

**RELI 107**

**RELIGION, LAW AND POLITICS**

**SCHOOL OF ART HISTORY, CLASSICS & RELIGIOUS STUDIES  
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON  
2006**

# RELI 107

## RELIGION, LAW AND POLITICS

<i>Course co-ordinator:</i>	<i>Dr Marion Maddox, HU 319, tel: 463 5590</i>
<i>Tutors:</i>	<i>Daniel Dowling, Murray Shearer, David Murphy, Laura Marks</i>
<i>Where and when:</i>	<i>Lectures: HM 206 Thursday 2:10 - 4:00 pm Tutorials: time and place tba</i>

Religious Studies is in the Hunter Building. The programme administrator, Alik Kalliabetsos, is in room HU 318. Her telephone number is 463 5299 and email is aliki.kalliabetsos@vuw.ac.nz **Notices regarding the course or any information on changes will be posted on the notice board outside her office.**

**Office Hours:** The main office is open Monday - Friday, 9.30 - 12:00 and 2:30 - 3.30 pm. You can arrange to meet with Dr Maddox by appointment.

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### *Course outline*

#### **1 The course aims:**

The paper explores the connections between religious values, law and political process.

RELI 107 is the first step in a stream of politics-related papers in religious studies. It is also a useful broadening subject for students intending to major in Law, Politics, Public Policy and related areas.

From the 'war on terror' to the rise of 'family values' politics, understanding religion is an extremely important part of understanding the modern world. This paper offers information and critical skills which will enable you to draw connections between international events and developments in religious studies and legal and political theory.

The paper uses a mixture of lectures, small-group discussions and guest speakers to make connections between theory and practice.

## 2 Course objectives are:

### i Content objectives

To provide students with the information and critical skills to:

- Identify distinctive religious strands which have shaped the politics of NZ and other western societies
- Account for the different place of religion in the respective political cultures of the societies studied
- Critically interpret current religious or religiously-charged controversies, including (but not restricted to) legal protection of religious freedom; war, peace and violence; and gender and sexual politics.

### ii. Academic skills objectives

To foster the ability to:

- Read, summarise and analyse a range of literature in the disciplines of religious studies, law and political science
- Draw connections between the orientations and issues of concern in each discipline
- Critically analyse cutting-edge issues in public life from the perspective of the interrelationship of religion, law and politics
- Write a consistent and coherent argument
- Develop and present a clear verbal argument

### iii. Discipline-focused objectives:

- To model an interdisciplinary approach to the study of religion, supplementing the approaches modeled in other RELI papers
- To provide students with the skills and knowledge to progress to higher-level RELI papers
- To enable students majoring in other disciplines to bring a sensitivity to religious issues to bear in relevant areas

## 3 Rationale for assessment: The assessment of this course relates directly to these objectives.

**The weekly tutorial assignments** are to be short (one page maximum) written responses to each week's required readings and lectures. They ensure that students read and think about the required readings prior to tutorial discussion. They also provide continuous feedback to students on their level of understanding and their development of the analytical skills required in the essays.

**The library assignment** provides practical training in the techniques of information retrieval and referencing relevant to this paper, and provides a structure within which students can begin guided work towards the first essay.

**The essays** allow students to apply their analytical skills to information retrieved through library research on a set topic. Essays demonstrate the students' level of proficiency in finding, understanding, and using sources. They develop the skills of critical reading, analysis and organizing material necessary for continued study. The process also gives them the opportunity to develop a more in-depth knowledge of an area covered in the lectures and weekly readings.

**The test** allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the material presented in the course and presents students the opportunity to reflect on their learning process throughout the term.

Students who do not understand the grades they have been assigned or are concerned about their progress are encouraged to meet with their tutors for a discussion.

- 4 **The lecture programme** follows. Lectures may be varied from time to time. As much notice as possible will be given when changes occur and, if necessary a revised programme will be issued at lectures.
- 5 **Tutorials are held weekly** Tutorials deal with topics which complement the lecture programme and they provide an opportunity to discuss aspects of the course in a small group and develop the ability to contribute to discussions.

**Rationale: why a weekly assignment?** At every tutorial we require students to submit a written response to the readings of that week. These responses should not exceed one page in length and need only address the required readings. They will be marked according to the scheme below and returned to students the following week. These written responses are designed to accomplish the following three objectives, each of which is vital to successful completion of the course:

- They ensure students are keeping up with the required readings and enable tutors to monitor student progress on a regular basis.
- They provide students the opportunity to develop critical reading skills (i.e. a focus on the material most pertinent to the question).
- They develop students' analytical skills.

