

## **Religion and Politics at Home and Abroad**

Northwestern University  
Political Science 101  
Winter 2018

Tues./Thurs. 12:30-1:50

Scott 107, Burdick Room

Professor [Elizabeth Shakman Hurd](#)

Office hours: Tuesday 2-3 or by appointment, Scott 209

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This course will explore the politics of religion in the United States and in U.S. foreign policy past and present. The terms “at home” and “abroad” in the course title are not taken in the usual sense as referring to inside versus outside U.S. territorial boundaries but rather are themselves subject to interrogation and reconsideration. What and who counts as “home” and what/who counts as “abroad,” how are those determinations made, and by whom? Related axes of discrimination such as domestic/foreign, inside/outside, and self/other will also be considered. This frame will be brought to bear on our understanding of categories that shape discussion at the intersection of religion and politics such as secularism, religion, disestablishment, freedom, diversity, interfaith, pluralism and equality.

As a first-year seminar, the course also teaches critical research and writing skills to prepare students for college-level research and writing. It also will include discussions of academic integrity and an orientation to conducting library research.

Students are strongly encouraged to consult with the peer tutors at the Writing Place, directed by Dr. Barbara Shwom. For an appointment email [writingplace@northwestern.edu](mailto:writingplace@northwestern.edu).

### **Learning Objectives**

Through taking this course, students will:

- Summarize and evaluate arguments made by others;
- Formulate persuasive arguments, orally and in writing, based on careful analysis of evidence;
- Cite sources appropriately;
- Write competently enough to satisfy the Weinberg College writing requirement.

### **Course Requirements**

Students are expected to come to class prepared for active participation. Take notes on the readings, bring them to class and use them to participate in discussion. Attendance and participation are crucial components of the final grade. Students will also complete several writing assignments.

### **Written Assignments**

There will be five written assignments over the course of the quarter: three 1-page reader’s responses, one 3-page paper, and one 5-page final paper.

### **Policy on Use of Personal Technology**

Personal computers and mobile devices are not permitted in class. This is a discussion-based course and students are required and requested to listen to others and participate actively in discussion.

### **Grading and Academic Integrity**

Final grades will be based on: 1) attendance and participation, including three short reader's response essays and attendance at Prof. Foody's talk during class time on Feb. 8th (30%); 2) short paper (30%); and 4) final essay (40%). No late work will be accepted without a written medical excuse.

Any student who violates the University's principles of academic integrity will automatically fail this course and be referred to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies' office for further action by the University. The Dean's policy for WCAS is available [here](#).

### **Formatting Guidelines for Written Assignments**

Double-space your essay

Use 12-point Times New Roman font

Number the pages

Use one-inch margins

Give your paper a title

Include your full name and the date at the top of the first page

### **Disability Accommodation**

Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with AccessibleNU ([accessiblenu@northwestern.edu](mailto:accessiblenu@northwestern.edu); 847-467-5530) and provide the professor with an accommodation notification from AccessibleNU, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

### **Readings**

All readings are posted on Canvas Course Reserves with the exception of those that are open access (links below). You may purchase the following three books from Beck's Books (716 Clark St., Evanston) or check them out on 4-hour reserve at the Main library.

Steven K. Green, *Inventing a Christian America: The Myth of the Religious Founding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *Beyond Religious Freedom: The New Global Politics of Religion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017 (paper).

Nadia Marzouki, *Islam: An American Religion*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017.

### **Course Schedule:**

**9 January**      **Introduction**

**11 January**      **Politics/religion, home/abroad**

Suzy Hansen, "Unlearning the Myth of American Innocence," *The Guardian* (August 8, 2017). Adapted from *Notes on a Foreign Country: An American Abroad in a Post-American World*. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/aug/08/unlearning-the-myth-of-american-innocence>

Mae M. Ngai, "Introduction: Illegal Aliens: A Problem of Law and History," in *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), 1-14.

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, "Religion and Secularism," in Richard Devetak, Jim George and Sarah Percy, eds. *An Introduction to International Relations* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017, 356-370.

