

**RELS 5331 Special Topics in Religious Studies I: Religion and Global Politics**  
**宗教研究專題(一): 宗教與全球政治**

**Time:** Monday (7:00 - 9:30pm)

**Venue:** ELB\_206

**Language:** P & E

**Instructor:** Dr. GUO Ting

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**Office:** KKB 213

**Description**

This course surveys major topics in the religious studies approach to religion and global politics. The first objective of the course is to familiarise students with the existing theoretical literature and empirical research. The second objective to evaluate recent research on the role of religious actors, institutions, and ideologies in policymaking, state-building, democratic politics, social movements, and other political processes.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

After completing this course, students should:

1. Gain a nuanced understanding of the religious role in the modern world;
2. Develop an understanding of the main ways in which religious communities and political institutions interact;
3. Have an understanding of the diversity of religious organisations and experiences across the globe;
4. Understand various concepts of secularism and the primary criticisms secularisation theory faces;
5. Understand religion as a system of belief, a formal institution, an element of group identity, a part of civil society, a diffused everyday practice, and an actor at the local, national, and international level;
6. Be able to defend particular political positions on issues such as the appropriate role for religious institutions in society, the relationship between religion and violence, and;
7. Have stronger written and verbal communication skills and critical thinking skills.

**Assessment Methods and Criteria**

Type of Assessment	Weighting	CILOs to be addressed	Description of Assessment Tasks
Attendance and Engagement	10%	1, 7	So that the students will acquire skills of analysis that you may apply to other academic classes and in everyday life and gain confidence in expressing yourself orally through classroom discussions and presentations.
Presentation	30%	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	To assess how well students have read selected readings, identified a specific issue

			and present their ideas and viewpoints in the presentation.
Research Paper	60%	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	To check if students are able to understand and analyze the texts.  The research paper aims to assess major learning outcomes achieved by students upon the completion of the course.

*Attendance and engagement: 10%*

Some examples of how your participation performance will be evaluated in the class, e.g. Class Discussion, Feedback to the Class Presentation etc) in lectures

*Presentation: 30%*

- The class presentation is meant to stimulate the discussion by presenting the argument of additional readings and relating it to the other readings. Students may choose any articles from any academic source in either English or Chinese.

*Final paper: 60%*

- In the form of a research proposal
- Choose a specific research problem in the research fields covered by the course that is of interest of you, review the relevant existing literature, derive expectations from existing theories, and propose data and methods that would allow settling controversial issues. All references must be credible and academic resources.
- English 3500, 中文 Chinese 4000 words (excluding reference and footnotes)
- Times New Roman 12pt., double-spaced, standard margins.

**Week 1 Intro 8 Jan**

What is religion? What is politics? What's global politics got to do with religion?

**Week 2 Rethinking Religion and Secularism 15 Jan**

Charles T. Mathewes, "An Interview with Peter Berger," *The Hedgehog Review* Spring/Summer, 2006, pp. 152–161.

Saba Mahmood, *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report*. Intro.

**Week 3 Against "Clash of Civilisations" 22 Jan**

Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," *Foreign Affairs*, 1993.

Edward W. Said, "The Clash of Ignorance," *The Nation*, October 22, 2001.

《东方学》与中东女性主义研究：一份综述。《结绳志》，2023。

**Week 4 Religion and Democracy 29 Jan**

Zoya Hassan, "Gender, Religion, and Democratic Politics in India," *Third World Quarterly*, 2010.

**Week 5 Religion and Democratisation 5 Feb**

Kuo Cheng-tian 郭承天, "Introduction." *Religion and Democracy in Taiwan*, 1–14. New York: SUNY, 2009.

Kim Young Jae, "Unsung Religious Politics after Korea's Democratization: Analysis of Empirical Evidence." *Asian Survey* 57(6): 1159–1179, 2017.

### **Week 6 Religion and Violence 19 Feb**

Weber, Max. 2020. "The Three Types of Legitimate Domination." *Essays in Economic Sociology*. Princeton University Press.

### **Week 7 Religion and Nationalism 26 Feb**

Andrew L Whitehead, Samuel L. Perry, and Joseph O. Baker, "Make American Christian Again: Christian Nationalism and Voting for Donald Trump in the 2016 Presidential Election," *Sociology of Religion*, May 2018.

Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India*. Intro.

### **Week 8 Religion, Social Engagement, and Political Activism 4 Mar**

Kiran Laloo, "The Church and State in Apartheid South Africa," *Contemporary Politics*, 1998.

Ziad W. Munson, *The Making of Pro-Life Activists*. Chicago UP, 2009. Intro.

### **Week 9 Religion and Social Movements 11 Mar**

Christian Smith (ed.), *Disruptive Religion: The Force of Faith in Social Movement Activism*, Routledge 1996. Intro.

Frydenlund, Iselin et al. "Religious Responses to the Military Coup in Myanmar." *The review of faith & international affairs* 19.3 (2021): 77–88

### **Week 10 Religion and Gender Politics 18 Mar**

Mahmood, Saba. 2004. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton University Press. Introduction.

Choi, Hyaewool. 2020. *Gender Politics at Home and Abroad: Protestant Modernity in Colonial-Era Korea*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1, "Ideology: "Wise Mother, Good Wife"."

### **Week 11 Religion and Identity in East Asia 25 Mar**

Rausch, Franklin. 2014. "Violence against Catholics in East Asia: Japan, China, and Korea from the Late Sixteenth Century to the Early Twentieth Century." *Oxford Handbook Online*.

Deuchler, Martina. "Elitism and Ideology", in *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology*. Cambridge, Mass: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1992.

Further reading:

末木文美士, 《日本思想史》, 王頌, 杜敬婷譯。北京大學出版社, 2022.

李孟衡評《海東五百年》 | 李氏朝鮮與韓國式的儒教化,

[https://m.thepaper.cn/quickApp\\_jump.jsp?contid=13641310](https://m.thepaper.cn/quickApp_jump.jsp?contid=13641310)

### **Week 12 Presentations 8 Apr**

### **Week 13 Presentations 15 Apr**

## Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

The Chinese University of Hong Kong places very high importance on honesty in academic work submitted by students, and adopts a policy of zero tolerance on cheating and plagiarism. Any related offence will lead to disciplinary action including termination of studies at the University. All student assignments in undergraduate and postgraduate programs should be submitted via VeriGuide: <https://veriguide2.cse.cuhk.edu.hk/cuhk/>.

## Rubrics

- Presentation 30%
- Format for each presentation:
- Presenter: 15 minutes
- 10 % - Introduce a theory of your choosing;
- 10 % - Identify the key scholars on this theory;
- 10 % - Your evaluation of the development of the theory
- Written work 60%

### A:

- Shows an exceptional degree of insight and independent thought.
- Demonstrates true flair in tackling issues.
- Is of outstanding quality, in terms of scholarship and originality.
- Often faultless.
- The work is well beyond that expected at the appropriate level of study.

### B:

- A very good answer that shows qualities.
- Addresses the question directly and fully, showing clear focus on the subject with only trivial deviation.
- Exhibits a clear and coherent structure, showing logical, ordered thought and clear presentation.
- Exhibits knowledge of a very good range of theories, perhaps with some gaps, but handled in a professional way.
- Displays understanding and handling of key concepts: shows a firm grasp of the subject and current theory (but there may be gaps).
- Shows initiative, the ability to think clearly, to critically evaluate ideas, to bring different ideas together, and to draw sound conclusions.
- Displays evidence of further reading and appropriate use of examples and diagrams.
- Contain no significant errors of fact or interpretation.
- Develops a coherent analysis/argument proceeding to a convincing conclusion.
- Without major blemish in the quality of the writing and presentation.

### C:

- A good answer with elements of the routine and predictable.

- Sound knowledge, although limited.
- May contain occasional factual errors and misunderstandings of concepts but this should not be a dominant impression.
- Generally accurate - inaccuracies, if any, should be moderate. Show understanding and handling of key concepts.
- There may not be a firm grasp and depth of understanding of all the key concepts.
- Focused on the subject, with relatively little irrelevant material. Exhibit a limited degree of critical analysis and evaluation.
- Structured in a reasonably clear and coherent manner, generally presenting ideas and information in a logical way and often with some examples.
- Generally well-presented but there may be minor flaws in information, figures and standard of English.
- Generally shows a good quality of writing and presentation.