

Religion and Politics in the Developing World

POLI 139, Spring 2019

MWF 1:00 – 2:05pm

Kenna Hall 111

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Office Hours:
Wednesday 2:15-4pm
Thursday 11am-12pm
and by appointment

This political science course is designed for three complementary and overlapping purposes. First, it is an upper-division comparative politics course that treats the political effects of religion in various developing world cultures, societies, and political systems. Second, it constitutes a course in Religion, Culture, and Theology 2 (see below for learning objectives) for the Core. Third, it has been approved as part of the Religion and Politics pathway for the Core.

By the end of the course, students should be able to

- understand variation in the effects of religion and religious groups on political behavior and institutions around the world
- formulate explanations for political phenomena that are consistent with empirical variation
- compare and contrast religious politics across countries and across religions

This course fulfills the Religion, Theology & Culture 2 Requirement in the Core Curriculum

Goals: Critical Thinking, Complexity, Religious Reflection

Objectives: Students will

- 2.1 Analyze complex and diverse religious phenomena. (Complexity; Critical Thinking).
(readings, exams)
- 2.2 Integrate and compare different approaches to a coherent set of religious phenomena. (Complexity; Critical Thinking). *(quizzes, review essay)*
- 2.3 Clarify beliefs in light of their critical inquiry into the religious dimensions of human existence. (Reflection; Critical Thinking). *(case comparison, review essay)*

This course is also a part of the Pathway in Politics and Religion. Be aware that if you plan to use this course as part of your pathway you need to save a piece of work to submit online.

Course requirements:

1. Attendance (5% of final grade)

I will take attendance at the beginning of every class. Please notify me in advance if you will miss class because of religious observance, participation in university-sponsored events, or other university-approved reasons for absence. I will calculate this grade as the percentage of classes that you attended, excluding excused absences. I will overlook one unexcused absence.

2. Participation (5%)

This class offers frequent opportunities for participation. Each week is built around an important scholarly article (or book) in the field of religion and politics. I will frequently ask you to analyze these articles in the context of in-class discussions. These discussions are your opportunity to weigh in with your opinions! Each week I will circulate questions to guide the discussion; you can also use these to guide your reading. I encourage everyone to participate during class discussion. Not only will I award participation credit, but speaking up and sharing your opinion is a skill that takes practice. Please take advantage of this opportunity to develop a very useful skill.

I will evaluate participation based on consistency, thoughtfulness, courteousness, and effort, among other things. Please note that I define participation broadly to include my interaction with students during class, at office hours, and by email.

3. Reading quizzes (10%)

Each week, a reading quiz will ask you to answer one of the week's reading questions (which I will have previously circulated—see point 2, above). I do not promise to announce the quiz in advance, although I will try to do so. The quizzes will earn a score of 1 if I am convinced that you did the reading, and a zero otherwise. At the end of the quarter, I will sum the scores and divide by ten, the total number of quizzes. You may make up any quiz for any reason by submitting responses to the full set of reading questions. More details on make-up policy are available on the course website.

4. Map quiz (5%)

During week 2, there will be a map quiz that asks you to locate on a map each of the country cases, their capital cities, and other important geographical features. I will circulate the locations ahead of the quiz for your reference.

5. Review essay (15%)

Students will write one review essay that synthesizes two or three scholarly articles in order to answer one of the five big questions posed in this course. Broadly speaking, in this assignment you will compare and contrast the answers that different articles pose in response to similar questions. At least one of the articles that you review should come from the course syllabus.

You should address your review essay to one of the five questions printed in the course schedule below. The due date for your review essay depends on the question that you choose to address. Review essays addressing Part 1 of the course are due on April 18, Part 2 on May 3, Part 3 on May 17, Part 4 on May 31, and Part 5 on June 10.

6. Case comparison (20%)

Students will write a comparative paper, based on scholarly sources, that compares the political role of religious groups across countries or religions. For the purposes of this assignment, you may define religion broadly. You can choose groups that practice the major world religions, heterodox sects within those religions, or smaller groups that practice less well-known religions.

