

RELIGION AND POLITICS IN A GLOBALISED WORLD (RelPol)

Abstract

Religion and Politics (RelPol) is a multi-disciplinary teaching and research initiative with participants from across the Faculty of Humanities. Our main asset is the broad, multifaceted and interdisciplinary competence of the group. Our ambition is to substantially contribute to an emerging academic field and respond to society's acute need for knowledge as described in the White Paper on the Humanities. When migration crisis and news media turn local events into global issues it is necessary to build down walls between disciplines. Central to RelPol's ambition is to develop multidisciplinary research, secure long-term external funding, and establish an interdisciplinary Graduate School.

Participants (alphabetical order by department):

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ILOS: Geir Flikke (Russia), Christian Janss (Germany), Pål Kolstø (Russia/Eurasia).

IMK: Christina Archetti (Political Communication), Charles M. Ess (Information ethics), Knut Lundby (Media and Religion).¹

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The RelPol initiative is proposed by the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages (IKOS) and the Department of Media and Communication (IMK). The RelPol group consists of 22 researchers at the Faculty of Humanities (HF), 13 have taken up their position at HF over the last 5 years. Synthesising their insights in a truly interdisciplinary manner, RelPol will strengthen HF's ability to address contemporary issues and need for knowledge and informed reflection about social and political challenges. In an increasingly interconnected world of migration and migration crises, of world-wide religious revival and religious terrorism, and of local events instantly being turned into global issues by new media and social media, it is necessary to build down walls between disciplines and engage the humanities in our global grand challenges. RelPol has real potential to develop into a leading institution internationally. Combined we represent years of internationally recognised in-depth research on religio-political mobilisation, religion in different ideological constellations, jihadism and Islamism (within our research group Political, Social and Ideological Change in the Middle East, identified as 'world leading' by an international evaluation panel this year),² media and conflict,³ UN activism,⁴ Indian cosmopolitanism, and issues of transgression, political mobilisation, and blasphemy in South Asia.⁵

¹ Lundby will retire in August 2018, but will participate in relevant activities as professor emeritus.

² In addition three of our researchers participate in the UiO research center on extremism, C-Rex (Archetti, Endresen, Lia). A new NFR project started in 2017: Dag Henrik Tuastad og Brynjar Lia: Rebel Governance in the Middle East: The role of kinship groups in sociopolitical organization of insurgent proto-states www.hf.uio.no/forskning/aktuelt/aktuelle-saker/2016/60-millioner-til-fri-humanistisk-forskning.html

³ Lundby leads the NFR financed CoMRel project (-2018) www.hf.uio.no/imk/english/research/projects/comrel/

⁴ This year the Value Politics research group at IKOS, led by Anne Stensvold published an edited volume: *Religion, state and the United Nations* (Routledge, 2017). The group is currently working on an edited volume on blasphemy. www.hf.uio.no/ikos/english/research/projects/the-role-of-religion/

⁵ Kathinka Frøystad's NFR financed project (2014-2019) on Indian Cosmopolitan Alternatives: www.hf.uio.no/ikos/english/research/projects/indian-cosmopolitan-alternatives/. With other faculties she is currently editing a volume on blasphemy: www.hf.uio.no/ikos/english/research/projects/transgressions/index.html

Introduction to RelPol

In our increasingly globalised world, it is powerfully evident that the domains of religion and politics are mutually constitutive and shape each other in ever-novel ways. The outcomes are unpredictable and sometimes violent. RelPol is an initiative from scholars at the Faculty of Humanities who work on religious traditions, on political development and conflict, and on political communication and media. RelPol will focus on the *interface of religion and politics*, and bring the humanities to the fore in a field of great social concern. The humanities can bring unique insights, methodology and disciplinary traditions, including language skills and ‘area knowledge’ that, once synthesised as we propose, will substantially illuminate acute and complex issues in new ways.

We see a need for new analytical concepts and models that will allow us to overcome the divisions and fragmentation in the religion and politics field. Therefore we have designed a systematic plan to achieve our goal of progressively making RelPol evolve into a strong and innovative research community.

Our main asset is the broad, multifaceted and interdisciplinary competence of the group. We represent in-depth knowledge of different world regions and religious traditions, media studies, and language based ‘area studies’. We are familiar with a range of methods and approaches, including field work, philology, archival studies, various media studies, including social media, literary fiction and popular culture. With our multiple spaces of encounter, RelPol will challenge and broaden the ways in which we meet one of the greatest interpretive challenges of our times.

