



International Joint PhD Programme
in “Religion, Culture and Public Life” - ReCuPL

SYLLABUS

Academic Year 2024-2025

Course unit English denomination	Sociology of Religious Freedom
Teacher in charge	Giuseppe Giordan , University of Padova
Teaching Hours	14 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	2 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>The course “Sociology of religious freedom” will explore the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Religious freedom and religious pluralism. 2. Religious economy model and religious freedom. 3. Political secularism and religious freedom. 4. Religious freedom from a socio-legal perspective: key concepts. 5. Definitions of religion and judicialization of religious freedom. 6. Government regulation of religion and social hostilities. 7. Current studies on policies of religious freedom.
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to provide a critical overview of the sociological theories of religious freedom and socio-legal implications of its implementation across various political and cultural contexts.</p> <p>During the course, students will have the opportunity to acquire the following knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand key sociological concepts and theories of religious freedom. • Define conditions supportive and non-supportive to religious freedom. • Evaluate public policies related to religious freedom in varying political and cultural contexts. <p>The competences to be acquired include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability for critical and reflective analysis of religious freedom within a broader framework of sociological theories and perspectives (secularization and religious pluralism). • Ability to formulate and evaluate state policies related to religious freedom. • Ability to analyze legal cases and interpret data regarding religious freedom reports.



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Teaching methods

During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions

Prerequisites
(not mandatory)

Knowledge of general sociological concepts

Suggested readings

- Richardson, James T. 2006. "The Sociology of Religious Freedom: A Structural and Socio-legal Analysis." *Sociology of Religion* 67, no. 3: 271–94.
 - Finke, Roger. 2013. "Origins and Consequences of Religious Freedom: A Global Overview." *Sociology of Religion* 74: 297–313.
 - Breskaya, Olga, Giuseppe Giordan, and James T. Richardson. 2018. "Human Rights and Religion: A Sociological Perspective." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 57, no. 3: 419–431.
 - Breskaya, Olga, Giuseppe Giordan, and James T. Richardson. 2024. *A Sociology of Religious Freedom*. Oxford University Press: New York.
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Course unit English denomination	Pluralization of the Religious Landscape in Europe: Islam as a Case Study
Teacher in charge	Stefano Allievi , University of Padova
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	The following topics will be studied: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transformations in the religious landscape. 2. Consequences at the societal and at the subjective level. 3. Religious conflict and interreligious relations. 4. Evolutions of Islam in Europe. 5. Lessons to be learned.
Learning goals	The course aims to introduce to the transformations of the religious landscape in Europe, due to secularization, privatization of the religious dimension, and pluralization of the religious offer. The course will deal with the consequences of these transformations, and their impact on European societies. The students will learn an interpretative key to complexity, that does not relate only to the religion, but to cultural change, and has an impact on how individuals experience society. Islam in Europe will be the main case study used to understand this complexity.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures, discussions and role playing.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	No prerequisites
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive list of readings will be proposed at the beginning of the course. • Introductory reference: S. Allievi, "How cultural and religious pluralism shapes Europe: The role of Muslim minorities," in <i>Minorities and Populism. Critical Perspectives from South Asia and Europe</i>, eds. V. Kaul and A. Vajpeyi, Cham: Springer, 2020, pp. 171-192.



Course unit English denomination	The Power of the Sacred. Introduction to Hans Joas's Theory of Religious Evolution
Teacher in charge	Andrea Maccarini , University of Padova
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Course delivery method	<input type="checkbox"/> In presence <input type="checkbox"/> Remotely <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blended
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>The following points constitute the main topics to be examined in this course:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Theory of religion: social cohesion, experience, self-transcendence 2. Multiple forms of ideal formation vs. necessary process of disenchantment 3. Transcendence as reflexive sacredness. The 'Axial Age' and its consequences 4. The power of the sacred and the sacrality of power. Collective Self-Sacralization, its causes and interpretation
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to discuss a new theory of religion and of its developmental paths in contemporary global society. Through the analysis of Hans Joas's theoretical work, some fundamental hypotheses are discussed about the possible scenarios concerning religion and ideal formation in the present predicament. In doing this, the class will critically review some of the main tenets of the sociological theory of religion, such as secularization, Weber's notion of disenchantment, the Axial Age, processes of sacralization, and more. The guiding idea is that of a pluralization of religious evolution, in which historical, social and cultural contingency shapes diverse processes of sacralization and questions disenchantment as a necessary outcome dominating the civilizational landscape of late modernity.</p> <p>Students will acquire deeper knowledge about the interpretation of the current religious and political dynamics, learning to distinguish and examine different processes of reflexive sacralization, including collective sacralization occurring in the wake of neo-nationalist and fundamentalist political movements.</p>
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Basic familiarity with the sociological tradition
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joas H (2021) <i>The Power of the Sacred. An Alternative to the Narrative of Disenchantment</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press. • Joas H (2008) <i>Do We Need Religion? On the Experience of Self-Transcendence</i>. Boulder and London: Paradigm Publishers. • Note: the texts must not be studied in all their parts. Specific chapters will be indicated in due course.



