



SHPRS Main Office: Coor 4595
SHPRS Main Phone: 965-5778
Undergrad Advising: Coor 3rd Flr.
 SHPRSadvising@asu.edu; 965-8364

Religion, War, and Peace

REL & POS 378

Spring 2023

T/R 1:30-2:45

Instructor: Prof. John Carlson

Class Location: [Life Sci Tower E-Wing B04](#)

Office Location: West Hall 123

Office Hours: Thu 2:45-4:00 & by appt.

E-mail: john.carlson@asu.edu

Office (Zoom) Ph#: 480-727-0694

Course #: 34640 / 34634

Teaching Asst: Fatemah "Aida" Movahed

TA Office Location: Coor 4533

TA Office Hours: Tue 10:00-12:00 & by appt.

TA Email: fmovahed@asu.edu

TA Phone#/Zoom:

Course Description: This course explores different religious, political, and ethical understandings of violence, war, and peace. We will take up a range of Christian, Jewish, Islamic, and secular perspectives, including political realism, holy war, pacifism, "just war" thought, and Christian realism and consider whether and how these different traditions help us to assess both occasions for the use of force as well as the conduct of war. In addition to studying the origins and formations of these traditions, we will use various case studies to show what they tell us about the justice or injustice of past and present wars. The course draws from readings and methodologies in religious studies, political science, and ethics.

Knowledge and Skills Goals (K2-3; S1-3): The goal of this course is for each student (1) to adopt a moral and civic framework for evaluating the occasions for and conduct of war; and (2) to analyze and understand the ways that religion does or does not—should or should not—shape that perspective. Students should engage the various approaches, theories, and case studies of the course as they consider whether and how war can be justified. This class prepares students, as current and prospective citizens, to participate in the informed moral and civic deliberation around nations' and peoples' decisions to use force, declare war, and "wage peace," with attention to the role religion plays in a pluralistic democracy. This course also seeks to cultivate a variety of practical skills that are vital to a well-rounded education, intellectual development, good citizenship, and ethical reflection:

- The ability to read and think critically: to assess the premises, contentions, implications, and applications of an argument or set of claims.
- The ability to reason through an argument and assess its coherence including the ability to distinguish between articulating an argument and expressing an opinion.
- The ability to formulate thoughtful and intelligent questions of various kinds: clarifying, background, analytical, critical, comparative, and constructive.
- The ability to formulate and express one's views clearly and convincingly in written and oral form.
- The ability to relate knowledge developed in the classroom to issues of wider public, political, or cultural life (e.g., history, current events, media, literature, film, etc.)
- The ability to listen well and respectfully to others, particularly those who hold views or who possess levels of expertise different from your own.
- The ability to dialogue with others on potentially contentious issues—to use civil dialogue as a medium for clarifying different perspectives.

While these skills will be honed through discussions of war and peace, they also are applicable to many disciplines, professions, and realms of life.

Class format & attendance: The course will be interactive in nature, so student engagement and preparedness for class are essential. The course relies heavily upon students to set the tone and carry the momentum. Class will usually begin with a short lecture that will flow into follow-on instruction and class discussion. Complete the readings and a *brief* daily assignment *before* coming to class, which will serve as a basis for class discussion. The daily assignment consists of the following: 1) a restatement of the main thesis; 2) an observation about something that you found interesting, compelling, or perplexing in the readings; and 3) a question to raise in class. When more than one reading is assigned, you may select which reading(s) to engage. This assignment is not intended to be onerous and may be completed in a few sentences. Please submit daily assignments on Canvas. You should complete them as or shortly after you do the reading. These will be randomly reviewed and incorporated into the class participation grade. *Daily assignments are due in class and should not be accepted late.* Students may expect to be called upon in class to share their thoughts, questions, or reactions to the readings.

Active participation requires attending class. I do not formally take roll, but I do take notice of students who are absent. Kindly let me and the TA know if you will be missing a class. If class attendance does become a problem, I reserve the option to implement measures to increase class attendance. If, for some reason, you are not able to complete the reading or assignment on a given day, please do not skip class; you can still profit from the discussion.

