
POS 4931 and REL 4936 Religion and Politics

Department of Political Science

University of Florida

Dr. Patricia Sohn, Ph.D.

Fall 2020

Course Information – Technical

Online (100%) -- Access Course Page @ elearning.ufl.edu. All assignments for this course are posted on the course webpage on Canvas; all assignments are submitted electronically via the Canvas course webpage. If you have severe difficulty with submitting assignments electronically, please contact the professor immediately to make other arrangements (contact on or before September 14, 2020). Class meets:

T | Period 8 - 9 (3:00 PM - 4:55 PM)

R | Period 9 (4:05 PM - 4:55 PM)

Class 21827 and 25540 Sections 19B1 and 19B2

Zoom Link For Class Meetings. You must preregister for class meetings once @ Zoom for each, Tuesday and Thursday. You must sign in using your Gatorlink credentials; you will be provided with a link and password to sign into the class meetings. Tuesday classes meet at one link; Thursday classes meet at the second link. Class links for Tuesday and Thursday classes appear on the course page on Canvas. You are encouraged to put these links and passwords into your online Calendar at UF webmail, Google, or other calendar system.

Office Hours, Times and How To Access

Wednesdays, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m., in person @ 333 Anderson Hall; by office phone @ (352) 273-2370; or @ the Zoom link provided on Canvas course webpage. Note that if you connect via Zoom for office hours, you may have to wait to meet with the professor if other students arrive to Zoom or to the office first. Meetings are on a first-come, first-serve basis. You are welcomed and encouraged to attend office hours if you have questions about the class, readings, choosing other related courses, professionalization or graduate school questions, or other questions about academic life. If you meet with the professor via Zoom for office hours, you can ask your questions with or without other students “present” on Zoom (please ask directly if you would like to speak without other students present; the professor will put them in a Zoom waiting room while you ask your question).

Course Description

The course addresses themes in religion and politics, primarily in comparative and international perspectives. It includes a few works that relate to the U.S. The course includes theoretical works relating to religion, politics, or religion and politics together; these works are important selections from

across disciplines in the social sciences and humanities, including political science, sociology, anthropology, history, and comparative religion. Regionally, most case studies relate to the Middle East, Europe, East and South Asia, and Africa, while a few address comparative or international sphere issues more broadly. Readings address a range of themes, such as religion versus secularism; religiosity in practice; the secularization thesis; sympathetic approaches to religion; communities, values, and how they emerge and are defended; religion and laws or norms; orthodoxy in a “secular” world; religious resurgence; religion in political processes; religion, politics, and movements of people (e.g., migration); religious freedom; gender, feminism, and religion; religion in authoritarian states.

Required Texts

1. Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *Beyond Religious Freedom: The New Global Politics of Religion*. Princeton University Press, 2015. (**Available free** as an [e-book @ Smather’s Library](#), or for purchase in local book stores.)
2. Saba Mahmood, *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report*. Princeton University Press, 2016. (**Available free** as an [e-book @ Smather’s Library](#), or for purchase in local book stores.)
3. A reader is available on [Electronic Reserve through Smather’s Library](#). **All items should be free** if you are signed in through Smather’s Library. If you are asked for payment for an article, please contact the professor immediately. You do not have to purchase e-reserves articles for this class.
4. Rent and view: “[The Monkey King: Havoc in Heaven’s Palace](#)” (2019, Chinese with English subtitles), a feature film in Chinese mythology, cosmology, and folklore based upon the classic text, *Journey To The West*.

Assignments

- **10% Participation**
 - **(A)** 33.3% - Active and appropriate participation in ad hoc group activities and individual discussions of readings in the class session.
 - **(B)** 33.3% - Each student will give one 5-7 minute reading report 1 day in class. These reports will be scheduled by the end of Week 2 (September 14, 2020). Students will be graded upon content; verbal communication (including language); and analysis.
 - **(B)** 33.4% - Each student will be assigned to a study group of 5-6 people. Each study group will be assigned to one E-Reserves reading for a presentation in class. The study group will provide an outline for that reading on PowerPoint or similar modality, and each member will speak for 1-2 minutes in a presentation organized by the group. Study group presentations will be assigned by the end of Week 2 (September 14, 2020). They may be done live on Zoom, or they may be pre-recorded if you prefer. Students will be graded upon content; verbal communication (including language); and analysis.