Course unit English denomination	Religious Pedagogy
Teacher in charge	Andrea Porcarelli , University of Padova
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	The following points constitute the main topics to be examined in this course: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Religious experience and its education 2. Formal, non-formal and informal educational contexts 3. Religious education in non-formal contexts 4. Religious education in formal context 5. The Toledo Guidelines on teaching about religions and believes 6. Teaching religion between bridges and walls: the Italian case and that of the Republic of San Marino
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to provide a critical overview of religious pedagogy as an academic discipline. Its diffusion in some international contexts (as in Germany) is opposed by the troubled path of this discipline in the Italian academic contest.</p> <p>During the course, students will have the opportunity to acquire the following knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the meaning of a Pedagogy of religious experience in a broad sense • Deepen the epistemological identity of religious pedagogy as a practical science • Explore the topic of religious education in public schools. <p>The competences to be acquired include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability for a critical and reflective analysis of religious education in different educational contexts; • Ability to set up research projects in the field of religious education; • Ability to compare different school systems and the ways in which religious education is held.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Knowledge of general pedagogy
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Porcarelli, Andrea. 2023. "Institutionalizing the Relationship between Religious Teaching and Religious Freedom: The Case of the Republic of San Marino". <i>Religions</i>. 14(6):685; pp. 1-10. • Zehavit, Gross (Ed.) 2023, <i>Reimagining the Landscape of Religious Education Challenges and Opportunities</i>, Springer.



Course unit English denomination	Secularism (<i>Laïcité</i>) in Diverse Cultures and Places
Teacher in charge	Néstor Da Costa , Catholic University of Uruguay
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Course delivery method	<input type="checkbox"/> In presence <input type="checkbox"/> Remotely <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blended
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>The course “Secularism (laïcité) in diverse cultures and places” will explore the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relationship between secularization and secularism. 2. Secularism (laïcité) and secularism (sécularisme) 3. Exploring diverse models of secularism (laïcité) 4. Secularism (laïcité) and religious diversity
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to provide a critical overview of the sociological theories of secularity and modalities of secular agreements across various cultural and political contexts. During the course, students will have the opportunity to acquire the following knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand vital sociological concepts and theories about secularity. • Identify different regimes of secularism in different parts of the world. • Evaluate public policies related to secularity and religious diversity in varying political and cultural contexts. <p>The competencies to be acquired include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability for critical and reflective analysis of secularity models in diverse cultural and political contexts • Ability to formulate and evaluate state policies related to secularity. • Ability to analyze and interpret diverse cases of secular models in the south and north of the world
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Knowledge of general sociology
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Da Costa, Néstor (2018). “Religion and public space in the Uruguayan laïcité” <i>Social Compass</i> Vol. 65(4) 503–515. • Da Costa, Néstor and Bidegain, Ana María (2022). “Religious Freedom” in Ross, Kenneth R., Ana María Bidegain, and Todd M. Johnson, eds. <i>Christianity in Latin America and the Caribbean</i>. Edinburgh University Press. • Kuru, A. T. (2009). <i>Secularism and State Policies toward Religion: The United States, France, and Turkey</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



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- Morello, Gustavo; Romero Catalina; Rabbia, Hugo and Da Costa, Néstor (2017). "An enchanted modernity: Making sense of Latin America's religious landscape" *Critical Research on Religion*. DOI: 10.1177/2050303217732131.
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Course unit English denomination	Religion and Politics in Latin America—An Approach from History
Teacher in charge	Carolina Greising , Catholic University of Uruguay
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>The course “Religion and Politics in Latin America—An Approach from History” will explore the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Religion and politics in Latin America: historical context. 2. The secularization processes in Latin American states during the 19th and 20th centuries. 3. The post-conciliar ecclesiastical renewal and its reception in Latin America within the framework of the Cold War. A case study of liberation theology.
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to offer students a general overview of the relationship between religion and politics in modern Latin America (19th and 20th centuries) as well as analyze the most significant issues in this respect.</p> <p>Likewise, special attention will be paid to the role played by Catholicism since its renewal (Vatican Council II), the political crisis, and the authoritarianism that prevailed in Latin America during the 1960s and 1970s.</p> <p>During the course, students will have the opportunity to acquire the following knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the main characteristics of the historical process and the links between religion and politics in the multicultural context of Latin America. • Distinguish the different religious currents, primary references, and stages of the complex link between religion and politics. • Demonstrate oral and written presentation skills to synthesize and integrate the authors' problematic cores and different historiographical positions analyzed during the course. <p>The competencies to be acquired included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to analyze the scope of religious currents, particularly Catholicism, and its articulation with social and political movements of the period studied. • Identify how historical perspectives on the links between religion and politics contribute to Latin America's complexity and diversity.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Knowledge of general history
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chopp, Rebecca S.; Regan, Ethna. 2005. <i>Latin American liberation theology. The modern theologians: An introduction to Christian Theology since 1918</i>. Blackwell Publishing, p. 469-484. • Di Stefano, Roberto. 2010. “Religion, politics and law in 19th century in Latin America”. <i>Rechtsgeschichte-Legal History</i>, no.16, 117-120.



