

Sabancı University  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
**SOC 408/508: Religion and Politics**  
**Fall 2022**

Mondays 2:40-4:30 p.m. FASS 2031 | Wednesdays 09:40-10:30 a.m. FASS 1102

**Instructor:** Ateş Altınordu (atesaltinordu@sabanciuniv.edu; meeting by appointment)

**Course description:** This course explores interactions between religious and political authorities, discourses, and organizations from a comparative perspective. Topics covered include religious movements and parties, religious nationalism and political violence, political identities and religious affiliation, secularism as political movement and cultural formation, and public religions in liberal democracies. Readings and discussions will refer to cases from Europe, North America, South Asia, and the Middle East.

**Requirements:** Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before class and actively participate in class discussions.

For *undergraduate* students, the course requirements include a midterm exam (November 14) and a final exam (date TBA).

For *graduate* students, the course requirements include an in-class presentation (~20 minutes) and a final exam (14-16 pages to be completed outside of class, due January 12). The presentation should briefly summarize the most important points from the readings and conclude with two critical questions. We will discuss final exam topics in class on Week 12 (December 19-21).

**Evaluation:**

For *undergraduate* students, the course grade will be composed of class participation (20%), the midterm exam (40%), and the final exam (40%).

For *graduate* students, the course grade will be composed of class participation (20%), the presentation (20%), and the final exam (60%). Late submission of final exams is allowed up to five days after the deadline. Late final exams will be subject to a 4-point (out of 100) reduction for each day late.

Letter grades will be calculated according to the following scale:

93-100	A	83-86	B -	73-76	C	60-66	D
90-92	A-	80-82	B	70-72	C-	0-59	F
87-89	B+	77-79	C+	67-69	D+		

**Attendance Policy:** Students who miss more than seven class meetings will receive N/A as their course grade. (Each Monday session counts as one class meeting & each Wednesday session counts as one class meeting). Those who enter class more than 20 minutes after its start will be considered absent on that date. Please do not ask for exceptions.

**Academic integrity:** Cases of plagiarism, cheating, and fraud will result in an F as the course grade and will be referred to the relevant Faculty Dean for potential disciplinary action. For Sabancı University's Academic Integrity Statement, see <https://www.sabanciuniv.edu/en/academic-integrity-statement> (ENG) or <https://www.sabanciuniv.edu/tr/akademik-durustluk> (TR).

**Readings:** All readings are available as pdf files under the 'Resources' section of the course page at SuCourse+.

### **Week 1 | Introduction to the Course | October 3-5**

- Anna Grzymala-Busse. 2012. "Why Comparative Politics Should Take Religion (More) Seriously." *Annual Review of Political Science* 15: 421-442.
- Ateş Altınordu. 2022. "Religion and Politics in Contemporary Turkey." Pp. 357-372 in Armando Salvatore, Sari Hanafi, and Kieko Obuse. Eds. *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of the Middle East*. Oxford University Press.

### **Week 2 | The Sociology of Religion | October 10-12**

- Karl Marx. 1978. Selection from "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*: Introduction." Pp. 53-54 in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd edition. Edited by Robert C. Tucker. New York and London: W.W. Norton.
- Emile Durkheim. 1995. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: The Free Press. Pp. 33-44, 207-216.
- José Casanova. 1994. *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago University Press. (11-39).

### **Week 3 | Religion in Social Movements | October 17-19**

- Christian Smith. 1996. "Correcting a Curious Neglect, or Bringing Religion Back In." Pp. 1-25 in Christian Smith. Ed. *Disruptive Religion: The Force of Faith in Social Movement Activism*. Routledge.
- Aldon Morris. 1996. "The Black Church in the Civil Rights Movement: the SCLC as the Decentralized, Radical Arm of the Black Church." Pp. 29-46 in *Disruptive Religion*.

