

American Public University
In partnership with the Institute for Global Engagement

GE 544 Faith and Politics

April 2004

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Student Course Guide

GE544 Faith and Politics April 2004

Scope:

GE544 – Faith and Politics. Part of the Master of Arts in Global Engagement degree program, this course is part of the “faith” pillar of the degree’s multi-pillar (i.e. multi-disciplinary) curriculum. Other APUS graduate students interested in learning about the intersection of religion and politics in comparative/international perspective may also enroll. The course, steeped in a Christian understanding of the human condition, is designed as a political science survey of some of the basic normative and theological issues of religious engagement in politics (with a particular emphasis on Christian engagement in international affairs) and of empirical and analytical issues of religion and politics that are important in contemporary political science. The scope of the course is broad, providing a graduate level introduction to Christian theology of politics and to three interrelated fields of specialization in the academic discipline of political science vis-à-vis religion: comparative politics and law, international relations, and U.S. foreign policy. The course begins with an overview of Christian theology of politics, with the primary focus initially being American domestic politics. The course then broadens the focus by putting American religion and politics into comparative international perspective. After introducing the field of comparative religion and politics, the course examines theory and practice of “church-state” relations, with an emphasis on constitutional and statutory law in America and a variety of European countries. The course then shifts to an examination of different ways in which contemporary Christianity is important in influencing international affairs, including a section examining NGOs and another looking at recent trends in Third World politics. The course then looks at the role of religion in contemporary international relations, focusing on issues of conflict, violence, democratization, conflict resolution and peacemaking. Included in this portion of the course are surveys of the “civilization conflict” debate (especially concerning conflict between Islam and the West), Islam and Judaism in Middle East politics, Islam and Hinduism in South Asian politics, religious freedom, and religion as a resource for lessening political conflict and improving social/political justice.

Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- ❖ Demonstrate sufficient familiarity with several different approaches to the nexus of “faith and politics” in the discipline of political science and comprehend and critically assess diverse writings on the subject.
- ❖ Discuss knowledgeably different biblical approaches to global political engagement in Christian theology, and to articulate clearly how this understanding informs his/her personal approach to integrating faith and politics.
- ❖ Explain the ways in which a holistic understanding of the role of religion in public life is essential to the scholarly study of comparative politics, international relations, and foreign policy.
- ❖ Discern the diversity of religion’s effects on domestic and foreign policy from one national context to another, and discuss implications for U.S. foreign policy in general, and U.S. religious freedom policy in particular.
- ❖ Analyze the role of religion in violent conflict—both at the international (perhaps even “civilizational”) level and at the level of religious nationalist movements within countries.
- ❖ Interpret the significance of religion for the future of international affairs both in terms of religion being “part of the problem” and religion being part of the solution.
- ❖ Evaluate recent debates about the compatibility of religion (especially conservative religion) and democratization.

Required Textbooks and Article (all articles available online):

Paul Marshall, *God and the Constitution: Christianity and American Politics* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002)—hardcover, ISBN: 0742522482

Ted Jelen and Clyde Wilcox, eds., *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)—paperback, ISBN: 052165971X

John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, *Islam and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996)—paperback, ISBN: 0195108167

Stephen V. Monsma and J. Christopher Soper, *The Challenge of Pluralism: Church and State in Five Democracies* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997)—paperback, ISBN 0-8476-8569-1

Elliott Abrams, ed., *The Influence of Faith: Religious Groups and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001)—paperback, ISBN: 0742507637

Marc Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon: The Future of World Religions, Violence, and Peacemaking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000)—
paperback, ISBN: 0195157257

Mark Silk, Rosalind Hackett, and Dennis Hoover, *Religious Persecution as a U.S. Policy Issue* (Hartford, CT: Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life), <http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/csrpl/rpintro.htm>

Jeremy Gunn, "The United States and the Promotion of the Freedom of Religion and Belief," in Tore Lindholm, W. Cole Durham, and Bahia Tahzib-Lie, eds., *Facilitating Freedom of Religion or Belief: A Deskbook* (Kluwer Law International, 2003), pp. 161-186. (pdf to be supplied by professor)

Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993 v72 n3 pp. 22-28. ProQuest database in the Online Research Center.