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- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. 1988. *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*. 50th Anniversary. New York, Orbis Books.
 - Morello, Gustavo, SJ. 2021. *Lived Religion in Latin America. An Enchanted Modernity*. Oxford University Press, New York. (Chapter 2: Historical Context).
 - Ross, Kenneth R., Ana María Bidegain, and Todd M. Johnson, eds. (2022) *Christianity in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Edinburgh University Press.
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Course unit English denomination	Religious Diversity through Popular and Lived Religion
Teacher in charge	Valentina Pereira Arena , Catholic University of Uruguay
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Course delivery method	<input type="checkbox"/> In presence <input type="checkbox"/> Remotely <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blended
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>This course aims to give students a critical understanding of the paradigms used in studying religious phenomena in Latin America. It will delve into theoretical approaches that shed light on the region's diverse religious landscape, considering historical, colonial, and contemporary factors.</p> <p>The course will explore the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Latin America: A brief historical and contemporary introduction to the religious, social, and political landscape. 2. Classical paradigms and their limitations for studying religion in Latin America. 3. Alternative paradigms for understanding religion in the continent: Popular Religiosity and Lived Religion.
Learning goals	<p>This course introduces students to the critical review of paradigms through which religious phenomena in Latin America have been studied. We will problematize Latin American modernity, distinguish it from the modernity of the global north, and relate these experiences to the lived religiosity in the south. Can we study religion in the Latin American continent using theoretical categories not initially intended for its reality and emerged in other contexts? If not, what approaches help us understand the religious phenomenon in Latin America, considering its history, its relationship with colonialism, and the specific expressions of religion that occur 'outside' established religions? Through the paradigms of popular religiosity and lived religiosity, theoretical alternatives are proposed that can account for the religious diversity in Latin America. Throughout the course, students will be able to gain the following knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand general aspects and characteristics of Latin American modernity and religiosity. • Familiarity with classical paradigms and theoretical frameworks used in studying religion in Latin America and their limitations. • Learn about religious diversity in Latin America through popular religiosity and lived religion approaches. <p>The competences that students will develop encompass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Analysis. Students will develop the ability to critically analyze and evaluate paradigms and theoretical frameworks used in the study of religious phenomena in Latin America. • Cultural Sensitivity and Awareness. Through the exploration of popular religiosity and lived religion approaches, students will gain cultural sensitivity and awareness regarding the diverse religious expressions and practices in



	Latin America. This competence involves understanding the historical, colonial, and contemporary factors shaping religious identities in the region.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Knowledge of general sociology
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morello, G. S.J. (2021). <i>Lived religion in Latin America: An enchanted modernity</i>. Oxford University Press. • De la Torre, R. (2013). <i>La religiosidad popular. Encrucijada de las nuevas formas de la religiosidad contemporánea y la tradición (el caso de México)</i>. Ponto Urbe. Revista do núcleo de antropologia urbana da USP, (12). • Pereira Arena, V. & Morello, G. SJ. (2022). <i>Entre el opio del pueblo y la búsqueda de la salvación. Aproximaciones a la religiosidad vivida desde América Latina</i>. Revista de Estudios Sociales, (82), 3-21. • Frigerio, A. (2018). <i>¿Por qué no podemos ver la diversidad religiosa?: Cuestionando el paradigma católico-céntrico en el estudio de la religión en Latinoamérica</i>. Cultura y representaciones sociales, 12(24), 51-95. • Morello SJ, G., Romero, C., Rabbia, H., & Da Costa, N. (2017). <i>An enchanted modernity: Making sense of Latin America's religious landscape</i>. <i>Critical Research on Religion</i>, 5(3), 308-326.



Course unit English denomination	New Religions and Contemporary Spiritualities. A Gendered Approach
Teacher in charge	Stefania Palmisano , University of Torino
Teaching Hours	14 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	2 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>After the first part, which introduces the main theoretical contributions made by the classics to the sociology of religion, the focus will shift to the transformations that have dominated the contemporary religious landscape. These include secularization, individualization, conversions to new movements, and alternative spiritualities, all of which will be used as lenses to interpret these changes. In the second part of the course, empirical cases of new religious movements and contemporary spiritualities will be discussed, featuring participation from academic scholars and members of the organizations under observation. The gender approach will be examined and subsequently applied to the case studies under review.</p>
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to provide a critical overview of the sociology of new religious movements and contemporary spiritualities. During the course, students will acquire the following knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand key sociological concepts and theories related to new religious movements and contemporary spirituality around the world. • Study the relationships between religion and spiritualities. • Familiarize themselves with the gender approach applied to the study of the sociology of new religions and spiritualities. • Formulate reasonable and empirically verified research hypotheses, establishing connections between concepts and the content of the various texts studied and/or lecture notes. <p>The competencies to be acquired include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to critically and reflectively analyze new religious movements and contemporary spirituality within a broader framework of sociological theories and perspectives, including secularization and individualization approaches. • Ability to apply their knowledge to case studies. • Ability to read and understand theoretical and empirical papers dedicated to new religious movements and contemporary spirituality. • Independence of judgment and communicative ability in debating and critically interpreting these important religious phenomena and their connections with cultural, social, economic, and political phenomena.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Knowledge of general sociology



Suggested readings

- Palmisano, S. and N. Pannofino *Contemporary Spiritualities: Enchanted Worlds of Nature, Wellbeing and Mystery in Italy*, Routledge, London, 2021 (Chapters 1; 3).
 - Palmisano S. and N. Pannofino, *Damanhur. An esoteric community open to the world*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023 (Chapters 8, 12).
 - Material provided in the workshop lectures.
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Course unit English denomination	The Modern Process of Historical Rationalization in the Face of Cultural and Religious Pluralism
Teacher in charge	Roberto F. Scalon , University of Torino
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>The course “The Modern Process of Historical Rationalization in the Face of Cultural and Religious Pluralism” will explore, synthetically, the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The concept of “modern process of historical rationalization”. 2. Historical periodization of modernization process (6 phases). 3. The debate on the meaning of cultural-religious pluralism and democracy in late or terminal modernity (4 approaches)
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to offer a reflection on late modernity by comparing some of the main interpretations of modernization process rationality, found in the historical-philosophical and sociological fields.</p> <p>The course will enable students to obtain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comparative understanding of the characteristic features of contemporary Western societies, both as the outcome of medium- to long-term historical-cultural processes and in the light of different theoretical interpretative frameworks; • An understanding of the different significance that cultural and religious pluralism takes on depending on the rationality allocated to the historical process of modernization; • An update regarding the question of democracy, that is, about the deeply-rooted tension between the democratic vocation and the totalitarian inertia of modernity. <p>The competences to be acquired include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to orient yourself in the contemporary scholarly debate on the late-modern condition; • Know how to read the issue of religious freedom and religious pluralism in light of a broader comparative reflection on late-modern programs (including the various globalization programs); • Know how to recognize in the public, ethical and political debate (including mass media) the characteristic instances of different interpretations of modern and late-modern rationality.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Knowledge of general sociology
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giddens, Anthony, 1999, Runaway World. How Globalization is Reshaping our Lives, London, Profile Books: Chapter 3 (“Tradition”), Chapter 5 (“Democracy”).



