

Spring 2008

PSC 700.m002/REL 600.m002/IRP 700.m002/NEW 600.m001

## **Religion, Media and International Relations**

Class Time: W 9:30-12:15

Classroom: Crouse Hinds 020

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This seminar has been designed to help students gain a critical understanding of (a) religion; (b) the role of religion (and its corollary, secularism) in international relations; (c) the dialectical relationship between various religious traditions and the media (as the purveyor of global culture); and (d) how the media shapes perceptions of religion among the public and the foreign policy elite. Among other approaches, the course will analyze the ways in which religion appears in major news stories, emphasizing how particular religions are portrayed in their interaction with other forces in society (i.e., politics and government) and who is quoted as representative of specific religious practices

**COURSE PHILOSOPHY:** You should consider this seminar a collective exercise in critical thinking. Our role is to steer class discussion and engender an informal participatory class environment where we can all search collectively for a broader understanding of the subject matter. The readings and videos will introduce you to some of the important scholarship and controversies related to Religion, Media and International Relations (RMIR). Please keep in mind that the present structure of the course reflects our interests. However, we welcome a broadening of aims and interests. Also, please take note of the fact that this syllabus represents *anticipated* scheduling of lectures/readings/assignments; changes may be made to suit the actual composition and competencies of the class or as warranted by current events.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Attendance: Attendance in this class is mandatory.

Participation: In addition to being physically present, we expect you to be mentally present as well! Therefore, you should complete all assigned readings *before* each class meeting (an average of 100 pages a week) so that will be familiar with the concepts, facts, theories, and controversies we bring up. Furthermore, you are required to engage in discussion through the course page in Blackboard (<http://Blackbord.syr.edu>) and the course listserv ([RMIR@listserv.syr.edu](mailto:RMIR@listserv.syr.edu)). We will use these mediums to post interesting or informative e-mails about the subject matter of the course and respond to points and issues raised by the instructors or your peers.

Reaction Papers: At the beginning of each class students are expected to hand in a 1-2 page (single-spaced) paper in which they reflect critically on - not summarizing - the readings for that week. In these short pieces you will tell us what *questions* you have developed in light of the readings and present what you find to be the major *strengths and weaknesses* of the works. These reaction papers will frame class discussion.

Oral Presentations: To ensure class participation and to spread out the work a bit, each student is required to make one oral presentation in class concerning one of the topics listed in the syllabus that interests them. Presenters will provide a critical summary of the assigned and/or suggested readings pertaining to their chosen topic. They are expected to answer such questions as: (a) what is the author's *thesis*?; (b) what is the major point s/he is trying to make?; (c) what are the major *assumptions* the author makes (and expects readers to accept) in arguing their thesis?; (d) what are some *useful concepts* s/he presents?; (e) how does the reading *relate to previous readings*?; and (f) what are the *implications for research practice* if the author's thesis and underlying assumptions are valid or true? Each presentation should last 15 to 25 minutes and should be accompanied by a class handout of 2-3 single-spaced pages. You will sign up for the presentations during our first meeting.

Research paper: Students are required to write one major research paper, 20-25 double spaced pages long, focusing on a subject examined in class. We ask that you first clear your subject choice in individual discussions with us. You will need to provide us with a one page précis (summary) and a brief bibliography no later than *February 27*. The outline should contain a title, main argument/finding, and a preliminary bibliography. Ideally, the papers should take the form of a critical/analytical case study. Worthy papers can be posted on the website of the RMIR Project. Further guidelines on how to write the papers will be provided in class. The research paper is due on *April 23*.

Please note that in this course we follow the university's policy regarding academic honesty (<http://provost.syr.edu/provost/units/academicprograms/academicintegrity/>). Those who engage in plagiarism will get an automatic F and will be referred to university officials for further disciplinary action.

Students who may need special consideration because of any sort of disability should make an appointment to see the instructors in private.

## **GRADING CRITERIA**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Quality and degree of participation in class and listserv discussions | 10% |
| Reflection Papers   | 20% |
| Oral presentation and handout   | 20% |
| Research Paper  | 50% |

## **REQUIRED TEXT**

Course Reader (#1053) available at the Copy Center located in Marshall Square Mall.

## CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

### Jan. 16: **What is RMIR?**

- Logistics, trajectory, expectations, goals of the course, and signing up for the oral presentations
- Timothy Samuel Shah, Monica Duffy Toft, “Why God is Winning,” Foreign Policy (July/August 2006).
- Video: “*War Spin: The Media and the Iraq War*”

#### *Recommended:*

- Video: “*Triumph of Evil*”

### Jan. 23: **Religion and Identity (I)**

- Clifford Geertz, “Religion as a Cultural System,” in Clifford Geertz The Interpretation of Cultures (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 87-125.
- Rhys H. Williams, “Religion as Political Resource: Culture or Ideology?” Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 35, no. 4 (December 1996): 368-378. (on Blackboard)
- S.N. Eisenstadt, “The Reconstruction of Religious Arenas in the Framework of ‘Multiple Modernities,’” Millennium: Journal of International Studies 29, no. 3 (2000): 591-611. (on Blackboard)
- Stephen Sharot, “Beyond Christianity: A Critique of the Rational Choice Theory of Religion from a Weberian and Comparative Religions Perspective,” Sociology of Religion 63, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 427-454. (on Blackboard)

### Jan. 30: **Religion and Identity (II)**

- Jonathan Fox, “World Separation of Religion and State into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” Comparative Political Studies 39, no. 5 (June 2006): 537-569.
- Mark Lilla, “The Politics of God,” New York Times Magazine (August 19, 2007): 28-35, 50, 54, 55. (on Blackboard)
- Nikki R. Keddie, “The New Religious Politics: Where, When, and Why do ‘Fundamentalism’ Appear?” Comparative Studies in Society and History 40, no. 4 (October 1998): 696-723. (on Blackboard)
- Peter Berger, “Max Weber is Alive and Well and Living in Guatemala: The Protestant Ethic Today” (on Blackboard)

#### *Recommended:*

- Peter Berger, “The Desecularization of the World: A Global Overview,” in Peter L. Berger (ed.) The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics (William B. Eerdmans, 1999), pp. 1-18.
- Andrew E. Kim, “Korean Religious Culture and its Affinity to Christianity: The Rise of Protestant Christianity in South Korea,” Sociology of Religion 61, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 117-133. (on Blackboard)

### Feb. 6: **Negligence of Religion in Political Science and International Relations**

- Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, “The Political Authority of Secularism in International Relations,” European Journal of International Relations 10, no. 2 (2004): 235-262. (on Blackboard)
- Daniel Philpott, “The Religious Roots of Modern International Relations,” World Politics 52, no. 2 (January 2000): 206-245. (on Blackboard)
- Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson (eds.), Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft (Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 8-34.
- Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” Foreign Affairs 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 22-49. (on Blackboard)
- Video: *Stories My Country Told Me: With Eqbal Ahmad* (VC 10140; 56 minutes)

*Recommended:*

- Kenneth D. Wald and Clyde Wilcox, “Getting Religion: Has Political Science Rediscovered the Faith Factor?” American Political Science Review 100, no. 4 (Nov. 2006): 523-529.
- Jonathan Fox, “Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations,” International Studies Review 3, no. 3 (Autumn 2001): 53-73. (on Blackboard)
- Jose Casanova, “Religion, Secular Identities and European Integration,” in Timothy Byrnes and Peter Wallrup (eds.) Religion in an Expanding Europe (Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 65-92.
- Wendy Tyndale, “Faith and Economics in ‘Development’: A Bridge Across the Chasm?” Development and Culture (2002): 45-59.
- John Schmalzbauer and Kathleen Mahoney, “Religion and Knowledge in the Post-Secular Academy,” Social Science Research Council (SSRC) Working Papers.
- Katerina Dalacoura, “Islamist Movements as Non-State Actors and their Relevance to International Relation,” in Daphne Josselin and William Wallace (eds.) Non-State Actors in World Politics (Palgrave 2001), pp. 235-248.
- Video: *The Myth of Clash of Civilizations* (VC 8110; 55 minutes)
- Madeleine Albright, The Mighty and the Almighty: Religions Role in International Affairs. Audio files of author’s discussion of the subject at United States Institute of Peace @ [http://www.usip.org/events/2006/1004\\_albright.html](http://www.usip.org/events/2006/1004_albright.html)

