

REL 373R - Islam and Democracy - Fall 2016

MW 4:20-6:00 p.m. (Seney Hall 215)

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Office: Seney Hall 115B

Hours: MW 1:30-2:15 p.m., or by appointment

Course Description

This course explores the role of Islam in the public sphere and its relation to liberal democracy. Following Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979 and the collapse of the former Soviet Union in the early 1990s, religion has returned to international and domestic political arenas. We will examine the presumed compatibility (or incompatibility) of some tenets of Islam with modern democratic principles of governance, individual freedom, human rights, justice, the equality of all before the law, multiculturalism, and pluralism. The course is divided into three larger units: The first unit of the course lays out the conceptual tools for analyzing the relationship between Islam and democracy. The second unit focuses on four country studies and examines significant moments in each related to the trajectory of the Islam and democracy debate. The final unit consists of round-table discussions on socio-political issues such as Islamic parties and women's rights in relationship to the democracy debate.

Course Objectives

The goals and objectives for you as a student in this course are:

- to gain a broader understanding of the concepts and theories of religion and democracy,
- to familiarize yourself with patterns, commonalities, and differences on a number of significant national and international issues concerning religion and democracy;
- to develop the ability to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view that have religious presuppositions or implications; and

to further develop skills in expressing yourself orally and in writing within and beyond the academic study of religion.

Readings

- Textbook: Esposito, John L., Tamara Sonn, and John Obert Voll. *Islam and Democracy after the Arab Spring*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

- All other required and optional readings for the course will be accessible to you electronically through our Canvas site. Often you will find pdf files of a specific journal article or section from a book you are required to read for a class session. In other instances, you will be taken to the Library's Electronic Reserve site or to sites such as JSTOR, Proquest, MUSE or Lexis-Nexus—all useful research tools for scholarly journals which I discuss later.
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Canvas Learning Technology

This course will involve using the online communication tools on Canvas as well as readings and documents located there. You would do well to acquaint yourself with the features Canvas offers and different usages and use them as frequent points of entry and exploration around many of the issues we will be discussing as well as in preparation for the assignments.

Course Requirements and Grading

The Final Grade will be calculated as follows:

1. Preparation and Participation (10%)
2. Reading Responses (20%)
3. Midterm and Final Essay (40%, 20% each)
4. Research Project (30%)

1. Preparation and Participation (10%)

Preparation: I expect you to keep up with all readings and assignments and to get the notes for missed class sessions from your peers. Appropriate preparation means reading the material several times, making notes, and coming to class with specific questions; part of this preparation should include consultation with recommended readings and standard reference works in order to understand fully the argument in the text.

Participation: There will be ample opportunity for you to participate in our class. Apart from my lectures you will be involved in activities such as class discussion, group work with subsequent presentations, and in-class writing assignments. Additional activities and assignments including peer assessments on written and oral work will also count toward your participation grade. While I will call on you often and ask about the content of assigned readings you are strongly encouraged to ask questions and suggest topics for discussion in class on your own.

Class Discussion: While I will lecture from time to time, the class will be conducted much more on a seminar model of examining your informed responses to the reading material. High-quality participation is key to the overall success of our class discussion. This means that I expect you to: raise thoughtful questions, analyze relevant issues, build on others' ideas, synthesize across readings and discussions, expand the class' perspective, and appropriately challenge the texts' and each other's assumptions and perspectives. We will use a number of different techniques to prepare and conduct class discussion throughout the semester. All place a premium on mastering the

content of a reading, evaluating it, and preparing cogent ways to convey your ideas before class. All also rely on public performance and evaluation.

1. *Short oral reports*: In the first unit of the semester we will begin each class session with short oral reports. Reports should cover the highlights or main points of the reading and offer a question for the class. In class, we draw the names of a few students to present their talks that day. The rest of the class and I evaluate the presentations aloud, examining strengths and weaknesses in content and delivery. After presenters and evaluators finish, we will have a whole-class discussion of the readings.
2. *Student discussion leaders*: In the second unit each of you will be responsible to formulate key questions and be prepared to lead the class in a discussion on the day's readings. In class, we draw the name of one of you who will lead the discussion that day. At the end of the discussion, the rest of the class will discuss strengths and weaknesses of the leader's performance. I will usually remain silent for the first minutes to allow free rein to your ideas and then join as a co-discussion leader later.
3. *Round Table Discussions*: The final course unit will address legal, ethical, religious, and political issues in the interplay of Islam and democracy. You will all participate in Round Table Discussions as a team to explore the issues at hand. (Additional guidelines will be made available on Canvas.)

