Course Description
What is the relationship between religion and politics? This course examines the meanings of, and interactions between, religion and politics in comparative politics and international relations. At the center of the course are questions about the impact religion has on a wide range of politically relevant outcomes and the mechanisms through which religion shapes those outcomes. The course provides an overview of the main theoretical, conceptual, and empirical studies of religion and politics. The course pays particular attention to the interaction of religion and democracy, and the relationship between religion and conflict.

Course Requirements
I. Reading and Participation
Students are expected to attend each class ready to contribute to the discussion and to have done the readings assigned for each session. Although I may provide contextual and introductory material for some books or set of readings, responsibility for the direction of class discussions will be shared among us. Participation will be graded each week as follows:

A = Actively participated (e.g. raised hand, seemed in command of readings) (100)
A/B = Spoke when prompted or only minimally (90)
C = Attended but did not speak (75)
F = Did not attend (0)

II. Critical reviews
Each student will be responsible for writing two short critical review papers during the semester. In the paper, consider your job to be that of a discussant on a panel; you can't ignore one or more of the readings, even if you don't like it, and you have to think of a way to make connections between readings so that your comments are coherent. Also the paper should raise points for discussion, and note positive or negative aspects of the work, not just summarize the arguments. See the “Questions to consider in formulating and evaluating social science research” below for some guiding questions to consider for each reading. All papers should:

a. Discuss all of the week's readings, though there does not have to be an equal amount of space for each reading.
b. Include two discussion questions.
c. Be completed by 8 PM on the Monday evening before the seminar and uploaded to Learn@UW.
d. Be no longer than 1,500 words (approximately 5-6 pages), and include page numbers and a word count at the top next to your name.
e. Paper grading criteria (point values given in parentheses):
   A = Raised interesting or innovative points in essay and questions + fulfilled all
       A/B requirements (100)
   A/B = Made connections between readings in essay and questions + fulfilled all B
        requirements (90)
   B = Accurately captured the main arguments or critical points in all of the readings
       in the essay and provided relevant discussion questions (85)
   B/C = Discussed some readings and provided discussion questions (80)
   C = Egregiously inaccurate or incomplete discussion of readings or missing
       questions (75)
       • Late papers will be marked down one grade if not posted by 9pm Monday, 2
         grades down if not posted by 9 am on Tuesday.
       • Papers with a significant number of grammatical or spelling errors will be
         marked down one grade. Make sure to proofread.

III. Final paper
The major assignment is an original research paper on an aspect of religion and politics that you
are interested in. All papers must be analytical in character. This means that they should identify
an interesting question dealing with the intersection of religion and politics, offer an answer to
that question, and explore the extent to which that answer is better (either qualitatively or
quantitatively) than the potential alternatives. The paper should be between 8000 and 10,000
words and is due in class on May 7th. You are strongly encouraged to discuss the paper with me
throughout the semester.

Grading Criteria
Final course grades will be assigned according to the following weights:
   Class participation 20 percent
   Critiques 20 percent
   Research paper 60 percent

Course Readings
Articles and book chapters will be placed on line. You can access them through the “Learn@UW”
link from the UW webpage. The following books have been ordered at the UW Bookstore.
   • Weber, Max The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.
     University Press,
     University Press. (recommended)
Questions to consider in formulating and evaluating social science research (thanks to Hein Goemans)

1. What is the central question?
   - Why is it important (theoretically, substantively)?
   - What is being explained (what is the dependent variable and how does it vary)?
   - How does this phenomenon present a puzzle?

2. What is the central answer?
   - What is doing the explaining (what are the independent variables and how do they vary)?
   - What are the hypotheses (what is the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, what kind of changes in the independent variable causes what kind of change in the dependent variable)?
   - What are the causal mechanisms (why are the independent and dependent variables related as in the hypothesis)?
   - How do the independent variables relate to each other?
   - What assumptions does the theory make?
   - Is the theory falsifiable?
   - What does this answer add to our understanding of the question?

3. What are the possible alternative explanations?
   - What assumptions does the central answer make about the direction of causality?
   - What other answers might there be to the central question, and to what degree do they conflict with the central answer?
   - Could the hypothesized relationships have occurred by chance?

4. Why are the possible alternative explanations wrong?
   - What is the logical structure of the alternative explanations, and why do they fail?
   - What is the empirical reasons for the failure of the alternative explanations?

