

**POLS 3490/MID E 3649**

**RELIGION AND POLITICS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

*Fall 2006*

*Instructor: Etga Ugur*

*Class Time: T, H 9:10-10:30 a.m.*

*Office: OSH 325*

*Office Hours: W 1:30-2:30 p.m.; H 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.*

*and by appointment*

*E-mail: [etga.ugur@poli-sci.utah.edu](mailto:etga.ugur@poli-sci.utah.edu)*

*Tel: 581-6372*

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**OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES**

The public role of religion seems to be a common controversy in almost every corner of the world in the contemporary age. If we think for a moment the issues that are on the agenda of public debate in our societies, we will realize that religion is an important and contentious aspect of our daily lives. Religious symbols in France and Turkey, moral issues in the US, criminal-legal sanctions in Nigeria, and religiously inspired activism and occasional confrontations of different religious groups in India, Sri Lanka, and Britain all demonstrate an ongoing debate and struggle over the place of religion in the larger system of public ethos. This course is designed to study this public visibility of religion across the world.

In the course of the semester we will discuss three major themes. First, we will examine the ways in which religion gets involved in politics in the three domains of the public sphere: the state, the political society, and the civil society. Second, we will investigate the relationship between religious groups and modernity. In other words, we will try to understand why particular religious groups prefer the strategies of isolation, accommodation or rejection vis-à-vis (economic, political and technical) modernization. Last but not least, we will discuss the resurgent religious identity in light of globalization.

This is not a course on comparative religion, so we will not primarily study belief systems of different religions but religiously inspired movements, organizations and ideas. Our major goal is to understand the relationship between religion and politics. This has two dimensions. One is the impact of religion or religiously inspired ideas, institutions and movements on politics (political process, ideology, policy outcomes). And the second is the impact of political ideologies, interests, and structures on religious ideas, organizations, and movements.

The course is structured around themes followed by some case studies. In that way we will be able to discuss similar topics comparatively across the globe. The utility of this type of an approach is two-fold. By studying diverse cases we will be able to overcome the “Western” tones of ‘church’-state relations. And by doing this comparatively we will

be able to identify some common characteristics of the religious engagement with modernity and politics in the contemporary world.

## REQUIREMENTS

Presentation/Paper : 25% (Refer to the sign-up sheet)  
Book Review : 25% (October 10 or November 7)  
Final Exam : 35% (December 5, 7)  
Pop Quizzes and Participation :15%

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Participation includes attendance, coming to class prepared and engaging in class discussion, exercises and activities.

Several pop quizzes will be given in order to test students' familiarity with the weekly readings.

Presentations and Paper: We will dedicate one portion of class time for weekly discussion. During this time, the designated students will do their presentation and will initiate a class discussion with their comments/questions directed to the class. The presentations will be based on selected news articles on the country cases (indicated for each topic in the course outline).

Each group presentation should last 10-15 minutes followed by 10-15 minute class discussion. The point of discussion section is to update our knowledge of the religion/politics relationship in the countries in question and also to be able to make comparative analysis. To that end, the students in charge of leading the discussion should first *introduce the subject* to the class, *summarize* the main points of *the article*, discuss its *relevance* to the particular course topic, and *raise critical questions* and comments.

Finally, the students are expected to submit a 4-5 page group paper a week after their presentation. The paper should briefly summarize the articles, and then compare the country cases in light of the concepts/theories covered for that particular week.

The students are recommended to consult especially to the *Religion in Global Politics* textbook by Jeff Haynes for some initial background information on the countries they are presenting.

The assignment of topics and presentation dates will be determined during the first class.

Book Review: Students are required to write a 4-5 page book review of the Almond et al. or Fuller book. Please note that the deadlines for the two are different (refer to the course outline). The reviews should *summarize* the main points of the books, make *connections* with class topics, and critically evaluate their *contribution and usefulness* for our understanding of the relationship between religion and politics.

Final Exam: Comprehensive in-class test consisting of concept-identifications and essay questions.

Late Entry Policy: Make-ups for missed exams and incompletes for the course will be given at my discretion. In cases of serious and unavoidable circumstances, arrangements can be made to take the exams earlier and later (with the exception of final exam). Prior permission of the instructor is obligatory in any case. Make-up tests will be taken at the Test Center (Students Services Building, Rm. 498) with a fee of \$ 5 per exam.

