## MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**UTICA AND ROME, NEW YORK**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**SO207 - Sociology: Comparative Religion C-3, P-0, Cr-3**

**Course Description:**

This course utilizes a socio-historical and comparative approach to study the development of world religions, their basic beliefs, and the relationship between religion and society. As one of the oldest of all social institutions, religion has been and continues to be a major force within society and thus this course looks at the impact these belief systems have on our world. No one religion is emphasized; rather 102 the sociological functions of religion and how religions serve these functions within their historical and cultural context are compared and contrasted.

**Prerequisites: SO101 - Introduction to Sociology**

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Students will be able to:

1. Distinguish various theisms.

2. Articulate the sociological functions of religion.

3. Differentiate Research Methods utilized in Social Sciences

4. Compare and contrast the typical forms of religion found in types I, II and III societies.

5. Outline basic beliefs and practices of major world religions.

6. Examine socio-historical development of major world religions.

7. Distinguish between cult, sect, denomination, and church.

8. Discuss religion influences on everyday life.

**Major Topics:**

I. The Sociological PerspectiveII. Theoretical Explanations of Religion Theological Explanations Psychological Explanations Anthropological Explanations Sociological Explanations

a. structural functionalism and functions of religions,

b. conflict perspective

III. General Characteristics of Religion in Type I (Pre-literate), Type II (Agricultural) and Type III (Industrial) Societies.

IV. The First Religions

The Religions of India

Geography and socio/historical developments and their relationship to the development of religion in India

Who were the Dravidians

The Aryan Invasion and Hinduism

VI. Other religions of India : Buddhism

Social ferment, invasion, dissatisfaction with Hinduism, and the emergence of other religions

Development in India; spread throughout Asia

The story of Siddartha and the basic beliefs of Buddhism

Mahayana and Theravadin beliefs

VII. Jainism, Sikhism

VIII. Religions of East Asia Geography and socio/historical development of China and their relation to

religious developments.

Confucianism, Daoism

IX. Religion in Japan

Geography, and socio/historical development of Japan, relationship to religion

developmentsShinto, Buddhism

New religions in Japan

X. Monotheistic Religions of the Middle East

Geography, and socio/historical development of area and relationship to religious

developments

XI. Judaism

Abraham and the Covenant; descendants of Abraham. The kingdoms of Judah and Israel, the Prophets, The Babylonian Captivity, The Torah and the development of the Synagogue

Jewish Sects today

XII. Christianity

The Empire of Rome, Jewish ferment and Old Testament Prophecies, Jesus, his Disciples, the “Way” and the New Testament. The work of Paul, the establishment of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire and its spread throughout Europe and the Mediterranean. Schisms within the Church, the Reformation and the establishment of Protestantism.

XIII. Islam

Geography of the Arabian Peninsula. Mohammed as a religious, political and

military leader. Abraham, Ishmael, Allah, the Qu’ran, The Five Pillars of Faith. Sunni and Shi ites

XIV. Religious Trends Today.