Richard Rubenstein and Jarle Crocker, "Challenging Huntington" *Foreign Policy*, Fall 1994, pp. 113-128. ProQuest database in the Online Research Center.

Anthony Gill, "Religion and Comparative Politics" *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2001, 4:117-138 (Word doc to be supplied by professor)

Philip Jenkins, "The Next Christianity," *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 2002. ProQuest database in the Online Research Center.

Tim Shah, "Evangelical Politics in the Third World: What's Next for the 'Next Christendom'?" *The Brandywine Review of Faith & International Affairs*, Vol. 1, No. 2. http://www.eppc.org/docLib/20040423_TimShahjournalfinal.pdf.

Readings from various Biblical texts may also be assigned. For consistency and clarity, students should use the New International Version (NIV). Students not owning a copy of this version of the Bible are encouraged to use <http://www.biblegateway.com/cgi-bin/bible> to find passages.

Grading:

There are a total of 400 points for this course, broken down as follows:

Student Participation	70 points
Weekly Reaction Papers – 3 pages each	260 points
Research Paper – 8-10 pages	70 points

Note: Each weekly reaction paper is worth 20 points, except the one due week 9, which is worth 40. The research paper, due the final week of class, is detailed on

p. 20 of this SCG. An initial proposal (due Week 8) and an outline/bibliography (due Week 11) are part of the research paper requirements.

Evaluation Procedures:

Student participation will be evaluated by a combination of required student contacts and weekly course newsgroup participation. Students are also encouraged, but not required to participate in voluntary course chatroom sessions. See lesson schedule for specific requirements on student contacts. Each week, I will post questions and/or topics for discussion in the course newsgroup. My online office hours will also be held from weeks 2 to 14 of the course. Students may also contact me by email (dhooover@globalengage.org) or telephone (see Appendix).

All student work should be uploaded to the student's folder on the APU course web site. Students are responsible for initiating Student Contacts with the instructor, and all student work should be uploaded to student folders no later than Friday of the week in which it is due.

Final letter grades are awarded as follows:

<u>Score</u>	<u>Letter</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Comments</u>
94-100%	A	4.0	Superior work
90-93	A-	3.7	
87-89	B+	3.3	
84-86	B	3.0	Above average
80-83	B-	2.7	
77-79	C+	2.3	
73-76	C	2.0	Average
70-72	C-	1.7	Below average
67-79	D+	1.3	
64-66	D	1.0	Unsatisfactory
60-63	D-	0.7	
0-59	F	0.0	Failing
	I		Incomplete
	W		Withdrawn
	X		Audit Grade

All papers must be double-spaced, and margins set at one (1) inch. Use Times New Roman font style, and 12 point font size. Use in-text citations (Jones, 1995: 235-237) for the research paper. A bibliography with all in-text citations should be included at the end of the research paper. For the bibliography, you may use any style format (Chicago, MLA, Turabian, APA, etc.) provided it is used consistently. Do not use footnotes or endnotes for citation purposes.

Course Overview Table:

Week	Dates (2004)	Lesson Subject	Schedule notes
1	April 5-9	The Bible and Politics	First student contact (CT1)
2	April 12-16	Christianity and Modern Politics	
3	April 19-23	Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective	
4	April 26-30	Church-State: Separationism and Principled Pluralism	
5	May 3-7	Church-State: European Establishment Models	Second student contact (CT2)
6	May 10-14	Faith-based NGOs and Politics	
7	May 17-21	Christianity and Third World Politics	
8	May 24-28	Islam and Democratization: Iran	Submit 200-word research paper proposal
9	May 31-June 4	Islam and Arab Politics	
10	June 7-11	Judaism and Israeli Politics	Third student contact (CT3)
11	June 14-18	Hinduism and Islam in South Asian Politics	Submit initial outline and bibliography of research paper
12	June 21-25	International Religious Freedom	
13	June 28-July 2	Religion, International Relations, "Civilization Conflict"	
14	July 5-9	Religion and Political Violence	
15	July 12-16	Religion, Peacemaking, and Conflict Resolution	Submit research paper

WEEKLY LESSON SCHEDULE

Week 1: The Bible and Politics

Scope:

This session provides an introduction to the intersection of Christianity and politics. It offers an initial reading addressing the role of faith and politics and the biblical basis thereof. It challenges students to consider their own rationales for political engagement and non-engagement.

