

SYLLABUS

Religion and International Relations (IR/RN561, PO 589, TX874)

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Spring 2016: Wednesday 9:00am-12:00pm in CGS 123 (871 Commonwealth Ave.)
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Sign up for office hours at: <https://jeremymenchik.youcanbook.me/>

One of the main methodological problems in writing about religion scientifically is to put aside at once the tone of the village atheist and that of the village preacher, as well as their more sophisticated equivalents, so that the social and psychological implications of particular religious beliefs [and organizations] can emerge in a clear and neutral light. And when that is done, overall questions about whether religion is “good” or “bad,” “functional” or “dysfunctional,” “ego-strengthening” or “anxiety-producing,” disappear like the chimeras that they are, and one is left with particular assessments, and diagnoses in particular cases.

– Clifford Geertz, 1973, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 123.

Course Description: Despite the predictions of modernization theorists, the heartfelt longings of secularists, and the deliberate neglect of structural realists, religion has not withdrawn from the world’s political stage. To the contrary, religion continues to shape individual values, social organizations, state institutions, and international relations. This has led to a re-evaluation of long-standing research programs that were based on the assumption that religion would either decline or disappear altogether. Scholars of world politics are now struggling to articulate a vision for the role of religion in public life, in the policies of states, and in global politics. This course is part of that process.

Course Objectives: By drawing on readings from international relations (IR), comparative politics (CP), history, and anthropology, this course will begin charting a path toward understanding the place of religion in contemporary world affairs. The outcome of this class will not be a new paradigm for IR, nor will it be a unified theory of the role of religion in politics. Rather, by the end of the course, students should possess:

- A historical understanding of the contingent nature of the Westphalian system and its ideational progeny: sovereignty, nation-states, realism, and liberal internationalism.
- A critical perspective on secularization theory.
- A descriptive understanding of select twentieth century religious-political movements.
- A set of causal hypotheses about the role of religious actors in democratization, social movements, political party formation and development, war, economic development, and psychology.

By the end of the course, students should have the vocabulary and knowledge to discuss the role of religious actors in world politics. This skill will be obtained through writing, critical thinking, and seminar discussions, and should be useful both inside and outside the classroom.

Course Requirements

Participation (20%): The course will be run as a seminar. This format requires students to attend regularly, read diligently, and participate actively in class discussions. Each week, come to class prepared with 1-2 discussion questions that pertain to the readings.

Presentation (1 x 10% = 10%): Each student will be assigned to a two-person group, which will be responsible for one 10-minute presentation on current political events regarding a religious organization of their choosing. Students will choose presentation dates in the first week of class. Presentation topics must be approved by the professor and be relevant to that week's themes. A grading rubric is at the end of the syllabus.

Response Papers (3 x 5% = 15%): Student will write three short (2-3 pages, double-spaced, 1 inch margins) analytical response papers (RP) over the course of the semester. I will provide the paper prompts one week before they are due on 2/2, 3/2, 3/23, and 4/6 (optional makeup). A grading rubric is at the end of the syllabus.

Midterm Exam (20%): One 4-5 page take-home essay exam will be given at the end of class **2/10** and returned via email by **5pm on 2/12**

Final Exam (Undergraduate Students: 35%): The final exam is a take-home essay, 7-8 pages in length. The exam will be handed out at the end of class on **4/27** and must be returned via email by **noon on 5/4**.

Research Paper (Graduate Students: 35%): In lieu of a final exam, graduate students will write a 15 page research paper. Students must meet with me the week of **March 23** to present an abstract and preliminary list of sources. Papers are due via email by **noon on 5/4**.

Late Work: Late submission of assignments will incur an automatic full-grade deduction per day beginning with the assignment deadline. Make up examinations will be granted only in exceptional cases.

Explanation of Letter Grades: <http://www.bu.edu/reg/grades/explanation-of-grades/>

Special Needs: If you have any special needs or circumstances, such as a learning disability or health concern, please do not hesitate to speak with me and we can discuss suitable accommodations and assistance. If there is a religious holy day that will require your absence, please notify me no later than the first two weeks of class so that we can make arrangements for your absence. If a student misses class due to an unexcused absence, their absence may be reflected in their participation grade.

Academic Misconduct: Plagiarism and cheating will be punished in accordance with BU's Academic Conduct Code: <http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/>

Electronic Communications in Class: Please close all email accounts, cell phones, instant messaging programs, homing pigeons, and any other communication devices for the duration of class. These are serious distractions to the instructor and your fellow students.

Required Texts: The following books are required for the class and may be purchased at the BU bookstore or online. They will also be placed on reserve at Mugar Memorial Library. Article and chapter-length readings can be accessed through the course Blackboard site.

Beth Baron, 2014. *The Orphan Scandal: Christian Missionaries and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).

Michael Griffin and Jennie Weiss Block, ed. 2013. *In the Company of the Poor: Conversations with Dr. Paul Farmer and Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez* (New York: Orbis Books).

James Hoesterey, 2015. *Rebranding Islam: Piety, Prosperity, and a Self-Help Guru* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).