- NOTE: Attendance. More than 3 absences will result in .05 points off your final grade on a 100-point scale per absence over 3.
- **30% Journal (3)** 1.5 – 2 pages. This is your opportunity to *engage with the course readings on a personal level*. Include only information that would be appropriate for the professor to read. Students are encouraged to keep a wider journal of your experience of the course for your own posterity. Please use footnotes and give a reference list, all formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style and the professor's style guide, both of which are available in Announcements. Paragraphs must be 5 – 7 sentences each (strict limit, no more than 7 sentences, and no fewer than 5 sentences). Sentences with semi-colons are allowed; please be sparing with them. Students may turn in one journal or abstract per class session; you may choose the session and reading about which you will write. Write for the reading assigned for the day you turn in the journal or abstract.
- **30% Abstracts (3)** 1 page. Explain the central argument/contention (or take-home message) of the assigned drawing upon three (3) major pieces of evidence used in the reading to support that argument/contention. In this assignment, you are working on developing *analytical distance* and *analytical neutrality or clarity*. In some ways, it is the opposite of personal engagement. Please use footnotes and give a reference list, all formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style combined with the professor's style guide, both of which are available in Announcements. Paragraphs must be 5 – 7 sentences each (strict limit, no more than 7 sentences, and no fewer than 5 sentences). Sentences with semi-colons are allowed; please be sparing with them. Students may turn in one journal or abstract per class session; you may choose the session and reading about which you will write. Write for the reading assigned for the day you turn in the journal or abstract.
- **30% Final Essay** 6 pages. Each student will write one 6-page essay. The student can choose between responding to an essay topic that will be provided; or choosing a major research text of interest to him or her and writing a 6-page analytical essay on that text (e.g., modeled on the abstract assignment but extended to six pages). If the latter is chosen, students should relate the text, analytically, to the arguments provided in at least 8 other course readings. To write a review of a major research text, you must have professor approval by the end of Week 4 (September 25, 2020) For either option, use Chicago Manual of Style combined with the professor's style guide, both of which are available in Announcements on Canvas. The final essay will be due on Canvas on the day and time of the scheduled Final Exam for this course. There is no final exam for this course. For the prompt option, you will be asked to distinguish between *analytical distance* and *personal engagement* with the materials, and to demonstrate both. When in doubt, *analytical distance* should come first. You may draw in some part upon your abstracts and journals, as appropriate to answering the essay prompt, or to linking the chosen text to our course readings. Essays responding to the essay prompt are limited to the readings from class. Essays choosing a major research text are also limited to course readings with the exception of that selected and approved research text. Please use footnotes and give a reference list, all formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style and the professor's style guide, both of which are available in Announcements. Paragraphs must be 5 – 7 sentences each (strict limit, no more than 7 sentences, and no fewer than 5 sentences). Sentences with semi-colons are allowed; please be sparing with them.

Course Learning Goals

1. Identify several major theories regarding religion in the modern world, such as the secularization thesis, sympathetic approaches to religion, etc.
2. Identify key themes through which religion and politics intersect in the late-modern world.
3. Identify key theories about religion. Is it mythology, history, community, ancestors, values, norms, laws, practices, beliefs, etc.? Identify the theory with the scholar who developed it.
4. Compare key themes through which religion and politics intersect across regions or religions.
5. Explain religious resurgence.
6. Explain key gender dynamics in religion and politics in specific national, religious, or thematic contexts.
7. Consider dynamics of religiosity and resurgence of religious practice and/or faith in contradistinction to dynamics of secularization across regions and religions.
8. Consider the themes, dynamics, and theories above while developing skills in analytical distance and personal engagement.