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- Habermas, Jürgen, 2008 [2005], *Between Naturalism and Religion*, Cambridge (UK), Malden (MA USA), Polity Press: Chapter 4 (“Prepolitical Foundations of the Constitutional State?”), Chapter 5 (“Religion in the Public Sphere. Cognitive Presuppositions for the ‘Public Use of Reason’ by Religious and Secular Citizens”).
 - Lasch, Christopher, 1995, *The Revolt of Elites and the Betrayal of Democracy*, W.W. Norton Company, New York-London: Chapter 1 (“The Malaise of Democracy”), Chapter 2 (“The Revolt of Elites”).
 - Del Noce, Augusto, 2015, *The Crisis of Modernity*, edited and translated by Carlo Lancellotti, Mc-Gill Queen’s University Press, Montreal & Kingston, London, Ithaca: Chapter 1 (“The Idea of Modernity” [1982]), Chapter 9 (“The Roots of the Crisis” [1982]).
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Course unit English denomination	Asceticism between Desert and City in Ancient Christianity and in Some Contemporary Revivals: Integration and Conflicts
Teacher in charge	Vittorio Berti , University of Padova
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>The course will explore the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ways the relationship between asceticism and secular life of the <i>polis</i> were articulated and imagined: in particular, the role of the polemic concept of “messalianism” in defining the border of the orthodoxy face to the monastic movement. 2. The main ascetic types that arose in the Roman Mediterranean and the way they conceived their role within the Church, and the relationship of their eschatological tension to secular society and thus to political powers. 3. The tensions and risks of fractures that these approaches generated within ascetic groups, with some examples extending to contemporary times.
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to provide an introductory overview of the ideological structures underlying the dialectic between late antique urban life and early Christian asceticism. Students will examine how this dialectic influenced the development of theological political thought, focusing particularly on the choice of the ‘desert’—seen as a rejection and distancing from ancient urban society—as a precursor to the heavenly city and a model for Christian views on community and governance.</p> <p>Key texts from the ancient Christian tradition on asceticism will be studied in English translation. Students will also gain an understanding of the historical context in which monasticism emerged and the main themes that were subjects of reflection and conflict among different ecclesiological models.</p>
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Knowledge of the History of Christianity
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brouha Bitton Ashkelony, “«Neither Beginning nor End»: The Messalian Imaginaire and Syriac Asceticism”, <i>Adamantius</i> 19 (2013), pp. 222-239. • Daniel Caner: <i>Wandering, Begging Monks. Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity</i>, University of California Press, Berkely-Los Angeles-London 2002, pp. 83-125.



Course unit English denomination	Food, Myth and Ritual: Religious Conventions and Paradoxes
Teacher in charge	Fabrizio Ferrari , University of Padova
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>The following topics will be discussed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. historical and anthropological approaches to the study of food in religious contexts; 2. food as/in sacrifice; 3. food in mythology; 4. sacred hierarchies: purity and impurity in religious contexts; 5. transgressive behaviors: from cannibalism to carnivals; 6. food, ritual and healing.
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to let students gain advanced familiarity with historical theories and methods in the study of religions and their applications to key concepts such as “ritual”, “myth” and “sacrifice”. In particular, the course will focus on how food has defined religious culture through an appraisal of case studies in relation to questions related to environment, biology, order, and transgression. During the course, students will have the opportunity to acquire the following knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to deepen their historical awareness in relation to core concepts of the study of religions; • to critically engage primary and secondary sources; • to gain analytical acumen and independency in delving into current debates in the academic history of religions. <p>Upon completion of the course, students will be able to critically review significant samples of advanced scientific literature and reflect critically by formulating independent reasoning in relation to selected case studies.</p>
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Awareness of historical methodologies and theoretical approaches to the study of religions
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Douglas, Mary. “The Abominations of Leviticus”, in <i>Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo</i>. London: Routledge, 2010, pp. 42-58. • Lévi-Strauss, Claude (2008) [1997]. "The Culinary Triangle". In Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik (ed.). <i>Food and Culture: A Reader</i>. Peter Brooks (trans.) (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge. pp. 36-43. • Wilkins, John, Robin Nadeau, eds., <i>A companion to food in the ancient world</i>. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2015, pp. 337-347. • Sen, Colleen Taylor. <i>Feasts and fasts: a history of food in India</i>. Foods and nations. London, UK: Reaktion Books, 2015, pp. 34-136.



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- Obeyesekere, Gananath. *Cannibal talk: the man-eating myth and human sacrifice in the South Seas*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005, pp. 1-23.
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Course unit English denomination	Terrorism in International Contemporary History
Teacher in charge	Valentine Lomellini , University of Padova
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	The course will focus on political and religious terrorism between the XX and XXI centuries, with particular attention to the following topics <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The rise of political terrorism as a transnational phenomenon 2. Counter-terrorism policies in Western states 3. The development of religious terrorism in Western and non-Western countries 4. The evolution of the global security system.
Learning goals	The course aims to provide a critical overview of the protean phenomenon of terrorism and security policies between the XX and XXI centuries. Students are expected to acquire the following knowledge, skills and competences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general knowledge of the history of terrorism and the response of states in the XX and XXI centuries • the ability to analyse terrorism in a historical and diachronic framework; • the ability to develop independent research on the topics covered in the course.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures, discussions, and in a simulation of terrorist crisis management.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	A good knowledge of international history
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D. Muro, T. Wilson (eds.), <i>Contemporary Terrorism Studies</i>, Oxford University Press, 2022. • Hoffman, B., <i>Inside Terrorism</i>, Columbia University Press, Washington, 2017. • Lomellini, V., <i>The Italian State and International Terrorism. The Lodo Moro</i>, Springer, London-New York, 2024. • Wilson, T., <i>Killing Strangers. How Political Violence Became Modern</i>, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2021.



