

# 2015 Sociology of Religion Seminar

Directed by Professor Fenggang Yang

## Does Religious Diversity Affect Religious Commitment? Some New Answers to an Old Question

**Dan Olson**

**Purdue University**

**March 26, 2015**

**Thursday, 6:00-8:00 pm**

**STONE HALL, 215**



Does religious diversity diminish religious participation as many secularization theories argue or does it boost religious participation as religious economies models argue? Testing this crucial hypothesis has been fraught with methodological challenges and empirical complications. We adapt a method first suggested by Voas et al. (2002) to examine the effects of religious diversity on individual commitment. The paper distributed prior to the class session first uses the combined World Values and European Values Surveys (WVS-EVS) and finds that religious diversity has a strong, robust, and negative relationship with individual religiosity. Using the cumulative U.S. General Social survey the relationship is weakly negative and not very robust. During the class presentation Olson will give a PowerPoint presentation to show preliminary results from three U.S. panel studies in which he examines whether local religious diversity is also associated with declines over time in the rates of religious service attendance of individuals living in the U.S.

