

PhD Course in Theories of Sociology of Religion (REL 603, 5 ECTS)

University of Agder, Kristiansand, Norway

December 2 – 4, 2014

Teachers

Professor David Herbert, Kingston University London and University of Agder

Professor Mia Løvheim, Uppsala University

Associate professor Lars Laird Iversen, Norwegian School of Theology

Professor Pål Repstad, University of Agder (co-ordinator)

Aim

The course aims to give each PhD student in sociology of religion a foundation for the choice, usage and development of theory for their own research project. After the course, students should be able to confront, combine, modify and challenge various theories, and be able to identify new trends in religious life and relate them to theories in the sociology of religion.

Language

The lectures and group sessions will normally have English as the working language. Papers submitted in advance is expected to be in English. If only Scandinavian-speaking people are present, a change to Scandinavian may take place. Exam papers submitted after the course may be in English or Scandinavian.

Requirements for admission

Applicants should be connected to a phd program. Priority is given to participants in the specialization “Religion, ethics, history and society” at University of Agder, and at Norwegian School of Theology, as well as phd students at other institutions that are members of the

national research school "Religion, values and society". The deadline for application is October 23, 2014. Please send applications and papers by e-mail to Lise Moss, who is responsible for the administration of the course. E-mail address: Lise.Moss@uia.no .

Examination requirements

A brief paper (about 1000 words plus list of references) should accompany the application. The paper should give a presentation of problem formulation, methods material and (if possible) theoretical perspectives in the project. These papers will be distributed to the participants before the course. The papers will be used in the group sessions of the course, in order to adapt and connect theories from the curriculum and the lecture to the participants' projects. Each student will present his or her paper in a group session, and prepare a comment to another student's paper. This is a requirement for being allowed to put one's essay forth for review after the course.

Examination

On completion of the course each student will submit for assessment a paper (maximum 3000 words plus list of references) in which lines are drawn between relevant course literature and the student's own phd thesis. The precise exam questions will be presented by the co-ordinator at the end of the course, and the deadline for submitting the paper is January 20, 2015.

Practical information

Part of the curriculum will be distributed electronically to the participants. A compendium with the rest of the curriculum will be available after the deadline for application, and can be ordered at that time from the university book shop, SørBok. Contact sorbok@sia.no .

Lunches will be paid for by the University of Agder. As for dinner, participants are expected to cover their expenses themselves. Places with reasonable prices will be suggested, so that participants can join up for common excursions.

For practical information (accommodation and so on), contact lise.moss@uia.no).

PROGRAMME

Tuesday, December 2

11.15 – 11.45 Welcome, Presentation, Information (PR)

11.45 – 12.45 Lunch

12.45 – 14.00 Use and misuse of theory in the sociology of religion (PR).

14.15 – 15.30 The classical tensions in theory-building: agency-structure; harmony-conflict; idealism-materialism; norms-rational choice. Is there anything to add? (PR)

15.45 – 17.15 Theorising religion, identity and diverse nation states (LLI)

17.15 – 18.00 Group session, presentation of papers in light of lectures and reading list

18.00 – 18.15 Brief plenary summing-up (PR)

Wednesday, December 3

09.15 – 10.45 Gender theory in the sociology of religion (ML)

11.00 – 12.00 A postsecular world? Habermas and others (LLI)

12.00 – 13.00 Lunch

13.00 – 14.30 Theories on media and religion (ML)

14.45 – 16.15 Group session, presentation of papers in light of lectures and reading list

16.15 – 16.30 Brief plenary summing-up (PR)

Thursday, December 4

09.15 – 11.30 Theorising religion and the consumer society: Consumption, Neo-liberalism and Inequalities (DH)

11.30 – 12.15 Lunch

12.15 – 13.45 Group session, presentation of papers in light of lectures and reading list

14.00 – 14.15 Brief plenary summing-up (PR)

14.15 – 15.00 Relations between theories presented: Additive theories, or theories in tension with each other? (DH, ML, PR)

15.00 – 15.30 Evaluation, exam paper, farewell.