Feb.13: **Religion and Globalization**

- Jose Casanova, “Globalizing Catholicism and the Return to a ‘Universal’ Church,” in Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and James Piscatori (eds.) Transnational Religion and Fading States (Westview Press, 1997), pp. 121-143.
- Robert Hefner, “Multiple Modernities: Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism in a Globalizing Age,” Annual Review of Anthropology 27 (1998): 83-104. (on Blackboard)
- Bruce B. Lawrence, “Allah On-Line: The Practice of Global Islam in the Information Age,” in Stewart M. Hoover and Lynn Schofield Clark (eds.) Practicing Religion in the Age of the Media (Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 237-253.
- James Lull, Culture-on-Demand: Communication in a Crisis World (Blackwell, 2007), pp. 1-51.

*Recommended:*

- Peter van der Veer, "Political Religion in the Twenty-First Century," in T.V. Paul and John A. Hall (eds.) International Order and the Future of World Politics (Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 311-327.
- Special issue on "Religion and Globalization," Hedgehog Review 6, no.1 (Spring 2004). [http://www.virginia.edu/iasc/publications\\_hedgehog\\_2002-Summer.php](http://www.virginia.edu/iasc/publications_hedgehog_2002-Summer.php)

Feb. 20: **Religion and Violence (I):** [Guest Speaker: Professor Michael Barkun]

- Mark Jurgensmeyer, Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence (University of California Press, 2000), pp. 3-15; 119-215.

*Recommended:*

- Mark Juergensmeyer, "Religious Terrorism and the Secular State," Harvard International Review (Spring 2004).
- Mark Juergensmeyer, "The Worldwide Rise of Religious Nationalism," Journal of International Affairs 50, no. 1 (Summer 1996): 1-20.

Feb. 27: **Religion and Violence (II)**

- David Rapaport, "Fear and Trembling: Terrorism in Three Religious Traditions," American Political Science Review 78, no. 3 (September 1984): 658-677. (On Blackboard)
- Daniel Philpott, "Explaining the Political Ambivalence of Religion," American Political Science Review 101, no. 3 (August 2007): 505-525.
- Andreas Hasenclever and Volker Rittberger, "Does Religion Make a Difference: Theoretical Approaches to the Impact of Faith on Political Conflict," Millennium: Journal of International Studies 29, no. 3 (2000): 641-674. (on Blackboard)
- Reinhold Niebuhr, The Irony of American History (Scribner, 1952), pp. 1-42; 130-150.
- Griff Witte, "Violence: Its Source Is Not Always What It Seems," Nieman Reports 61, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 6-7.

*Recommended:*

- Center for Strategic and International Studies, "Mixed Blessings: U.S. Government Engagement with Religion in Conflict-Prone Settings." (on Blackboard)
- Special issue on "Religion and Violence," Hedgehog Review 6, no.1 (Spring 2004). [http://www.virginia.edu/iasc/publications\\_hedgehog\\_2004-Spring.php](http://www.virginia.edu/iasc/publications_hedgehog_2004-Spring.php)
- David Rapaport, "Some General Observations on Religion and Violence," Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence 3, no. 3 (1991): 118-139.
- Jonathan Sacks, "The Dignity of Difference: Avoiding the Clash of Civilizations" Templeton Lectures on Religion and World Affairs. <http://www.fpri.org/education/templetonlecture.html>
- Video: *In the Name of God* (VC 6573; 97 minutes)
- Video: *Bombay: A Myth Shattered* (VC 7082; 25 minutes)

Mar. 5: **Media and Religion**

- Daniel A. Stout and Judith Buddenbaum (eds.) Religion and Popular Culture: Studies on the Interaction of Worldviews (Iowa State University Press, 2001), pp. 81-139.
- Mohammed el-Nawawy, "U.S. Public Diplomacy and the News Credibility of Radio Sawa and Television Al Hurra in the Arab World," in Philip Seib (ed.) New Media and the New Middle East (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 119-135.
- Geneive Abdo "When the News Media Focus on Islam's Internal Struggles," Nieman Reports 61, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 12-14.
- Bruce Lawrence, "Exposing Extremism – No Matter Where It Is Found," Nieman Reports 61, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 28-30.
- Abdallah Schleifer, "Media and Religion in the Arab-Islamic World," Templeton Lectures on Religion and World Affairs.  
<http://www.fpri.org/education/templetonlecture.html>

