POLI 382
Politics and Religion

Instructor:
Dr. Andrew Wender (Summer 2021)

Course delivery:
In the Summer 2021 term, this course will be delivered online in a synchronous format.

Course description:
POLI 382, “Politics and Religion” uncovers revealing points of overlap between the two vital dimensions of human experience and social life denoted by the course’s name. More than this, though, POLI 382 is dedicated to critical reflection on what is signified by, and at stake in the peculiar, modern conceptualizing of “politics” and “religion” as distinct entities, each consigned to its own proper domain of existence. We will explore concepts like ‘civil religion’ and ‘political religion’ asking whether the singular, nationalistic and statist connotations that were attached to the terms in decades past still apply in the 21st century. We will also examine political movements of the 20th and 21st centuries including populism, religious-related discourses and ‘religious resurgence’ and ask what is becoming of the ‘religious’ and the ‘political’ in 2021?

About the instructor: Dr. Andrew Wender is a faculty member in the Departments of Political Science and History. His research focuses on political theory, religion and the politics of the Middle East.

Prerequisites: None

Course outcomes/objectives:
• Develop written and verbal communication through essay writing and discussion
• Identify the major movements and ideas which have shaped the interaction and intersection between religion and politics
• Understand how the post-Enlightenment influenced separation of ‘Church and State’
• Engage in an informed discussion about current events

Topics may include:
Secular state
Fundamentalism
Religious freedom
‘Civil Religions’ and ‘Political Religions’

This online summary is only intended to give an overall sense of the course. Detailed course outlines will be made available for all registered students on the first day of class. Only those outlines are to be considered official.