#### **Week 4 | Religion and Nationalism | October 24-26**

- Geneviève Zubrzycki. 2010. "Religion and Nationalism: A Critical Reexamination." Pp. 606-626 in Bryan S. Turner. Ed. *The New Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Religion*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Philip Gorski and Samuel Perry. 2022. *The Flag and the Cross: White Christian Nationalism and the Threat to American Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press. Ch.1.

#### **Week 5 | Religion and Political Violence | October 31- November 2**

- Rogers Brubaker. 2015. "Religious Dimensions of Political Conflict and Violence." *Sociological Theory* 33 (1): 1-19.
- Michael A. Sells. 1996. *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia*. University of California Press. (29-70).

#### **Week 6 | The Rise and Transformation of Religious Parties | November 7-9**

- Ateş Altınordu. 2010. "The Politicization of Religion: Political Catholicism and Political Islam in Comparative Perspective." *Politics & Society* 38 (4): 517-551.
- Cihan Tuğal. 2009. *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to Capitalism*. Stanford University Press. (1-56).

#### **Week 7 | Midterm Exam (Undergraduate Students) | November 14 (no class on Nov. 16)**

#### **Week 8 | Secularism as Movement and Culture | November 21 -23**

- Christian Smith. 2003. "Introduction: Rethinking the Secularization of American Public Life." Pp. 1-96 in Christian Smith. Ed. *The Secular Revolution: Power, Interests, and Conflict in the Secularization of American Public Life*. University of California Press.
- Esra Özyürek. 2006. *Nostalgia for the Modern: State Secularism and Everyday Politics in Turkey*. Duke University Press. (1-27; 93-124).

#### **Week 9 | Multiple Secularisms | November 28-30**

- Andrew Davison. 2003. "Turkey, a 'Secular' State? The Challenge of Description." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 102 (2-3): 333-350.
- Rajeev Bhargava. 2010. "The Distinctiveness of Indian Secularism." Pp. 99-119 in Aakash Singh and Silika Mohapatra. Eds. *Indian Political Thought: A Reader*. Routledge.

#### **Week 10 | Judicialization vs. Bureaucratization | December 5-7**

- Yüksel Sezgin and Mirjam Künkler. 2014. "Regulation of 'Religion' and the 'Religious': The Politics of Judicialization and Bureaucratization in India and Indonesia." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 56 (2): 448-478.
- Ahmet Erdi Öztürk. 2018. "Transformation of the Turkish Diyanet Both at Home and Abroad: Three Stages." *European Journal of Turkish Studies* 27.

#### **Week 11 | Political Identity and Religious Affiliation | December 12-14**

- David E. Campbell and Robert D. Putnam. 2012. "God and Caesar in America: Why Mixing Religion and Politics is Bad for Both." *Foreign Affairs* 91 (2): 34-43.
- Mucahit Bilici. 2018. "The Crisis of Religiosity in Turkish Islamism." *Middle East Report* 288: 43-45.
- Ayşe Çavdar. 2022. "Never Walk Alone: The Politics of Unveiling in 'New Turkey.'" Pp. 172-190 in *The Politics of Culture in Contemporary Turkey*. Edited by Pierre Hecker, Ivo Furman and Kaya Akyıldız. Edinburgh University Press.

#### **Week 12 | Presentation of Final Paper Topics (Graduate Students) | December 19-21**

#### **Week 13 | Religion & Liberal Democracy | December 26-28**

- Alfred C. Stepan 2000. "Religion, Democracy, and the 'Twin Tolerations'." *Journal of Democracy* 11 (4): 37-57.
- David T. Buckley. 2015. "Beyond the Secularism Trap: Religion, Political Institutions and Democratic Commitments." *Comparative Politics* 47 (4): 439-458.

#### **Week 14 | Documentary Screening & Discussion | January 2-4**

**\* Final Exam (Undergraduate Students) | Date TBA**

**\* Final Exam Due (Graduate Students) | January 12 (Thursday)**