Objectives:

- ❖ Assess Marshall's perspectives on the place of religion in politics.
- ❖ Develop a biblical basis for engagement in politics.
- ❖ Evaluate justifications for the power and authority of government.

Required Readings:

Marshall, *God and the Constitution*, 1-90

Notes and Questions, Weekly Reaction Paper:

As Marshall queries, "Is there room for religion in politics?"

In your view, how does the Bible inform political engagement? In particular, should Christians engage or refrain from involvement in politics? What biblical justification does Marshall provide for engagement?

What is government's basis for authority and power?

What are the responsibilities of government according to Marshall? Do you agree?

Student Participation:

Post your name and a short biography on the course newsgroup for instructor and other students. See the instructor's biography in Appendix A as a sample of the detail desired in your posted biography.

First student contact: Upload to your student folder student contact one (CT1), consisting of any information you would like me to know that you do not wish to post in your newsgroup biography, and the days and times you are available for the course chatrooms (include your geographic location and time zone, GMT + or – if you are outside the US. If in the US, EST, CST, PST are sufficient designations). Use the filename (no spaces) GE544yourlastnameCT1.htm (or .doc) for this upload.

Week 2: Christianity and Modern Politics

Scope:

This week is a broad-based review of misguided and sometimes idolatrous Christian political behavior, government bases for religious freedom, and the role of religion in international affairs. It presents readings that evaluate the political pursuit of justice via government as well as limits on the role of government in society, encouraging students to consider the appropriate role of the state.

Objectives:

- ❖ Evaluate appropriate and inappropriate Christian behavior in the public square.
- ❖ Assess the role of government in tolerating different religions.
- ❖ Define the role of the state in society.
- ❖ Appraise the place of religion in international affairs.

Required Readings:

Marshall, *God and the Constitution*, 91-182

Notes and Questions, Weekly Reaction Paper:

Explore an example of a Christian group pursuing “Christian” political goals shaped more by non-biblical theories and ideas than biblical ones.

According to Marshall, how and when does support for political parties, movements and ideologies become idolatrous?

What is the basis for government support of religious freedom?

What does it mean to take religion seriously in international affairs?

How can politics be used to pursue justice? What are the limitations of politics?

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Week 3: Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective

Scope:

This lesson will introduce students to the field of religion in comparative politics, surveying social science understandings of secularization, fundamentalism, church and state, religious economy/markets, religion and regime opposition, “priestly” religious politics, “prophetic” religious politics, and “culture war.”

Objectives:

- ❖ Evaluate secularization theory
- ❖ Introduce fundamentalism and culture war politics
- ❖ Assess the economics-based rational choice approach to analyzing religious politics comparatively

Required Readings:

Jelen and Wilcox, *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective*, 1-26
Gill, “Religion and Comparative Politics”

Notes and Questions, Weekly Reaction Paper:

Why is the study of religion important in comparative political science?

Create a typology that you think works best in describing the major types of religious politics

In your view, what are the strengths and weaknesses of religious economy models, especially by comparison to secularization theory?

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Week 4: Church-and-State: Separationism and Principled Pluralism

Scope:

This session begins the evaluation of church-state models, focusing on the U.S. model of strict separation and the Dutch pluralist model. It explores the bases for each model and pushes students to consider the complications faced by each nation in their efforts to allow for the free exercise of religion without establishing religion.

Objectives:

- ❖ Communicate the bases for varying models of church-state relations.
- ❖ Evaluate and compare the *free exercise* of religion in the United States and Netherlands.
- ❖ Discuss and compare concerns regarding the *establishment* of religion in both cases.

Required Readings:

Monsma and Soper, *Challenge of Pluralism*, ix-86.

Notes and Questions, Weekly Reaction Paper:

How can states be even-handed or neutral with regard to various religious groups?

On what basis does the U.S. follow a strict church-state separationist model?