Course unit English denomination	Rituals, Liturgies and Ceremonies in History: A Fruitful Perspective
Teacher in charge	Andrea Nicolotti , University of Torino
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	The course will focus on interdisciplinary study of the phenomenon of rites, ceremonies and liturgies, with particular attention to the following topics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The birth of a scientific interest in ceremonies and rituals 2. The possibilities of definition 3. Ritual categories 4. Historical and interdisciplinary approaches
Learning goals	The course aims to introduce to the possibilities of an interdisciplinary study of the phenomenon of rites, ceremonies and liturgies. Considered almost unworthy of critical attention or scarcely relevant until very recently, ceremonies and rituals are now increasingly under the historiographical spotlight. We will offer a tentative definition and summary of the multiple approaches and interpretations applicable to this subject of academic inquiry.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures, discussions, and in a simulation of terrorist crisis management.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	No prerequisites
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B. Stephenson, <i>Ritual: A Very Short Introduction</i>, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2015.



Course unit English denomination	Accommodation of Sharia Law and Courts in Greece and the ECHR
Teacher in charge	Nikos Koumoutzis , University of Nicosia
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	The course will explore the following topics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Historical background of the Sharia normative system in Greece 2. The legislative framework for the operation of Sharia law and Courts in Greece 3. The ECtHR case <i>Molla Sali v. Greece</i> 4. Discrimination in Sharia divorce and inheritance rules and ‘multicultural vulnerability’ of Muslim women 5. Abstract human rights review of the Mufti decisions by the secular judge
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to assess the special status enjoyed by the Muslim minority of Western Thrace (NE Greece), providing for the application of Sharia law in family and succession matters, as well as for the jurisdiction of the Mufti for the resolution of relevant disputes. The course pinpoints the legal framework whereby the minority is recognised in its quality as ‘nomoi group’ (Shachar) or ‘minority legal order’ (Malik) and, as such, is made an integral part of the official state legal structure. It further goes on to discuss two basic features of this regime: first, that the application of the Mufti jurisdiction is no more mandatory but depends on the consent of all parties; and second, that Mufti decisions are enforceable provided that the civil judge gives them the exequatur after review –among other things– of the compliance of the applied Sharia law with the Constitution and the ECHR.</p> <p>After completing the course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss major issues and stakes of multicultural accommodation and legal pluralism • Demonstrate tensions between Sharia personal law and human rights
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	General knowledge of law
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kalampakou</i>, “Is There a Right to Choose a Religious Jurisdiction over the Civil Courts? The Application of Sharia Law in the Minority in Western Thrace, Greece”, <i>Religions</i>, 10 (4): 260, 2019, pp. 1-7. • <i>Koumoutzis</i>, “Judicial Review of Mufti Decisions Applying Islamic Family Law in Greece”, <i>Laws</i>, 12 (3): 58, 2023, pp. 1-18. • <i>Koumoutzis</i>, “Consensual Accommodation of Sharia Law and Courts in Greece”, <i>European Journal of Law Reform</i>, Vol. 23, No. 2, 2021, pp. 167-184. • <i>Koumoutzis & Papastilianos</i>, “Human Rights Issues Arising from the Implementation of Sharia Law on the Minority of Western Thrace – ECtHR <i>Molla</i>



Sali v. Greece, Application No. 20452/14, 19 December 2018”, Religions 10 (5): 300, 2019, pp. 1-12.

- *Koumpli*, “Managing Religious Law in a Secular State: The Case of the Muslims of Western Thrace”, in Yassari & Foblets (eds.), *Normativity and Diversity in Family Law: Lessons from Comparative Law* (Springer, 2022), pp. 327-349.
 - *Leigh*, “Religious Adjudication and the European Convention on Human Rights”, *Oxford Journal of Law and Religion*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2019, pp. 1-27.
 - *Malik*, “Minorities and Law: Past and Present”, *Current Legal Problems*, Vol. 67, No. 1, 2014, pp. 67- 98.
 - *Papadopoulou*, “Trapped in History: Greek Muslim Women under the Sacred Islamic Law”, *Annuaire International des Droits de l’Homme. Religions et Droits de l’Homme*, Vol. V, 2010, pp. 397-418.
 - *Shachar*, *Multicultural Jurisdictions: Cultural Differences and Women’s Rights* (Cambridge University Press, 2001).
 - *Tsaoussi & Zervogianni*, “Multiculturalism and Family Law: The Case of Greek Muslims”, in Boele-Woelki & Sverdrup (eds.), *European Challenges in Contemporary Family Law* (Intersentia, 2008), pp. 209-239.
 - *Tsavousoglou*, “The Legal Treatment of Muslim Minority Women under the Rule of Islamic Law in Greek Thrace”, *Oslo Law Review*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 2015, pp. 241-262.
 - *Tsitselikis*, *Old and New Islam in Greece: From Historical Minorities to Immigrant Newcomers* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2012).
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Course unit English denomination	Religion and Public Order in the Jurisprudence of the EU Court and the ECtHR
Teacher in charge	Christos Papastylianos , University of Nicosia
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	The course will explore the following topics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Religious symbols in national life 2. Religious Symbols in working place 3. Religious Freedom and anti-discrimination norms 4. Morality and Religious based derogations from EU rules 5. The religious identity of the asylum seekers and the notion of “persecution” 6. Religion as identity and the Fundamental Rights obligations of the EU 7. Religion as a source of the Union’s Constitutional Values
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to provide a critical overview of religious freedom and public order in a double sense: (Public Order as a Limitation of Rights and Public Order as a common ground upon which the fundamental values of a legal order are formulated. During the course, students will have the opportunity to acquire the following knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand key legal concepts and theories of religious freedom in the context of European Human Rights Law. • Define the role of public order in the context of state-religion relations. • Evaluate public policies related to religious freedom according to the basic principles of the jurisprudence of ECJ and ECtHR regarding religious freedom. <p>The competences to be acquired include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability for critical and reflective analysis of religious freedom within the context of the jurisprudence of the ECtHR and the EU Court. • Ability to formulate and evaluate the EU policies related to religious freedom. • Ability to analyze legal cases related to religious freedom and to develop methodological tools which can be used in the resolution of cases which involve a conflict between religious freedom and other rights or public interest.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Basic Knowledge of European Human Rights’ Law
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ronan Mac Crea, Religion and the Public Order of the European Union, Oxford University Press, 2010, ISBN 978-0-19-856963-3. • Lucian N Leustean and John T.S Madeley (eds), Religion, Politics and Law in the European Union, Routledge, 2010, ISBN 978-0-415-85031-5. • Thematic Fact Sheet on Freedom of Religion available at https://rm.coe.int/thematic-factsheet-freedom-religion-eng/16809fa94b.