*In-class discussion: How do you think about religion, secularism and politics at home and abroad? What are the key issues as you see them as you begin this class? What do these readings have to do with our topic?*

## **16 January      Bodies, religions, establishments: the politics of yoga**

Kyla Calvert, "Promoting Hinduism? Parents demand removal of school yoga class." NPR Morning Edition (Jan. 9, 2013).

<http://www.npr.org/2013/01/09/168613461/promoting-hinduism-parents-demand-removal-of-school-yoga-class>

Erik Davis, "Is Yoga a Religion?" *Aeon* (May 3, 2013).

<http://aeon.co/magazine/society/erik-davis-is-yoga-a-religion/>

Andrea R. Jain, "Is Downward Dog the Path to Hell?" *Religion Dispatches* (Dec. 10, 2010).

<http://religiondispatches.org/is-downward-dog-the-path-to-hell/>

Katherine Stewart, "Protesting Yoga in Schools, but Welcoming Bible Study." *Religion Dispatches* (February 25, 2013).

<http://religiondispatches.org/protesting-yoga-in-schools-but-welcoming-bible-study/>

Andrea R. Jain, "Claiming Yoga for India." *Religion Dispatches* (Dec. 15, 2014).

<http://religiondispatches.org/claiming-yoga-for-india/>

Background: Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District, Division One, State of California, *Stephen Sedlock et al. v. Timothy Baird et al* (Superior Court Case No. 37-2013-00035910-CU-MC-CTL). [https://www.yogaalliance.org/Portals/0/Appellate%20Opinion\\_04.03.15.pdf](https://www.yogaalliance.org/Portals/0/Appellate%20Opinion_04.03.15.pdf)

**Reader's response #1:** Bring to class a 1-page (double-spaced, 12 point font) reader's response for discussion in class. What is your response to the yoga debate? What struck you as interesting or unexpected in these readings? Have you experienced a similar controversy in your educational or community institutions? If so, describe it.

## **18 January      Inventing a Christian America**

Green, *Inventing a Christian America*, Preface, Intro., & Chap. 4 (pp. vii-xi; 1-19; and 154-198).

\*Write and bring to class a one-paragraph summary of Green's argument.

## **23 January      Cemetery Anarchy, or the Impossibility of Religious Freedom**

Guest: Prof. Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, Professor of Religious Studies, Indiana University

Reading: Teaching Law and Religion Case Study Archive:

<http://sites.northwestern.edu/lawreligion/project/cemetery-anarchy/>

Go to the “Cemetery Anarchy” case page. Read: 1) the “Case synopsis,” 2) the document under “Analysis” called “Cemetery Anarchy: Religion, Religious Freedom, and the Rule of Law” by Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, and 3) the article under “Context” by Michael Graziano entitled “Race, the Law and Religion in America.”

**\*3 page paper topic (due Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>):** How would you have decided the *Warner* case and on what grounds? Draw on two sources that you find at the library (see next class) to make your case and be sure to consider different sides of the argument. You may also draw on other sources from the Cemetery Anarchy [page](#) of the Teaching Law and Religion Case Archive.

**25 January**      **Class will meet in Main Library classroom B238 today for a research orientation led by Dr. Jeannette Moss**

At the library: collect sources for your 3-page paper on the *Warner* decision.

Read: Green, *Inventing a Christian America*, Chap. 5 & Conclusion (pp. 199-243).

**30 January**      **Politics of Islam in the United States**

Marzouki, *Islam: An American Religion*, pp. 1-68.

Note: Prof. Marzouki will be giving two lectures in Evanston on April 23<sup>rd</sup>: “Back to the Future? Tunisia’s Democratic Constitutional Order Under Threat,” 12:00-1:30pm in Kresge 1-515; and “When Law is Not Enough: Controversies over Muslim Rights in the US,” 6pm at the Evanston Public Library.

**1 February**      **Politics of Islam in the United States, part II**

Marzouki, *Islam: An American Religion*, pp. 106-167.

