

PO9E8-20 Religion in Global Politics

26/27

Department

Politics & International Studies

Level

Taught Postgraduate Level

Module leader

Steven Kettell

Credit value

20

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

To provide an overview of the key themes, developments and concepts in the intersection of religion and global political affairs.

Module aims

1. Provide an overview of some the key and contemporary issues involving religion in global political affairs.
2. Engage with the literature on religion in global politics and the key debates with which scholars are presently engaged.
3. Encourage students to think critically about the various ways in which religious beliefs, organisations and actors are involved in global politics, drawing on insights from various academic disciplines, as well as contemporary events and examples.
4. Provide the theoretical and empirical tools necessary to understand and critically assess different perspectives on global politics and religion.
5. Encourage students to build coherent and persuasive arguments in both written and verbal form.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

SYLLABUS

1. Perspectives on religion in global politics

This class examines the various ways in which scholars have conceptualised the role of religion in global political affairs. It focuses on developments since the 'return of religion' to public life during the latter part of the twentieth century and considers the methods by which 'religion' can function as a global political actor.

2. Constructing 'religion'

The class considers the way in which the concept of 'religion' has been constructed by political affairs. Key factors here include the politics of imperialism and the development of the academic study of religion. The class also considers the ways in which secular as well as religious states create the category of 'religion' for their own political purposes.

3. Conflict and co-operation

This week examines the securitisation of religion since the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the way in which states have sought to promote 'moderate' forms of religion and considers claims that religion is a source of global political instability. Key examples of religious violence, radicalisation and peace-making will be considered.

4. The personal is the political

This class looks at the relationship between religion and human rights. Key themes include cases of interpersonal violence as well as issues of prejudice around gender and sexual orientation. These issues centre on debates about abortion, LGBT rights, assisted dying and the extent to which religion serves as a positive force for personal wellbeing.

5. The state and regulation

The purpose of this class is to look at the ways in which states regulate religion and/or use religious laws in order to maintain political power. The session considers the means by which religion is embedded in state formations (from theocratic to secular regimes) and focuses on debates around 'civil' and 'political' religion as well as the links between religion, nationalism and populism.

6. Reading Week

7. Religion and the media

This class explores the relationship between religion and the media, centring on the changing nature of information communications technology. The class looks at the way in which the rise of the internet and social media have provided religious actors with a challenge (not least via the rise of new atheism and the promotion of secularisation) as well as an opportunity to extend their political influence by using the tools of popular culture.

8. Capitalism in the twenty-first century

This session examines the links between religion and late capitalism, centring in particular on the impact of globalisation. The key themes here include the ways in which religion both supports and challenges neo-liberal capitalism, from the development of alternative economic models to new age consumerism.

9. Development and welfare

This class considers the role of religion in international development and welfare policies.

Amongst the key themes to be examined here include the role of religious actors in poverty reduction programs, the development of social capital, and the provision of alternative welfare models.

10. Sustainable futures?

This final class looks at the way in which religious actors are involved in some of the key challenges facing global politics in terms of climate change and environmental security. Key

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- By the end of the module students should be able to:
- Demonstrate a clear grasp of the key theoretical arguments and substantive issues concerning religion in global politics.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the role played by religious beliefs, organisations and actors in global political affairs, drawing on insights from a range of academic disciplines as well as contemporary events and examples.
- Apply the knowledge they have gained to developments in key thematic areas, such as religious regulation, development, globalisation and the politics of climate change.
- Present work coherently and to a high academic standard.

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

Subject specific skills

tbc

Transferable skills

tbc

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	9 sessions of 2 hours (100%)
Total	18 hours

Private study description

tbc

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
5000 word essay	100%		Yes (extension)
Reassessment component is the same			

Feedback on assessment

tbc

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of TPOS-M9PT MA in International Development
- Year 1 of TPOS-M9Q1 Postgraduate Politics, Big Data and Quantitative Methods
- Year 1 of TPOS-M1P3 Postgraduate Taught International Political Economy
- Year 1 of TPOS-M1P8 Postgraduate Taught International Politics and East Asia
- Year 1 of TPOS-M9P9 Postgraduate Taught International Relations
- Year 1 of TPOS-M9PC Postgraduate Taught International Security
- Year 1 of TPOS-M9PS Postgraduate Taught Political and Legal Theory
- Year 1 of TPOS-M9PF Postgraduate Taught Public Policy

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 1 of TPOS-M1PD Postgraduate Taught the Politics of Climate Change