Course unit English denomination	Legal Sources and Institutions of the Catholic Church in Historical Perspective
Teacher in charge	Valerio Gigliotti , University of Torino
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Learning goals	<p>The course will explore the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction to the history of Western law and its sources 2. The origins of Christian communities and normative rules 3. The development of State-Church relations in late antiquity and the Middle Ages 4. Relations between theology and law in the Middle Ages 5. The influence of the Lutheran Reformation on the system of law in Europe 6. Perspectives of Church Law in the Modern and Postmodern Age
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to provide an overview of the historical and legal evolution of Church institutions and norms from the origins to the contemporary age. In particular, the relationship between law and theology and the evolution of the system of normative sources will be the subject of the course, in relation to the historical development of the Church through the centuries.</p>
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	No prerequisites
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cambridge history of medieval canon law / edited by Anders Winroth John C. Wei, Cambridge University Press, 2022. • During the lessons, the parts of the text to be studied will be indicated.



Course unit English denomination	Legal Principles and Models of State-Religions Relationships: A Comparative Approach
Teacher in charge	Maria Chiara Ruscazio , University of Torino
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	The course will explore the following topics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Legal definition of religion and religious organizations 2. Legal status of religious organizations across European countries 3. Models and implementations of the principle of secularism
Learning goals	The course aims to provide a general overview of the principal legal principles and rules concerning the regulation of the religious phenomenon, from a comparative perspective. During the course, students will have the opportunity to acquire the following knowledge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding of the basic principles and rules governing religion in States' legal systems • Knowledge and understanding of the main trends and models of States' regulation of religion Skills and competences to be acquired include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to identify and evaluate different models of legal regulation of religion • Ability to apply basic principles to interpret and solve religiously-based legal disputes
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Basic legal concepts
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cases and research materials will be suggested before each lecture.



Course unit English denomination	Marriage and Law of Religions: A Comparison of State and Religious Legal Systems
Teacher in charge	Ilaria Zuanazzi , University of Torino
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	The course will explore the following topics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Marriage and family in rights: the different perspective between States and Religions 2. The relevance of religious rights on marriage and family in State legal systems 3. Marriage and family in the law of the Catholic Church 4. Marriage and family in the law of the Orthodox Churches 5. Marriage and family in Jewish law 6. Marriage and family in Islamic law
Learning goals	The course aims to compare different systems of marriage and family regulation, both in States and Religions, by highlighting differences or similarities, due to different or common spiritual or cultural roots, and exploring the possibilities of coexistence. During the course, students will have the opportunity to acquire the following knowledge and skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential elements of marriage and family regulation systems in States and in certain religious traditions • Similarities or differences between religious rights on marriage and family • Compatibility or antinomies between state and religious rights on marriage and family
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	No prerequisites
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study texts will be indicated in class.



Course unit English denomination	Religion and Politics in the Contemporary World
Teacher in charge	Luca Ozzano , University of Torino
Teaching Hours	14 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	2 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>The first unit will revolve around, first, the modalities of the relation between religion and politics in the contemporary world, starting from the idea of secularization and the “return of religion” happened at the end of the 20th century. Afterwards, the unit will analyse the role of faith in democracy and democratization at the theoretical level, and the different types of religiously oriented parties. The “clash of civilizations” thesis by Samuel Huntington will also be discussed.</p> <p>The second unit will more specifically focus on the role played by religion in democratization processes and in the development of a new right wing populist party family, with the analysis of some case studies, in Western Europe, the Balkans and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa.</p>
Learning goals	The course aims to provide students with the basic tools to understand the role played by the religious factor in political affairs, at the domestic and the international/transnational levels. The main theoretical issues and debates involved in the relation between religion and politics in the contemporary world will be dealt with, as well as some case studies, considered as particularly relevant.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	No prerequisites
Suggested readings	<p>Unit 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luca Ozzano, <i>The Masks of the Political God. Religion and Political Parties in Contemporary Democracies</i>, Rowman and Littlefield 2020, chapters 1, 2, 3, and 6. • Samuel P. Huntington. 1993. “The Clash of Civilizations?” <i>Foreign Affairs</i>, Vol. 72, No. 3 (Summer, 1993), pp. 22-49. • Jonathan Fox, “Paradigm Lost: Huntington’s Unfulfilled Clash of Civilizations Prediction into the 21st Century”, <i>International Politics</i> Vol. 42, 2005, pp. 428-457. • Luca Ozzano. 2013. “Introduction: Religion, Democracy and Civil Liberties”. <i>European Political Science</i> 12 (2), pp. 147-153. • Alfred C. Stepan. 2000. “Religion, Democracy, and the ‘Twin Tolerations’”. <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 11 (4): 37-57. • Steve Bruce. 2004. “Did Protestantism Create Democracy?” <i>Democratization</i> 11(4): 3-20. • Manfred Brocker and Mirjam Kunkler. 2013. “Religious Parties: Revisiting the Inclusion Moderation Hypothesis”. <i>Party Politics</i>, 13(2): 171-186. <p>Unit 2:</p>



