



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
School of Continuing Studies

Georgetown University
Master of Arts in Liberal Studies

Summer 2020 LSHV 517 -40

Secularism and Church-State Relations

Instructor: John Shook, PhD

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Semester: May 18 – August 16, 2020

Class Meetings: Tuesdays 6:00pm – 9:00pm in location (possibly online) TBD

Office Hours: Tuesdays 4pm – 6pm, or by appointment

Course Description

This course discusses theories about regulating engagements between religion and politics. Religious organizations and governing powers can benefit from neutral restraints preventing each side from dominating the other. Secularism in principle offers a third option besides the government controlling religion (tyranny) and a religion controlling government (theocracy). A variety of secularisms are surveyed around the world, where types of separations between church and state have developed within different socio-cultural contexts. The experiences of France, USA, Turkey, Egypt, Israel, India, and China, along with a selection of additional nations, are represented. Historical, anthropological, sociological, political, philosophical, and theological perspectives contribute to studies of secular institutions adopting religious functions and religions responding to rising secularity. By our time, the civil peace promised by secularism has only been partially realized. Religious adherents can use voting in elections, mobilizing in protests, and even terrorizing violence to get preferential treatment from their governments. Secularist voices can sound intolerant towards all religion and hostile to religious freedoms, thereby threatening rather than defending core democratic values such as individualism, diversity, and pluralism. Re-designed compromises between religious and secularist agendas now require global attention.

Multidisciplinary Objectives

Many academic disciplines in the humanities and social sciences are consulted throughout this course, notably history, philosophy, religious studies, cultural studies, demographics, social theory, civil and constitutional law, comparative politics, and international relations. Relationships among disciplines will require adjudication: their assessments may be discordant, or their recommendations might point in divergent directions.

While exploring these disciplines, students will achieve individualized learning objectives, taking advantage of opportunities to:

- acquire facility with past and contemporary demographic and sociological data that point to trends in the religiosity and secularity of populations around the world;
- assess theoretical views about possible grounds for public attitudes and receptivity (or antipathy) towards religious practices, spirituality, and scientific information;

- apply the perspectives of multiple disciplines upon potential explanations for processes of secularization, and correlations between secularization and other socio/cultural features;
- examine varieties of political secularism in countries around the world, and compare their distinctive approaches to achieving legal respect and neutrality toward religions;
- join their own voices to ongoing debates about the relationships between religion and politics, and compose well-researched papers for academic consideration.

Required Texts

Bose, Sumantra. *Secular States, Religious Politics: India, Turkey, and the Future of Secularism*. Cambridge University Press, 2018. ISBN 9781108454865.

Publisher's abstract:

A comparative study of the two major attempts to build secular states - where the state's constitutional identity and fundamental character are not based on or derived from any religious faith - in the non-Western world. This book explains the origins, evolution and latterly the decline of secularism as a core principle of the state in India and Turkey. The anti-secular political transformations of the twenty-first century are the rise of a Sunni-Islamist definition of Turkish national identity to hegemonic power, and Hindu nationalism as India's pre-eminent political force. Both secular-state models adopted a similar operational doctrine of state intervention in and regulation of the religious sphere, rather than a Western-style separation of church and state. But, Turkish state-secularism took a culturally deracinated and harshly authoritarian form that led to its failure, whereas India's secular state - though flawed in practice - followed a culturally rooted and democratic path that makes secularism indispensable to India's future.

Hurd, Elizabeth. *Beyond Religious Freedom: The New Global Politics of Religion*. Princeton University Press, 2015. ISBN 9780691176222.

Publisher's abstract:

Hurd looks at three critical channels of state-sponsored intervention: international religious freedom advocacy, development assistance and nation building, and international law. She shows how these initiatives make religious difference a matter of law, resulting in a divide that favors forms of religion authorized by those in power and excludes other ways of being and belonging. In exploring the dizzying power dynamics and blurred boundaries that characterize relations between "expert religion," "governed religion," and "lived religion," Hurd charts new territory in the study of religion in global politics.

Lacorne, Denis. *The Limits of Tolerance: Enlightenment Values and Religious Fanaticism*. Columbia University Press, 2019. ISBN 9780231187145.

