

**GLOBAL RELIGION AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY**  
**PSC 3020**

**Instructor:** Allen Hertzke, Political Science Professor and Director of Religious Studies  
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Office Hours: After class TTH 12-12:30; MW 2:00-4:00, and by drop in or appointment. Late afternoons are often good.

**Graduate Teaching Assistant:** Larycia Hawkins  
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Office Hours: TBA

**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.

**Important Dates:** January 26, last day to drop  
February 20, last day to drop with a W

**Introduction.**

As we look back on the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 Kepel 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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, 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*.

In addition to these books, there will be a variety of handouts, including short news articles, tables, religious documents, and soon to be published material. 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%
In-class assignments:	15% (This may change depending on room situation)

In borderline cases class attendance, improvement over the semester, and class participation will be the decisive factors.

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

### Week 1: Introduction and Religious Demographics

Quiz on Thursday

### Week 2: Survey of the Global scene

Chapters 1-2 of Johnston, chapters 1-2 of Huntington, Introduction of Abrams  
Handouts on religious traditions  
Demographic trends in Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.  
A look at migrations and interactions

### Week 3: A Civilizational Framework for understanding the role of global religions

Begin Huntington  
Internet assignment due – Thursday

### Week 4: Fundamentalism and Religious Strife

Continue Huntington  
Possible speaker

### Week 5: Critiques of the civilizational thesis

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, Crisis, 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

Week 12: Religious mediation of conflict

Begin Johnston and Sampson

Week 13: Reconciliation and religious mediation

Complete Johnston and Sampson

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  
Papers Due

Week 15: **Summary**