**6 February**      **Academic integrity**

Read these two online Northwestern publications:

1) “Academic Integrity: A Basic Guide”

<http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/docs/Academic%20Integrity%20Guide%202016.pdf>

2) “Avoiding Plagiarism”

<http://nuwrite.at.northwestern.edu/communities/first-year/academic-integrity.html>

**8 February**      **Attend Prof. Foody’s talk at Buffett Institute at 12:30pm.**

**\*3-page paper due today.\*** No reading.

[Kathleen Foody: “Islamophilia - Imagining Islam through Public Diplomacy”](#)

*Description:* This talk will explore US government involvement in defining Islam in public and foreign policy with particular attention to the “Committee to Honor the Fourteenth Centennial of Islam” and its activities under Presidents Carter and Reagan. Carter instigated the creation of the ICF in 1979 to manage America’s image in the Middle East. During the

1980s it produced a museum exhibit on the “Heritage of Islam,” a PBS series, and one of the first academic centers in the US devoted to the study of Islam. While the ICF’s activities ostensibly provided a counter-narrative to rising Islamophobia and anti-Arab sentiment, the discourses that swirled around them—including their own press reports, outside conspiracy theories, and academic analyses—foreshadowed post-Cold War culture talk and contemporary xenophobic politics.

### **13 February Indigenous religion**

Bjørn Ola Tafjord, “Indigenous Religion(s) as an Analytical Category,” *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 25 (2013): 221-243.

Miranda Johnson, “The river is not a person: Indigeneity and the sacred in Aotearoa, New Zealand.” *The Immanent Frame* (June 15, 2017). <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2017/06/14/the-river-is-not-a-person/>

**\*Reader’s response #2:** What are the stakes of designating a way of life as ‘religion’ or ‘indigenous religion’? Where do you see this category in use today? Are you convinced by Tafjord’s critique?

### **15 February No class today.**

### **20 February ‘God and Government:’ religion and politics on the air**

‘[God and Government](http://interfaithradio.org/godandgov)’ is a public radio series on the politics of religious diversity in 14 nations around the world. The series homepage is: <http://interfaithradio.org/godandgov>

Listen to the Guatemala, Thailand, and China country shows (click on “Full series” at the top of the homepage for a pull down menu). Be sure to listen to the entire program, including both the in-country reporter’s segment and the panel discussion. The musical selections are optional. You may also listen to other country programs if interested.

### **22 February Politics of international religious freedom**

Hurd, *Beyond Religious Freedom*, pp. ix-xii and 1-36.

John Kerry, “Religion and Diplomacy: Toward a Better Understanding of Religion and Global Affairs,” *America* (September 14, 2015).

<http://www.americamagazine.org/issue/religion-and-diplomacy>

### **27 February Politics of international religious freedom, II**

Hurd, *Beyond Religious Freedom*, pp. 37-64.

Marzouki, *Islam: An American Religion*, pp. 168-194.

### **1 March Religious freedom at the State Department (if there still is one)**

Hurd, *Beyond Religious Freedom*, pp. 109-127.

Marzouki, *Islam: An American Religion*, pp. 195-210.

**\*Reader's response #3:** Choose and read one of the country reports from the 2016 State Department Annual Report on International Religious Freedom, available online. Write a one-page assessment of the State Department report that draws on at least two ideas discussed in *Beyond Religious Freedom* and/or *Islam: An American Religion*. Be prepared to discuss your response in class.

**6 March            The US security state, Islam and the 'war on terror'**

Alireza Doostdar, "How not to understand ISIS." Martin Marty Center for the Advanced Study of Religion (October 2, 2014). <https://divinity.uchicago.edu/sightings/how-not-understand-isis-alireza-doostdar>

Darryl Li, "A Jihadism Anti-Primer." Middle East Research and Information Project 276, vol. 45 (Fall 2015). <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer276/jihadism-anti-primer>

**8 March            Wrap-up: final paper discussion and recap**

In-class discussion: How do you think about religion and politics at home and abroad after taking this course? What do you see as the key issues as you finish the class?

**Final paper topic (5 pages):** Research the concept of "American exceptionalism" and give 2-3 definitions of the term. Then explain how you think this concept relates to what you have learned in this class about the politics of religion at home and abroad. Use a minimum of three outside academic sources in your paper and draw on at least two course readings.

**13 March** WCAS reading week. No class.

**20 March** Final papers due in my office (Scott 209) or by email ([eshurd@northwestern.edu](mailto:eshurd@northwestern.edu)) by noon.