

GLOBAL RELIGION AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

University of Oklahoma
PSC 3020

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Office Hours: After class Monday and Wednesday till 11:30; Tuesday 2-3, and by drop in or appointment. Late afternoons are good and I am often around.

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Office Hours:

Accommodation Policy: The University of Oklahoma is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for all students with disabilities. Students with disabilities who require accommodations in this course are requested to speak with the professor as early in the semester as possible. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services prior to receiving accommodations in this course. The Office of Disability Services is located in Goddard Health Center, Suite 166, 325-3852.

Now, beyond this university policy statement, if anything is impeding your ability to participate fully in this course, please notify me.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Professors have to obey rules of honest scholarship, and so do students. Here are the basic assumptions about academic work at the University of Oklahoma, as outlined in the Provost's Policy on Academic Integrity:

- Students attend OU in order to learn and grow
- Academic assignments exist for the sake of this goal
- Grades exist to show how fully the goal is attained
- Thus, all work and all grades should result from the student's own effort to learn and grow. Academic work completed any other way is pointless, and grades obtained any other way are fraudulent.

Academic Integrity means understanding and respecting these basic truths, without which no university can exist. Academic misconduct – “cheating” – is not just “against the rules.” It violates the assumptions at the heart of all learning. It destroys the mutual trust and respect that should exist between student and professor. Finally, it is unfair to students who earn their grades honestly.

The special case of Plagiarism: Anytime you use the written words of another person, even a

short phrase, you must put them in quotation marks and provide citation. If you do not, then you are implying that those words are your own, which is plagiarism and is grounds for academic misconduct proceedings. I do not hesitate to bring these cases before the Dean. Taking direct verbiage from an Internet source IS plagiarism. And there are new and effective Internet based programs available to teachers to identify such plagiarism.

For more information, including a statement of what constitutes academic misconduct and plagiarism, see OU's "A Student's Guide to Academic Integrity" at <http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity/>

Important Dates: last day to drop
 last day to drop with a W

Introduction.

As we look back on the 20th Century one thing is clear: the global recrudescence of religion as a powerful force in culture and politics caught many by surprise. Guided by the secularization paradigm -- which suggested that religion would fade as societies modernized -- scholars, journalists, and elite policy makers tended to dismiss transcendent faith as a matter of enduring import. Momentous events of the last quarter century, however, have forced a re-evaluation of that view, calling into question some of the central premises of the modern age. Indeed, from the mid-1970s onward diverse religious communities reversed their posture of accommodation to secular trends and re-entered the public world with astonishing vigor. This "Revenge of God," as French Scholar Kepele termed the phenomenon, arose from the very forces of modernization and globalization that would supposedly doom religion.

A catalogue of disparate events and trends suggests how pivotal religion has become in the politics of the new century. The Iranian revolution, the rise of militant Islamist movements, the resurgence of Islam in Central Asia, the papacy of John Paul II, the role of churches in the collapse of the Soviet bloc, the evangelical resurgence in the United States, Jewish fundamentalism in Israel, Hindu nationalism in India, the Falun Gong movement in China, Buddhist dissent in Southeast Asia, religiously-infused ethnic strife from the Balkans to Africa, endemic religious persecution, and the faith-based human rights movement shaping American foreign policy – all these indicate the power of public religion, for good or ill.

In this class we will not only examine how global religious forces impinge on the United States, but how religious developments at home reflect global trends and in turn affect global developments. As we will see, influences are moving in all sorts of directions, shaping America's posture toward the world. But we will not only focus on "forces" and "trends." Rather, a good portion of this class explores the resources and assets that religious organizations can marshal in famine relief, development, and diplomacy. An unheralded role of churches has been as mediators of conflicts and reconcilers after wars are over. Beyond the public level, this course also has an individual dimension. As citizens of the globe's dominant power, Americans bear a special responsibility to appreciate their influence around the world, especially in these volatile times. Thus this course should help equip students with the kind of knowledge they will

need to function -- whether in professional lives or as citizens -- in the religiously pluralistic world of the 21st Century. A theme of the course is that one will not be able to function well without a knowledge of different religious traditions and how they interact.

Class format:

We will employ a variety of teaching modalities. There will be thematic lectures, extensive discussions of the readings, quizzes, team-based exercises, and Internet-based assignments that capitalize on the explosion of religious websites. Attendance and participation is a must and will factor in the grade.

Books for purchase:

Elliott Abrams, editor, *The Influence of Faith: Religious Groups and American Foreign Policy*

Ahmed Akbar, *Islam Under Siege*

Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*

Douglas Johnson and Cynthia Sampson, *Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft.*

Available but not required: Allen Hertzke, *Freeing God's Children: The Unlikely Alliance for Global Human Rights*

In addition to the required books, there will be a variety of handouts, including articles, short news articles, tables, religious documents, and excerpts from Freeing God's Children. All of this is fair game for exams, so you might get a loose leave binder to organize this material. Also, you should read a regular newspaper that covers international news and religious developments. To get a different perspective you might try <nytimes.com.> <washingtonpost.com> <washtimes.com> <csmonitor.com>

Also browse at Borders or B&N in magazine section.

Assignments:

Short Internet-Based Paper 10%

Midterm: 20%

Final Paper: 25%

Final Exam: 30%

Quizzes and In-class assignments: 15%

Attendance and Participation: Decisive in borderline cases (and that happens to include lots of students)

Outline and Readings: Approximate weekly schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments.

Week 1: Introduction and Religious Demographics

- Demographic trends in Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.
 A look at migrations and interactions
 Demographic Assignment Due and Quiz on Friday
- Week 2: Survey of the Global scene
 Internet Sites
 Chapters 1-2 of Johnston, chapters 1-2 of Huntington, Introduction of Abrams
 Handouts on religious traditions
 Friday Guest lecture by Dr. Abdelhamid Abed on Human Rights in the Arab World
- Week 3: A Civilizational Framework for understanding the role of global religions
 Huntington, Chapters
 Internet assignment due
- Week 4: Fundamentalism and Religious Strife
 Continue Huntington
 Possible speaker
- Week 5: Critiques of the civilizational thesis
 Critiques of Huntington – handouts
 Huntington’s impact: diagnostic or self-fulfilling?
 Finish Huntington
- Week 6: Islam and the West
 Begin Ahmed
 Handouts on Islam and possible guest speaker
- Week 7: Crisis, Islamism, and violence
 Finish Ahmed
 Habib Malik, in Abrams
 Handouts on terror networks, militancy abroad and in the U.S.
 U.S. Reaction
- Week 8: Catch up, review, and Midterm
- Week 9: Religious Groups and U.S. foreign policy
 Chapters 1-6 of Abrams
- Week 10: Transnational Religious Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)
 Chapters 7-9 in Abrams
 Handouts
- Week 11: The faith-based movement for global human rights
 Photocopied packet on how religious groups have pressed new initiatives by the
 American government on human rights and humanitarian intervention. Chapter 7 of Freeing
 God’s Children and short summary handout of the movement.
- Week 12: Religious mediation of conflict
 Begin selected chapters of Johnston and Sampson
- Week 13: Reconciliation and religious mediation
 Complete Johnston and Sampson
 Papers Due
- Week 14: Special Topic: Israel, the Palestinians, and the United States
 Handouts on American religious groups and Israel, Christian Zionism, Muslim posture
 Possible guest speaker
- Week 15: **Summary**