Publisher's abstract:

Lacorne traces the emergence of the modern notion of religious tolerance in order to rethink how we should respond to its contemporary tensions. In a wide-ranging argument that spans the Ottoman Empire, the Venetian republic, and recent controversies such as France's burqa ban and the white-supremacist rally in Charlottesville, *The Limits of Tolerance* probes crucial questions: Should we impose limits on freedom of expression in the name of human dignity or decency? Should we accept religious symbols in the public square? Can we tolerate the intolerant? While acknowledging that tolerance can never be entirely without limits, Lacorne defends the Enlightenment concept against recent attempts to circumscribe it, arguing that without it a pluralistic society cannot survive.

Mahmood, Saba. *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report*. Princeton University Press, 2016. ISBN 9780691153285.

Publisher's abstract:

Drawing on her extensive fieldwork in Egypt with Coptic Orthodox Christians and Bahais—religious minorities in a predominantly Muslim country—Saba Mahmood shows how modern secular governance has exacerbated religious tensions and inequalities rather than reduced them. Tracing the historical career of secular legal concepts in the colonial and postcolonial Middle East, she explores how contradictions at the very heart of political secularism have aggravated and amplified existing forms of Islamic hierarchy, bringing minority relations in Egypt to a new historical impasse. Through a close examination of Egyptian court cases and constitutional debates about minority rights, conflicts around family law, and controversies over freedom of expression, Mahmood invites us to reflect on the entwined histories of secularism in the Middle East and Europe.

Additional Readings: Handouts provided during the semester as pdf files on Canvas. Some chapters from the *Oxford Handbook of Secularism* (ed. JR Shook and P Zuckerman) will be included.

Course Requirements

1. Class Participation. Regular participation in class discussion, and a 15-minute classroom presentation of the term paper (see below). 200 points possible. 20% of total grade.
2. Issue Brief. 1000 words, fully referenced. On a topic chosen from the issues raised during the first 4 weeks of the course. This Brief will explain the enduring significance of an example of religious toleration that is discussed in Lacorne, *The Limits of Tolerance*. 100 points possible. 10% of total grade.
3. Short Paper. 3000 words, fully referenced. On a topic of students' choice, selected from the course's topics during the first 7 weeks. At least five disciplinary perspectives from among the social sciences and the humanities will be applied to the topic. You will first compose a one-page prospectus outlining your paper's plan, to be approved by the instructor. 300 points possible. 30% of total grade.
4. Term Paper. 5000-6000 words, fully referenced. On any topic covered in this class, except for the topic chosen for the Short Paper. A term paper addresses an issue having multiple disciplinary aspects, by focusing on either social secularization or political secularism, and it may deal with one country or several countries. A successful paper will synthesize relevant material gained throughout the course (lectures and readings), information from secondary literature chosen from several disciplines, and the student's academic background and interests. 400 points possible. 40% of total grade.

Citation Style: The APA Style (APA Publication Manual 6th Edition) is used widely in SCS courses. Consult <http://pitt.libguides.com/citationhelp/APA>

Final Grade

ASSIGNMENT	PERCENT OF TOTAL GRADE	POSSIBLE POINTS
Class Participation	20%	200

Issue Brief – 1,000 words	10%	100
Short Paper – 3,000 words	30%	300
Term Paper – 5,000 words	40%	400
	TOTAL	1000 points

Total Points	Grade	Quality Points
920-1000	A	4.00
900-919	A-	3.67
881-899	B+	3.33
800-880	B	3.00
781-799	B-	2.67
761-780	C+	2.33
700-760	C	2.00
690-699	C-	1.67
680-689	D+	1.33
660-679	D	1.00
Less than 660	F	0.00

Course Policies

Students' Religious Observances: The following is university policy: Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a given day because of the observance of a major religious holiday or related travel shall be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes.

Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability who requires accommodations or if you think you may have a disability and want to inquire about accommodations, please contact the Academic Resource Center at 202-687-8354 or arc@georgetown.edu. Individuals with disabilities have the right to specific accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the course. Some accommodations might include note takers, books on tape, extended time on assignments, and interpreter services among others. Students are responsible for communicating their needs to the Academic Resource Center before the start of classes to allow time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. The University is not responsible for making special accommodations for students who have not declared their disabilities and have not requested an accommodation in a timely manner. Also, the University need not modify course or degree requirements considered to be an essential requirement of the program of instruction. For the most current and up-to-date policy information, please refer to the Georgetown University Academic Resource Center website. Students are highly encouraged to discuss the documentation and accommodation process with an Academic Resource Center administrator.

Extreme weather, Emergencies, and Instructional Continuity: During inclement weather or other emergencies on a day when we are scheduled to meet face-to-face, check the university's Web site or call (202) 687-7669 for information on whether the university is open. If the university is open, this class will meet. If the university is closed, this class will meet through distance means such as online videoconferencing; check your e-mail for a message from me on how we will proceed in that situation. Due dates for written assignments submitted through Blackboard will not be changed due to campus closings. The university recently has acquired the capability to send text messages and recorded messages about emergencies to cell phones and other mobile devices. Sign up on MyAccess.

Georgetown Honor System: All students are expected to follow Georgetown's honor code unconditionally. We assume you have read the honor code material located at <http://scs.georgetown.edu/academic-affairs/honor-code>, and in particular have read the following documents: Honor Council Pamphlet, What is Plagiarism, Sanctioning Guidelines, and Expedited Sanctioning Process. Papers in this course will all be submitted to turnitin.com for checking. Submitting material in fulfillment of the requirements of this course means that you have abided by the Georgetown honor pledge: *In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

Plagiarism: In accord with university policy, all incidents of suspected plagiarism or other Honor Code violations will be reported to the Honor Council without fail. If the Honor Council finds that a student has plagiarized or has violated the Honor Code in any other way, the student may receive a grade of F for the course.

Turnitin.com: Students acknowledge that by taking this course all required papers can be submitted for a Textual Similarity Review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.

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:

Jen Schweer, MA, LPC

Associate Director of Health Education Services for
Sexual Assault Response and Prevention

[\(202\) 687-0323](tel:(202)687-0323)

jls242@georgetown.edu

Erica Shirley

Trauma Specialist

Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

[\(202\) 687-6985](tel:(202)687-6985)

els54@georgetown.edu

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>.

Class Schedule

This tentative schedule is subject to change as necessary.

Week	Topic	Readings, Events
Week 1. May 19	The Secular, Secularity, Secularization, Secularism	<i>Handbook of Secularism</i> , Introduction
Week 2. May 26	Christianity, Religious Wars and the idea of religious toleration	<i>The Limits of Tolerance</i> , chaps. 1, 2, 3
Week 3. [no class 20 th] June 2	Islam, blasphemy, multicultural tolerance, and women's liberation	<i>The Limits of Tolerance</i> , chaps. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Week 4. June 9	Religious freedom, democratic liberties, and liberal limits to toleration	<i>The Limits of Tolerance</i> , chaps. 9, 10, Epilogue
Week 5. June 16	Defining religion, placing boundaries on religion, and protecting religion by law	<i>Beyond Religious Freedom</i> , chaps. 1, 2 Issue Brief due
Week 6. June 23	Religious liberties and restrictions in the USA and around the world	<i>Beyond Religious Freedom</i> , chaps. 3, 4
Week 7. June 30	Religious diversity, religious minorities, and reducing violence	<i>Beyond Religious Freedom</i> , chaps. 5, 6 Prospectus due for short paper
Week 8. July 7	Minority rights and national interests, drawing lines between Church and State	<i>Religious Difference in a Secular Age</i> , chaps. 1, 2
Week 9. July 14	Religion is always more than doctrine: family, gender, history, and culture	<i>Religious Difference in a Secular Age</i> , chaps.
Week 10. July 21	Paradoxes of political secularism and the future of individual rights	<i>Secular States, Religious Politics</i> , chaps. 1, 2, 3 Short Paper due
Week 11. July 28	The experiences of India, Turkey, and anti-secular nationalisms	<i>Secular States, Religious Politics</i> , chaps. 4, 5, 6, 7
Week 12. Aug 4	Student presentations	
Week 13. Aug 11	complete Term Paper	Aug 16: Term Paper Due