2. Reading Responses (20%)

For this class you are asked to write short analytical responses to the assigned readings. This task is designed to encourage you to keep up with your reading, keep you engaged with the material, enrich class discussion (as you will already have something to say), help you practice your skills in thinking critically and writing fluidly, and, finally, provide a log of your thoughts at this state in your studies. We will use the discussion function on Canvas to collect your entries which also allows us to read and comment on each other's writing. [See Canvas for more details.](#)

3. Midterm and Final Exams (20% each, 40% total)

The midterm and final exams will be take-home exams that ask you to study a specific topic related to our class discussion carefully and in its context. For each exam you will write an essay of 1,000-1,200 words. I will post in advance of each assignment essay prompts as well as guidelines on how to write the essays. I will be looking for two things in your writing: a) evidence of your knowledge and understanding of class material and b) your ability to use or apply the material in ways that go beyond what you have read or heard in class. This second part can be done in many ways: you can critique the material, apply it to something else, or even just explain it in a different way. Regardless of your particular approach to the topic, you must have a specific point or claim to argue in your essay. I encourage you to write a thesis paragraph ahead of time and to discuss it with me. Many students have found that it improves the quality of their writing. Support for your writing will also come from your peers through a peer review process. [See Canvas for more details.](#)

4. Research Project (30%)

The research paper is an opportunity to engage more deeply with a particular topic of your choice related to this course. It is of greatest importance that you choose a topic of interest to you. The research paper must be 3,000 words (+/- 10%) and should ideally use both primary source material and appropriate secondary and theoretical studies to focus more closely on your subject. Your paper must not merely summarize the position maintained by another, but present your own argument, scholarly analyses and reflections. Your argument must be amply supported by the data reviewed. You cannot expect to produce your best writing when you first get started. Thus, revising your work

is an integral part of successful writing. Revising is a process of rethinking your paper and differs from simple proofreading. As you revise your paper you will have to reconsider your argument, review your evidence, refine your purpose, and reorganize your presentation. You will find that I indicated different dates and deadlines for these activities on the course schedule at which I expect you to present and discuss your results to date with me and/or your peers.

Policies

Attendance

You must be present for class meetings in order to do well in the course. You should aim to arrive to class meetings a couple minutes early having read the assignment and taken notes, including at least two questions or observations to contribute to discussion. Latecomers will be counted absent at the very beginning of class. Should you be late, you are permitted to enter the classroom only if you do so silently and without disturbing class proceedings. You are **allowed to be absent from a total of three (3) class sessions**. With every additional absence your final grade for this class will go down 5%. This means you will have to plan ahead with your allowance of three absences. Talk to me ahead of time if you foresee any difficulties for yourself with this policy. My expectations of professionalism extend to classroom etiquette. This includes such behavior as arriving on time, staying in the classroom until an official break or the end of the class period, and packing up only when class has finished.

Devices in Class

You may utilize laptops and tablets in their capacity as learning aids during class. You may not use them for communicating, browsing, gaming, doing schoolwork for other courses, or otherwise departing from the task at hand during the brief periods of the week we will spend together. Your phone(s) should be powered down, or in airplane mode, and stowed during class. If you find yourself needing to access the day's reading on your phone, or are expecting a time-sensitive call, announce it before class begins.

Academic Integrity

All students deserve an atmosphere of fairness, honesty and maturity. All of us at Oxford College live by the standards set forth in the Honor Code, which includes the "responsibility for maintaining standards of unimpeachable honesty in all academic work." The Honor Code also indicates that we cannot tolerate actions in others that violate this code, so we (and you) are obligated to report violations. Oxford College takes this honor code very seriously, as do I, and penalties for violations are severe. Please read the Honor Code carefully; I will trust you to conduct yourselves accordingly. See the Honor Code:

<http://oxford.emory.edu/academics/student-services/student-honor-code>

Access, Disability Services, and Resources

It is the policy of Emory University to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Students with any condition such that the requirements of this class present a problem should make this known to the instructor as soon as possible and contact Access, Disability Services, and Resources for documentation:

<http://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access>

Affirmative Action & Sexual Harassment

All persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by university policies. Discrimination against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, gender, sexual orientation, or veteran status is unacceptable.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Wednesday (8/24) – Introduction to each other and the course

Unit 1 – How to Think about Islam and Democracy

Week 2

Monday (8/29) - Introductory Reflections: What is Democracy? What is Religion?

Required: Locke (1685), Schmitter & Karl (1991)

Optional: Dahl (1971), Sen (1999), Ibrahim (2006)

Wednesday (8/31) - Thesis 1: Islam is Incompatible with Democracy

Required: Fukuyama (1989), Huntington (1993)

Optional: El-Affendi (1999), [Said \(2001\)](#) (Links to an external site.), Norris & Inglehart (2002)

Video Assignment: Unity Productions Foundation. "Inside Islam: What a Billion Muslims Really Think" (55 min). Please watch it, analyzing critically how the polling data is used to produce policy recommendations, at <http://vimeo.com/14121737> (Links to an external site.)