### **Assessment: A standard marking scheme**

Tutors will assign one of the following grades to tutorial work received:

- **2.5/10     unsatisfactory**  
the student shows evidence of having read the set work, but shows little comprehension; the question has not been answered.
- **5/10       satisfactory**  
the set work has been read and the question addressed but comprehension is unclear.
- **7.5/10     good**  
question is addressed, readings have been understood but writing and analysis require work.
- **10/10      excellent**  
clear comprehension, pertinent examples, the question is answered.

The marks for each assignment will be added up and averaged to calculate the 10% of the overall grade delegated for tutorial assignments. Missing assignments, and assignments which show no evidence of tutorial reading, will receive a 0/10. Late assignments will be accepted only with medical documentation.

- 6 **The course is internally assessed** by means of two long written papers, eight short tutorial assignments, one library assignment and one class test, as follows:
- **1 library assignment**, as set out below, due on **Friday 21 August**, worth 10% of the final grade
  - **1 essay of 1,500 words**, due on **Monday 11 September**, worth 20% of the final grade.
  - **1 essay of 2,000 words**, due on **Friday 20 October**, worth 30% of the final grade.
  - **8 tutorial assignments**; short (one page maximum) weekly written assignments to be submitted to your tutor at each tutorial, collectively worth 10% of the final grade.
  - a **class test** worth 30% of the final grade.

**Mandatory Course Requirements:** attaining 50% or above for course assessment.

- 7 **Required text:** There is no set textbook. The *RELI 107 Course Reader* should be obtained from the Student Notes shop at a cost of approximately \$30.
- 8 **Work-load (Recommendation of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences):** For 100-level 18 points one trimester courses, 12 hours per week are recommended. An average student should spend 9 hours per week for

preparation, reading and writing in addition to attendance at lectures and tutorials.

[100 – level            1 trimester            18 points            12 hours ]

**9 Aegrotat regulations apply** to internally assessed courses. Students who cannot submit or complete the course requirements due to illness or some other impairment should inform the programme administrator immediately and present the appropriate documentation.

**10 General University policies and statutes**

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar available in hard copy or under 'About Victoria' on the VUW home page at [www.vuw.ac.nz](http://www.vuw.ac.nz).

**11 Student and staff conduct**

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps are to be taken if there is a complaint. For information about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor or refer to the statute on the VUW policy website at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct) The Policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/staffconduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/staffconduct)

**12 Academic grievances**

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned; class representatives may be able to help you in this. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the relevant Associate Dean; VUWSA Education Coordinators are available to assist in this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievance Policy which is published on the VUW website at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances)

**13 Students with Impairments** (see Appendix 3 of the Assessment Handbook)

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities the same opportunity as other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, please contact the course coordinator as early in the course as

possible. Alternatively, you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss your individual needs and the available options and support on a confidential basis. DSS are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building; telephone: 463-6070 email: [disability@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:disability@vuw.ac.nz) The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person is in the relevant prospectus or can be obtained from the School Office or DSS.

#### **14 Student Support**

Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. In the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences the support contact is **Dr Allison Kirkman, Murphy Building, room 407**. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Maori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International.

In addition, the Student Services Group (email: [student-services@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:student-services@vuw.ac.nz)) is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/st\\_services/](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/)

VUWSA employs Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office (tel. 463-6983 or 463-6984, email at [education@vuwsa.org.nz](mailto:education@vuwsa.org.nz)) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.

**15 Taping of Lectures:** All students in the School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies are welcome to use audio-tapes to record lectures. If you want to do this, please see your lecturer, tutor or the relevant programme administrator and complete a disclaimer form which advises of copy right and other relevant issues.

**16 Class representatives:** Class representatives are elected in the first week or two of term. They are supported by the VUW Students' Association, and have a variety of roles, including assistance with grievances and student feedback to staff and VUWSA. Contact details for your class rep will be available from the Religious Studies Administrator.

**17 Student Learning Support Services:** A range of workshops, drop-ins and other assistance is provided by SLSS, covering such things as study techniques, essay writing, exam preparation and note taking skills. They are at 14 Kelburn Parade, tel: 463 5999.

**18 Supplementary Materials:** A website of materials related to RELI 107 is being maintained in Blackboard. You can find it by visiting <http://blackboard@vuw.ac.nz>. Your user name is the one issued to you by Student Computing Services. Your password is your Student ID Number. If in doubt, please contact the Student Computing Services Help Desk, 463-6666 (extension 6666 from VUW phones) or by email [scs-help@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:scs-help@vuw.ac.nz)

**19 Evaluation:** This course will be assessed by UTDC



## *Lecture Programme*

### **UNIT 1**

### **GODS OF NATIONS**

- 13 July** Right, wrong and rules: religion and the law
- 20 July** God, nation, power: religion and politics
- 27 July** Religion in three recent elections
- 3 August** Religion and reconciliation: dealing with the past
- 10 August** Politics and faith

