



## **FSP 164-23 WORLD RELIGIONS: AN ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE SYLLABUS, FALL 2018**

TIME:	Tuesday & Friday 11:00–12:20pm
CLASSROOM LOCATION	Business Building, Room 124
PROFESSOR:	Donka Mirtcheva Brodersen, PhD
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OFFICE HOURS:	Tuesday & Friday 12:30-1:20pm & Wednesday by appointment only

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

FSP 164-23. What difference does religion make for individuals and nations? How does religion relate, if any, to people's educational attainments, household wealth, marriage and family decisions, and health outcomes? Are there time-money tradeoffs in religious participation? Does religion speed up or slow down the growth of countries? This seminar will provide an overview of world religions, with the United States serving as a reference point, before delving into the influence of religion on nations and individuals' lives. Course discussions will be organized by world religions and follow examples from countries representative of regions around the world.

1 course unit (4 credit hours), fulfills the requirement for *Global Civic Responsibilities*.

Freshman Seminar Program (FSP): As the cornerstone of the College's Liberal Learning Program, First Seminar is designed to provide all first-year students with an intellectually exciting and challenging experience taught by faculty mentors in a living-learning environment. Each seminar is designed around a topic selected for its special interest by an individual professor. Students are encouraged to use the First Seminar to deepen their current interests or to explore new academic opportunities. Each seminar is limited to about 18 students, is writing intensive, and demands the active participation of all students. Limited to first-year students; does not fulfill major requirements.

### **COURSE MATERIALS**

See list of readings. Additional readings will be provided during the course of the semester.

### **COURSE PURPOSE & LEARNING GOALS**

Economics is the study of how people allocate scarce resources to satisfy unlimited wants. This course provides an introduction to the Economics of Religion. We will apply basic economic analysis to the study of affiliation and/or participation in religions around the world. Specifically, we will study the relationship between religion and various outcomes at the individual and country level in different regions around the world.

The purpose of this course is to prepare students to succeed in an increasingly complex world where religion plays an important role. Students will gain experiences that will enable them to gain insight in the repercussions of religion in various aspects of a country or individual's lives. By the end of the semester, you are expected to develop an understanding of the religious landscape in different regions around the world as well as improve the following skills:

Specific skills:

- Gain an understanding of the relationship between world religions and various outcomes
- Understand basic economic principles such as tradeoffs
- Distinguish between cause and correlation
- Read graphs and tables to draw conclusions
- Carry out introductory level data analysis.



General skills:

- College preparedness—develop college study habits
- Practice teamwork
- Critical thinking skills—develop and apply the economic way of analytical thinking to everyday situations
- Communication skills—communicate effectively in written, spoken, and graphical form
- Lifelong skills—better understand and evaluate events from an economic perspective, and be sensitive to ethical challenges and issues of social responsibility.

The reading list, assignments, and course outline have been constructed to help achieve the academic learning goals of an FSP at TCNJ, which include: fostering intellectual curiosity; improving the ability to think critically about the world, one’s culture, and one’s own beliefs; introducing a breadth of knowledge that goes beyond one’s immediate professional or academic field; and introducing college-level assignments and expectations in terms of writing, reading, research, and oral presentations.

Finally, this is a *Writing Intensive Course*, where you’ll receive feedback on your stylistic and technical writing competency. Most excellent writing is not the product of natural talent, but hard work. Becoming a better writer will require persistent effort and should remain a goal throughout your college career and beyond. This course aims to provide a start to your development as an effective writer.

**USAGE OF THE “4TH HOUR”**

Consistent with the TCNJ course structure of 4-credit units this course includes the "4th hour" of student engagement in the following manner: group and individual learning projects outside of class, as well as additional learning tasks.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

Your course grade will be based on two non-cumulative semester tests, a cumulative final exam, a paper, problem sets, and attendance and class participation.