Reading Schedule

Your two text books are Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, and Saba Mahmood. Both are available FREE as e-books at Smather's Library.

If a reading in the schedule below does not come from one of those two books, it is on electronic reserve at Smather's Library. Sign in to Smather's Library; go to e-reserves; your courses with e-reserves readings will be listed.

Week 1. Introductions

Week 2. Religion vs. Secularism in the Third Wave

- Tuesday: 1. Samuel Huntington, "Religion and the Third Wave"
 2. Peter Berger, "Religion and the West"
- Thursday: 1. Jose Casanova, "The Secular and Secularisms"

Week 3. Sympathetic Approaches to Religions

- Tuesday: 1. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "1983 Presidential Address to the American Academy of Religion: The Modern West in the History of Religion"
 2. Talal Asad, "Reading a Modern Classic: W. C. Smith's "The Meaning and End of Religion"
- Thursday: 1. Peter Berger, "Religion and World Construction"

Week 4. Religion and Civil Society

- Tuesday: 1. Robert Bellah, "Civil Religion in America"
2. Jose Casanova, "Civil Society and Religion: Retrospective Reflections on Catholicism and Prospective Reflections on Islam"
- Thursday: 1. David Kertzer, "The Ritual Construction of Political Reality"

Week 5. Theorizing Religion. Various Approaches.

- Tuesday: 1. Mary Douglas, "The Abominations of Leviticus"
2. Emile Durkheim, "Mechanical Solidarity, or Solidarity by Similarities"
- Thursday: 1. Claude Levi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth"

Week 6. Theorizing Religion, Various Approaches, Continued

- Tuesday: 1. Peter Berger, "Secularism in Retreat"
2. Victor Turner, "Frame, Flow and Reflection: Ritual and Drama as Public Liminality"
- Thursday: 1. George Simpson (Emile Durkheim), "A Durkheim Fragment" (the modern state as taking over religious arenas, such as the family)
2. Talal Asad, "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam"

Week 7. Religion in Political Processes/Contexts

- Tuesday: 1. Jonathan Fox, "Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations"
2. Leonardo A. Villalón "From Argument to Negotiation: Constructing Democracy in African Muslim Contexts"
- Thursday: 1. Mark Tessler, "Islam and Democracy in the Middle East: The Impact of Religious Orientations on Attitudes toward Democracy in Four Arab Countries"

Week 8. Religion in Political Processes/Contexts

- Tuesday: 1. Sonalde Desai and Gheda Temsah, "Muslim and Hindu Women's Public and Private Behaviors: Gender, Family, and Communalized Politics in India"
2. Patricia Woods [Sohn], "The Irony of State Incorporation"
- Thursday: 1. Saba Mahmood, "Topography of the Piety Movement"

Week 9. Religion in Political Processes/Contexts

- Tuesday: 1. Sayyid Qutb (translated by John B. Hardie), "Religion and Society in Christianity and in Islam" and "The Nature of Social Justice in Islam"
2. Judith Laikin Elkin, "Refugees, Nativists, and Nazis"
- Thursday: 1. Steven Mazie and Patricia Woods [Sohn], "Prayer, Contentious Politics, and The Women of The Wall: The Benefits of Collaboration in Participant Observation at Intense, Multifocal Events"

Week 10. Religion in Political Processes/Contexts: China and Tibet

- Tuesday: 1. Dan Smyer Yü, "Redeeming a Stigmatized Tibet: Virtual Tibet as an Emerging Public Space of Tibetans in China"
2. Melvyn Goldstein, "Tibet and China in the Twentieth Century"
- Thursday: 1. Michael Walsh, "Religion"
Please be prepared to talk about the Chinese feature film, "[The Monkey King: Havoc in Heaven's Palace](#)" (English subtitles)