Why do Monsma and Soper find fault with this?

What have been some of the struggles in the U.S. in allowing for the free exercise of religion without establishing religion?

What is the Netherlands' basis for following a church-state model of principled pluralism? What do Monsma and Soper appreciate about this?

How has the Netherlands dealt with key struggles in allowing for the free exercise of religion without establishing religion?

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Week 5: Church-and-State: European Establishment Models

Scope:

This session is a continuance of the evaluation of church-state models. This week focuses on the establishment models of England and Germany, enabling students to compare the dilemmas faced in each nation.

Objectives:

- ❖ Articulate two models of church-state relations that differ from the U.S. case.
- ❖ Continue the comparison of government neutrality and non-neutrality toward religion in regards to free exercise and establishment.
- ❖ Develop an understanding of diverse methods in establishing limits to the free exercise of religion for the sake of the common good.

Required Readings:

Monsma and Soper, *Challenge of Pluralism*, 121-223.

Notes and Questions, Weekly Reaction Paper:

What is the historical basis for England's partial establishment of religion? What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of this model according to Monsma and Soper?

How has Britain addressed questions related to free exercise and establishment, particularly in the realms of education and civil society (NGOs)?

What has been the historical basis for Germany's model of partnership and autonomy? Why do Monsma and Soper consider this a largely successful case of dealing with religious pluralism?

As you considered with the U.S., the Netherlands and Britain, how has Germany addressed questions related to free exercise and establishment, also in the realms of education and civil society?

Compare and contrast how each of these four nations limit the free exercise of religion when it conflicts with the public good.

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Second student contact (CT2). Upload to your student folder any comments or questions remaining from Weeks 1-5. Use filename GE544yourlastnameCT2.htm (or .doc).

Week 6: Faith-based NGOs and Politics

Scope:

This session will explore the development of the American missionary movement and Christian relief and development agencies (both Catholic and Protestant). As well, it includes and evaluation of the influence of Christian NGOs on U.S. foreign policy, and and the influence of government aid on Christian NGOs.

Objectives:

- ❖ Assess the trajectories of the Protestant and Catholic missionary movements and relief and development efforts.
- ❖ Appraise the influence of religious NGOs on U.S. foreign policy.
- ❖ Evaluate the means by which religious NGOs receiving public monies can maintain religious autonomy.

Required Readings:

Abrams, *The Influence of Faith*, 153-223

Notes and Questions, Weekly Reaction Paper:

Compare the Protestant missionary movement with the Catholic missionary movement. What factors shaped the growth of each?

What are the ways in which Amstutz maintains that churches and faith-based NGOs influence U.S. foreign policy? Develop each of the three facets (institutions, ideas, and service).

How does Natsios contend that faith-based NGOs influence U.S. foreign policy?

How is it similar to and different from Amstutz's assessments?

According to Monsma, how are faith-based NGOS affected by the receipt of government funds? How can they do so and maintain their religious distinctives?

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Week 7: Christianity and Third World Politics

Scope:

This lesson explores some of the roles religion plays in civil society and politics of developing nations, with emphasis on the implications of religious pluralism generally, and specifically of growing evangelical Protestantism in the Third World. The primary geographical focus is Latin America.

Objectives:

- ❖ Define evangelicalism, and, in the context of Latin America, distinguish between historic evangelicals, neo-Pentecostals, and Pentecostals
- ❖ Appraise the “Next Christendom” thesis
- ❖ Analyze the historic roles of Catholicism in Latin American politics and changes in these roles due to increasing religious pluralism and competition
- ❖ Compare the ideological character of politics in the U.S. with patterns of evangelical politics observed in the developing world
- ❖ Appraise the possible positive and negative influences of religion on prospects for consolidating democracy in the Third World

Required Readings:

Jelen and Wilcox, *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective*, 195-239

Jenkins, “The Next Christendom”

Shah, “Evangelical Politics in the Third World”

Notes and Questions, Weekly Reaction Paper:

“The future of religion and politics in the Third World is a new Christendom.” Discuss and evaluate this claim in light of the readings and objectives for this week.

