

War in World Religions, REL 3600, Fall 2024, CRN 6839

TTH 3:45-5:00

WP6 320

Gen Ed: Ethical Reasoning and Values

Professor Margo Kitts, PhD

Office hours: TTH 11:15-12:15 and by appointment

WP6 322

mkitts@hpu.edu

Course description per the catalogue

A survey of the historical link between religion and war, from antiquity to the present and from west to east. Students will peruse literature justifying war, imagining war, and condemning war from different cultures, religions, and historical periods.

Overall course objectives

- (1) Demonstrate a grasp of the role played by religious ideology in the history of warfare.
- (2) Critically assess the religious underpinnings of notions such as just war and the rules of war in different cultural contexts.
- (3) Recognize persistent religious themes and experiences on the battlefield from ancient times to the present.

General Education Ethical Reasoning and Values Requirement

This elective course satisfies the UDV (B) requirement for ethical reasoning and values. Accordingly, students will learn to identify, explain, and evaluate the ethical perspectives of others as well as of themselves specifically in relation to war and religion.

One or more of the questions on the final exam will be evaluated using the general education ethical reasoning rubric at the end of this syllabus. It will account for 20% of the course grade.

Course Overview

The association of religion with war is as old as our earliest writings from China and the ancient Near East and continues to find expression in contemporary discourse. Despite myriad laments about this association, it is indisputable that religious rhetoric has supported actual military aims across geographies and historical eras. While there is arguably a propagandistic dimension to some of this rhetoric, there is no good reason to suppose that warriors on the ground have been indifferent to it. For instance, it is well-known that religious inspiration did motivate some knights of the First Christian Crusade (Gaposchkin 2023), does inspire some passionate millennial groups in the US and abroad (e.g., Barkun 2013, Graziano 1999, Filiu 2011), and continues to play a role in conflicts in the contemporary Middle East.

Fighting a religious war differs from fighting any other war primarily in that, as opposed to fighting solely for materialist aims, a conspicuous religious enthusiasm may be said to inform the fight, whether as zeal for battle itself (as in biblical herem), as righteous indignation about perceived wrongs (as in traditional jihad), or as devotional performances on the battlefield (as in the Mahabharata's Gita). That is, religion tends to be intertwined with the narrative imagination that justifies and interprets wartime struggles. Even in seemingly secular wars, religion is not entirely irrelevant. Just war principles rooted at least in part in religious thinking (e.g., Gratian, Aquinas) seep into justifications for many wars, as do inspirational fighting models based on religious legends (e.g., Joshua, Huseyn, Arjuna). While the religious motivations for such struggles can be contested from one angle or another, it would be nonsensical to deny that religious feeling might shape the commitments of some warriors across traditions. The scope of religion's effects on war is conceivably quite broad.

While we cannot cover all facets of religious influence on warfare in this course, we can explore some general themes associated with each of the world's major and some minor traditions. We will begin with the earliest known art and literature of the ancient Near East and proceed up to contemporary expressions of the link between religion and conflict. Our readings from the *Cambridge Companion to Religion and War* will be supplemented by other readings posted on blackboard, and may shift, depending on where we decide to go as a class.

In general, the course is organized for: one class foundational texts, followed by a second or third on contemporary relevance.

Requirements

Readings: Our primary text is *Cambridge Companion to Religion and War*. Ed. Margo Kitts. Cambridge University Press 2023. The bookstore should have the paperback version of this. It is not too expensive, about \$35.00.

Other texts: Pdfs, ppts, and links are on blackboard.

Grading:

50% Participation. This enormous percentage of your grade will be assessed in a three-fold manner:

- (1) We should prepare all of the SQs, but you individually will be assigned **several study questions** for each reading (when we have readings). You will share your observations with the class.

- (2) Where relevant, you will also be assigned a short reading, e.g., Bible passages, to summarize to the class. In some cases we may apply the readings, or parts of them, to a conflict in the contemporary world. Most of these will be described in articles on blackboard or linked from the internet.
- (3) You must attend class, having prepared the readings ahead of time, and must vocally participate. HPU is adamant about attendance and courteous participation. (See notes at the end of the syllabus.) **Unexcused absences will be deducted from your score at 3 points per miss. Also, the films are not optional viewing but rather they are intended to flesh out the ideas we read.**

50% Two essay exams worth equal weights (25% each). Questions are given in advance and essays are to be submitted through safe assign on blackboard.

