

University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Department of Political Science
Fall 2014
Ross Hall 215, TTh 9:25-10:50 am

Dr. Rebecca Glazier
Stabler Hall 603K
Office Hours: Wednesdays 8:30-10:00
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POLS 4341: Seminar on Religion and Politics

Course Syllabus



Description: This course analyzes the role of religion in politics by examining the affiliations, beliefs, and behaviors of religious individuals, institutions, non-state actors, and states. We also explore the paradox of religion as a source of division and conflict, on the one hand, and of peaceful aspirations and compassionate, sacrificial service, on the other. We will study religion and politics both through a theoretical lens and through in-depth study of national and international cases. This is also a research practicum course, and students in the course will participate in conducting scholarly research.

Course goals: In this course, students are expected to gain substantive knowledge about religion and politics through the study of theories, facts, and cases, as well as to gain transferrable skills. At the end of this course, students should be able to compare and evaluate the role of religion in politics over time, the extent to which religious considerations influence the foreign policies of various nations, and the motivations behind political actions taken in the name of religion. Students should be able to thoughtfully analyze issues of religion and politics and express their analysis through written and verbal communication. Students will also improve their writing and researching skills, apply critical thinking and analytic skills to challenging readings, and gain experience working in groups, leading class discussions, and presenting complex information.

Required readings:

- Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective: The One, The Few, and The Many. Ted G. Jelen and Clyde Wilcox, eds. Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- God's Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics. Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shah. W.W. Norton, 2011.
- Many, many scholarly articles and readings posted online.

Course assignments and grading standards: Letter grades will be based on the traditional scale (90-100 is an A, 80-89 is a B, 70-79 is a C, 60-69 is a D, and below 60 is an F). There will be no opportunities for extra credit. Course assignments and their percentage of the total grade are as follows:

- Participation: 25%
- Class Discussion Leader Assignment: 10%
- Congregation Report: 10%
- Website Report: 10%
- Website Data: 5%
- 5 Critical Analysis Papers: 10%
- Annotated Bibliography: 15%
- Final Paper: 15%

Expectations: Students are expected to attend all lectures on time, have the assigned readings completed by the beginning of class each day, participate in class discussions, activities, and simulations, and ask questions. Students are expected to be respectful in their interactions with the professor and with their fellow students. Students are required to have reliable access to the Internet. Cell phones should be turned off and the owner of any cell phone that rings will be required to bring treats for the rest of the class.

Email policy:

The best way to get a hold of me is through email. If you want to receive a reply, please make sure to 1) put your name and the name of the course in the subject line, 2) address the email to Dr. or Professor Glazier, 3) close with your name. Please feel free to ask me any questions about the course, but out of courtesy please check the syllabus and the course website to see if the answer is already available. If you want to make any special arrangements or for any reason want me to remember something, please send it in an email. If I don't have it in email, it never happened.

Attendance policy:

Participation is a critical part of this course, and constitutes 25% of your final grade. If you are not in class, then you cannot participate. If you miss more than one discussion day (usually Thursdays), or if you miss more than 10% of class meetings, it will be very difficult to earn an "A" for participation. I will take roll every day to keep track of attendance. If you are late to class and miss the roll, you are out of luck. Be on time. If you need to miss class, you do not need to tell me beforehand. I don't distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences and it is your responsibility to get lecture notes from your peers. I do not give out my lecture notes or my PowerPoint slides.

Snow day policy:

In accordance with University policy, class will be canceled any day that the Little Rock School District cancels school. Look to your local news sources for this information. I will also do my best to post it on our course Blackboard website.

Paper submission:

The annotated bibliography and final paper assignments for the course must be submitted through Blackboard using the Safe Assign tool on the homepage of the course Blackboard site. All papers will be run through plagiarism screening software, which will compare the material used to online sources, library books, and papers submitted by other students. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Dean of Students. Please read the plagiarism handout very carefully, as well as the cheating policy described below.

Cheating policy: Academic dishonesty is taken very seriously in this course. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, cheating on an exam, unauthorized collaboration on an assignment, and plagiarism. Professors are **REQUIRED** to report any academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students, and students caught cheating will receive an F for the assignment and may receive an F for the course. In order to ensure that you understand what constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty, please thoroughly review the plagiarism handout provided and read the complete description of the UALR policy on academic dishonesty, which is available in the student handbook at www.ualr.edu/www/handbook/student_rights.html.

