

CERS-4000 RELIGION AND POLITICS IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE**Foundational Themes in Religion and Politics & their Social, Economic,
and Historical Implications**

Tuesday, 09:40-12:30PM, GTU Library Collaborative Learning Space

Instructor

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Course Description

The role of religion in contemporary world politics has become even more complex after a series of events that shook the twenty-first-century: the 9/11 attacks in 2001 and the post-9/11 wars, the Jasmine Revolution in Islamic countries, the rise of Hindu nationalism in India, China's expansionism, the election of President Donald Trump, and rise of the Black Lives Matter movement. New questions and suspicions concerning religion arise. What is religion, and what is politics in this new century? Should they be separated, and can they? What should we do as religious people and faithful citizens? This course is a journey to acquire the capacity to answer these questions with a global perspective.

This course will give a critical overview of the relationship between religion and politics in various regions of the world. In this course, religion is defined not only as formal theological creeds but also as the societal beliefs, organizations, and subcultures associated with various religious/non-religious communities. Also, politics is not merely a set of institutional structure of statecraft but a whole dynamics of grass-root political life of each individual and community. Students will be encouraged to keep the limitations of two prevelant concepts: religion and politics. The main goals of the course are threefold:

1. To build a tool to analyze what it means to be a religion and what role it plays in society
2. To analyze our own context through this tool
3. To construct an ethical/theological perspective for the role of religion in politics

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

At the end of this course students will be able to:

Outcome	Assessment
<p>1. Outcome 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine the diversity of religious communities and the effects of that diversity on politics; Define the meaning of ‘religious’ and ‘political’ in the 21st century. 	<p>1. Assessment 1</p> <p>Critical Reflection #1 on assigned readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essay on the political system and religious tradition of a given context. What is religion and what is politics?
<p>2. Outcome 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe and analyze the historical, philosophical, theological and practical issues in the relation between politics and religious belief/practice. 	<p>2. Assessment 2</p> <p>Critical Reflection #2 on assigned readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essay addressing convergences and divergences across religious and political traditions. What is the historical trajectory of your context?
<p>3. Outcome 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the role of religion in diverse cultures and, ultimately, in political sources of identities and norms for behavior. 	<p>3. Assessment 3</p> <p>Class Presentation on student’s choice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine and elucidate the relationship between a religion (or a comprehensive doctrine, belief system, so on) and politics in a specific context.
<p>4. Outcome 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze intersectionally the religious perspective of a select group of people and indicate how factors such race, gender, etc. shape voting and political behavior. 	<p>4. Assessment 4</p> <p>i. Consistent attendance at Class Lectures and Participation in & Facilitation of Class Discussions.</p>
<p>5. Outcome 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply the theories and assertions and identify the roles of religion and how it shaped a country and how subcultures are mobilized on behalf of political ends. 	<p>5. Assessment 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Studies and Special Lectures Final Research Paper & Class Presentation of Outline

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

EVALUATION

- I. **20% (Critical Reflection 1&2)** - Critical Essays on assigned readings
- II. **20% (Participation)** – Participation in the Discourse on Theology & Ethics
 - (i) Class Attendance, Engagement with, and Facilitation of Class Discussions
- III. **20% (Presentation)** – Class Presentation
 - (i) In-depth Analysis of the Issue
 - (ii) Succinct Elucidation of the Issue
 - (iii) Well-organized Delivery to Audience
- IV. **40% Final Project (Research Paper)**
 - 40% 10-12 pages Final Research Paper

GRADING

Assignment Grade Equivalencies:

- A: 96-95 – A publication-worthy paper with minor revisions; significantly exceeds expectations
- A-: 93-90 – A publishable paper with major revisions; exceeds expectations
- B+: 89-87 – A well done paper that meets all expectations
- B: 86-83 – Meets basic expectation
- B -: 83-80 – Does not meet basic expectations
- C: Failure to meet standards of the GTU Theology & Ethics Seminar

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

I. **Two Critical Reflections on the Readings (20%) | (400-500 Words)**

Essay #1. Essay on political system and religious tradition of given context that focuses on:

- Reading materials from Weeks 2 & 3.
- Due Week 3.