Academic Honesty: I expect academic honesty in this class. Cheating and presenting somebody else's work or ideas as your own are serious offences. You should make sure to include citation information whenever you draw on others' work. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Americans with Disabilities Act Notice: Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations to meet the expectations of this course are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the instructor as soon as possible. Written documentation of the disability should be submitted along with the request for special accommodations. For more information, please contact the Center for Disabled Student Service, 160 Union Building, 581-5020, [www.disability.utah.edu](http://www.disability.utah.edu).

## READINGS

- Textbooks:
- Jeff Haynes, *Religion in Global Politics*, Longman, 1998.
  - Almond et al., *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalisms around the World*, University of Chicago Press, 2003.
  - Graham E. Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, Palgrave MacMillan, 2003.
- (Optional)
- M. Hakan Yavuz, *The Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, Oxford University Press, 2003.

The lectures and class discussions will complement each other. The students are responsible for everything covered in class lectures and discussions as well as the assigned readings.

Also note that for most weeks, there will be some additional readings besides the required textbook and those will be available on electronic reserve through the library website.

This course will also be activated on Web CT (<https://webct.utah.edu/webct>). Students are encouraged to keep an eye on Web CT to check occasional announcements, suggested readings, study guides and grades. It may also serve as a useful tool for student communication and online discussion.

## COURSE OUTLINE

August 24

### **Introduction**

-Haynes, Ch. 1

August 29-31

### **Secularization, Religion and the State**

- Haynes pp. 63-68, Ch. 5  
- Alfred Stepan, "Religion, Democracy, and the Twin Tolerations", *Journal of Democracy* 11.4 (2000) 37-57

Cases: Britain, Poland, France

September 5-12

### **Secularization, Religion and the State**

- Haynes Ch. 6, 7  
- Fuller, Ch. 6  
- Vali Nasr, "Lessons from the Muslim World," *Daedalus*, vol.132, no. 3 (Summer 2003): 67-72.

Cases: Afghanistan, Iran, Sudan

September 14-19

### **Religion, Ethnicity and Nationalism**

-Haynes, pp. 68-85, Ch. 9

Cases: India, Yugoslavia, Ireland

September 21-28

### **Religion and Politics**

-Haynes, pp. 28-41, Ch. 3  
-Ira Sharkansky, "Religion and Politics in Israel and Utah," *Journal of Church & State*, Summer 1997, vol. 39, no. 3.

Cases: US-Utah, Germany, Latin America

October 3-10

### **Religion and Politics**

-Fuller, Ch. 1, 2, 3, 7, 10

#### Suggested:

-Vali Nasr, "The Rise of Muslim Democracy", *Journal of Democracy*, 16:2, 2005, 13-17.  
-[Alfred Stepan](#) with [Graeme B. Robertson](#), "An 'Arab' More Than 'Muslim' Electoral Gap", *Journal of Democracy*, 14.3 (2003) 30-44.  
-[Mark Tessler](#), [Mansoor Moaddel](#), [Ronald Inglehart](#), "What do Iraqis Want?" *Journal of Democracy* 17.1 (2006) 38-50.

Cases: Iraq, Turkey, Algeria

- October 5 *Fall Break-No Class*
- October 12-17 **Religion and International Relations**  
 - Fuller, Ch. 4, 5, 8, 9  
**\*\* Fuller Book Review Due**  
Cases: Israel-Palestine, Egypt, Pakistan
- October 19-November 2 **Religion and Civil Society**  
 -Haynes, pp. 20-27, Ch. 10  
 - Fredrick Harris, “Ties that Bind and Flourish: Religion as Social Capital in African American Politics and Society” in Corwin Smidt (ed), *Religion as Social Capital* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003), pp.121-137  
  
 (Suggested)-Hillel Fradkin, “Does Democracy Need Religion?”, *Journal of Democracy* 11.1 (2000) 87-94.  
  
Cases: US, Latin America, South East Asia
- November 7-14 **Religious Fundamentalism**  
 Almond et al., Ch. 1-3  
**\*\* Almond Book Review Due**  
Cases: Christian, Jewish, Muslim
- November 16-28 **Religious Fundamentalism**  
 Almond et al., Ch. 4-6  
  
Cases: Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist
- November 23 *Thanksgiving Break- No Class*
- November 30-December 5 **Conclusion**  
 - Haynes, Ch. 11  
  
**\*\* Final Exam: December 5, 7**