Ziad W. Munson, 2009. *The Making of Pro-Life Activists: How Social Mobilization Works* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

Robert Opello and Stephen Rosow, 2004. *The Nation-State and Global Order: A Historical Introduction to Contemporary Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner).

Recommended:

Fred Harris, 1999. *Something Within: Religion in African American Political Activism* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Timothy Samuel Shah, Alfred Stepan and Monica Duffy Toft, eds. 2012. *Rethinking Religion and World Affairs* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Dates and Readings

Week One: January 20 Our Framework

Key terms: comparative politics, tradition, international relations, secularism, sovereignty

- Opello and Rosow, *The Nation-State and Global Order*, Introduction (pp. 1-13).
- Daniel Philpott, 2009. "Has the Study of Global Politics Found Religion?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 12, 183–202.

Week Two: January 27 Historical Contingency and Moral Authority

Key terms: nation-state, empire, feudalism, moral authority

- Opello and Rosow, *The Nation-State and Global Order*, ch. 1-2 (pp. 19-54).
- Rodney Bruce Hall, 1997. "Moral Authority as a Power Resource," *International Organization* 51:4, 591-622.

Week Three: February 3 The Peace of Westphalia, Exported [RP1 due]

Key terms: reformation, modernity, sovereignty, imperialism

- Opello and Rosow, *The Nation-State and Global Order*, ch. 3-4 on Europe (pp. 55-97), ch. 8-10 (pp. 166-241) on the postcolonial world
- Daniel Philpott, 2000. "The Religious Roots of Modern International Relations," *World Politics* 52:2, 206–45.

Week Four: February 10 Secularization Theory and Its Discontents

Key terms: secularization, privatization, differentiation, decline of belief

- Charles T Matthews, 2006. "An Interview with Peter Berger," *The Hedgehog Review* Spring/Summer, pp. 152-161.
- José Casanova, 2006. "Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective," *The Hedgehog Review* Spring/Summer, 7-22.
- Talal Asad, "Secularism, Nation-State, Religion," in *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 181-201.
- Rodney Stark, 1999. "Secularization, R.I.P.," *Sociology of Religion* 60:3, 249-273.

****Midterm distributed after class, due 2/12 by 5pm****

Week Five: February 17 After Secularization

Key terms: Varieties of secularism, cosmopolitanism, the clash of civilizations, multiple modernities, imm

- Samuel Huntington, 1993. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* Summer, pp. 22-49.
- S. N. Eisenstadt, 2000. "Multiple Modernities." *Daedalus* 129:1, pp. 1-29.
- Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, 2008. "Varieties of Secularism," in *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 23-45.
- José Casanova, 2011. "Cosmopolitanism, the clash of civilizations and multiple modernities," *Current Sociology* 59:2, 252-267.
- Charles Taylor, 2011. "Western Secularity," *Rethinking Secularism* Craig Calhoun et al., eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 31-53.

Week Six: February 24 Colonialism and Social Movements

Key terms: social movements, missionaries, social welfare

- Baron, *The Orphan Scandal* [entire].

Week Seven: March 2 Religion and Social Movements I [RP2 due]

Key terms: public sphere, counter-public, public/private distinctions, da'wa

- Charles Hirschkind, 2001. "Civic Virtue and Religious Reason: An Islamic Counter-Public," *Cultural Anthropology* 16:1, pp. 3-34.
- Saba Mahmood, "Chapter Two: Topography of the Piety Movement," *The Politics of Piety: The Islamist Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), pp. 40-78.
- Suzanne Brenner, 2011. "Private Moralities in the Public Sphere: Democratization, Islam, and Gender in Indonesia," *American Anthropologist* 113:3, pp. 478-490.

**** No Class March 9 (Spring Break) ****

Week Eight: March 16 Religion and Social Movements II

Key terms: mobilization, social movements, public sphere

- Ziad Munson, *The Making of Pro-Life Activists* [entire].

Week Ten: March 23 Religion and Conflict I [RP3 due]

Key terms: assimilation, cooperation, polarization, pogrom, secession

- Diana Dumitru and Carter Johnson, 2011. “Constructing Interethnic Conflict and Cooperation: Why Some People Harmed Jews and Others Helped Them during the Holocaust in Romania,” *World Politics* 63:1, 1-42.
- Giovanni Capoccia, Lawrence Saez and Eline de Rooil, 2012. “When State Responses Fail: Religion and Secessionism in India 1952—2002,” *The Journal of Politics* 74:4, 1010–022.
- M. Steven Fish, Francesca R. Jensenius and Katherine E. Michel, 2010. “Islam and Large-Scale Political Violence: Is There a Connection?” *Comparative Political Studies* 43:11, 1327-1362.