Essay #2. Essay addressing convergences and divergences across religious and political traditions that focuses on:

- Reading materials from Weeks 5 & 6.
- Due Week 7.

Critical Reflections must include:

1. 400-500 Words (not to exceed 550) - (1-2) pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman.
2. Major Theses of the articles, chapters, or group of chapters, summarizing key points,

teachings, or arguments of the authors / writers.

3. Response / Reaction. Present your critical analysis of the readings to convey your critique, constructive viewpoint, and questions raised by your reflection.
4. Citation / References.

Essay Grading:

Essays should demonstrate:

Basic Expectations (all of the following):

1. Understanding of authors' positions.
2. Clear Thesis & Supportive Argumentation.
3. Critical & Evenhanded Engagement.
4. Correct Grammar.
5. Proper Style
 - Turabian

Advanced Composition:

6. Interdisciplinary: Bring in another discipline, field, or theory than the one being studied.
7. Reflection on the value of the material for:
 - Gender, Intersectional, and Cross-Cultural needs, considerations, and transactions.
8. Application: How do the assigned readings speak to (or can be used to engage):
 - Problems of the contemporary era.

II. **Class Presentation. Examine and elucidate the relationship between a religion (or a comprehensive doctrine, belief system, so on) and politics as it is reflected in:**

- Religion and political system of student's choice—it would be better if they are your own— explaining convergences and divergences.
- Explore how religion and politics react, converge, and diverge from each other.
- Focus on reading material from Weeks 1 – 8.

III. **Seminar Attendance (20%).** Missed classes will affect student cognition and participation, and will impact grade (unless faculty excuses for critical reason or emergency). More than one missed class (class held 1x/wk.) will result in loss of 2 percentage points per absence unless there is a documented reason related to family, health, legal, transport, or other emergency.

- Students will have a chance to facilitate class discussions. Each group will engage the readings and come up with a QCC: question, comment, and/or concern.
- Participation is always expected.

IV. Final Research Paper /Presentation (40%).

- **The final research paper will explain and assess a theo-ethical approach to a major contemporary topic of concern.**

Final Research Paper /Presentation Cont'd:

- **The topic and sources must be approved first by the instructor during a meeting or email communication with each student (before Thanksgiving break).**
- **When composing the final research paper:**
 1. Choose a specific issue on religion and politics:
 - Contemporary societal and global challenges—ethical, moral, relational, sociological, environmental, economic, etc.
 2. Use one or more of the readings, approaches, and theories that have been studied in the seminar.
 3. In relation to the specific religion/politics issue you have chosen to focus on:
 - Emphasize the work and thought of a particular theory, religious-political movement, individual, or community.
 4. The grade for this paper will be based on the extent to which the following requirements are fulfilled and the Assignment Grade Equivalencies.
 - i) Clarity of thesis statement.
 - ii) Sufficient evidence (properly referenced) to support your thesis.
 - iii) Careful and comprehensive grasp of the material used.
 - iv) Argumentation must be supported by a variety of sources: Primary; Secondary; Monographs; Edited Volumes; Journal Articles.
 - v) Demonstrated critical (analytical) and evenhanded approach.
 - vi) Appropriate & consistent use of citations (Turabian).
 - vii) Works Cited Page or Bibliography of works referenced (not solely to class materials).

COURSE FORMAT

- Lectures (faculty and guests) with audio-visual content as appropriate
- Interactive Discussion with student facilitation and presentation as assigned

REQUIRED TEXT

- All course materials will be posted on Moodle.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 (M/D)

FOUNDATIONAL QUESTIONS I

What is Religion? What are the Categories of Religion?

Assigned Readings:

- Asad, Talal, "The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category." In *Genealogies of Religion*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998, 27-54.
- Storm, Jason Josephson, *The Invention of Religion in Japan*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012, 1-21.