While it is not required, I strongly encourage you to discuss your paper with me in person. You may attend my office hours or email me to arrange an appointment.

The case comparison is due on Wednesday, May 29.

7. Exams (40%)

Two non-cumulative exams will cover all course material, including lectures, discussion, and assigned reading. I will administer exams during class; they will take the entire period. They will combine short-answer questions that address the specifics of particular cases, and essay questions that ask students to formulate arguments about the major topics of the course. Essay questions will be circulated in advance. Please bring green books.

Course policies:

Electronic devices

Laptop computers are powerful tools for learning if used appropriately. However, I reserve the right to ask students to put them away if I believe that they are distracting students from classroom activities. Smart phones, by contrast, have less functionality for typing and research, and more potential for distraction. If your device doesn't have a keyboard, please leave it at home.

Late assignments

Students, like faculty, juggle many responsibilities, which is why it's so important to meet your deadlines! Nevertheless, I am willing to negotiate extensions, but you must approach me before the assignment is due, not after. Otherwise, late work will incur penalties worth one-sixth of a letter grade per day (e.g. the grade is reduced from a B+ to a B after two days).

Academic integrity

The Academic Integrity pledge is an expression of the University's commitment to fostering an understanding of – and commitment to – a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University. The Academic Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states:

I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code.

Students are expected to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. For more information about Santa Clara University's academic integrity pledge and resources about ensuring academic integrity in your work, see www.scu.edu/academic-integrity/.

Accommodation for students with disabilities

If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through Disabilities Resources, please discuss them with me during my office hours within the first two weeks of class. The full university policy is available at www.scu.edu/disabilities.

Accommodations for pregnant and parenting students

Santa Clara University provides reasonable accommodations to students who are pregnant, have recently experienced childbirth, and/or have medical needs related to childbirth. Pregnant and parenting students can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors, or departments, or by requesting accommodations through Disability Resources.

Discrimination and sexual misconduct (Title IX)

Santa Clara University upholds a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, I encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please consult the University's [Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) or contact [Belinda Guthrie](#). Reports may be submitted online through the [Office of Student Life](#) or anonymously through [EthicsPoint](#)

In-class recordings

The University has a new policy prohibiting in-class recordings “without the knowledge and consent of all recorded parties,” except in cases of approved disability accommodations. The full policy is in the [Student Conduct Code](#) (p. 13).

Course schedule
(Subject to change)

Week 1: Introduction

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|---------------------------|--|
| Monday, April 1 | Introductions |
| Wednesday, April 3 | Secularization and clash of civilizations |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Gill, Anthony. 2001. "Religion and Comparative Politics", pp. 117-130. |
| Friday, April 5 | Approaches to the study of religion |

PART ONE: "Zealots"

Why do religious groups sometimes conflict and other times coexist?

Week 2: Religious riots in India

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|----------------------------|---|
| Monday, April 8 | Background |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Gargan, Edward. 1992. "Peril to the Indian State: A Defiant Hindu Fervor," <i>New York Times</i>, December 8. |
| Wednesday, April 10 | Institutionalized riot systems |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Brass, Paul. 1997. <i>Theft of an Idol</i>, Chapter 7. |
| Friday, April 12 | Explaining variation |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Brass, Paul. 1997. <i>Theft of an Idol</i>, Chapter 8. |

Week 3: Peaceful accommodation in Nigeria

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|----------------------------|---|
| Monday, April 15 | Nigeria's constitutional convention |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Laitin, David. 1986. <i>Hegemony and Culture</i>, Chapter 1. |
| Wednesday, April 17 | The sources of religious identity |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Von Tunzelmann, Alex. 2017. "Who Is to Blame for Partition, Above All, Imperial Britain," <i>New York Times</i>, August 18. |
| Friday, April 19 | <i>Good Friday; no class</i> |

PART TWO: “Crusaders”

Under what conditions do religious groups kill in the name of God?