N.B. Policy on missed assignments: Only by official notice (e.g, doctor's note) or prior permission will you be allowed to make up assignments after the scheduled dates for them.

N.B. This is an upper division class on a controversial topic; you should expect to put in substantial time in order to understand conflicts that might be foreign to you.

Schedule

[The order is tentative, depending on what is happening in the wider world and on your interests]

- 8/27 Introduction to the subject
PPT on ancient warfare
Skim introduction in our textbook, hereinafter CC to R&W.
- 8/29 War in the Hebrew Bible
Read John Collins, "Biblical Paradigms of War in History and Eschatology." CC to R&W chapter 1, 35-51.
B. Don't forget the sqs on blackboard here on out.
- 9/3 Varieties of Zionism
A. **Read** Robert Eisen's "War in Religious Zionism," CC to R&V: Chapter 14, 299-313.
B. **SQ, don't forget here on out**
- C. If you have time, listen to this?
<https://www.npr.org/2024/06/13/1198908908/a-history-of-zionism>

9/5 A. Jewish ethics of war

Read portion of Reuven Kimmelman's "Judaism and the Ethics of War," CC to R&V Chapter 9, 220-231. See SQs

B. Peruse websites re Israel, Gaza, and surrounding:

<https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/ideas/philosophy/64163/israel-gaza-philosophy-just-war>

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2024-07/holy-land-justice-peace-decries-weaponization-of-just-war.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/12/opinion/israel-gaza-war-crimes.html>

<https://wavellroom.com/2024/02/06/just-war-in-gaza/>

<https://www.understandingwar.org/search/google/Israel%20Hammas>

<https://www.justsecurity.org/90776/keeping-sight-of-our-moral-compass-as-the-israel-hamas-war-rages/>

<https://opencanada.org/just-war-theory-fighting-with-one-hand-bound-not-both/>

Discussion re moral justifications for war and the contemporary Middle East

9/5 Varieties of Zionism

D. **Read** Robert Eisen's "War in Religious Zionism," CC to R&V: Chapter 14, 299-313.

E. **SQ, don't forget here on out**

F. If you have time, listen to this?

<https://www.npr.org/2024/06/13/1198908908/a-history-of-zionism>

9/10 **View and discuss *God on Trial***

(holocaust story based loosely on Eli Wiesel's *Trial of God*)

9/12 War in early Christianity

A. **Read** Paul Middleton, Chapter 2, "Early Christianity and War," CC to R&W 52-75

B. SQs

9/17 Ancient Christian martyrdom and torture

Read Carole Streete, "Performing Christian Martyrdoms," in Kitts, *Martyrdom, Self-Sacrifice and Self-Immolation*, Oxford University Press, 2018. 40-53.

Recommended Lucy Grig. "Torture and Truth in late antique martyrology." *Early Medieval Europe* 2002 11(4) 321-336.

Optional: Margo Kitts, "The *Martys* and Spectacular Death: From Homer to the Roman Arena." *Journal of Religion and Violence* 6:2. ISSN 0738-098X. pp. 267-294 doi: 10.5840/jrv201811956

9/19 Christian nationalism in the U.S

- A. **Read** Angela Lahr, “Christian nationalism and millennialism in the U.S.” CC to R&W, 314-331; and Philip Gorski, “Civil Religion Today.”

<https://thearda.com/ARDA/rrh/papers/guidingpapers/Gorski.pdf>

- B. Listen to NPR: Christian nationalism in the U.S.

<https://www.npr.org/2024/02/29/1234843874/tracing-the-rise-of-christian-nationalism-from-trump-to-the-ala-supreme-court>

OR: interview with Philip Gorski: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CtGdQW5BucA>

9/24 **View and Discuss** *God and Country*, free on Amazon.