WEEK 2 (M/D)

FOUNDATIONAL QUESTIONS II

What is Politics and What is its Impact on Religion?

- Lefort, Claude, "The Permanence of the Theologico-Political?" transl. David Macey. In *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, Hent de Vries and Lawrence Eugene Sullivan, eds., New York: Fordham University Press, 2006.
- Quealy, Kevin. "Your Rabbi? Probably a Democrat. Your Baptist Pastor? Probably a Republican. Your Priest? Who Knows," *The New York Times*, June 12, 2017.
- Mahmood, Naazir. "Feminism and a People's Perspective," *The News nn Sunday*, July 26, 2020. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/691950-feminism-and-a-peoples-perspective>

WEEK 3 (M/D)

FOUNDATIONAL QUESTIONS III

What is Your Definition of the Relationship Between Religion and Politics?

- Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise*, Chapters 7-9
- Casanova, Jose, "Public Religions Revisited," in *Religion: Beyond a Concept*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2008.
- Marvin, Carolyn and Ingle, David W. *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation*. London: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Shahra Razavi & Anne Jenichen (2010) The Unhappy Marriage of Religion and Politics: problems and pitfalls for gender equality, *Third World Quarterly*, 31:6, 833-850, DOI: [10.1080/01436597.2010.502700](https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2010.502700) https://brill.com/view/journals/rhrs/6/1/article-p75_5.xml

WEEK 4 (M/D)

FOUNDATIONAL QUESTIONS IV

Religion as a Source of Politics? or Politics as a Cause of Religious Movement?

- Martin Luther King Jr. "I Have a Dream"
- Weber, Max. 1958. The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism. In *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Stark, Rodney, and Roger Finke. 2000. *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, Chapter 5.
- Blydes, Lisa, and Drew A. Linzer. "The Political Economy of Women's Support for Fundamentalist Islam" *World Politics* 60 (2008): 576-609.

WEEK 5 (M/D)
CASE STUDY: U.S.A.

Guest Speaker: **Dr. Nathan Walker** (<https://www.natewalker.com/>)

- The First Amendment, The Establishment Clause
- Hamburger, Philip. *Separation of Church and State*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009. Introduction, Chapter 1.
- Levitsky, Steve and Ziblatt, Daniel. *How Democracies Die*. New York: Broadway Books, 2018. Part 1.

WEEK 6 (M/D)
CASE STUDY: INDIA

Guest Speaker: **Zulunungsang Lemtur**

- Malji, Andrea. "The Rise of Hindu Nationalism and Its Regional and Global Ramifications" *Asian Politics* Vol. 23, No. 1 (Spring 2018): 39-43.
- Nussbaum, Martha. *The Clash Within: Democracy, Religious Violence, and India's Future*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007. Chapter 2, 4, and 5.
- Subramanian, Samanth. "How Hindu Supremacists are Tearing India Apart." *The Guardian*, February 20, 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/20/hindu-supremacists-nationalism-tearing-india-apart-modi-bjp-rss-jnu-attacks>.
- TBD

WEEK 7 (M/D)
CASE STUDY: KOREA

- Walraven, Boudewijn. "Popular Religion in a Confucianized Society," JaHyun Kim Haboush and Martina Deuchler eds. In *Culture and the State in Late Choson Korea*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Belke, Thomas J. *Juche: A Christian Study of North Korea's State Religion*. Bartlesville, OK: Living Sacrifice Book Company, 1999
- TBD

WEEK 8 (M/D)
CASE STUDY: ITALY

Guest Speaker: **Dr. Gabriella Lettini and Dr. Paolo Naso (Sapienza-Universita' di Roma)**

