

TR 370 Politics and Religion in the World  
Winter, 2009 8:45am to noon

Professor: Sharon Tan  
Office: 231 MacMillan Center  
Phone: (651) 255-6129  
Email: [stan@unitedseminary.edu](mailto:stan@unitedseminary.edu)  
Office Hours: noon-1pm Tuesday and Friday

### **Course Description**

Religion, and religious worldviews, both form and inform the context and content of a nation's domestic and foreign politics. Conversely, a culture's theologies and religious expressions are shaped by its political milieu. This course explores the relationships between religion and the structure, institutions, and content of a nation's political processes. This semester, particular attention will be paid to the Middle East. This course qualifies as an elective in "non-Christian religion."

### **Course Objectives**

1. To recognize, understand, and articulate relationships and patterns between religious beliefs and practices, and the structure, institutions, and content of a nation's political processes.
2. To recognize, understand, and articulate themes and issues in these relationships and patterns, e.g. secularization, pluralism, nationalism, and religious violence.
3. To begin a more in-depth exploration of the relationship between politics in a specific geo-political region and a world religion dominant in that region.
4. To be able to listen empathetically to the opinions and thoughts of others both in the class and in the texts, and engage in "enlarged thinking" and "enlarged perspective taking" through conversation that bridges barriers.

### **Course texts:**

Required textbooks:

1. Peter Berger, ed., *The Desecularization of the World* (Eerdmans, 1999)
2. Scott Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations* (Palgrave, 2005).
3. Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton, 2005)
4. Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God* 3d ed (University of California Press, 2003)
5. John Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam* (Oxford, 2002)
6. Abdullahi An-Na'im, *Islam and the Secular State* (Harvard, 2008).
7. Marc Gopin, *Holy War, Holy Peace* (Oxford, 2005).

Recommended (some chapters, and recommended reading):

1. Thomas Banchoff, *Democracy and the New Religious Pluralism* (Oxford, 2006)
2. Larry Diamond, et al. *World Religions and Democracy* (Johns Hopkins, 2005)

Reference (for your paper or for later study):

1. Brackney, William H. series ed., *Human Rights and the World's Major Traditions* vols 1-5 (Praeger, 2005).
2. <http://www.CarnegieCouncil.org>
3. <http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/buddhaintheworld/index.shtml>
4. <http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/volf/index.shtml>
5. <http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/marty/index.shtml>
6. <http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/danforth/index.shtml>
7. <http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/globalization/index.shtml>
8. <http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/fundamentalism/index.shtml>
9. <http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/islaminiraq/index.shtml>

### **Course requirements:**

1. Regular and punctual attendance in class, timely reading, and thoughtful participation in class discussions. More than two unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your grade (one grade level per absence).
2. Two seminar papers or presentations on the reading for that day. 3-4 pages, with questions for discussion. 20% each, for 40% of final grade.
3. A final paper or project focusing on a specific context of politics and religion. 40% of final grade.
4. Class participation to develop the ability to listen empathetically to the opinions and thoughts of others, and engage in “enlarged thinking” and “enlarged perspective taking” through conversation that bridges barriers. 20% of final grade.

### **General Class Structure**

The class will be seminar style, with student papers and discussion led by students and the instructor.

### **Course Policies**

1. Please treat this course, your instructor, and your fellow students with respect by attending class and participating thoughtfully in the discussions. In fact, attendance and participation in class are required to pass this course. More than two unexcused absences will result in a penalty of one grade level per absence. Coming to class late or leaving early may count as an absence.
2. All papers are to be double-spaced, and typewritten, with appropriate citation format. A sample format is provided in Appendix I. I will not accept emailed papers, but you may fax papers to me at 651-633-4315. Papers are due at the beginning of the class for which they are assigned.
3. All work submitted must be your own, and done specifically for this course.
4. Please see the seminary-wide policies on academic integrity, inclusive language, and sexual harassment, articulated in the student handbook.
5. The current UTS policy on extensions is as follows:  
 The work for a course is terminated at the end of the final class session. The performance in the course is evaluated on the basis of the work submitted by that time, unless an exception is made by the instructor, in which case an extension must be agreed to by the instructor by the end of

the final class session and the student must complete a formal petition to be submitted in lieu of a grade. If the student is unable to negotiate the extension by the end of the final class session due to critical health issues, the student is responsible for seeing that the professor is notified as soon as possible, and then negotiating the extension promptly.

Furthermore, since I will be going on sabbatical on February 1, 2009, I will not give out extensions past January 31.

**Course Schedule:**

Day/date	Subject	Reading
1. 1.5.09	Introduction Syllabus	
	<i>Themes in Religion and Politics</i>	
2. 1.6.09	Secularization/Desecularization Globalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Berger chs. 1, 4, 7</li> <li>• Banchoff, ed., chs. 2, 3</li> <li>• <a href="http://speakingoffaith.pUBLICradio.org/programs/globalization/index.shtml">http://speakingoffaith.pUBLICradio.org/programs/globalization/index.shtml</a></li> </ul>
3. 1.8.09	Religion and violence Fundamentalism and religious nationalism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Juergensmeyer, chs. 1, 3-5</li> <li>• <a href="http://speakingoffaith.pUBLICradio.org/programs/volf/index.shtml">http://speakingoffaith.pUBLICradio.org/programs/volf/index.shtml</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://speakingoffaith.pUBLICradio.org/programs/crisisinislam/index.shtml">http://speakingoffaith.pUBLICradio.org/programs/crisisinislam/index.shtml</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://speakingoffaith.pUBLICradio.org/programs/fundamentalism/index.shtml">http://speakingoffaith.pUBLICradio.org/programs/fundamentalism/index.shtml</a></li> </ul>
4. 1.9.09	Religion and violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Juergensmeyer, chs. 7-11</li> <li>• <a href="http://speakingoffaith.pUBLICradio.org/programs/islaminiraq/index.shtml">http://speakingoffaith.pUBLICradio.org/programs/islaminiraq/index.shtml</a></li> </ul>
	<i>Contexts</i>	
5. 1.12.09	International community and conflict <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thomas, Introduction to Ch. 4</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended: the rest of the book when you have time</li> </ul>
6. 1.13.09	Islam and violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Esposito</li> <li>• Juergensmeyer, ch. 4</li> <li>• <a href="http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/marty/index.shtml">http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/marty/index.shtml</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/danforth/index.shtml">http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/danforth/index.shtml</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/marty/index.shtml">http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/marty/index.shtml</a></li> <li>• Ref.: HRWMR vol. 2</li> </ul>
7. 1.15.09	Islam and secularism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An-Na'im, chs. 1, 2</li> </ul>
8. 1.16.09	Islam and secularism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An-Na'im chs. 3, 7</li> <li>• Banchoff, ed., ch 7</li> <li>• Ref.: HRWMR vol. 3</li> </ul>
9. 1.20.09	Judaism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The Birth of Modern Zionism" in Bickerton and Klausner.</li> <li>• Juergensmeyer, ch. 3</li> <li>• Banchoff, ed., ch. 5</li> </ul>
10. 1.21.09	Judaism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gopin chs. 1-5</li> </ul>
11. 1.22.09	Judaism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gopin chs. 6-10</li> </ul>
12. 1.23.09	Wrap up	