<https://www.amazon.com/God-Country-Bishop-William-Barber/dp/B0CVNH2413>

9/26 War in Foundational Islam

Read Asma Afsaruddin: Chapter 3, “Fighting and Martial Valor in Islamic Thought,” CC to R&V 79-94

SQs, also see the document listing fighting verses, on blackboard

10/1 Islamic nationalism

Read Mohammed Hafez, Chapter 16, “The Elusive Dream of Pan-Islamism,” CC to R&W, 332-348.

10/3 Hamas. Listen to

<https://www.npr.org/transcripts/1198908227>

Read Mohammed Hafez, “Hamas,” from *Routledge Handbook of Political Islam*. 2011.

10/8 **View and discuss** *Paradise Now*

Read Hafez: “Rationality, Culture, and Structure in the Making of Suicide Bombers: A Preliminary Theoretical Synthesis and Illustrative Case Study.” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29(2), 2006.

10/10 Discussion re suicide terrorism per se

Read Akil Awan: “Spurning This Worldly Life: Terrorism and Martyrdom in Contemporary Britain.” (2014), in (Eds.) Dominic Janes and Alex Houen *Martyrdom and Terrorism: Pre-Modern to Contemporary Perspectives*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Read Mohammed Hafez: “Apologia for Suicide: Martyrdom in Contemporary Jihadist Discourse,” from Kitts, *Martyrdom, Self-Sacrifice and Self-Immolation*, Oxford University Press, 2018, 126-139

Also of possible interest: Margo Kitts: “The Last Night: Ritualized Violence and the Last Instructions of 9/11.” *Journal of Religion* 90:3 (2010): 283-312.

10/15-17 Just War Traditions compared: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

A. Review and outline Kimelman, Chapter 9, CC to R&V, 215-240

Read and outline James Turner Johnson, “Just War in Christian Traditions,” Chapter 10, CC to R&V, 241-254

Read and outline David Cook, “Islam and the Just War Tradition: post-classical developments,” Chapter 11, CC to R&V, 255-268

B. Apply to contemporary conflicts

C. Prep for exam

10/22 Exam 1 assigned. Due October 30

10/22 Hinduism and War

Read Kaushik Roy: “Hinduism and War,” Chapter 4, CC to R&V 95-113.

<https://religionunplugged.com/news/2024/4/10/as-indias-elections-draw-near-nearly-a-dozen-pro-modi-films-hit-theaters>

10/24 A. Hindu nationalism

Read Kathinka Fryostad, “Killing for the Hindu Nation,” Chapter 17, CC to R&V 349-367

<https://www.bbcselect.com/watch/india-the-modi-question/>

10/29 India’s warrior goddesses

Read June McDaniel, “Fierce Goddesses of India” Chapter 21, CC to R&V 415-442

https://tubitv.com/movies/312524/the-world-before-her?start=true&tracking=google-feed&utm_source=google-feedCC

Recommended Torkel Brekke’s “Is there a Hindu Just War?” Chapter 12, CC to R&V, 269-282

10/31 Tamil militancy

Read Iselin Frydenlund, “Tamil Militancy in Sri Lanka and the Role of Religion.” Oxford Research Encyclopedia Sept 2018

11/5 Sikhism and Just War

Read Pashaura Singh, “Sikhism: Exploring the Notion of a Righteous War” Chapter 6, CC to R&V, 141-163.

11/7 Sikh martyrdom

Read Louis Fenech, “The Tropics of Heroic Death: Martyrdom and the Sikh Tradition,” Chapter 11, *Martyrdom, Self-Sacrifice and Self-Immolation*, Ed Kitts, OUP 2018, 205-225.

<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=BBC+Sikh+1984+documentary&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:ef5b0acf,vid:BTol8j0piQQ,st:0>

11/12 Buddhism and War

Read Stephen Jenkins, “Buddha in the Ring of Fire: The Buddhist Ethics of Warfare.” Chapter 5, CC to R&V, 114-140.

11/14 Buddhist Just War?