- Ferrari, Alessandro and Ferrari, Silvio. "Religion and the Secular State: The Italian Case," *Religion and the Secular State: National Reports*, Madrid, Spain: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad Complutense, 2015.
- Pin, Andrea. "Public Schools, the Italian Crucifix, and the European Court of Human Rights: The Italian Separation of Church and State," *Emory International Law Review*, Vol. 25 Issue 1 (2011): 96-149.
- Office of International Religious Freedom. "2018 Report on International Religious Freedom: Italy," *The Annual Report on Religious Freedom 2018*. The U. S. Department of State, 2018. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2018-report-on-international-religious-freedom/italy/>
- Mithans, Gasper. "The Italian Fascist Regime, the Catholic Church and Protestant Religious Minorities in *terre redente* (1918-40)," *Approaching Religion*, Vol. 9, No. 1-2 (October 2019): 57-76.
- Fahmy, Dalia. "In Western Europe, Most People Back Church-state Separation Even While Many Willingly Pay Church Tax," Pew Research Center, May 28, 2019.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/05/28/in-western-europe-most-people-back-church-state-separation-even-while-many-willingly-pay-church-tax/>

WEEK 9 (M/D)

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 10 (M/D)

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 11

RELIGION AND POLITICS IN ACTION

- Davis, Creston, Milbank, John, and Žižek, Slavoj. *Theology and The Political: The New Debate*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. Selected Chapters: Intro, 2.
- Morris, Catherine, "Case Studies in Religion and Peacebuilding." *In Religion and Peacebuilding*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2004.

WEEK 12

RELIGION AND POLITICS IN ACTION

- Davis, Creston, Milbank, John, and Žižek, Slavoj. *Theology and The Political*. Selected Chapters: 3, 18.
- Smith, Ted. *Weird John Brown: Divine Violence and the Limits of Ethics*. California, Stanford University Press, 2014.

WEEK 13

How/Where Should Religion and Politics Meet to Generate a Just, Loving Society?

Student Presentations of the Final Paper Proposals / Discussion

WEEK 14

- Final Paper Due

COURSE POLICIES

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of another's ideas, methods, research, or words without proper acknowledgement. It runs the gamut from failing to cite a reference (sloppy scholarship), to passing off another's work as one's own. It includes close paraphrasing as well as lifting of entire lines nearly verbatim without acknowledgement. As the effects of the plagiarism will be the same regardless of intent, intent will not be construed as essential to the act, although it may be considered in determining whether the charge of plagiarism should be pursued or what the penalty may be. For general requirements for proper acknowledgement in written work, see the most current edition of Kate Turabian, *Manual for the Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* and *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Arrangements in Cases of Documented Disability

If you will need special arrangements for meeting course requirements for reasons of documented disability, please speak to one of the instructors very early in the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. A description of the GTU policy regarding accommodation for differently abled students is online at: <http://gtu.edu/admissions/life-at-gtu/students-with-disabilities>

Honor Code

Students in all courses and phases of the Doctoral Program are subject to the GTU Honor Code, described on p. 15 of the on-line Student Handbook. Please note: "Documented evidence that a student has violated the honor code may result in immediate expulsion from the program."

Other GTU Policies

Students and faculty in required Doctoral Seminars are also subject to GTU Institutional Policies, detailed on pp. 54 ff. in the on-line Student Handbook, including: Non-discrimination, AIDS non-discrimination, and Drug Free Environment (52), Inclusive Language (54), Plagiarism (55 ff.), Exceptions and Accommodations (63 ff.), and Sexual Misconduct (65 ff.).

Note any stipulations regarding conduct, absences, late submissions, special needs, etc. We are required by the Graduate Theological Union, the Association of Theological Seminaries (ATS), and the Department of Education to include the following statements in all SKSM Syllabi:

- Academic Conduct

<https://www.sksm.edu/current-students/statement-academic-integritymisconduct/>

- Plagiarism

<https://www.sksm.edu/plagiarism/>

- Notice to Students About Your Privacy (FERPA)

<https://www.sksm.edu/academics/policy-statements/ferpa-familyeducational-rights-and-privacy-act/>

- Disability Policy

<https://www.sksm.edu/resources/student-handbook/starr-kingpolicies/students-with-disabilities-policy/>