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- Jeffrey Haynes. 2020. "Right-Wing Populism and Religion in Europe and the USA", *Religions* Vol. 11, No. 10.
 - Guy Ben-Porat, Dani Filc, Ahmet Erdi Ozturk and Luca Ozzano. "Populism, Religion, and Family Values Policies in Israel, Italy and Turkey", *Mediterranean Politics* Vol. 29 No. 2, 2023, pp. 155-177.
 - Guy Ben-Porat and Dani Filc, "Remember to be Jewish: Religious Populism in Israel", *Politics and Religion*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 2022, pp. 61-84.
 - Jeffrey Haynes, 'Religion and democratization in Africa', *Democratization*, 11, 4, August 2004, pp. 66–89.
 - Jeffrey Haynes, 'Religion, Morality, and Democracy in Ghana', *Journal of Religion in Africa* (published online ahead of print 2024). <https://doi.org/10.1163/15700666-12340300>
 - Marko Vekovic, "Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe", Pew Research Center, 2017. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2017/05/10/religious-belief-and-national-belonging-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>
 - Marko Vekovic, *Democratization in Christian Orthodox Europe: Comparing Greece, Serbia and Russia*, Routledge studies in Religion and Politics, 2021.
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Course unit English denomination	Populist Radical Right and (Anti)Gender Politics
Teacher in charge	Alessia Donà , University of Trento
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>The course “Populist Radical Right and (Anti)Gender Politics” will explore the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The populist phenomenon, its definitions, and features 2. Radical right politics and its ideological foundations 3. Nationalism and and sexuality issues 4. ‘Gender ideology’ as a rhetorical device of the Vatican State 5. The role of anti-gender actors in the political arena and public debate 6. The attack on women’s and LGBTQIA+ rights 7. The erosion of democracy (de-democratization)
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to introduce students to what is called ‘anti-gender politics,’ which refers to the attack on women’s and LGBTQIA+ rights pursued across many countries by a constellation of anti-gender actors seeking to defend the traditional heterosexual family. Among these anti-gender actors, populist radical right parties are the main drivers of the backlash against gender equality and the de-democratization process. During the course, students will have the opportunity to acquire the following knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the construction of ‘gender’ as a rhetorical device used to delegitimize gender studies and the initiatives of women’s and LGBTQ+ movements. • Identify the main actors and targets involved in the ‘battle against gender.’ • Develop a critical approach towards the populist style of communication adopted by radical right parties. <p>The competencies to be acquired include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to read electoral manifestos and other political documents critically. • The ability to address the nationalist and authoritarian dimensions of radical right politics. • The ability to identify the main frames of anti-gender politics.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Basic knowledge of political science
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alessia Donà (2020). What’s gender got to do with populism? <i>European Journal of Women’s Studies</i>, 27(3), 285-292.



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- Sonia Corrêa, David Paternotte, Claire House (2023), Dr Frankenstein's hydra Contours, meanings and effects of anti-gender politics 'in Routledge Handbook of Sexuality, Gender, Health and Rights.
 - Elżbieta Korolczuk and Agnieszka Graff (2018). Gender as "Ebola from Brussels": The Anticolonial Frame and the Rise of Illiberal Populism, Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 43(4), 797-821.
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Course unit English denomination	Contemporary Cultures of Religion and Gender - Digital and Feminist Perspectives
Teacher in charge	Alberta Giorgi , University of Bergamo
Teaching Hours	14 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	2 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	The course will explore the following topics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Religion and gender 2. The multiple secularities approach 3. Feminist approaches to religion 4. Digital religion 5. Gender and religion and the digital 6. The politics of religious activism
Learning goals	The course aims to provide a critical overview of contemporary cultures on religion and gender, with a specific focus on digital and feminist perspectives. During the course, students will have the opportunity to acquire the following knowledge and skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key debates in the politics of religion and gender • Key concepts and perspectives in the field of digital religion • Feminist approaches to the study of religion The competences to be acquired include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to adopt a feminist and critical approach to religion • Ability to analyze the intersections of religion and gender in different contexts with reference to the political sphere • Ability to analyze the role of digital environments for key issues related to religion, gender, and feminism
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Knowledge of general sociology
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aune, Kristin, and Line Nyhagen. 2015. "Religion, Politics and Gender." In <i>Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics</i>, edited by Jeffrey Haynes, 335–51. Routledge. • Lövheim, Mia, and Evelina Lundmark. 2019. "Gender, Religion and Authority in Digital Media." <i>ESSACHESS</i> 12 (2(24)): 23–28. • Giorgi, Alberta. 2016. "Gender, Religion, and Political Agency: Mapping the Field". <i>Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais</i> 110: 51-72 (https://doi.org/10.4000/rccs.6371). <p>(Optional supplementary readings will be suggested during the course).</p>