Read and compare with Jenkins, Scheible (Chapter 13) and/or Walton (Chapter 18) Myanmar Buddhism versus the Rohingya

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mF1GZ0O94qk>

11/19 Sri Lankan Buddhism

Read Iselin Frydenlund, “Buddhist militarism beyond texts: The importance of ritual during the Sri Lankan civil war,” JRV 2017

Another documentary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBfltn8HhE8>

11/21 Religion and War in Traditional China

Read Barend ter Haar, “Religion and War in Traditional China,” Chapter 7, CC to R&V, 164-186.

11/26 The Taiping Rebellion

Read Barend ter Haar, “The Demonological Framework of the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace,” Chapter 22, CC to R&V, 428-442

The Pacific War Channel on Taiping Rebellion of 1850-1864.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C5E0__A8d0

Exam 2 assigned, due December 10.

11/28-29 Thanksgiving Break

12/3 Buddhism and War in Premodern Japan

Read Brian Victoria: “Buddhism and War in Premodern Japan,” Chapter 8, CC R&V, 187-214

12/5 ?? “Patriotism,” very sensational story by Mishima Yukio. If we have time.

Video with Brian Victoria on Zen and War:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fI3mADy46xQ>

Prep for exam

OTHER EXPECTATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

Professionalism:

Professionalism is expected in students who are enrolled in university level courses. Regular attendance, prompt arrival, attentive listening, thoughtful participation, neat and timely completion of assignments, and polite, respectful attitudes, words, and conduct toward classmates, professors, class activities, online activities and the University are evidence of professionalism and appropriate behavior. All students are bound by the University’s Code of Student Conduct. Cases of questionable conduct will be referred to the Dean of Students and/or the Student Conduct Board.

Academic Integrity Policy:

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT, PLAGIARISM ETC.: Academic misconduct undermines the integrity of the college and the learning environment. As such, the instructor treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. **Plagiarism in exams and chat and discussion postings** is included under the description of academic misconduct for this class. Students who violate any of the instructor’s or college’s policies on academic misconduct in this class will be penalized. If the violation is due to plagiarism or dishonesty relating to an assignment or exam in this course, the student will receive a zero for that assignment and will not be permitted to resubmit the assignment or retake the quiz or exam. Students who are signed up for the course are expected to complete all of the work for the class THEMSELVES. If it is subsequently discovered that students other than those enrolled in the course completed work in the names of enrolled student, said enrolled student will receive a zero for the course, will be reported to the Dean and Academic Provost, who will then decide on further appropriate action to take. Students are warned that any of the above actions labeled academic misconduct may lead to suspension or dismissal from the university.

Course Drop or Withdrawal:

Students who choose to drop/withdraw from the course must take responsibility themselves to officially initiate the process, complete the necessary paperwork, and drop or withdraw from the course by the school deadline. If not, the student could receive a failing grade for the course.

Please see specific deadlines (some included at the end of this syllabus) regarding dropping the course or withdrawing from the University. Students who consider this option should be aware of lost tuition and University credits that this action involves.

Incomplete:

This grade is only assigned in the unusual case in which a student has completed the majority of the course, but through some unforeseen, confirmable circumstance (unexpected military deployment, serious illness) has missed a major assignment (such as the final exam) at the end of the semester. A student affected by such an event may submit a written application to the instructor with documentation for an incomplete "I" grade. If the application is accepted by the instructor, the student may complete the missed assignment after the end of the course.

Accessibility Services (ADA Accommodations):

First, know that **we all learn differently; we each are unique**. Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act 2008 (ADAAA), and Title III (Public Accommodations) Hawai'i Pacific University does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. Any student who feels he/she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability is invited to contact the Specialist of Accessibility Services at HPU (808-544-1197); access@hpu.edu or at Waterfront Plaza, Tower 6, Suite 440, 500 Ala Moana Blvd. This is a necessary step in order to ensure reasonable accommodations in a course. Students are not expected to disclose their specific disability to the professor; the Specialist will provide a letter for an instructor explaining the accommodations and not the nature of the disability. If you would like to discuss other concerns such as medical emergencies or arrangements in the event of an emergency evacuations, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible.

