



CIEE Global Institute – Rome

Course name:	Politics of Religion
Course number:	(GI) RELI 2001 ROIT / POLI 2001 ROIT
Programs offering course:	Rome Open Campus (IRPS Track)
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. semester credits:	3
Contact hours:	45
Term:	Spring 2020

Course Description

This course examines the relationship between church, religion and state, evaluating a comprehensive range of thematic approaches in the politics of religion. Where evidence, both current and historical, suggests a relationship between religion and morality, this course will review how religious morality informs the politics of the state, and how some societies are moving towards popular and populist notions of civic morality. Through the contrast between civic and religious morality, students will explore case studies in different countries on issues such as homosexuality, contraceptives, abortion, legitimate and illegitimate violence, the role of women in society, and the significance of rational thought in the sciences.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be in a position to:

- Critically evaluate readings from the course
- Independently source and verify additional and relevant sources of information
- Develop and deliver complex arguments on highly sensitive issues
- Articulate the distinction between morality and religion
- Improve academic writing and presentation skills
- Enhance intercultural awareness and communication competencies

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

Among other techniques, the methodology used throughout this course will include: teacher presentations with student-teacher dialogue and discussion; active discussion in which students will be expected to prepare presentations to



argue a specific case and defend it to an opponent and the class. Students will also attend site visits, special events, and guest lectures. They are expected to take copious notes of readings, lectures and out-of-class activities to be potentially used for course submissions. Rules for citation and referencing apply.

Assessment and Final Grade

Case Studies (x 2) 10%
Presentation 15%
Midterm Exam 20%
Final Paper 25%
Class Participation 20%

Course Requirements

Case Studies (x 2)

Each student is required to participate twice in a prepared debate on the role of politics in religion, based on selected case studies. The individual debates will be in groups each given a topic. Grading will be based on knowledge and preparation demonstrated in the in-class debate.

Presentation

Students will be required to deliver a presentation during the course. Each presentation should be about 10-15 minutes (excluding opponent and class discussion) and it should show a good understanding of a selected topic and the ability to put it in perspective. The topic should be presented in a concise yet comprehensive manner.

Midterm Exam

The midterm exam will consist of multiple-choice and short answer / paragraph questions to measure the students' progress halfway through the course.

Final Paper

A 1,500-word discussion paper will be required. This paper will cover a specific topic and needs to show a solid understanding of and reflection on the topic assigned. The topic cannot be the same as the presentation topic.

Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.



Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, unexcused absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to Internship, Service Learning, or required field placement. Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent and unexcused. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:

<i>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</i>	<i>Equivalent Number of Open Campus Semester classes</i>	<i>Minimum Penalty</i>
Up to 10%	1 content classes, or up to 2 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements.
10 – 20%	2 content classes, or 3-4 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements; written warning
More than 20%	3 content classes, or 5 language classes	Automatic course failure , and possible expulsion

Please note this schedule is subject to change if opportunities arise to enhance the curriculum

Weekly Schedule

Week 1 Introduction: Religion in Our Societies

Class 1:1 Students will be presented the course and instructed on how to access all the related materials on Canvas.
The second part of the class will be dedicated to a general introduction on the anthropological aspects of religion and on the theoretical difference between religion and faith.

Week 2 Religion and politics in the Ancient world

Class 2:1 In the ancient societies, from Mesopotamia to Egypt, down to Rome, religion and politics were strictly intertwined. This class will examine this relationship in Ancient Greece and Rome in particular, in order to outline the elements that have survived in our cultures.

Visit to the Ara Pacis Augustae or to other significant monument.

Class 2:2 **“In this sigh thou shalt conquer”:** Constantine and Theodosius and the conversion of the Roman Empire
This module will examine the figure of the first Christian Roman Emperors Constantine (272-337 AD) and Theodosius Students will trace the origins of Christianity and how politicization of religion has taken place throughout it.

Readings from:

The Acts of the Apostles

St. Paul, Letters

The Edict of Milan

The Edict of Thessalonica

Faggioli, M., *Catholicism and Citizenship*

Zamagni, G., *Theology and History*

Vidal, Gore, *Julian*

Christianity: Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants

This module of the course will outline the characteristics the Christian churches from an historical and theological point of view, with respect to their relationship with the temporal power.