Disability statement: Your success in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to create inclusive learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have a documented disability (or need to have a disability documented), and need an accommodation, please contact me privately as soon as possible, so that we can discuss with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) how to meet your specific needs and the requirements of the course. The DRC offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process among you, your instructor(s) and the DRC. Thus, if you have a disability, please contact me and/or the DRC, at 501-569-3143 (V/TTY) or 501-683-7629 (VP). For more information, please visit the DRC website at www.ualr.edu/disability.

Contested grades: If you believe a grade is inaccurate, you must wait at least 24 hours before coming to speak with the professor. If there is a math mistake or an overlooked answer, please let me know and I will correct it. However, if you are actually contesting your grade, you must write a letter that explains why you believe a mistake in grading was made. Grades on exams or papers can only be contested within two weeks of when they are handed back. Course grades can only be contested within 60 days of the end of the quarter.

Schedule and Reading Assignments:

Week 1: Introduction and Overview

Assigned Readings: Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective Chapter 1

Week 2: Introduction and Overview, Continued

Assigned Readings: God's Century Chapters 1 and 2; Harris vs. Armstrong on the value of religion; "God Angrily Clarifies 'Don't Kill' Rule"

Discussion on Tuesday, August 26

No class on Thursday, August 28. Dr. Glazier will be presenting research at the American Political Science Association Annual Conference in Washington, DC.

Week 3: Secularization

Assigned Readings: Sacred and Secular Chapter 1; Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective Chapter 8; "The Secularization Debate"; "Has the Study of Global Politics Found Religion?"

Guest Lecture from Dr. Dorian Jano about religion and politics in Albania and the Balkans on Thursday, September 4.

Week 4: Religion and Power Part 1: Soft Power

Assigned Readings: "Diplomacy in an Age of Faith"; Religious Transnational Actors Chapters 1 and 8
Discussion on Thursday, September 11

Week 5: Religion and Power Part 2: Religious Mobilization

Assigned Readings: "Bridging Religion and Politics"; "Making Sense of Religion in Political Life"; "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"; Politics in the Pews Chapter 2.

Discussion on Thursday, September 18

Week 6: Religion and Power Part 3: Religious Abuse of Power

Assigned Readings: God's Century Chapter 6; "Femicide as Terrorism: The Case of Uzbekistan's Unveiling Murders"; "The True Clash of Civilizations"; Sex and World Peace Chapters 1 and 4

Discussion on Thursday, September 25

Week 7: Religious Competition

Assigned Readings: Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective Chapter 13; The Churching of America Chapter 7; "Is the clash of civilizations really true?"; "Religious Persecution in Cross-National Context: Clashing Civilizations or Regulated Religious Economies?"

Discussion on Thursday, October 2

Week 8: Religion and National Politics

Assigned Readings: God's Century, Chapter 3; Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective Chapter 11; Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective Chapter 5; "Elite Competition, Religiosity, and anti-Americanism"

Discussion on Thursday, October 9

Week 9: Fall Break Week

No assigned readings

No class on Tuesday, October 14

Annotated Bibliography Due Tuesday, October 21

Week 10: Religion and Democracy

Assigned Readings: God's Century, Chapter 4; Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective Chapter 7; "The New Islamists"

Discussion on Thursday, October 23

Week 11: Religion and Social Capital

Assigned Readings: "The Resourceful Believer"; "Faith in Action"; American Grace Chapter 12

Guest lecture on Islamism in Tunisia and Libya by Dr. Christ Lamont on Thursday, October 30

Week 12: Religion and the 2014 Elections

Assigned Readings: TBA

No class on Thursday, November 6. Dr. Glazier will be presenting research at the International Studies Association-Midwest Annual Conference in St. Louis

Congregation Report due Tuesday, November 11

Week 13: Religion's Ambivalence

Assigned Readings: "The Ambivalence of the Sacred"; God's Century Chapter 7; God's Long Summer, Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2.

Discussion on Thursday, November 13

Week 14: Religious Terrorism

Assigned Readings: God's Century Chapter 5; "The Genesis of Suicide Terror"; "What's so 'religious' about 'religious terrorism'?"

Discussion on Thursday, November 20

Website Report and Website Data due Tuesday, November 25

Week 15: Thanksgiving

No assigned readings

No class on Thursday, November 27 for Thanksgiving

Week 16: Religious Peacemaking

Assigned Readings: God's Century Chapter 7; Peacemakers in Action Chapters 1 and 14

Discussion on Thursday, December 4

Final Paper due on Blackboard and in person by 9:00 am on Friday, December 12