Week Eleven: March 30 Religion and Conflict II *

Key terms: The Islamic State, Islamic law, authoritarianism, political order

- Introduction to Syria, Iraq and ISIS:
 - Vice Documentary on ISIS: <https://news.vice.com/video/the-islamic-state-full-length>
 - The New York Times, Nov 20, 2014. “Efforts to stem the rise of the Islamic State” <http://nyti.ms/1pOUv3k>
 - BBC News, “What is ‘Islamic State’?” <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29052144>
 - Toby Dodge, 2012. “Introduction: Assessing the Future of Iraq”, *Adelphi Series* Vol. 52, Issue. 434-435, 13-30.
- Audrey Kurth Cronin, “ISIS Is Not a Terrorist Group: Why Counterterrorism Won’t Stop the Latest Jihadist Threat” *Foreign Affairs* March/April 2015, pp. 1-9.
- Dodge et al. “Iraq between Maliki and the Islamic State” *POMEPS Briefing #24* (July 9, 2014): 1-38.
- Thomas Hegghammer, 2011. “The Rise of Muslim Foreign Fighters: Islam and the Globalization of Jihad,” *International Security* 35:3, pp. 53-94.
- Andrew F March and Mara Revkin, “Caliphate of Law: ISIS’ Ground Rules,” *Foreign Affairs* March/April 2015, pp. 1-7.
- Christoph Reuter, “The Terror Strategist: Secret Files Reveal the Structure of Islamic State” *Der Spiegel* (April 18, 2015).

Recommended:

- Thomas Hegghammer, “Why Terrorists Weep: The Socio-Cultural Practices of Jihadi Militants.” Paul Wilkinson Memorial Lecture, University of St. Andrews, 16 April 2015.

*These readings may be supplemented or replaced closer to the date of the class in response to the changing political situations in Iraq and Syria

Week Twelve: April 6 Religion and Democracy [RPX due]

Key terms: separation of religion and state, democracy, twin tolerations

- Jonathan Fox, 2006. "World Separation of Religion and State Into the 21st Century," *Comparative Political Studies* 39:5, 537-569.
- Alfred Stepan, 2000. "Religion, democracy, and the "twin tolerations," *Journal of Democracy*, 11:4, 37-56.
- Alfred Stepan, Juan J. Linz and Yogendra Yadav. "Comparative Theory and Political Practice: Do We Need a 'State-Nation' Model as Well as a 'Nation-State' Model?" *Crafting State-Nations: India and Other Multinational Democracies* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 1-38.
- Stathis N. Kalyvas, 1998. "From Pulpit to Party: Party Formation and the Christian Democratic Phenomenon," *Comparative Politics*, 30:3, 293-312.
- Charles Kurzman and Ijlal Naqvi, 2010. "Do Muslims Vote Islamic?" *Journal of Democracy* 21:2, pp. 50-63.

Week Thirteen: April 13 Religion and Development

Key terms: development, liberation theology, social medicine, preferential option for the poor

- Michael Griffin and Jennie Weiss Block, *In the Company of the Poor* [entire]
- James Carroll, 2013. "Who Am I To Judge?: A Radical Pope's First Year." *The New Yorker* <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/12/23/who-am-i-to-judge>

**** No Class April 20 (BU Monday) ****

Week Fourteen: April 27 Religion and Psychology

- Hoesterey, *Rebranding Islam* [entire]

**** May 4: Final exams and research papers due via email by noon ****

Response Papers – Grading Rubric

5/5 Answers the prompt in a coherent manner. Makes creative *links* between the reading, authors and concepts. Goes *beyond* the assigned content to draw fresh insights and analysis. Demonstrates *mastery* of the material and engages in independent thinking. Avoids making claims unsupported by evidence and/or reasonable judgment, or making fallacious claims including equivocation. Writing is exceptionally lucid.

4.5/5 Answers the prompt in a coherent way. Makes *links* between the cases, concepts or authors. Demonstrates a *solid* understanding of the material and goes beyond simple regurgitation, even if all claims are not convincingly established. Avoids being vague, making claims unsupported by evidence and/or reasonable judgment. Writing is clear and concise.

4/5 Answers the prompt in a coherent way although lacks creativity and depth. Demonstrates more than cursory understanding of the material. Tends toward vagueness but does not make claims unsupported by evidence and/or reasonable judgment. Writing is good.

3.5/5 Answers the prompt. Provides examples of cases, concepts or authors but fails to effectively connect evidence to the prompt. Makes claims unsupported by evidence and/or reasonable judgment. Writing itself is acceptable but needs improvement.

3/5 Unclear answer to the prompt. Fails to lay out the answer with evidence from the cases concepts, and/or fails effectively connect evidence to the argument. Tends toward vagueness, makes claims unsupported by evidence and/or reasonable judgment. Writing itself is poor.

2.5 - States an unclear claim. Fails to lay out the argument with evidence from the texts and fails to demonstrate knowledge of the material itself. Vague, makes claims unsupported by evidence and/or reasonable judgment. Writing itself is unacceptable or incoherent.

Presentations – Grading Rubric

Each student will be assigned to a two-person group, which will be responsible for one 10-minute presentation on current events regarding religion and politics. The aim of this assignment is two-fold: (1) to provide presenters with an opportunity to improve their oral presentation skills, and (2) to increase students' understanding of various aspects of contemporary religious political movements. Presentation topics must be approved by the professor and be relevant to that week's themes.

1 pt. Clear and concise

1 pt. Comprehensive

1 pt. Logical

1 pt. Accurate

1 pt. Imaginative

5 pt. Total