*Recommended:*

- Rebecca Moore, "A Framework for Understanding Fundamentalism," in Claire Badaracco (ed.) Quoting God: How the Media Shape Ideas about Religion and Culture (Baylor University Press, 2004), pp. 87-100.
- Aslam Abdulla, "Post-9/11 Media and Muslim Identity in American Media," in Quoting God, pp. 123-128.
- Paul Soukup, "Vatican Opinion on Modern Communication," in Quoting God: 211-224.
- Dennis R. Hoover, "Is Evangelicalism Itching for a Civilization Fight?: A Media Study," The Brandywine Review of Faith and International Affairs 2, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 11-16.

**Mar. 12: Spring Break**

**Mar. 19: Media and International Relations** [Guest Speaker: TBA]

- Lawrence Pintak, Reflections in a Bloodshot Lens: America, Islam and the War of Ideas (Pluto Press, 2006), pp. 15-132, 153-176.
- Video: *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People* (DVD 12805).

*Recommended:*

- Video: "Letter to America: How Arabs View the United States"
- Video: "Glass Eyes"

**Mar. 26: Faith-based Diplomacy**

- Douglas M. Johnston (ed.) Faith-based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik (Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 11-29, 231-258.
- Jeff Hayes, "Transnational Religious Actors and International Politics," Third World Quarterly 22, no. 3 (June 2001): 143-158. (on Blackboard)

**Apr. 2: Religion and Democracy** [Guest Speaker: TBA]

- Alfred Stepan, "The World's Religious Systems and Democracy: Crafting the Twin Tolerations," in Alfred Stepan Arguing Comparative Politics (Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 213-253.

- Jonathan Fox, “Separation of Religion and State in the Twenty-First Century: Comparing the Middle East and Western Democracies,” Comparative Politics 37, no. 3 (April 2005): 317-335.

*Recommended:*

- S.N. Kalyas, “Commitment Problems in Emerging Democracies: The Case of Religious Parties,” Comparative Politics 32, no. 4 (July 2000): 379-398. (on Blackboard)
- Seyla Benhabib, “Unholy Wars,” Constellations: An International Journal of Critical and Democratic Theory 9, no. 1 (2002): 34-45.

**Apr. 9: Old and New Media in the Muslim World [Guest Speaker: Mona Eltahawy]**

- Video: *Al Jazeera: Voice of Arabia* (VC 10862; 52 minutes)
- Mohamed Zayani (ed.) The Al Jazeera Phenomenon: Critical Perspectives on New Arab Media (Paradigm Publishers, 2005), pp. 1-46; 183-202.
- Maura Conway, “Terrorism and the Making of the ‘New Middle East’: New Media Strategies of Hezbollah and al Qaeda,” in Philip Seib (ed.) New Media and the New Middle East (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 235-253.
- Steven R. Corman and Jill S. Schiefelbein, “Communication and Media Strategy in the Jihadi War of Ideas” (on Blackboard)

*Recommended:*

- Hugh Miles, Al-Jazeera: The Inside Story of the Arab News Channel That is Challenging the West (Grove Press, 2006), pp. 1-12, 327-389.

**Apr. 16: Controversies: Rushdie’s Satanic Verses, Danish Cartoons**

- Talal Asad, Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp. 239-306.
- Lars Erslev Andersen, “Freedom of Speech, Battle over Values, and the Political Symbolism of the Muhammad Drawings” <http://www.erslev-andersen.dk/comments.php> (on Blackboard)
- The Danish Cartoon Fiasco  
[http://silvers.progressiveislam.org/The\\_Danish\\_Cartoon\\_Fiasco](http://silvers.progressiveislam.org/The_Danish_Cartoon_Fiasco) (on Blackboard)

*Recommended:*

- Edward W. Said, Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World (New York: Vintage Books, 1997):

**Apr. 23: Concluding Reflections on the Course**

*(Term papers are due)*

- Evaluations & Open Discussion about the Course