Week 11. Thinking About Religion in Empirical Context

- Tuesday: 1. Patricia Sohn, "Inhabiting Orthodoxy, Discussing Islam and Feminism, Continued" (2 pages)
 2. Pages 4-11, Eurobarometer Survey Report 2005
 3. Pew Center Research Reports, 2014: (a) "Attendance at Religious Services"; (b) "Belief in God"; and (c) "Adults in the South"
- Thursday: 1. Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, Chapter 2, "The Two Faces of Faith" (main text)

Week 12. Religious Freedom in the International Sphere

- Tuesday: 1. Hurd, Chapter 3, "International Religious Freedom"
 2. Hurd, Chapter 4, "Religious Engagement"
- Thursday: 1. Hurd, Chapter 5, "Minorities Under Law"

Week 13. Religious Freedom: International and Minority Politics

- Tuesday: 1. Hurd, Chapter 6, "Beyond Religious Freedom"
 2. Saba Mahmood, Chapter 1, "Minority Rights and Religious Liberty: Itineraries of Conversion" (main text)
- Thursday: THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS

Week 14. Religious Freedom in Minority Context

- Tuesday: 1. Mahmood, Chapter 2, "To Be Or Not To Be A Minority?"
 2. Mahmood, Chapter 3, "Secularism, Family Law, and Gender Inequality"
- Thursday: 1. Mahmood, Chapter 4, "Religious and Civil Inequality"
 2. Mahmood, Chapter 5, "Secularity, History Literature"

Week 15. Conclusions

- Tuesday: 1. Mahmood, Epilogue

UF and Course Policies

- Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. [Click here to read the university attendance policies.](#)
- Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center.](#) It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.
- Current UF grading policies for assigning grade points. See: [link to the university grades and grading policies.](#)
- Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner.](#) Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the

email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here.](#)

- Materials and Supplies Fees: Books, e-reserves, and one film. Both texts are available free at Smather's Library as e-books. E-reserves should be free of charge; please contact the professor if you are asked to pay for items on e-reserves. Students are asked to rent or purchase one feature film; it is available as of 8/27/20 for \$3.99 rentals at on-line venues.
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work. [Find more information in the university attendance policies.](#)
- Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.
- Please note recommendations for preferred methods for public and private communication regarding the course: Please keep the audio on "mute" if you are not speaking about something related to class. It is best to keep your audio on "mute" unless you are speaking to the class. Please note that when you are not on "mute," all sound from your computer can be heard by everyone in the class and may be recorded, as noted immediately above. Please use the "raise hand" feature on Zoom to ask to speak in class; please be as respectful as possible to all students and faculty when speaking; please keep comments related to the readings and course materials, or other course items. Your participation and speaking in class are welcomed and encouraged. Just keep these guidelines in mind.
- For technical computer or Canvas issues, please [visit the helpdesk website](#) or call 352-392-4357.
- Please do not be late to class. Please keep cell phones on mute during class.
- UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Honor Code.](#) Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.
- Office hours will be in person, via phone, or via Zoom. If you come to office hours in person, remember:
 - You are required to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and

Conflict Resolution. Follow your instructor's guidance on how to enter and exit the office for office hours.

- Cleansing materials will be available to wipe chair if you would you like. Please remain six feet apart at all times.
 - Chairs are set 6 feet from the faculty member. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the office.
 - If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms ([Click here for guidance from the CDC on symptoms of coronavirus](#)), please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. [Click here for UF Health guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to or are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms](#).
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CAMPUS RESOURCES

Health and Wellness

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
 - *Counseling and Wellness Center*: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
 - *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
 - *University Police Department*: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
 - *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
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Academic Resources

- *E-learning technical support*: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
 - *Career Connections Center*: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
 - *Library Support*: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
 - *Teaching Center*: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
 - *Writing Studio*: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
 - *Student Complaints On-Campus*: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information](#).
 - *On-Line Students Complaints*: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process](#).
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