Films are used to help illuminate course themes and readings. Students will watch and write short (two-page) reflection assignments for the assigned films. *Breaker Morant* and *The Mission* are required; you may choose between two other films for your third film reflection. Films will be viewed outside of class through the library. Many are also available through streaming services. In any case, be prepared to discuss the film on the designated class period (at which time I will collect the film reflections). They are designed to stimulate thinking and serve as a basis for class discussion. Reflections are not graded (i.e., credit will be given for satisfactory completion) and need not be polished prose. Students are encouraged to attend related lectures and events on campus. Finally, keep up with the news, and consider how course readings and themes bear upon or can sharpen our understanding of current events.

Required Reading (books available at ASU bookstore):

- Jonathan Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades*
- Arthur Holmes, ed., *War and Christian Ethics* (2nd ed.) (WCE)
- Other readings on Canvas

Instructor Policies:

E-mail: Email easily displaces conversations that best occur during office hours. Please limit email to logistical matters (e.g., absences, logistical concerns, assignments, etc.).

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and cheating will be dealt with severely. This is your warning. If you have questions, ask me. Also consult these resources: <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity> (especially the section "Avoiding Plagiarism").

Requirements & Grading: Students may choose either to take a final exam (cumulative) or to conduct a research project on a pre-approved topic and that includes interim updates before submitting.

Option 1: Final Exam

First paper (4-5 pp.)	15%
Second paper (5-6 pp.)	23%
Three film reflections (2 pp ea.)	12%
Final Exam (in class/take home)	35%
Class Participation	15%
-Daily assignments	
-Discussion	

Option 2: Research Project

First paper (4-5 pp.)	15%
Second paper (5-6 pp.)	23%
Three film reflections (2 pp ea.)	12%
Research paper (10 pp.)	35%
and in-class presentation	
Class Participation	15%
-Daily assignments	
-Discussion	

Calendar	Topic / Readings	Assignments
<u>Week 1</u>	<u>Course Introduction</u>	
T 10 Jan	Course Introduction, John Mearsheimer Interview on Ukraine	
R 12 Jan	Barack Obama, Nobel Peace Prize Address	
<u>Week 2</u>	<u>Course Introduction (cont): Religion, the Secular, and War</u>	
T 17 Jan	Walter McDougall, "The Myth of the Secular: Religion, War & Politics in the 20 th Century"	
R 19 Jan	Carlson talk: "The Future of Religion and Conflict," MU 202 (Alumni Lounge)	
<u>Week 3</u>	<u>Political Realism</u>	
T 24 Jan	Thucydides, <i>History of the Peloponnesian War</i> , 2.4, 3.3, 5.7	
R 26 Jan	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> , Chs. 3, 7, 8, 15, 18, 26	
<u>Week 4</u>	<u>Political Realism (cont.)</u>	
TBD	Film: <i>Breaker Morant</i> (required)	
T 31 Jan	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , Chs. 13, 17 Luttwak, "Give War a Chance"	
R 2 Feb	<u>Case Study</u> : Richard Haas Richard Haas, <i>War of Necessity, War of Choice</i> , Ch. 1 Haas, "The U.S. Should Keep Out of Libya" Haas, "America Must Respond to Atrocities in Syria" Haas, "Ukraine's Coming Winter of Discontent"	Film reflection due in class
<u>Week 5</u>	<u>Holy War Thought</u>	
T 7 Feb	Numbers 25:1-18; 31:1-20 Bernard of Clairvaux, "A Holy War" (<u>WCE</u> , pp. 88-91) Johnson, "The Idea of Holy War"	
R 9 Feb	Johnson, <i>The Holy War Idea in Western & Islamic Traditions</i> , pp. 19; 47-52 bin Laden, "Crusader Wars" and other excerpts	
<u>Week 6</u>	<u>Holy War Thought (cont.)</u>	
TBD	Film: <i>Kingdom of Heaven</i> (optional)	
T 14 Feb	<u>Case study</u> : The Crusades Riley-Smith, <i>What Were the Crusades?</i> Intro, Chs. 1-4	
R 16 Feb	Johnson, "The Conduct of Holy War"	Film reflection due in class
F 17 Feb		Post 1st paper topic
<u>Week 7</u>	<u>Pacifism and Nonviolence</u>	
T 21 Feb	"Sermon on the Mount" Tertullian, Origen, Menno Simons (<u>WCE</u> , pp. 39-50; 185-189)	
R 23 Feb	Hauerwas, <i>Peaceable Kingdom</i> , Ch. 5	
<u>Week 8</u>	<u>Pacifism and Nonviolence (cont.)</u>	
T 28 Feb	Hauerwas, <i>Peaceable Kingdom</i> , Ch. 6 Hauerwas, "America's God"; "Tonto Principle"	
R 2 Mar	<u>Case Study</u> : Responding to September 11, 2001 George W. Bush, Speeches of Sep 20 & Oct 7, 2001 "September 11, 2001: A Pacifist Response"	
F 3 Mar		1st paper due, 5:00 pm
<u>Week 9</u>	<u>Spring Break</u>	
5-12 Mar	No Class 😊	

