Religion and politics are increasingly getting intertwined worldwide. In South Asia, religion is deeply rooted in everyday life and intersects every other sphere - social, economic, cultural and political. Hence, it is common to witness an interplay of politics and religion in public sphere. Despite being religious and overwhelmingly Hindu, India consciously made a choice to adopt secularism as a foundational principle of its Constitution in order to give politics an autonomous space and minimize the role of religion in politics and governance. But this experiment faced continuous challenge from the ideologues and practitioners of Hindu nationalism. As Hindu nationalism gradually came from periphery to the centrestage of Indian politics, and became hegemonic, the secular India received a severe jolt as the Indian state became overtly Hindu in many ways. In this context, this seminar course will engage with the following topics:

- Religion and Politics in contemporary times
- Religion and Politics in South Asia
- Colonialism, Communities and Identities
- Secularism in postcolonial India
- Evolution and ascendency of Hindu nationalism
- Majoritarian discourses and Practices
- Hindutva redefines India

Class 1: 21 October 2019

Introduction

Class 2: 28 October 2019

Religion and Politics in Contemporary Times

Essential Readings:


Supplementary Readings:


**Class 3: 04 November 2019**

**Religion and Politics in South Asia: Colonial and Postcolonial**

Readings:


Supplementary Readings:


**Class 4: 11 November 2019**

**Religion and Politics in India I: Colonialism, Communal Identities and Partition**


Supplementary Readings:


**Class 5: 18 November 2019**

**Indian Secularism: Discourses and Practices**

Essential Readings:


Supplementary Readings:


**Class 6: 25 November 2019**

**Emergence of Hindu Nationalism: Ideology, Organization and Mobilization**

Readings:


Supplementary Readings:


Class 7: 09 December 2019

Hindutva Hegemony


Supplementary Readings:


Class 8: 16 December 2019

Majoritarian Discourses and Practices

Essential Readings:


Supplementary Readings:


Class 9: 13 January 2019

The Indian Context: Hindutva and the Idea of India

John Harriss, Craig Jeffrey, and Stuart Corbridge, “Is India Becoming the ‘Hindu Rashtra’ Sought by Hindu Nationalists?” Simons Papers in Security and Development no. 60, School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University (December 2017)


Supplementary Readings:


Class 10 – January 20
Presentation

Class 11 – January 27
Presentation

Class 12 – February 03
Presentation

Assessment

Assessment will be on the basis of three criteria:
1. Final Term Paper
2. Class Presentation
3. Attendance and Participation

Term papers are to be 5000-6000 words in length (3000-4000 words for BA students) including footnotes and references. Term papers are due by 15 March 2020.
Each student will give a presentation on a topic for 15 minutes to be followed by Q&A.
Each student is expected to attend classes regularly and proactively participate in discussion and Q&A, besides going through the recommended readings before each class.