<b>Paper (proposal, bibliography, outline, paper)</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Quizzes (4 @ 5% each)</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Homework</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Individual presentation &amp; reflection</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Group presentations (2 * 5% each)</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Class Participation &amp; Attendance</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

92-100 %	<b>A</b>	72-76 %	<b>C</b>
90-91 %	<b>A-</b>	70-71 %	<b>C-</b>
87-89 %	<b>B+</b>	67-69 %	<b>D+</b>
82-86 %	<b>B</b>	62-66 %	<b>D</b>
80-81 %	<b>B-</b>	0-61 %	<b>F</b>
77-79 %	<b>C+</b>		

Grades may be modified to fit a curve, if appropriate.

The assignments are scheduled as indicated in the tentative timetable at the end of this syllabus. In general, **late assignments will not be accepted**, unless you speak to me beforehand, ask very nicely, and have an acceptable excuse. I may require documentation to substantiate the reason for each extension request.

## **PAPER**

The paper should be 5 pages long (double spaced, Times New Roman, font size 12, 1" margins, 0-spacing before and after paragraphs), not including cover page, bibliography, tables, or charts. You will prepare a report on the religious landscape of a country of your choice, supplementing it with data analysis, where you will quantify the relationship between religion and 3–5 other variables, depending on the complexity of the relationship (e.g., gender, marital status, education, household income, degree of life satisfaction, health, confidence in courts and legal system, accept a person from a different religion as a candidate for a political party, etc.).

For the religious landscape part of your paper, you must consult and cite **at least three** sources, one of which must be an academic journal article. You will find the best articles in economics journals or magazines. To find articles, I suggest that you use Google Scholar, Lexis-Nexis or Ebsco Host, which are databases of magazines and journal articles and are available on the TCNJ library's web page.

Once a dataset is selected for the data analysis portion of the assignment, the research paper submission will proceed in several stages: 1). Paper proposal (0.5 pages); 2). Paper outline (1.5 pages); 3). Bibliography (2 styles, e.g., APA & MLA); 4). Data Analysis; 5). Paper draft – reviewed by classmate and Writing Center (5 pages); 6). Final paper (5 pages).

The paper also presents a chance to work on your writing skills. The final paper should have a clear writing style, correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation, and be well-organized and logical. Be sure that your sentences are coherent and that each paragraph follows from the previous paragraph. Writing clearly about complex issues is a valuable skill to master. In addition, a good way to avoid a poorly written paper is to take a look at a manual of style. I recommend *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk and E. B. White or *The Elements of Business Writing* by Gary Blake and Robert W. Bly. The TCNJ Writing Center also provides assistance with writing papers. In grading your paper, I will pay close attention to the clarity and quality of your writing, which will determine a significant portion of your grade. Do not claim anyone else's writing or ideas as your own. Make sure to cite your sources. *Plagiarism* will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

Each student will give two (2) group presentations (10 minutes) and an individual presentation (7 minutes). The presentations will be graded based on contents and effectiveness of delivery. For the group presentations, a team of about 3 students will give an in-class presentation on a given topic. The individual presentation will be on your paper. After each presentation, you will be asked to write a short reflection paper. More details will be given at that time.

## **HOMEWORK**

There will be weekly homework assignments, such as a reading log, reflection on readings, data preparation and analysis, and other assignments.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Announcements will be sent by email through Canvas. Please check your email regularly. The best way to reach me is by email. I usually respond within 2 business days.

Students are responsible to be aware of the following policies:



## **SELECT TCNJ POLICIES**

### **Academic Integrity:**

Students are responsible to know the Academic Integrity policy. Students may only represent work that is their own. Cheating on tests, failing to cite sources, or submitting someone else's work are just a few examples that may result in failing the entire course or dismissal from the College. TCNJ's academic integrity policy is available on the web: <http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/viewPolicy.php?docId=9394>

### **Attendance Policy:**

Except in the case of a TCNJ authorized absence or documented personal emergency, faculty are encouraged NOT to make individual exceptions to course assignment due dates and exams. Our work is no less coordinated or time-sensitive than many tasks encountered in the workplace and meeting deadlines and obligations is simply one more step in preparation for a business career. TCNJ's Attendance Policy: <http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/viewPolicy.php?docId=9134>

