INAF 481: RELIGION, JUSTICE, AND AMERICAN NATIONAL SECURITY
Professor Thomas F. Farr
Georgetown University, Spring 2017
Wednesdays, 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm
Class taught at the Berkley Center, 3307 M St., Suite 200, 3rd floor conference room

Office Hours: by appointment
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Introduction

U.S. foreign policy has always been influenced by religion and religiously-informed judgments about justice and national security. Since the early days of the Republic religion – both here and abroad – has had a significant impact on American understandings of the nation’s role in the world. The idea of American exceptionalism, for example, has been molded in part by domestic faith-based views of international affairs, as well as by US missionaries abroad, and by foreign religious actors such as the Pope or Islamic revivalism.

During the late 20th and early 21st centuries the involvement of domestic religious groups in foreign affairs, especially in advocacy for human rights and religious freedom, has in many ways intensified. More broadly, evangelical Protestants, Catholics, Jewish and Christian supporters of Israel and, particularly after 9/11, American Muslims, have had a varied and sometimes significant impact on our foreign policy.

Interestingly, the “secularization theory” has long held that religion will diminish with the advance of modernity. In fact, religious actors, ideas, movements and communities have become major factors on the international stage, a development with enormous implications for American understandings of justice and of American national interests. Religion has fed terrorism and freedom, authoritarianism and democracy, persecution and reconciliation, economic stagnation and economic growth. The spread of public manifestations of religious belief, what some scholars have labeled “political theology,” present particular challenges for U.S. foreign policy.

This course will study the impact of religion on U.S. foreign policy and American understandings of justice and national security. Part One will examine how views of religion in the modern West and the American founding have influenced the nation’s conduct of foreign affairs. Part Two will explore selected topics in American religion and foreign policy, including U.S. missionary movements, religious actors in American history, and religious freedom.

Part Three will turn to religion in the international order and how it affects America’s responses to the major foreign policy issues of the day, including the growing challenges posed by China, the critical issue of stable democracy in Muslim-majority nations, and the threat of violent Islamist extremism.
Readings will draw from a wide variety of disciplines, including international relations, political theory, history, sociology, economics, theology, and philosophy. You will also be asked to read regularly from media sources.

Course Format and Requirements

Our seminar will be highly collaborative. *You are expected to come to class prepared, not only in the sense of having read the assignments, but also being ready to participate.* Of your final grade, 40 percent will be derived from your participation in class and 10 percent from a class presentation on your paper toward the end of the semester.

A term paper will account for the other 50%. It should be 5,000-6,000 words in length and include footnotes and bibliography. The subject should encompass some aspect of how religion has impacted U.S. foreign policy, focusing either on its domestic sources and processes, on an international case or cases, or some combination of both. Each student should conceive one or more options for papers and discuss them with me by the end of February. The readings are rich with ideas for further exploration. The paper is due on **Friday May 5**.

You should acquire one book for this course:


All other readings for the course will be found on the Blackboard. Note that most of these readings are reasonably short. It is important that you get to them all.

Finally, each student will be expected to keep up with domestic and world events that are germane to our course. Examples: the views of U.S. policy makers, members of Congress, foreign affairs experts, journalists, and major religious figures on religion and foreign affairs; political and religious developments in key countries; Islamist extremism. Peruse *The New York Times, Washington Post, Economist, First Things, The Public Discourse, the National Review* and *The Weekly Standard* and you should get a good balance.
PART ONE: SETTING THE STAGE

January 18: The Contemporary Dispute Over the Role of Religion in Western History


Weigel, “Is Political Theology Safe for Democracy,” chapter 5 in Weigel, Against the Grain (Crossroads, 2008).


January 25: Religious Liberty and the American Founding


John Witte, Jr. and Joel A. Nichols, “Concluding Reflections,” in Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment, 4th ed.

PART II: SELECTED TOPICS IN RELIGION AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

February 1: Religion, Foreign Policy and National Security at the Founding and in the Late 20th Century


February 8: Religious Actors in American History

George Washington, *Second Farewell Address* (179)

Abraham Lincoln, *Second Inaugural Address* (18)

Martin Luther King, *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* (19)

Muslim Political Action Committee, “Religious Freedom in the United States”

**February 15: Differing Views on Religion in US Foreign Policy**

**NOTE:** By February 15 all students should have secured from me a “green light” for their paper topics.

Farr, “The Intellectual Sources of Diplomacy’s Religion Deficit,” chapter 2 in *World of Faith*


**February 22: American Missionaries, Proselytism and U.S. Foreign Policy**


**March 1: Religious Lobbying and the International Religious Freedom Act**


**March 6-10: Spring Break - no class on March 8**

Abdullahi Ahmed An-Naim, “Good Intentions Alone Are Not Enough,” The Immanent Frame Blog

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, “The Global Securitization of Religion,” The Immanent Frame blog

Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, “The Extra-Territorial Establishment of Religion,” The Immanent Frame blog


March 22: Religion, Democracy, and Economic Growth


Farr, “Religion and Liberal Governance,” chapter 3 in World of Faith

PART III – RELIGION, JUSTICE, AND AMERICAN NATIONAL SECURITY

March 29: China and Religious Persecution

Farr, “Riding the Dragon: The Case of China,” chapter 10, World of Faith


Department of State, Annual Report on International Religious Freedom, 2015, China, Hong Kong, Macau and Tibet

U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, Annual Report for 2015, China Chapter

April 5: Turkey and Pakistan: Religion and Muslim Democracy
Mustafa Akyol, “Render Unto Ataturk,” *First Things* (March 2007)

April 12: Saudi Arabia, Iran and the Problem of Islamist Theocracy
Farr, “Seeking the Heart of Islam,” chapter 8, *World of Faith*

April 13-18: Easter Break

April 19: ISIS and the Contours of Violent Islamist Extremism
Abu Bakr Al Baghdadi Lebanon speech, January 19, 2014


April 26: Presentations of Papers