Week 3

Monday (9/5) - No Class (Labor Day)

Wednesday (9/7) - Thesis 2: Islam is Compatible with Democratic Governance

Required: Abou El Fadl (2003), Esposito (2016, "Introduction")

Optional: al-Hibri (1992), Zakaria (2003)

Week 4 - Thinking about Islam and Democracy in More Complex Ways: Democracy and Secularism

Monday (9/12)

Required: Soroush (2000), Tamimi (200)

Optional: Rahman (1982)

Wednesday (9/14)

Required: Casanova (2001)

Optional: Stark (1999), Keane (2000)

Week 5 - Thinking about Islam and Democracy in More Complex Ways: Islamist Opposition to Democracy

Monday (9/19)

Required: Qutb (1964), Haddad (1983)

Optional: Mandaville (2014, "State Formation and the Making of Islamism," pp. 49-95)

Wednesday (9/21)

Required: Bayat (2007), Nasr (2005)

Optional: Mitchell (2013)

Midterm Essay: Prompts will be available here on Canvas after Wednesday, September 21.

Unit 2 – Case Studies: Turkey, Iran, Indonesia, and Egypt

Week 6 - Islam and Democracy in Turkey

Monday (9/26) - Tension between State Secularization Process and Islam

Required: Esposito (2016, Ch.2)

Optional: Arat (2005), Keyman (2007), Hanioğlu (2012)

Wednesday (9/28) - The Marked for Identities: Islam, Secularity, and Democracy

Required: Kuru & Stepan (2012)

Optional: Atasoy (2005), Toprak (2005)

Week 7 - Islam and Democracy in Iran

Monday (10/3) - Shi'i Challenge: Islamic State and the Man Who Changed the World

Required: Esposito (2016, Ch.3), Khomeini, Shariati (1980)

Optional: Rahnama (1998), Abrahamian (1991), Jahanbakhsh (2001)

Wednesday (10/5) - Post-Revolutionary Iran: Khomeinism and Reform

Required: Jahanbakhsh, Baktiari (2005)

Optional: Khatami, van Ess & Kung (2001); Afary (2003); DePaul (2008)

Week 8

Fall Break (10/10-11/10) - No Class

Wednesday (10/12) - Individual Research Project Consultations

Week 9 - Islam and Democracy in Modern Indonesia

Monday (10/17) - Islam and Civil Society in the late New Order

Required: Esposito (2016, Ch.5), Madjid (2001)

Optional: Hefner (2005)

Wednesday (10/19) - Islamic democracy vs. theocracy in Indonesia

Required: Menchick (2014)

Optional: Allen (2007), Buehler (2008)

Week 10 - Islam and Democracy in Egypt

Monday (10/24) - Goodbye Mubarak!

Required: Esposito (2016, Ch.8)

Optional: Blaydes (2010)

FILM: Katia Jarjoura. 2011. "Goodbye Mubarak!" Icarus Films, 75 minutes.

Wednesday (10/24) - Egypt after the Arab Spring

Required: Brown (2013)

Optional: Masoud (2011)

Unit 3 – Comparative Perspectives: Islamic Parties and SRAS

Week 11 - Islamic Political Parties and the Moderation Hypothesis

Monday (10/31) - Political Party Moderation

Required: Kalyvas (1998)

Optional: Wickham (2004), Tepe (2005)

Wednesday (8/31) - Thesis 1: Islam is Incompatible with Democracy

Required: Schwedler (2011)

Optional: Driessen (2012)

Week 12 - Separation of Religion and State: How much of it does democracy need?

Monday (11/7) - SRAS in Global Comparison

Required: Fox (2008)

Optional: Driessen (2011)

Wednesday (11/9) - Islamic Education and the State

Required: Cesari (2014)

Optional: TBD

Week 13 - Research Project Presentations

Monday (11/14) - In-class presentations and discussion

Wednesday (11/16) - In-class presentations discussion

Week 14

Monday (11/21) - No Class (Professor at AAR Conference)

Thanksgiving Recess (11/23-11/25)

Unit 4 – Wrapping Up

Week 15 - Religions and Liberal Democracy

Monday (11/28) - Democracy and Protestant Exceptionalism

Required: Weber (2001), Bruce (2004)

Optional: Fukuyama (1995)

Wednesday (11/30) - Democracy in the Vernacular

Required: Stepan (2000)

Optional: TBD

Week 16 - Last Day of Class

Monday (12/5)

Required: Esposito (2016, Conclusion)

Reading Response: Final Reading Response (required of everyone)

Final Essay: Prompts will be available here on Canvas after Monday, December 5.