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Week 8: Islam and Democratization: Iran

Scope:

This lesson introduces students to Islamic resurgence and radicalism, and reviews the history and debates surrounding prospects for different kinds and levels of “democracy” in Islamic societies. Special focus is placed on Iran, a case where a radical Islamist social movement was able to gain power.

Objectives:

- ❖ Describe the variety of historical and contemporary models of interaction between faith and politics in the Islamic world
- ❖ Analyze the origins of movements of Islamic fundamentalism and Islamization of society and politics
- ❖ Introduce contested understandings of democracy
- ❖ Appraise resources for democracy within Islam
- ❖ Assess the model of Islamist politics presented by Iran

Required Readings:

Esposito and Voll, *Islam and Democracy*, 3-77

Jelen and Wilcox, *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective*, 125-138

Assignment:

Submit initial proposal (approximately 200 words in length) for paper topic. (See week 15)

Note: There is no reaction paper due this week. Write a 5-6 page reaction paper next week on reading for weeks 8 and 9 together.

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Week 9: Islam and Arab Politics

Scope:

This week reviews the impact of radical Islamist movements in cases where they were not able to operate as all or part of the established order. Particular attention is given to the cases of Algeria and Egypt, in which topics that feature prominently include populist Islam, anti-colonialism/anti-Westernism, electoral democracy and radical Islamist movements, the role of the Muslim Brotherhood and similar groups, Islamist strategy in civil society (media, education, professional associations, etc), tactics of guerilla warfare and terrorism, and sources of internal and external opposition to the Islamist agenda.

Objectives:

- ❖ Compare/contrast the role of Islam in politics in Algeria and Egypt, and to compare/contrast with the Iranian case as well.
- ❖ Assess the legacy of imperial influence, authoritarianism, and populist reactions
- ❖ Analyze the Islamist strategies of penetrating civil society
- ❖ Appraise dilemmas of electoral democracy vis-à-vis radical Islamist movements
- ❖ Appraise the use of violence by Islamists.

Required Readings:

Esposito and Voll, *Islam and Democracy*, 150-202

Jelen and Wilcox, *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective*, 139-165

Notes and Questions, Weekly Reaction Paper (5-6 page paper on weeks 8 and 9 together):

Why is the concept of “Islamic democracy” difficult for many in the West to accept?

What do Esposito and Voll mean when they refer to the trend toward “identity assertion”?

Summarize (use bullet points if desired) the resources within Islam that (according to Esposito and Voll) can support aspects of democracy and dissent from government authority.

Assess the statement made by Esposito and Voll, that “In many ways, the Islamic republic is the closest thing to democracy Iran has ever had.”

Mehan Tamadonfar concludes (Jelen and Wilcox p. 163), “The Islamists have and will always be committed to the Islamic order and will pursue all viable avenues in achieving that goal.” Assess this statement in light of the reading for weeks 8 and 9.

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Week 10: Judaism and Israeli Politics

Scope:

This week examines the role of Judaism in Israeli politics, which necessarily encompasses as well some consideration of the dynamics of the Jewish-Arab conflicts and Middle Eastern politics. The lesson introduces some of the tensions Israel faces between identity as a Jewish state and as a modern democratic state. Attention is also given to the serious religio-political divisions within Israeli Jewry, religious nationalism, and conflict over territory,

Objectives:

- ❖ Introduce the history and contemporary politics of the world's only Jewish state.
- ❖ Introduce internal divisions among Israelis (e.g. Ultraorthodoxy, Modern Orthodoxy) and relevance to politics
- ❖ Analyze tensions between religious establishment and liberal democracy in contemporary Israel.
- ❖ Assess key intra-Israeli conflicts and their relationships with the ongoing conflict with Palestinians (and with the Arab world more generally)

Required Readings:

Jelen and Wilcox, *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective*, 99-124
Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon*, 115-138

Notes and Questions, Weekly Reaction Paper:

"A lack of a substantive Israeli and Jewish identity for peacetime that is widely shared is one of the principal culprits of the current crisis of Israeli culture" (Gopin p. 116). Write a paper in the form of a 3-page memo to Israel's religious and political leaders that uses this quote as the point of departure for recommendations for how the mix of religion and politics should be handled in that country. Feel free to agree or disagree with all or part of Gopin's arguments. Where appropriate make reference to insights about religion and politics you have gained from prior weeks in this course.

