, organizing principles, or style of presentation of someone else). Plagiarism includes paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgment, submission of another student's work as one's own, the purchase of prepared research or completed papers or projects, and the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else. Failure to indicate accurately the extent and precise nature of one's reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. The student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources; the appropriate ways of acknowledging his or her

academic, scholarly, or creative indebtedness; and the consequences for violating the Skidmore Honor Code. THE JUDICIAL BOARDS OF THE COLLEGE WILL NOT REGARD CLAIMS OF IGNORANCE, OF UNINTENTIONAL ERROR, OR OF ACADEMIC OR PERSONAL PRESSURES AS AN ADEQUATE DEFENSE FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE HONOR CODE.

Minor offenses: failure to acknowledge the source(s) of a few phrases, sentences, or an idea (though not an idea of importance to the thesis or central purpose of the paper or project).

More serious offenses: failure to acknowledge the quotation or paraphrase of a few longer, paragraph-length sections of a paper, failure to acknowledge the source(s) of a major idea or the source(s) of important pieces of evidence or information or the source(s) of an ordering principle central to the paper's or project's structure.

Major offenses: failure to acknowledge the source (quoted, paraphrased, or summarized) of major sections or passages in the paper or project; the unacknowledged use of several major ideas or extensive reliance on another person's data, evidence, or critical method; submitting as one's own work borrowed, stolen, or purchased from someone else.

Penalties for Plagiarism All offenses observed by faculty or students must be reported to the Associate Dean of the Faculty with responsibility for student academic affairs, who will keep a confidential record of the offense, the evidence, and the penalty. The Associate Dean will also make certain that the student understands his or her rights, the nature and importance of academic integrity, and the probable consequences of a second violation.

In the case of minor offenses (as defined above), the instructor might make any one or a combination of the following responses: • warning without further penalty • required rewriting of the paper, but without grade credit • lowering of the paper or project grade by one full grade

In the case of more serious offenses and major offenses (defined above), the instructor might impose one or more of the following: • failure on the plagiarized essay, report, or project (no revision or supplemental work accepted) • failure in the course (more appropriate for a major offense) Be aware that some faculty maintain a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism and will fail a student for the course regardless of the level of offense.

Cheating On Examinations Giving or receiving unauthorized help before, during, or after an examination. Examples of unauthorized help include collaboration of any sort during an examination (unless specifically approved by the instructor); collaboration before an examination (when such collaboration is specifically forbidden by the instructor); the use of notes, books, or other aids during an exam (unless permitted by the instructor); looking at someone else's exam during the examination period; intentionally allowing another student to look at one's exam; and the passing of any exam information to students who have not yet taken the examination. While the exam is ongoing, students may not discuss test items with any other student, including those not enrolled in the course. Any talking during an exam or other mode of communication (including use of cell phones) constitutes a violation of the Honor Code. The content of the conversation does not matter; the act of communicating violates the Honor Code.

Penalties for Cheating on Examinations The great variety of exam situations and procedures makes it difficult to identify different degrees of infractions. However, in determining an appropriate sanction,

instructors and judicial boards might take the following into account: • the degree to which the cheating was premeditated or the student(s) collaborated in receiving or giving unauthorized help on the exam • the percentage of the student's exam which was affected by the incident • the degree to which the examination procedures in general were jeopardized or other students affected by the cheating incident Penalties will generally include one or more of the following: • failure on the examination • lowering of the course grade by one full grade or more • failure in the course • academic disciplinary probation, another type of academic sanction, suspension, or dismissal

Disability and Accessibility

Skidmore is proud to employ a coordinator of student access services, who works as a member of the SAS team to ensure that eligible students are provided accommodations necessary to obtain full access to all Skidmore programs and activities. We are pleased to provide this web resource to incoming and current students as a guide to the services available to students with disabilities and the policies and procedures for applying for and implementing accommodations at Skidmore College. Students are encouraged to contact the coordinator, **Meg Hegener**, with questions or concerns related to the application process or the services available at Skidmore to students with disabilities.

Another essential member of our SAS team is our Learning Specialist, Alicia Sullivan. Alicia provides vital individualized academic support for students, particularly self-identified students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs). Her work includes assisting students to develop learning strategies, planning for assignments, and guidance regarding student progression to degree completion. Students are welcome to contact Alicia via email **here** or schedule an appointment **here**.

Writing Center

- The Philip Boshoff Writing Center is focused on all kinds of writing and writing concerns. Trained peer tutors hold one-on-one conversations about writing from any discipline, at any course level, and at any stage of the writing process. Our primary goal: to give all students the tools to become stronger, more confident writers. **Make an appointment at the Philip Boshoff Writing Center.**
- The Writing Center also offers specialized support for English language learners: see **English Language Support**.
- Through its academic coaching and counseling services, **Student Academic Services (SAS)** offers professional one-on-one support to address challenges that may be involved with writing, such as learning barriers, time management, and organizational skills. The breadth of support provided by SAS is meant to help students deal with a variety of academic stressors, which can in turn assist students in their writing processes. **Request an appointment with SAS office.**