5. What is the relationship between the theory and the evidence
   - What does the research design allow to vary (i.e., are the explanations variables or constants)?
   - What does the research design hold constant (i.e., does it help rule out alternative explanations)?
   - How are the theoretical constructs operationalized?

6. How do the empirical conclusions relate to the theory?
   - How confident are you about the theory in light of the evidence?
   - How widely do the conclusions generalize? What are the limitations of the study?
   - What does the provisionally accepted or revised theory say about questions of broader important?
COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING LIST

Week 1 (January 22): Introduction: Religion in political science

Week 2 (January 29): Religious ideas, values, and politics
Weber, Max The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. (skim chapter 4, except for Calvinism section), 3-80, 102-125

Week 3 (February 5): Functionalist religion

Week 4: (February 12): Political Economy approaches to Religion and Politics

Week 5 (February 19): Religion and social capital


**Week 6 (February 26): Religious nationalism**


**Week 7 (March 5): Religion and democracy I: Is there a relationship?**


**Week 8 (March 12): Religion and democracy II: Religious parties**


Week 9 (March 19) Religion and democracy III: the Inclusion-moderation thesis

Week 10 (April 2): Religion and violence I: Is there a connection?
Week 11 (April 9): Religion and violence II: religion, terrorism and civil wars
Fish, M. Steven, 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 12 (April 16): Religion and violence III: religion and inter-state war

Week 13 (April 23): Religion and conflict resolution
Chatterjee, Margaret. 1983. Gandhi’s religious thought. South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, selections

**Week 14 (April 30): Reconsidering secularism**


**Week 15 (May 7): Papers due**
Recommended Readings

Religion in Political Science

The Weberian approach
Durkheim and Functionalist religion

Geertz, Clifford. “Religion as a Cultural System,” in The Interpretation of Cultures, 87-125.

Political Economy of Religion and Politics


**Religion and social capital**


Machiavelli, Niccolo, The Discourses, chapters 12-15 (149-160)


Plato, The Republic, Book III, 413a–427e (92-105)


Wickham, Mobilizing Islam

Wiktorowicz. 2003. Islamic Activism: a social movement theory approach


Religious Nationalism


Barth, Fredrick. “Are Islamists nationalists or internationalists?”


Tilli, An interpretation of Finnish religious nationalism- the four topoi of theological depoliticisation


**Fundamentalism**

*The Fundamentalism Project*, Five volumes.


Yadav, Understanding what Islamists want: public debate and contestation in Lebanon and Yemen
Burgat, Francois and William Dowell. 1993. The Islamist Movement in North Africa. Austin, TX: The Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Texas at Austin.

*The Fundamentalism Project* from the National Academy of Sciences

**Religion, conflict, and conflict resolution**
Ben-Dor, Gabriel and Ami Pedahzur. “The Uniqueness of Islamic Fundamentalism and the Fourth Wave of International Terrorism,” *Totalitarian Movements & Political Religions.*
Berkowitz, Shmuel. 2000. The battle for the holy places: the struggle over Jerusalem and the holy sites in Israel, Judea, Samaria and Gaza district.


Ikle, Fred. Every war must end. Columbia University press. 1971


Kline, Menahem. 2001. Shattering a taboo: the contacts towards a permanent status agreement in Jerusalem.


Stern, Jessica Terror in the name of God


Fox, “Religion and conflict resolution”

Gopin, Marc. 2002. *Holy War, Holy Peace: How religion can bring peace to the middle east*


Johansen, Radical Islam and Nonviolence- A Case Study of Religious Empowerment and Constraint among Pashtuns


Hammad Sheikh* Jeremy Ginges* Alin Coman# Scott Atran, “Religion, group threat and sacred values”

**Religion and democracy**


Hamid, Arab Islamist Parties- losing on purpose


The secularization debate


Recommended:


Steve Bruce, ed. Religion and Modernization.

Bruce, Steve. 2002. God is Dead: Secularization in the West.


Is there a clash of civilizations?


**Transnational Religion**


**Recommended**


Katzenstein and Byrnes, eds. 2006. Transnational Religion in an Expanding Europe
Rudolph, Susanne Hoeber and James Piscatori, eds. Transnational religion and fading states