### **UNIT 2**

### **LIFE, DEATH AND THE STATE**

- 17 August** Does religion cause violence? Case study 1 – Saudi Arabia

### **Mid-trimester break 21<sup>st</sup> August – 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2006**

- 7 September** Does religion cause violence? Case study 2 – India
- 14 September** Does religion cause violence? Case study 3 – Rwanda

### **UNIT 4**

### **GOD, SEX AND THE STATE**

- 21 September** What is a family? 'Family values' politics
- 28 September** Dearly beloved: Religion, marriage and civil unions
- 5 October** Abortion and the politics of birth
- 12 October** Class Test

## *Tutorial Programme*

The required readings are essential background for the lectures and tutorials. Weekly readings should be completed **before each lecture**. The readings will be further discussed in the tutorials. The readings are all found in the *RELI 107 Course Reader*, which can be purchased at the Student Notes shop.

### **UNIT ONE GODS OF NATIONS**

**10 - 14 July** No tutorials are held this week. Tutorial groups will be organised during this week.

**17 - 21 July** God, nation, power: religion and politics

Key concepts: Nationalism; Civil Religion; Values; Commitment; Ideology; Convictions; Pragmatism; Conscience; Compromise

Question: Should a nation use religious language to describe its history, present commitments and sense of destiny? Should leaders use religious language when speaking about public affairs? What are the pluses and minuses of doing so?

#### Readings:

Aldridge, Alan *Religion in the Contemporary World: A sociological introduction* Cambridge: Polity Press 2000, pp 140-159

Caldwell, Deborah, 'Decoding Bush's God-Talk'  
[www.beliefnet.com/story/159/story\\_15968.html](http://www.beliefnet.com/story/159/story_15968.html)

Janiewski, Dolores and Paul Morris, *New Rights New Zealand: Myths, moralities and markets* Auckland University Press 2005, pp 103-117

McCollister, John C. *God and the Oval Office: The religious faith of our 43 presidents* Nashville: Thomas Nelson 2005, pp 231-238

**24 - 28 July** Religion in three recent elections

Key concepts: Double-coding, Dog-Whistle, Priming, Civil Religion, Theocracy, Democracy, Christian Nationalism, Fundamentalism

Question: In what ways can religion play a role in elections? Is there any reason to worry about any of them?

#### Readings:

Maddox, Marion 'One Country Under Howard' in Geoffrey Barker et al, *A Win and a Prayer: Scenes from the 2004 Australian election* Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, pp 43-49

Maddox, Marion 'God and the New Zealand 2005 Election'  
[http://www.apo.org.au/webboard/results.chtml?filename\\_num=28861](http://www.apo.org.au/webboard/results.chtml?filename_num=28861)

Gerson, Michael, 'The Danger for America is not Theocracy'  
[www.beliefnet.com/story\\_15943.html](http://www.beliefnet.com/story_15943.html)

### **31 July - 4 August Religion and reconciliation: dealing with the past**

Key concepts: Responsibility; Justice; Reconciliation; Apology; Reparation

Question: Is it reasonable for the present generation to apologise for the wrongs of the past?

Readings:

Keating, Paul, Australian launch of the International Year of the World's Indigenous People (the 'Redfern Park speech'), 10 December 1992, in Lovell, David et al (eds), *The Australian political system*, Melbourne: Longman, 1995, p 599

Kelsall, Tim, Truth, lies, ritual: Preliminary reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone, *Human Rights Quarterly* 27, 2005, pp 361-391

Prophecy fulfilled by settlement, *Dominion post*, 5 June, 2003

Weyeneth, Robert, The power of apology and the process of historical reconciliation, *Public historian*, 23(3) 2001, pp 9-38

### **7 - 11 August Politics and faith**

Key Concepts: Faith; Separation of Church and State; Conscience Vote; Moral Issue

Question: How relevant is a politician's religious faith to their public life? In what different ways might faith and politics interact?

Reading:

Maddox, Marion *For God and country: religious dynamics in Australian federal politics* Canberra: Department of the Parliamentary Library 2001, pp 105-158

## UNIT TWO

## DOES RELIGION CAUSE VIOLENCE?

### 14 - 18 August Case Study 1: Saudi Arabia

Key Concepts: Mecca; Mohammad; Shari'a; Islamic State; Koran

Question: What are the political implications of Al-Wahhab's teachings in Saudi Arabian politics?

Readings:

Helms, Christine Moss *The Cohesion of Saudi Arabia* London: Croom Helm 1981, pp 76-126

### Mid-trimester break 21st August - 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2006

### 4 - 8 September Case Study 2 – India

Key Concepts: Secularism; Communalism; Minorities

Question: What can the Indian case teach us about the relationship between religion and nationalism?

Readings:

Falk, Nancy Auer *Living Hinduisms: An explorer's guide* Belmont, California: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006, pp. 271-94.

Embree, Ainslie T. *Utopias in Conflict: Religion and nationalism in modern India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992, pp. 1-18.

