

**Course Syllabus**  
**POL 567**  
**International Relations Seminar**  
**Credit Hours: 3**  
**Fall, 2009**

Class Location: University Center  
Class Meeting Time: W, 6-9  
Instructor: Dr. William E. Carroll  
Office Location: CHHS 396D  
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Office Hours: 2-3 MW

**Course Description:**

Until recently the role of religion(s) in international (and domestic) conflict has been seen as almost entirely negative. Doubtless this has been and is all too frequently the case, as many conflicts appear to have religious roots – though arguably the bloodiest conflicts of the twentieth century were not caused by religion at all, but by aggressive totalitarian ideologies and their brutal proponents. Still, many of the conflicts in history and in contemporary times have a significant religious component (Huntington’s “clash of civilizations” presumes as much). In this seminar we will certainly focus on the role of religion as *a* cause, among many possible, of international conflict – though even here much of the literature either reduces religion to a minor role, or dismisses it as troublesome fundamentalism (which it sometimes is). What has been, until recently, frequently overlooked or ignored is the positive role that religion(s) can and have played in preventing or resolving conflicts. We will be reading scholarly literature that outlines this positive role, both in theory and in concrete cases. The seminar, then, focuses on the role of religion and religions in international conflict, both as a cause or basis of such conflict, but also its capacity for contributing (perhaps essentially) to conflict prevention and resolution.

This seminar however will not focus exclusively on conflict but religion and conflict as an issue among many. For example, we will look at the place of and the impact on religion in the globalization process, in the international order, and its contribution to the politics of identity, and terrorism – but also conflict resolution and peace-making. The role of religion in the politics and foreign policies of the US, Europe, Africa and the Middle East, South and East Asia form the substantive middle of the course. Finally we engage in a deep discussion of Islamic terrorism, in historical and comparative perspective – with forays into Hindu and Buddhist nationalism and other religious based extremisms.

## **Seminar Objectives:**

This is a graduate seminar: so the usual course objectives of factual learning, critical thinking, and analytical skills take on extra weight.

## **Course Requirements/Assignments and Grading:**

Final grades will be based on: an in-class presentation (25%); a written review (20%); a major research paper (40%); and seminar participation (15%). The details of each of these will be explained in class. The presentation is to be a summary review of one of the chapters from the Haynes book, where the presenter will also be expected to answer questions and lead discussion of the reading. The written review will be a critical review of one of the chapters in the Petito and Hatzopoulos book short (3-5 pages). The major research paper (20 pages) will provide the opportunity to pursue a particular topic at great length, theoretical or substantive. What I look for in the paper is analytical focus, an extensive use of relevant sources, and quality of exposition. Participation stems from keeping up with the assigned readings and attentiveness to seminar discussion. Discussion in fact is always the key to a good seminar experience.

## **Texts and Readings:**

Petito and Hatzopoulos, Religion in International Relations: The Return from Exile (2003)

Haynes, An Introduction to International Relations and Religion (2000)

Murawiec, The Mind of Jihad (2008)

In addition to the above required texts, additional readings will be cited in class – most available through NGL's electronic reserve/electronic journals. Given the nature of the topic – religion and international conflict – we will follow, discuss and analyze *ongoing* developments in international politics: Bosnia and the Balkans, the Israeli-Palestinian/Arab conflict, India and Pakistan, and fundamentalist terrorism.

## **Outline and Schedule:**

A separate, more detailed outline of topics and readings will be provided in class. At that time presentations will be decided and scheduled.

Week 1: Syllabus and Introduction

- Week 2: Religion and Soft Power; Religion and Globalization  
Haynes, chapter 1-3
- Week 3: Religion and International Order  
Haynes, chapters 4-5
- Week 4: Religion and Conflict: Fundamentalisms  
Haynes, chapter 6
- Week 5: Country and Regional Focus: US and Europe  
Haynes, chapters 8-9  
*Presentations Begin*
- Week 6: Africa and Middle East  
Haynes, chapters 10-11
- Week 7: South Asia  
Haynes, chapter 12
- Week 8: East/Pacific Asia  
Haynes, chapter 13
- Week 9: *Discussion of Papers*
- Week 10: The Mind of Jihad: “We Love Death”  
Murawiec, chapter 1
- Week 11: “Amoral Supermen:  
Murawiec, chapter 2
- Week 12: “The Gnostic Mahdi”  
Murawiec, chapter 3
- Week 13: “Manichean Tribalism” and “The Odd Pedigree of Modern Jihad”  
Murawiec, chapters 4-5  
*Papers Due*
- Week 14: “The Mutated Virus: Islamic Revolution” and “Jihad as Terror”  
Murawiec, chapters 6-7

**Attendance Policy:**

Seminar attendance is required. Again, this is a graduate seminar: weekly preparation and participation and attendance are at a particular premium. More than two unexcused absences will result in a grade penalty.

**Classroom Rules of Conduct:**

Disruptive behavior – intentionally disrupting class, persistent talking at inappropriate times, disrespectful words or actions toward classmates or instructor, etc can result in a directive to leave class.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

The principle issue here is plagiarism – which would result in the work being assigned an F.

**Instructor Evaluations:**

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation toward the end of the semester.

**Students With Disabilities** will be accommodated in any necessary and possible. Please let me know your needs at the beginning of the semester.

**Religious Holidays:**

Any student who needs to miss a class due to observance of a religious holiday will be accommodated in any way possible. Please let me know early in the semester.

**NOTE: The syllabus is subject to change if circumstances dictate: this would happen only if, for example, it is necessary to shift material and assigned readings from one week to another.**