Week 4: Terrorism

Monday, April 22

Suicide terrorism

- Hoffman, Bruce. 2003. “The Logic of Suicide Terrorism,” *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Wednesday, April 24

ISIS

- Wood, Graeme. 2015. “What ISIS Really Wants,” *The Atlantic*

Friday, April 26

The multi-vocality of religious belief

- Ghobash, Omar Saif. 2016. “Advice for Young Muslims: How to Survive in an Age of Extremism and Islamophobia,” *Foreign Affairs*, November 29.

Week 5: Persecution in Myanmar

Monday, April 29

The Rohingya

- Beech, Hannah. 2017. “‘No Such Thing as Rohingya’: Myanmar Erases a History,” *New York Times*, December 2.
- “How the Rohingya Escaped,” *New York Times*, Interactive Feature, December 21, 2017; <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/12/21/world/asia/how-the-rohingya-escaped.html> (*This interactive multimedia feature includes disturbing images and is therefore OPTIONAL.*)

Wednesday, May 1

Buddhist nationalism

- International Crisis Group. 2017. “Buddhism and State Power in Myanmar,” Asia Report No. 290, September 5.
- Jones, Lee. 2017. “A better political economy of the Rohingya crisis,” *New Mandala*, September 26.

Friday, May 3

SEAREG conference; no class

PART THREE: “Theocrats”

Under what conditions do religious groups support authoritarian regimes?

Week 6: Is Islam anti-democratic?

Monday, May 6

Exam #1

Wednesday, May 8

Islam and democracy

- Esposito, John and John Voll. 1996. *Islam and Democracy*, Chapter 1
- Kalyvas, Stathis. 2000. “Commitment problems in emerging democracies: The case of religious parties,” *Comparative Politics*

Friday, May 10

Revolutionary Islam in Iran

- Esposito, John and John Voll. 1996. *Islam and Democracy*, Chapter 3

Week 7: The Catholic Church and the Argentine military junta

Monday, May 13

Argentina’s Dirty War

- Reading TBA

Wednesday, May 15

“Complicity with the devil”

- Gill, Anthony. 1998. *Rendering Unto Caesar*, Chapter 6.

Friday, May 17

Oscar Romero

- Romero (film)

PART FOUR: “Revolutionaries”

Under what conditions do religious groups oppose authoritarian regimes?

Week 8: Liberation theology in El Salvador

Monday, May 20

“A preferential option for the poor”

- Brown, Robert McAfee. 1993. *Liberation Theology: An Introductory Guide*, Chapter 1.

Wednesday, May 22

El Salvador’s civil war

- Klaiber, Jeffrey, S.J. 1998. *The Church, Dictatorships, and Democracy in Latin America*, Chapter 9.

Friday, May 24

Explaining variation

Week 9: The Democratic opposition in Indonesia

Monday, May 27

Memorial Day; no class

Wednesday, May 29

Case comparison due

Indonesia’s New Order

Friday, May 31

Toppling a dictator

- Hefner, Robert. 2000. *Civil Islam*, Chapter 7.

PART FIVE: “Democrats”

Under what conditions do religious groups undermine liberal democracy by seeking to restrict the rights of religious minorities?

Week 10: The limits of religious pluralism in Indonesia

Monday, June 3

Islam in Indonesia’s new democracy

- Pepinsky, Thomas. 2017. “Indonesian politics has been rocked by two big developments. Now what’s next?” Monkey Cage Blog, *Washington Post*, June 1.
- Eka Kurniawan. 2019. “Indonesia’s Next Election Is in April. The Islamists Have Already Won,” *New York Times*, February 14.

Wednesday, June 5

Godly nationalism

- Menchik, Jeremy. 2014. “Productive Intolerance: Godly Nationalism in Indonesia,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*

Friday, June 7

Exam #2