Counseling and Behavioral Health Resources:

Sometimes school and work responsibilities, health or substance abuse issues, financial problems, or relationship or family troubles can become overwhelming and interfere with your ability to complete course work. The Counseling and Behavioral Health Services (CBHS) Department provides free and confidential counseling services to current registered HPU students to discuss any personal problems or concerns and explore solutions. Appointments can be scheduled by phone at 808-687-7076 or in person at the Downtown campus at WP6-402. Office hours are Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Services include counseling for individual, couples, families, crisis intervention, grief and loss, and consultation. CBHS can also be reached by email at counseling@hpu.edu, but they are unable to take appointments online or through email; all appointments must be scheduled by calling the numbers listed above. In the event of an emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room or hospital.

Military Veteran Center (MVC)

MVC has one full time mental health provider from the Veterans Administration who offers confidential psychological counseling to military veterans. Sometimes, the transition from military to civilian life, managing school, and other personal issues can be challenging. MVC has an onsite provider at the downtown campus (PL 200) and appointments can be scheduled by phone at 808-763-7470. Office hours are Monday–Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Security and Safety – Downtown/Hawaii Loa Campus

We want all students to help keep our campus safe and secure. For emergency situations, call 911; for non-emergencies, contact HPU security (808) 544-1400. Timely reports of observations to security and the police can go a long way in preventing future crimes. Also, HPU security provides a walking escort known as SafeWalk for anyone walking alone on foot to any university parking lot, facility, or city bus stop. Call (808) 236-3515 (Hawaii Loa) or (808) 544-1400 for all other HPU locations and a security officer will be dispatched to your location. To receive critical information via text messaging, update your mobile number with Rave Alert (<http://phone.hpu.edu>), HPU's emergency text program. Go to: <https://www.hpu.edu/security/index.html> for more information regarding campus security and emergency preparedness.

Title IX – Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy

HPU is committed to providing an educational environment free from sexual discrimination. Students, faculty and staff must report violations of sexual harassment, sexual assaults, stalking, domestic violence, dating violence, and retaliation to trigger corrective and preventative actions as well as victim support services. Support services include assistance with filing reports, referrals to counseling and medical providers, and assistance with academic accommodations. Faculty and students who become aware of such violations should contact the Title IX Coordinator (808-544-0276), file a report at www.hpu.edu/titleix or the Compliance Hotline (877-270-5054 or www.tnwinc.com/hpu). More details can be found at www.hpu.edu/studenthandbook.

HPU libraries

HPU Libraries provide services and resources to serve the research needs of the HPU community. Print books, periodicals, and audiovisual materials are available at the Library at Waterfront (WP6-302) and at Atherton Library at the Hawai'i Loa Campus. Online resources, such as articles, eBooks, and streaming videos, are available from the library's homepage at hpu.edu/libraries. Off-campus access to online content will prompt users to input their my.hpu.edu credentials. Students can stop by the reference desk at any library location for research assistance. Librarians are also available over the phone (808.544.1133), via email (reference@hpu.edu), and through the Libraries' 24/7/365 online chat service (hpu.on.worldcat.org/chat/librarian). To schedule a research consultation with a subject specialist, visit hpu.libcal.com/appointments.