### ***Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy:***

TCNJ is committed to ensuring equal opportunity and access to all members of the campus community in accordance with Section 503/504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The College prohibits discrimination against any student, employee, or applicant on the basis of physical or mental disability, or perceived disability. The College will provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to enable employees and students to participate in the life of the campus community. Individuals with disabilities are responsible for reporting and supplying documentation verifying their disability. Requests for accommodations must be initiated through the Disability Support Services (DSS), 121 Roscoe West, 609.771.3199, [dss@tcnj.edu](mailto:dss@tcnj.edu).

*TCNJ's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) policy is available on the web:*  
<http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/digest.php?docId=9206>

### ***Specific Sanctions for Selected Violations:***

The College is required by law to disclose possible sanctioning practices for certain violations of the Undergraduate Student Conduct Code, and Graduate Student Conduct Code, including physical sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, alcohol and other drug violations, and bullying, intimidation and/or harassment. Specific sanctions for selected violations of the student conduct codes can be found in Appendix E at <http://conduct.pages.tcnj.edu/files/2011/08/APPENDIX-E.pdf>

### **Code of Conduct:**

Students are responsible for awareness of the Code of Conduct, online at:  
<http://business.pages.tcnj.edu/our-philosophy/code-of-conduct/>

### **School of Business Writing Policy:**

Because writing is a fundamental business skill, your grade for each assignment will reflect, among other things, your ability to write, even for assignments with minimum writing. Feedback on your writing will be provided as deemed necessary and, if your writing needs improvement, you should seek help from the Writing Center at (<http://tutoringcenter.pages.tcnj.edu/humanities/writers-place/>), from someone who writes well, or some other writing source. The responsibility to write well is yours. My responsibility is to hold you accountable for how well you write. Poor writing will be reflected in your final grade.

### **Final Exam Policy:**

Students are responsible for being present for all exams as scheduled by the College. TCNJ's final examination policy is available on the web: <http://recreg.pages.tcnj.edu/269-2/>

**READINGS (R)**

1. Iannaccone, Laurence R. (1998). Introduction to the Economics of Religion. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 36(3): 1465-1496.
2. Pew Research Center. (2012). Global Religious Landscape: Executive Summary (pp. 9-16), available at <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-exec/>.
3. Pew Research Center. (2015). The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050 (pp. 4-23), available at <http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/>
4. Pew Research Center. (2015). America's changing religious attitudes (pp. 3-17), available at <http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2015/05/RLS-08-26-full-report.pdf>
5. Pew Research Center. (2015). U.S. Public Becoming Less Religious (pp. 1-29), available at [http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2015/11/2015.11.03\\_RLS\\_II\\_full\\_report.pdf](http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2015/11/2015.11.03_RLS_II_full_report.pdf)
6. Pew Research Center. (2017). Religious beliefs and national belonging in Central and Eastern Europe, available at <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/05/10/religious-belief-and-national-belonging-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>.
7. Pew Research Center. (2014). Religion in Latin America, available at <http://www.pewforum.org/2014/11/13/religion-in-latin-america/>.
8. Pew Research Center. (2017). American and Israeli Jews: Twin Portraits from Pew Research Center Surveys, available at <http://www.pewforum.org/essay/american-and-israeli-jews-twin-portraits-from-pew-research-center-surveys/>.
9. Pew Research Center. (2012). The World's Muslims: Unity and Diversity, available at <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/08/09/the-worlds-muslims-unity-and-diversity-executive-summary/>.
10. Pew Research Center. (2010). Tolerance and Tension: Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa, available at <http://www.pewforum.org/2010/04/15/executive-summary-islam-and-christianity-in-sub-saharan-africa/>
11. Woodberry, Robert. (2012). The missionary roots of liberal democracy. *The American Political Science Review*. 106(2): 244-274.
12. McCleary, Rachel M. & Robert J. Barro. (2006). Religion and Economy. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 20(2): 49-72.
13. Pew Research Center. (2016). Religion and Education Around the World, available at <http://www.pewforum.org/2016/12/13/religion-and-education-around-the-world/>
14. Pew Research Center. (2017). In America, Does More Education Equal Less Religion?, available at <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/04/26/in-america-does-more-education-equal-less-religion/>
15. *The Economist*. (2015). The marriage squeeze in India and China: Bare branches, redundant males—Distorted sex ratios at birth a generation ago are changing marriage and damaging societies in Asia's twin giants, available at <https://www.economist.com/news/asia/21648715-distorted-sex-ratios-birth-generation-ago-are-changing-marriage-and-damaging-societies-asias>
16. Saxe, Leonard, Michelle Shain, Shahar Hecht, Graham Wright, Micha Rieser, & Theodore Sasson. (2014). Jewish Futures Project: The Impact of Taglit-Birthright Israel: Marriage and Family. Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies. Brandeis University, available at <https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/pdfs/jewish%20futures/JewishFutures2014V1.pdf>
17. Brown, Candy G., Stephen C. Morey, Rebecca Williams, & Michael J. McClymond. (2010). Study of the Therapeutic Effects of Proximal Intercessory Prayer (STEPP) on Auditory and Visual Impairments in Rural Mozambique. *Southern Medical Journal*. 103(9): 864-869.

### TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

The course outline below is tentative. There may be minor changes in dates, requirements, and there is always a possibility of unannounced quizzes (although I have not given one yet). Additional readings may be assigned in the course of the semester. Announcements will be sent by email through Canvas. Please check your email regularly. Readings below are denoted as **R** followed by a number (see previous page for readings list).

Week	Date	Topic/Readings
1	Aug 28, 31	Introduction Economics of Religion
2	Sept 7 (Sept 4: no class, follows Monday schedule)	Economics of Religion, <b>R1</b>
3	Sept 11, 14	Economics concepts: Time-money tradeoffs Overview of world religions, <b>R2</b>
4	Sept 18, 21	Overview of world religions (cont'd), <b>R3</b> Overview of religion in the United States, <b>R4-5</b> <b>Quiz 1 – September 21</b>
5	Sept 25, 28	Religions by world regions: Central and Eastern Europe; Latin America, <b>R6-7</b> Group presentations 1
6	Oct 2, 5	Religions by world regions: Middle East; Africa, <b>R8-10</b> Group presentations 1 (cont'd) Class discussion on religion's impact on countries/people's lives <b>Quiz 2 – October 2</b> <b>Proposal – due Friday, October 5</b>
7	Oct 9, 12	Religion and economic development: Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Oceania, <b>R11</b>
8	Oct 19 (Oct 16: No class, Fall break)	Data Analysis workshop <b>Outline – due Friday, October 19</b>
9	Oct 23, 26	Religion and income/wealth: 81 countries, <b>R12</b> Religion and education: worldwide, <b>R13</b> <b>Quiz 3 – October 26</b>
10	Oct 30, Nov 2	Religion and education: United States (cont'd), <b>R14</b> <b>Bibliography – due Friday, November 2</b>
11	Nov 6, 9	Religion, marriage, and fertility: India and China; Israel, <b>R15-16</b> Group presentations 2
12	Nov 13, 16	Religion and health: Mozambique, <b>R17</b> <b>Paper draft – due November 13 (review with classmate, Writing Center)</b>
13	Nov 20 (Nov 23: No class, Thanksgiving break)	Professor's research on the Economics of Religion
14	Nov 27, 30	Charitable giving, terrorism, and other topics on religion <b>Quiz 4: November 27</b> <b>Paper – due Friday, November 30</b>
15	Dec 4, 7	Individual Presentations
16	Dec 11 (5pm on)–Dec 14, Dec 17–18 (until 5pm) Snow dates: Dec 18 (5pm on)–Dec 19 (until 5pm)	