### 11 - 15 September Case Study 3: Rwanda

Key Concepts: Genocide; Colonialism; Decolonisation; Postcolonialism; Catholic; Protestant

Question: In what ways did religion contribute to the Rwandan genocide? What factors contributed to this result?

Readings:

Bjornlund, Matthias, Eric Markusen, Peter Steenberg, Rafiki Ubaldo 'The Christian churches and the construction of a genocidal mentality in Rwanda,' in *Genocide in Rwanda*, Rittner, Carol, John K Roth and Wendy Whitworth (eds), St Paul, Minnesota: Paragon House 2004, pp 141-167

## UNIT 4      GOD, SEX AND THE STATE

### 18-22 September      What is a family? The rise of 'family values' politics

Key Concepts: Family; Nuclear Family; 'Family Values'; Liberalism; Conservatism; Feminism; State Intervention

Question: How do you account for the recent rise of 'family values' politics? Why do politicians find 'the family' such an attractive concept, and how do religious messages contribute to its political success?

#### Readings:

James, Colin, Bringing back the family – this election's legacy, *New Zealand herald*, 20 August 2002

Stacey, Judith, *In the name of the family: rethinking family values in the postmodern age*, Boston: Beacon, 1996, pp 38-51

Maddox, Marion, *God under Howard: the rise of the religious right in Australian politics* Sydney: Allen & Unwin 2005, pp 71-106

### 25 - 29 September      Dearly beloved: Marriage and Civil Unions

Key Concepts: Marriage; Family; Citizenship; Equality

Question: Has marriage historically meant only relationships between one man and one woman? What kinds of discrimination have non-heterosexual couples experienced? Does New Zealand's *Civil Unions Bill* go too far, not far enough, or get things about right?

#### Readings:

Coontz, Stephanie, *Marriage, a history: from obedience to intimacy or how love conquered marriage* New York: Viking 2005, pp 263-280

Dunne, Peter, Why United Future opposes the *Civil Unions Bill*, media release, [www.unitedfuture.org.nz](http://www.unitedfuture.org.nz)

Taylor, Kevin, Conservative bill poses no threat to marriage, says PM, *New Zealand Herald*, 24 April 2004

Marshall, Carolyn, Rushing to say 'I do' before city is told 'you can't', *New York times*, 17 February 2004

The road to gay marriage, *New York times*, 7 March 2004

**2 – 6 October            Abortion and the politics of birth**

Key Concepts: Conception; Viability; Quickening; Pro-Life; Pro-Choice

Question: Why do ideas about the morality of abortion change? Why does it attract so much attention in some religious traditions, and not in others?

Reading:

Dutney, Andrew, *Playing God: ethics and faith* Sydney:HarperCollins 2001, pp

## Essays

### Due dates:

- the library assignment is to be submitted by **Friday 21 August**
- the first essay to be submitted by **Monday 11 September**
- the second essay to be submitted by **Friday 20 October**
- Tutorial assignments are to be handed to the tutor in the tutorial class each week. **Tutorial assignments received after the Friday of the week in which the assignment was due will not be marked unless accompanied by a doctor's certificate.**

### Penalties for late essays / assignments:

- 1 percent per 24 hours will be deducted for late essays.
- essays submitted more than two weeks late will not be accepted for assessment unless prior written arrangement has been made with the lecturer.
- essays submitted late due to medical reasons must be given to the programme administrator accompanied by a doctor's certificate.

### Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

*The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.*

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

*Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.*

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely.

Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website: [www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html)

## *Bibliography*

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Helms, Christine Moss *The Cohesion of Saudi Arabia* London: Croom Helm 1981, pp 76-126

Falk, Nancy Auer *Living Hinduisms: An explorer's guide* Belmont, California: Thomson Wadsworth 2006, pp 271-294



Embree, Ainslie T. *Utopias in Conflict: Religion and nationalism in modern India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press 1992, 1-18

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Stacey, Judith, *In the name of the family: rethinking family values in the postmodern age*, Boston: Beacon 1996, pp 38-51

Maddox, Marion, *God Under Howard*, Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin 2005, pp 71-108

Coontz, Stephanie *Marriage, a history: from obedience to intimacy or how love conquered marriage* New York: Viking 2005, pp 263-280

Dunne, Peter, Why United Future opposes the *Civil Unions Bill*, media release, [www.unitedfuture.org.nz](http://www.unitedfuture.org.nz)

Taylor, Kevin, Conservative bill poses no threat to marriage, says PM, *New Zealand Herald*, 24 April 2004

Marshall, Carolyn Rushing to say 'I do' before city is told 'you can't', *New York times*, 17 February 2004

The road to gay marriage, *New York times*, 7 March 2004

Dutney, Andrew *Playing God: ethics and faith*, Sydney: HarperCollins 2001, pp 97-124