<u>Week 10</u>	<u>Just War I: Origins and Sources</u>	
TBD	Film viewing: <i>The Mission</i> (required)	
T 14 Mar	Rom. 12-13; St. Augustine (<u>WCE</u> , pp. 61-83) Augustine, <i>City of God</i> , selections on Canvas Miller, <i>Interpretations of Conflict</i> : "Adumbrations and Approximations"	
R 16 Mar	Aquinas, (<u>WCE</u> , pp. 92-97) Aquinas, q. 64, art. 2 & 7	
<u>Week 11</u>	<u>Just War II: <i>jus ad bellum</i></u>	
T 21 Mar	Vitoria, Suarez, (<u>WCE</u> , 106-136, 195-198) Johnson, "Right to Use Armed Force"	Film reflection due in class
R 23 Mar	Case Study: Libya Walzer, "The Case against Our Attack on Libya" Galston, "Necessary and Sufficient"	
<u>Week 12</u>	<u>Just War III: <i>jus in bello</i></u>	
T 28 Mar	Ramsey, "Justice in War" Biggar, "Principle of Double Effect" Walzer, "The Triumph of Just War Theory"	Post 2nd paper topic
R 30 Mar	Case Study: US Airstrikes against ISIS Gopal, "America's War against Syrian Civilians" **Anand Gopal guest lecture** <i>Don't miss this class!!!</i>	
F 31 Mar		Research topics due
<u>Week 13</u>	<u>Just War and Islam</u>	
T 4 Apr	Kelsay, <i>Arguing the Just War in Islam</i> , Intro, Chs. 1, 2 (pp. 43-45), & 3	
R 6 Apr	Kelsay, <i>Arguing the Just War in Islam</i> , Ch. 4	
<u>Week 14</u>	<u>Just War and Islam (cont.)</u>	
M 10 Apr		
T 11 Apr	Kelsay, <i>Arguing the Just War in Islam</i> , Chs. 5 & 6	
R 13 Apr	Hashmi, "Is There an Islamic Ethic of Humanitarian Intervention?"	
<u>Week 15</u>	<u>Just War and Judaism</u>	
M 17 Apr		Research outlines due
T 18 Apr	Broyde, "Just Wars, Battles & Conduct in Jewish Law"	
R 20 Apr	Walzer, "The Ethics of Warfare in the Jewish Tradition"	
F 21 Apr		2nd paper due Post take-home final
<u>Week 16</u>	<u>Christian Realism / Conclusion</u>	
TBD	Film viewing: <i>Black Hawk Down</i> (optional)	
T 25 Apr	Niebuhr, <i>Irony of American History</i> , selections Carlson, "Reinhold Niebuhr and the Use of Force" Brooks, "Obama's Christian Realism" Kaus, "What <i>Black Hawk Down</i> Leaves out"	
R 27 Apr	Research Presentations & Review (attendance required)	Film reflection due
T 2 May		Take-home final due Research papers due
R 4 May	12:10 - 2:00 pm: In-class portion of final exam	
T 8 May	Commencement / Grades Due	