REVELATION AND CONFLICT, LSHV 354-40

Mondays, 6:00 PM – 9:45 PM, Maguire 103

Course Description
Religious terrorism is on the rise. Even a cursory glance at world affairs will show that religion is at the heart of today’s ongoing struggle between nations and ideology. Religion may be a motivator and catalyst in rallying popular support for waging war, and in fact may play a significant role in nurturing communal strife among various faith groups in their struggle to achieve governmental control.

This is a graduate course designed to acquaint students with the analytical study of religion and conflict on the world stage. By design, the course is interdisciplinary, covering areas in religion (theology/philosophy), sociology (ethno-religious & identity conflicts), ethics and politics. Students will have an opportunity to focus on one or more of these areas for their semester paper. This course will help students comprehend the global resurgence of religion in intra-state and international affairs, and will focus on specific areas in the world where religion is the primary issue. We will address the role religion plays in these conflicts, and offer possible resolutions.

Through classroom lecture and discussion, reading assignments, media and student presentations, we will address the role religion plays in various conflicts, the determination of whether religion is the basis of a given conflict, and possible resolutions to these conflicts.

Instructor
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Office Hours: Mondays, 5:00 – 5:45 PM, ICC Atrium, or by appointment

Course Goals
To provide an intellectual framework and analytical tools for students to discuss, reflect upon, understand, and propose solutions to a variety of religion and conflict issues throughout the world.

Learning Objectives
The following objectives are built into the pedagogy of this course syllabus:

1. To provide an awareness, knowledge & understanding of the global resurgence of religiously motivated conflict and violence
2. To help students understand the cultural, psychological, political & religious/theological foundations for religion and conflict on the world stage
3. To provide the building blocks for students to develop models of reconciliation and peace to religion and conflict issues on the world stage

Evaluation
Students are expected to attend lectures, read assigned texts, submit term paper & essays, and participate in discussion, as well as display an ability to absorb, comprehend, and analyze the course material.

Course Requirements
- Reading Assignments
- Submit three short analytical essays (3 pages each, max) on assigned readings
- Topics will be distributed for take home one week in advance
- Submit one 20 page paper; DLS has additional requirements
- Individual Oral Presentation: a 10 minute review of your semester paper

Study Groups
Depending on class size, study groups (usually four) will be formed to prepare class presentations on world “hot spots.” These 20 minute group presentations will take place near the end of the semester.

Grading Policy
Final grade for the course will be based on the following:

1. Class Participation/Discussion 10%
2. Analytical Essays 30% (10 X 3)
3. Research Paper 40%
4. Oral Presentation 20%

Grade Table
93-100 % = A
90 - 92 % = A-
87 - 89 % = B+
83 - 86 % = B
80 - 82 % = B-
77 - 79 % = C+
73 - 76 % = C
70 - 72 % = C-
67 - 69 % = D+
60 - 66 % = D
Below 60 % = F

Disabilities Statement
If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center,
Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

**Use of Electronic Devices**
Electronic devices will be turned off at the beginning of class.

**Class Attendance and Late Arrival**
Attendance is mandatory, and roll call will be taken at the beginning of each class. Students with two absences for any reason may receive a failing grade for the course. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to make up any assignments on time and obtain class handouts.

**Readings Assignments**
Required readings for each class are listed below, and should be completed before the class period. Weekly readings are listed in order of priority. All others are highly recommended, and may be referred to in class. Shorter articles will be uploaded to Canvas. Additional websites and recently declassified government documents will be made available in class.

**Title IX at Georgetown**
https://titleix.georgetown.edu/

**Sexual Misconduct**
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX") prohibits discrimination based on sex in any educational programs, which includes sexual harassment or any acts of sexual misconduct. Title IX requires the University, upon becoming aware of any incident of sexual harassment and misconduct to respond appropriately to protect and maintain the safety of the University community, including students, faculty, and staff.

Georgetown University prohibits sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, and stalking.

Discrimination based on sex, including sexual misconduct and discrimination based on pregnancy or parenting status, subverts the University's mission and threatens permanent damage to the educational experience, careers, and well-being of students, faculty, and staff.

Please know that as a faculty member I am committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, including relationship violence and sexual assault. However, University policy also requires me to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role is to coordinate the University’s response to sexual misconduct.

Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources who can provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. These resources include:
More information about campus resources and reporting sexual misconduct can be found at: https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/get-help.

**Pregnancy Adjustments and Accommodations**

Georgetown University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant and parenting students. Students may request adjustments based on general pregnancy needs or accommodations based on a pregnancy-related complication. Specific adjustments will be handled on a case by case basis and will depend on medical need and academic requirements.

Students seeking a pregnancy adjustment or accommodation should follow the process laid out at: https://titleix.georgetown.edu/student-pregnancy.

**Course Syllabus**

Week 1, May 21

**Introduction to the Course**

**Foundations of Religious Conflict**


Week 2, May 28 NO CLASS, Memorial Day Holiday

Week 3, June 4

**What Initiates Religious Conflict?**


Robert D. Kaplan, Warrior Politics (New York: Random House, 2003), 3-64.


Week 4, June 11
Religious Conflict from Family Myth and Culture
First Analytical Essay Questions Distributed


Week 5, June 18
Organized Religion as a Locus of Blame
First Analytical Essay Due


Week 6, June 25

**On the Road to Transformation**


Week 7, July 2

**Second Analytical Essay Distributed**

**Models of Reconciliation in Abrahamic Religions**


Tzvi Marx, “Theological Preparation for Reconciliation in Judaism,” Gort, 93-104.


Week 8, July 9

**Models of Reconciliation: Judaism**

**Second Analytical Essay Questions Due**


Marc Gopin, Chapter Six, “Patterns of Abrahamic Reconciliation,” *Holy War & Holy Peace*, 103-143.


Menachem Klein, A Possible Peace Between Israel and Palestine (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007)

Week 9, July 16
Models of Reconciliation: Islam
Topic for Final Research Paper Must be Approved by Today

Anton Wessels, “Can the Children of Abraham be Reconciled: Ishmael and Isaac in the Bible and the Qur’an,” Gort, 134-144.


Week 10, July 23
Models of Reconciliation: Islam, continued
Third Analytical Essay Distributed


Week 11, July 30

**Models of Reconciliation: the Balkans**  
*Third Analytical Essay Questions Due*


Week 12, Aug 6

**Last Class**

**The Road to Peace**

**Interfaith Dialogue**

**Liberation Theology**

**Final Student Oral Class Presentations**


READING LIST


Recommended


Abdulaziz A. Sachedina, “The Development of Jihad in Islamic Revelation and History,” in James Turner Johnson and John Kelsay, eds., *Cross, Crescent and Sword: The*
Justification and Limitations of War in Western and Islamic Tradition (New York: Greenwood, 1990).


Sami Zubaida, Islam, the People and the State (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2009).

United Nations and U.S. Government Documents; Additional Websites

Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/religion.htm

UNCHR Annual Report on Religious Intolerance.
http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/religion/annual.htm

UNCHR Press Releases on Religious Intolerance.


http://www.echr.coe.int/Convention/webConvenENG.pdf

http://www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/

The Oslo Declaration on Freedom of Religion or Belief.

National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism, U.S. Department of Homeland Security,
List of Terrorist Organizations by Ideology: Religion:
http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data/tops/terrorist_organizations_by_ideology.asp

Additional documents will be made available during the semester.