

Religious Roots of Europe: Law and Religion in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam - 10 credits

Course content

Are you curious about how law and religion have shaped societies throughout history? How Judaism, Christianity, and Islam relate to law? Whether religious norms are merely divinely sanctioned laws or are in essence distinct from secular law? What happens when religious and secular law come into conflict? Across three modules, you will explore the evolution of religious legal traditions, examine how law and religion interact in different spaces like homes, public squares and courts, and analyze contemporary issues that raise questions related to law and religion, for example with respect to freedom of expression or religion. The course likely even includes a field trip abroad, to Sarajevo, allowing you to explore the dynamic relationship between law and religion firsthand.

The course will be given with other students, including Law students. It is possible to study the course as a fifteen credit course, with a final module dedicated to contemporary issues. RRE students can choose to take part in the final module as well.

Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

- describe the emergence of distinct legal traditions within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and account for historical points of interaction between them,
- account for the different conceptions of law and their place within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam,
- give past and present examples of the changing meanings of law and religion in relation to one another,

Competence and Skills

- analyze specific sites of interaction between law and religion and how the three religions have conceptualized the relationship between both,
- critically discuss how specific understandings and interpretations of law within the three religions influence specific legal, moral, and political judgements in past and present,
- compare the conditions for religions to assert authority and exercise power in historical and contemporary legal and political frameworks,

- identify and distinguish between distinctly legal and distinctly religious types of argumentation in historical and contemporary affairs,

Judgment and Approach

- evaluate the situatedness of specific claims about the relationship between law and religion in past and present,
- critically evaluate how one's own scholarly, social, political, and religious contexts shape one's understanding of specific interactions between law and religion.

Instructors and institutions:

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Time period

Teaching (e-learning): weeks 6–20, primarily 13–20.

Compact seminar in Copenhagen, March 13–14.

Excursion to Sarajevo (if funded), May 5–9.

Examination: Paper to be submitted by June 5.

Form of Teaching; Course Activities

The course consists of e-learning units. Participation in the course forum on the internet is a requirement, as well as the submission of an exam paper.

Examination

A student who has participated regularly, actively and satisfactorily in the course, and has handed in 80% of the assignments, approved by the instructor may do a so-called free exam. In the free written exam, the student writes a paper of between eight and ten pages on a subject, question or material chosen by the student and approved by the instructor. A student who fails to fulfil these requirements will be assigned a topic for the exam paper (fixed exam). Those doing a fixed exam will have 4 days to write their paper.

Bibliography and syllabus

1300 pages of secondary scholarly literature and primary texts in translation. Of these, 800 pages are fixed and appear on the syllabus. The rest relates to the exam paper and is chosen by the student. Bibliography and syllabus will be made available to students after registration.

Registration

No later than January 16. Please send an email to all three instructors, and you will be invited to join the course on Canvas. If you are a student in the master's programme *Religious Roots of Europe* you should also send an e-mail to your local tutor.