Course unit English denomination	Social Research Methods: Data Analysis and Text Mining
Teacher in charge	Stefano Sbalchiero , University of Padova
Teaching Hours	14 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	2 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>The course “Social Research Methods: Data Analysis and Text Mining” will explore the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Methods and techniques for social research 2. Organization of a survey 3. In-depth interview and question wording (interview guide) 4. Survey tools (questionnaire) 5. Administration of a questionnaire 6. Data analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction of a data matrix and data analysis (categorical variables, ordinal variables, quantitative variables, contingency tables and bivariate analysis (short notes). - Quali-quantitative content analysis and statistical analysis of textual data (supported by free software) and text mining approaches.
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to provide a foundational understanding of social research methods and techniques. We'll delve into practical aspects like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing Surveys: Participants will gain the skills to design and conduct surveys that gather reliable and insightful data; • Navigating Research Resources: Students will learn to identify, evaluate, and utilize a diverse range of research sources to conduct comprehensive investigations; • Data Analysis: We'll focus on analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data, including data organized in data matrices and textual data. <p>Learning outcomes. By the end of this course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become Critical Thinkers: Develop a keen eye for the strengths and weaknesses of various social research approaches, allowing them to make informed methodological choices; • Survey Design and Field Research Methods: Sharpen their ability to critically analyze survey results, ensuring they can interpret their findings with accuracy and insight. • Critically Evaluating Research Sources: Confidently navigate and manage a variety of research sources, including official statistics, to support their investigations.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	General methodology of social research



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Suggested readings

- Corbetta P. (2003), *Social Research: Theory, Methods and Techniques*. London: SAGE.
 - Sbalchiero S. (2018), "Finding topics: a statistical model and a qualitative method", in Arjuna Tuzzi, "Tracing the Life-Course of Ideas in the Humanities and Social Sciences", Cham: Springer, pp. 189-210.
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Course unit English denomination	Empirical Sociology of Religious Freedom and Pluralism
Teacher in charge	Olga Breskaya , University of Padova
Teaching Hours	14 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	2 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>The course “Empirical Sociology of Religious Freedom and Pluralism” will explore the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conceptual framework for the analysis of religious freedom and pluralism. 2. Political, religious, and cultural correlates of religious freedom. 3. Approaches and methods of cross-national empirical analysis of religious freedom and pluralism. 4. The ARDA project and measures of religious economy. 5. Pew Research Center studies. 6. Religion and State (RAS) project. 7. International project ‘Religion and Human Rights’. 8. Social perceptions of religious freedom and pluralism.
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to summarize existing empirical projects and approaches covering cross-national studies in the field of religious freedom and pluralism. During the course, students will have the opportunity to acquire the following knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand measures of religious freedom and pluralism applied internationally. • Define challenges of measuring religious freedom and pluralism at national and international levels. • Analyze comparative data and prepare analytical reports on religious freedom and pluralism in selected countries. <p>The competences to be acquired include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to examine measures and correlates of religious freedom and pluralism. • Ability to design empirical instruments for the study of religious freedom, pluralism, and other human rights. • Ability to examine and interpret the data on religious freedom applying various methods of analysis.
Teaching methods	During the course, students will participate in lectures and discussions.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Knowledge of general sociological concepts
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finke, Roger. 2013. “Origins and Consequences of Religious Freedom: A Global Overview.” <i>Sociology of Religion</i> 74: 297–313. • Fox, Jonathan. 2015. <i>Political Secularism, Religions, and the State: A Time Series Analysis of Worldwide Data</i>. New York: Cambridge University Press.



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- Breskaya, Olga, Giuseppe Giordan, James Richardson. 2024. *A Sociology of Religious Freedom*. New-York: Oxford University Press.
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Course unit English denomination	The Anthropological Fieldwork: A Theoretically Oriented Practice
Teacher in charge	Ferdinando Fava , University of Padova
Teaching Hours	7 hours
Number of ECTS credits allocated	1 ECTS
Course period	2024/2025 AY
Language of instruction	English
Mandatory attendance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (100% minimum of presence) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course unit contents	<p>The course “The Anthropological Fieldwork: A Theoretically Oriented Practice” will explore the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The epistemological paradigms to frame the research interaction 2. The place of listening and gaze in the research interaction: epistemology, ethics, and justice 3. Insider vs Outsider dilemma: old problem new understandings 4. Working the beliefs with Michel de Certeau
Learning goals	<p>The course aims to provide a critical understanding of the anthropological fieldwork modus operandi, how "work" the listening and the gaze in the research interaction and the social ontology that grounds that gesture and legitimize it among the social sciences religious studies pantheon.</p> <p>During the course, the students will have the opportunity to acquire the following knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the way the research interaction transforms first person experience in critical knowledge • Situate the relevance of this knowledge among the social studies of religious phenomena • Evaluate the way the anthropological fieldwork can integrate /other his/her own research project <p>The competences to be acquired include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability for critical and reflective analysis of personal listening and gaze in the fieldwork interaction • Ability to confront, discern, manage critical understanding of belief of the others beyond methodological agnosticism • Ability to explore the conceptual mediation central in the anthropological knowledge construction
Teaching methods	Active learning activities (presentations of personal research projects, discussions, etc.). Light portfolio (5 /6 pages) of personal intellectual journey among the topics of the course.
Prerequisites (not mandatory)	Knowledge of general social/cultural anthropology
Suggested readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certeau de, Michel, What We Do When We Believe, in Marshall Blonsky, On Signs, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1985, pp. 192-202.



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