Oral Presentations and Case studies debate

Readings from:

Brown, Peter, *The rise of Western Christendom*

Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church: An Introduction to Eastern Christianity*

Marshall, Peter, *The Reformation: a very short introduction*

Stacey, Peter, *Roman Monarchy and the Renaissance Prince*

Week 3: Religion and the Nation-state - The case of Israel



Class 3:1

In this module students will explore the relationship between religion and the nation-state through a historical examination of the connections between the religious identity and the building of the State of Israel in the 20th century.

Oral Presentations and Case studies debate

Readings from:

The Holy Bible

www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org

Class 3:2

Visit to the Roman Ghetto and to the Jewish institutions.

Onsite class.

Students will visit the area of the Jewish Ghetto, a testimony of the most ancient Jewish community in Europe.

Class 3:3

Midterm Exam

Week 4

Islam and the Islamic countries

Class 4:1

In this module students will be introduced to Islam and its historical expansion from the Arabic peninsula to Europe, Africa and Asia. The question of the relationship between the Coranic law and the national legislation of the Islamic countries will be addressed.

Oral Presentations and Case studies debate

Readings from:

The Holy Bible

The Qur'an

www.al-islam.org

Abulafia, David, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*

The Muslim community in Rome.



Class 4:2

This module will focus on the diffusion of Islam in Italy, with special reference to the city of Rome and its Islamic Cultural Center.

Onsite class/guest lecturer

Religion war.

This module will analyze the concept of "religious war" first from an historical perspective, then focusing on the present situation and on the cultural debate concerning the actual causes of the current conflicts.

Readings from:

King, Martin Luther, *Selected speeches*

Arendt, Hannah, *On Violence*

Vidal, Gore, *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace*

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

Oral Presentations and Case studies debate

Week 5

Religion and Public Morality

Class 5:1

This module examines case studies of key debates surrounding a number of sensitive issues in contemporary society, including abortion rights, contraceptives, and state-sanctioned executions.

Religion, Gender and Sex

This module evaluates how religious dogma influences and informs public and political discourses throughout the world in relation to homosexuality, civil liberties, gender and marriage equality.

Guest Lecturer.

Readings:

www.religionandgender.org

Johnston, C. "Ireland becomes first country to legalise same-sex marriage by popular vote – as it happened", *The Guardian*

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

Rabbi Dorff Elliot et al., *Rituals and documents of marriage and divorce for same-sex couples*

The Glory of the Catholic Church: St. Peter's Basilica

Class 5:2

Onsite class.



Students will visit the Basilica of St. Peter's, the most important monument to the spiritual (and temporal) power of Catholicism, and will be shown the internal and external decoration, with special reference to its political symbolism.

Week 6 Religion, Ritual, and Society

Class 6:1 This module deconstructs ritual in contemporary societies, with particular emphasis on religious-inferred rituals surrounding public commemorations, and the operating religious-inspired rituals of modern governments and parliaments.

Due date for Submission of Final Paper

Readings:

Bruce, S. *Politics and Religion*

Class 6:2

Religion and Secularization

This last module will be dedicated to analyze and discuss with the students the future of religion as a legitimate player in the public debate.

Readings:

Bruce, S., *Late Secularization and Religion as Alien*

Readings

The Holy Bible

The Acts of the Apostles

St. Paul, Letters

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

The Qur'an

The Edict of Milan

The Edict of Thessalonica

Abulafia, David (2011), *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*, London: Penguin Books

Arendt, Hannah (1970), *On Violence*, New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company



Brown, Peter (2013), *The rise of Western Christendom*, Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell

Bruce, S (2003), *Politics and Religion*, Oxford: Polity Press

Bruce, S (2014), *Late Secularization and Religion as Alien*, in Open Theology 2014, De Gruyter Open

Rabbi Dorff Elliot et al. (2012), *Rituals and documents of marriage and divorce for same-sex couples*, in www.rabbinicalassembly.org
Bruce, Steve. *Late Secularization and Religion as Alien*

Johnston, C. "Ireland becomes first country to legalise same-sex marriage by popular vote – as it happened", *The Guardian*

King, Martin Luther, *Selected speeches* (available online)

Marshall, Peter (2009), *The Reformation: a very short introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Stacey, Peter (2007), *Roman Monarchy and the Renaissance Prince*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Vidal, Gore (2012), *Julian*, London: Abacus

Vidal, Gore (2002), *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace*, New York, NY: Thunder's Mouth Press/Nation Books

Ware, Timothy (1993), *The Orthodox Church: An Introduction to Eastern Christianity*, New York, NY: Penguin Books

Online Resouces

www.religionandgender.org

www.al-islam.org

www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org