Rubric for Ethical Reasoning

CRITERIA	Initial	Emerging	Developed	Highly developed
Identification: Students identify ethical dilemmas.	The student fails to adequately describe the ethical issue and/or present the facts in the case and omits important perspectives or contexts.	Student adequately describes the ethical issue but is missing some important facts, contexts, or perspectives	Student describes the issue, presents the relevant facts and identifies various perspectives. Some perspectives may be superficially acknowledged.	Student fully describes the issue, accurately summarizes relevant facts and contexts, and identifies the perspectives of key participants.
Explanation: Student explains relevant ethical perspectives or systems of reasoning such as referring to virtues, rights or duties, or consequences).	Student misunderstands some of the perspectives and/or discusses them superficially, does not employ appropriate terminology or attempt to explain underlying principles.	Student discusses most perspectives adequately and may label perspectives, but applies labels incorrectly or fails to explain the principles involved in the perspective.	There may be minor mistakes but for the most part student explains the various perspectives adequately and with appropriate detail, labels them, and explains how key principles apply.	Student explains the various perspectives fully with appropriate detail, labels them accurately, and explains how key principles apply.
Evaluation: Student evaluates positions/arguments considered.	Student attempts a superficial evaluation of some of the positions but student's argument is unpersuasive.	Student evaluates the various arguments but does not consider all of these factors: logic, consistency with the facts, and adherence to ethical principles or values. <u>Or</u> evaluations are not always persuasive.	Student persuasively evaluates the various arguments for logic, consistency with the facts, and adherence to ethical principles or values, but fails to recognize when principles or values are in conflict.	Student persuasively evaluates the various arguments for logic, consistency with the facts, and adherence to ethical principles or values, and recognizes when principles or values are in conflict.
Judgment: Student articulates a reasoned judgment.	Student does not take a position on whether a policy or action is ethical or come to a conclusion about the correct course of action to resolve a dilemma but merely describes various perspectives.	Student takes a position but does not adequately justify it.	Student takes a position and provides an adequate justification but does not fully consider implications or adequately address counterarguments.	Student takes a position and effectively defends it, considering implications and responding to counterarguments.

FALL 2024 16-WEEK TERM (PART OF TERM 1) (AUGUST 26, 2024 - DECEMBER 15, 2024)			
Registration Period	Wednesday, March 27, 2024	-	Tuesday, March 27, 2024
Tuition Payment Deadline	Monday, August 12, 2024		
First Day of Instruction (16-Week Classes)	Monday, August 26, 2024		

University Holiday (Labor Day)	Monday, September 2, 2024		
Last Day to Register (16-Week Classes)	Tuesday, September 3, 2024		
Last Day to Drop (16-Week Classes) with 100% Tuition Refund for Dropped Credits– 0% Student Financial Responsibility for Dropped Credits*	Tuesday, September 3, 2024		
Final Day to Submit Incomplete Grades for Summer 2024 Term 8M	Sunday, September 8, 2024		
Last Day to Drop (16-Week Classes) with 50% Tuition Refund for Dropped Credits – 50% Student Financial Responsibility for Dropped Credits*	Tuesday, September 10, 2024		
Shark Bundle Opt Out Deadline	Friday, September 13, 2024		
Last Day to Drop (16-Week Classes) without W Grade	Monday, September 23, 2024		
Last Day to Drop (16-Week Classes) with 25% Tuition Refund for Dropped Credits – 75% Student Financial Responsibility for Dropped Credits*	Monday, September 23, 2024		
Final Day to Submit Incomplete Grades for Summer 2024 Term 8B	Sunday, October 6, 2024		
Placement of Business Office SUPER HOLD on unpaid student account balance	Tuesday, October 8, 2024		
Midterm Grades Due for Fall 2024 16-Week Term	Wednesday, October 23, 2024		
Last Day to Drop (16-Week Classes) with a W Grade	Monday, November 4, 2024		
University Holiday (Veterans' Day)	Monday, November 11, 2024		
Final Day to Submit Incomplete Grades for Summer 2024 Full Term	Sunday, November 17, 2024		
University Holiday (Thanksgiving Break)	Thursday, November 28, 2024	-	Friday 2024
Final Day to Submit Incomplete Grades for Fall 2024 Term 8A	Sunday, December 1, 2024		

Final Exam Period	Monday, December 9, 2024	-	Sunday, December 15, 2024
16-Week Term Ends	Sunday, December 15, 2024		
Delinquent Student Accounts Forwarded to Collections	Monday, December 16, 2024		
Fall Commencement Ceremony	Tuesday, December 17, 2024		
Final Grades Due for Fall 2024 16-Week Term	Wednesday, December 18, 2024		
<p>*A tuition adjustment means that a tuition charge is reversed (or credited) to the student's account, resulting in a smaller charge owed to the University. Students are liable for all course fees. Refunds will be issued automatically if the account balance is negative. For eligible students, refund processing time is 4-6 weeks from the drop date.</p>			