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Upload to your student folder any comments or questions remaining from Weeks 1-10. Include suggestions for future course revisions. Use filename GE544yourlastnameCT3.htm (or .doc)

Week 11: Hinduism and Islam in South Asian Politics

Scope:

This week's discussion covers two major South Asian nations, Pakistan and India, and the powerful religious groups within each. In Pakistan, we investigate how the state addresses Islamic groups and how Islamic groups relate to the state. In India, the emphasis is on the rise of Hindu nationalism, particularly the quick ascent of the Hindu nationalist party, the BJP. Now that the BJP is in power, we will explore the implications for minority religions and the secular state in India.

Objectives:

- ❖ Understand the role of Islamic groups participating within the Pakistani political system.
- ❖ Evaluate the compatibility of political Islam and democracy in Pakistan, and the treatment of Islamic groups by the state.
- ❖ Comprehend the recent ascent of the Hindu nationalist party (the BJP) in India.
- ❖ Assess the ramification of the recent rise of Hindu nationalism in India for religious minorities (Muslims and Sikhs), as well as the consequences for the maintenance of a secular state.

Required Readings:

Jelen and Wilcox, *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective*, 243-268
Esposito and Voll, *Islam and Democracy*, 102-123

Notes and Questions, Weekly Reaction Paper:

Esposito and Voll argue that Pakistan offers two good test cases: 1) that of the role of religion in state building and 2) that of Islamic parties and organizations participating within the political system. What do they find in each case? Is political Islam compatible with democracy in Pakistan? How does the Pakistani government deal with Islamic groups and vice-versa? According to Sunil Salu, what are the factors that explain the rise of Hindu nationalism in India? Why did this not occur until the 1980s and 1990s? What are the implications of the rise of Hindu nationalism for religious minorities like Muslims and Sikhs? Since India is officially a secular state, what is the future of secularism in such a multi-religious state?

Research Paper:

Submit initial outline of research paper (1 page) and initial bibliography (1 page).

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Week 12: International Religious Freedom

Scope:

This week provides an introduction to the concept of religious freedom. As well, it includes a study of U.S. foreign policy approaches to religious persecution and why such efforts blossomed in the 1990s. Finally, we appraise the impediments to Christian unity in addressing religious persecution and the means to increase Christian cooperation.

Objectives:

- ❖ Introduce the meaning and basis of religious freedom as a fundamental human right.
- ❖ Explore U.S. foreign policy approaches to religious persecution and the increasing political awareness thereof.
- ❖ Assess the obstacles to Christian cooperation in fighting religious persecution and suggestions to overcome them.

Required Readings:

Abrams, *The Influence of Faith*, vii-x, and 33-94

Silk, Hackett, and Hoover, *Religious Persecution as a U.S. Policy Issue*
(selections tba)

Jeremy Gunn, "The United States and the Promotion of the Freedom of Religion and Belief"

Notes and Questions, Weekly Reaction Paper:

What is religious freedom according to Fr. Hehir?

How do you think the U.S. foreign policy can/should promote religious freedom worldwide?

Why does Huntington think religious freedom became important to U.S. policymakers in the 1990s?

Why have Christian churches in the U.S. failed to unite in the fight against religious persecution worldwide and on what bases might they cooperate?

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Week 13: Religion, International Relations, “Clashing Civilizations”

Scope:

This week focuses on the role of religion in international relations by way of an introduction to the seminal “clash of civilizations” thesis set forth by Samuel Huntington in a famous 1993 article. Among the issues addressed is the central role of religion in the definition of “civilization,” the history of paradigms in international relations theory, the significance of the end of the Cold War for religious-cultural conflict, the implications that (according to Huntington) the West should come to terms with, and some of the critiques that have been made of Huntington’s argument on both theoretical and empirical grounds.

