The class/seminar will serve as the forum for a systematic analysis of global religious trends, for a critical discussion of contemporary debates on religion and politics around the world, and for the presentation of student research papers on related themes. The course will begin with a critical discussion of the categories of religion and politics within the framework of standard modern theories of secularization of politics and privatization of religion. Among the topics covered will be: Religion as a global category and the religious dimension of processes of globalization, secularization and global religious trends, religious fundamentalisms and fundamentalist secularisms, Catholic and Muslim politics and aggiornamenti compared, transnational migrations, transnational religions and diversity, and the emerging global denominationalism. We will dedicate the first seven sessions to a discussion of these general issues. The remaining sessions will be dedicated to the presentation and critical discussion of the seminar participants’ research papers.

Course requirements:

Students are expected to take active part in class discussions and be thoroughly conversant with the readings. In addition students are required to develop a research paper on an issue related to the course, to make an oral presentation of a written draft of the project in a seminar session, and to present it at the end of the semester as a final term paper. The written draft along with some recommended reading should be made available one week before the oral presentation.

Required Readings:

Beyer, Peter, *Religions in Global Society* (Routledge, 2006)
Mazusawa, Tomoko, *The Invention of World Religions* (Chicago, 2005)

**Seminar Schedule**

1. (Sept 2) Organization of the seminar and scheduling of presentations
   General introduction and summary of the course

2. (Sept 7)
   The Secularization Paradigm in Question
   Casanova, “Rethinking Public Religions”

3. (Sept 14)
   Secularism, International Relations, and Global Politics
   **Readings:** Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*

4. (Sept 21)
   The modern discourse on “religion” and the invention of the “World Religions”
   **Readings:** Mazusawa, *The Invention of World Religions*

5. (Sept 28)
   The Globalization of ‘Religion’
   **Readings:** Beyer, *Religions in Global Society*
6. (Oct 5)
Globalization and Religion: Emerging perspectives

Readings: Beyer & Beaman, eds., *Religion, Globalization, and Culture*
(Essays by Robertson, Thomas, Simpson, Bouma, Spickard, Arweck, Van Pelt)
in Banchoff, ed. *Religious Pluralism, Globalization and World Politics*

October 12: No class

7. (Oct 19)
Global Religious ‘Fundamentalisms’?

Readings: Almond, Appleby, Sivan, *Strong Religion*
K.A. Appiah, “Causes of Quarrel” in Banchoff, *Religious Pluralism*
Casanova, “The secular and secularisms,” *Social Research*, vol 76, no. 4,
Winter 2009, pp. 1049-1066..

8. (Oct 26)
Islam and World Politics

Readings: Roy, *Globalised Islam*
S. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* (Summer, 1993)
T. Michel “Peaceful Movements in the Muslim World” and
J.O. Voll, “Trans-state Muslim Movements and Militant Extremists in an Era
of Soft Power,” in Banchoff, *Religious Pluralism*

9. (Nov 2)
Student presentations

10. (Nov 9)
Student presentations

11. (Nov 11/ make-up for Nov 23)
Student presentations

12. (Nov 16)
Student presentations

Nov 23: No class

13. (Nov 30)
Student presentations

14. (Dec 7)
Student presentations