Objectives:

- ❖ describe the role of religion in international relations theory since the end of the Cold War
- ❖ appraise the “clash of civilizations” thesis as a paradigm scholarly understanding of contemporary international relations
- ❖ evaluate alternative understandings that hold that cultural identities are not so much “given” but chosen, and that underlying issues of basic human needs are more relevant than civilizations in theorizing international relations

Required Readings:

Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?”
Rubenstein and Crocker, “Challenging Huntington”

Notes and Questions, Weekly Reaction Paper:

Is Samuel Huntington completely right, partly right, and totally wrong? Explain your view.

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Week 14: Religion and Political Violence

Scope:

This week includes an exploration of religiously motivated violence. It includes the appraisal of contemporary theories in understanding such kinds of violence. It concludes with an assessment of the components of political Islam that can lead to violence, particularly violence perpetrated against people of other faiths.

Objectives:

- ❖ Understand religiously motivated violence, with a particular focus on political Islam.
- ❖ Explore current theories of war, peace and conflict resolution in relationship to such violence.

Required Readings:

Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon*, 35-86
Abrams, *The Influence of Faith*, 113-151

Note: There is no weekly reaction paper due for this week, but please do the reading as it will be helpful in your semester research paper.

Student Participation:

Check weekly newsgroup.

Week 15: Religion, Peacemaking, and Conflict Resolution

Scope:

This concluding section of this survey course moves beyond the theme of religion as cause of political conflict (which, not surprisingly, is common in the scholarly literature addressing religion in comparative politics and international relations) to look more closely at the theme of religion's role in conflict resolution. Readings introduce the topic both from a theological and theoretical perspective, and also from the perspective of contemporary Mennonite and Jewish experience.

Objectives:

- ❖ Introduce the prospects and problems of religion and conflict resolution.
- ❖ Provide an opportunity to synthesize and apply insights from the week's reading and the course as a whole to a research topic of interest to the student.

Required Readings:

Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon*, 3-32, and 139-227

Note: There is no weekly reaction paper due for this week, but please do the reading as it will be helpful in your semester research paper.

RESEARCH PAPER DUE:

The final assignment provides an opportunity for you to draw on (1) the knowledge and perspectives you've gained from the course as a whole, (2) research using secondary sources that you'll conduct on your own, and (3) assigned reading for Weeks 14 and 15. Write an 8-10 page research paper on any contemporary case of political conflict (*outside* the U.S.) in which religion is relevant. Your task in this paper is to evaluate the following statement in the context of the conflict you select: "Religion can be part of the problem and also part of the solution."

The required reading for Weeks 14 and 15 (for which no weekly reaction papers are due) will be especially relevant, but do not confine your references to those selections. Research and formulate your own analyses and arguments, and defend them. The paper must use proper academic citations, and include references to at least 5 works outside the list of required readings for this course.

Appendix – Additional Course Information

Instructor Biography:

Dennis Hoover is Vice President for Research and Publications, and executive director of the Council on Faith & International Affairs (CFIA), at the Institute for Global Engagement (IGE). He also serves as editor of IGE's web magazine and of CFIA's journal, *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*. He also coordinates the efforts of IGE's Research Associate internship program. Originally from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, he earned his D.Phil. in Politics in 1997 at the University of Oxford, where he wrote his thesis, "Conservative Protestant Politics in the United States and Canada: The Mobilization of Evangelical Social Movements Across the Continental Divide, 1960s-1990s." He earned his M. Phil. in Politics in 1992 at Oxford as well, studying the political institutions of advanced industrial societies, American politics, contemporary political theory, and modern theories of law and state. He has taught political science courses at several institutions, including Trinity College in Hartford, CT, Berry College in Mount Berry, GA, and Rowan College of New Jersey in Glassboro. His publications have appeared in a variety of outlets, including *International Political Science Review* and the *Encyclopedia of American Religion and Politics*. He has also written for magazines such as *Religion in the News, Books & Culture* and *The Nation*. He serves on the editorial board for the forthcoming book series, *Religion in American Public Life*, from Greenwood Press.

Office Hours:

My online office hours will also be held during the course chatrooms from weeks 2 to 14 of the course. Dates and times TBA. If you have questions you would rather not ask in such a public forum, you may email me at dhoover@globalengage.org. If you want to contact me by telephone, please do so between 9.00 and 18.00 EST on weekdays.

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