RelPol includes an ambitious educational program. Our long-term ambition is a Graduate School in Religion and Politics where students work closely with researchers on their MA and PhD projects. An overarching goal is to erase the walls that typically separate research and education in the humanities, so as to create an innovative, vital, and fruitful new form of research environment. The synergies that results from a combination of multi-disciplinary knowledge will make RelPol an innovative and potentially transformative initiative. This will allow us to design significant comparative and transnational studies and analyse large trends that cannot be captured in singular case studies. In this way we believe that RelPol will be able to push the frontiers of research and succeed in the competition for external research financing through the EU and other international bodies.

Organisation of RelPol: The Clusters

RelPol will be organised around three thematic clusters: Confrontation, Mobilisation, and Communication, which constitute RelPol’s core, and structure our research, teaching and outreach activities.

1. Confrontation: Conflicts between traditional religious norms and liberal-secular values arise in the footsteps of modernity, and are accentuated by migration and mobilisation to revivalist and/or violent religious groups. Rather than taking conflicts between value systems as a given, there is a need to understand the processes by which values become polarised and how they are shaped by this process of polarisation. In contemporary public debates, LGBT rights and equal rights for women are typically framed as non-religious and Western values and seen as threatening to traditional religions. Even within the so-called ‘West’ there is no value consensus (Trump’s base is a case in point). Underlying these debates are conflicting theories about religion in the modern world: it is either construed as integral to ethnicity, or religion is conceived as devoid of cultural traits and presented as ‘pure’ religion, and the value conflict between ‘the God-fearing’ and ‘the secular’ (modernised, westernised). We believe there is a need to diversify the debate and investigate the cultural dynamics that expresses

itself in blasphemy controversies and other forms of confrontational religio-political mobilisation. We will also investigate the role of journalists and social media/internet. We know that mediatisation processes interfere in value conflicts and challenge the social role of religion in fundamental ways.

2. Mobilisation: Religion can serve as means for political mobilisation. This can happen ‘from below’ among adherents fighting for a social cause, or can be used as a strategy from ‘above’ to strengthen the normative power of religious authorities. Religious movements from below in important ways challenge the authority structures of established religions. They are also in many cases a main component of an emerging civil society that challenges the authoritarian rule of entrenched elites. A common trait of religio-political groups is the use of religious symbols in political mobilisation and prolific use of new media. This raises questions about the drivers and the effects of religious grass-root mobilisation, and the more general politicisation of religion: How does the mobilisation effect the interpretation of the central tenets of the religious tradition involved? May religious movements actually produce secularisation? How does the religious framing of oppositional movements influence the social content of their message? In some religious traditions there are strong elements of utopian/dystopic tendencies, amplified by media use and in mediatised conflicts. On an individual level these tendencies can be spurred on by migration. Who are the religious authorities that succeed in their use of new media? Contemporary debates about religion revolve around social integration and explicit or implicit conflicts involving religious minorities and majority religious traditions.

3. Communication: Religious symbols, myths and rituals are frequently used in political contexts, to varying effects. Naturally, communication in all forms (face-to-face, literature, electronic media) is paramount in all human interaction. However, over the last generation media such as television, the internet and social media have dramatically changed the religio-political dynamics. These processes of transformation are the specific focus of mediatisation theories, which try to capture how media and communication technologies interfere and transform the religious as well as the political spheres and the interplay between them. Examples of mediatised religio-political dynamics are when religious groups send prayers and religious messages on Facebook and Whatsapp, religious online counselling, virtual pilgrimage and sermons, and when new media confound existing categories turning religion into a commodity and entertainment into politics. New media also make possible an entirely new level of political mobilisation, as exemplified by the Arab Spring, as well as by transnational recruitment to extremist groups that challenge existing political power structures. Social media also play a dominant role in many instances of blasphemy accusations. Thus, new media provide us with a wide range of source material relevant to the study of religion and politics.

The cluster structure will enable cross-national and cross-cultural comparisons, studies of entangled societies and histories, transnational actors and spaces, and the role of state structures in shaping and influencing religious/political structures and events. Our diverse methodological repertoire will better equip us to provide socially and politically important knowledge. It is fundamental to RelPol that the need to collaborate on teaching will facilitate research collaboration. Being engaged in research as well as planning and teaching tasks, the clusters will effectively become communicative communities for the researchers. From a student’s point of view, the clusters will serve as ‘work-stations’ where they delve into the research themes that also structure their curriculum.

Outreach: The clusters will play a central part in RelPol’s outreach activities which aim to create public awareness of how religious and political issues shape everyday life and political developments. We will achieve this by firstly inviting ‘the outside in’ through our Guest Lecture Programme, which

will include practitioners.⁶ In addition we will also target the general public through blogs,⁷ podcasts of public debates structured as ‘encounters with the opposite’: conversations among researchers with opposite methods or analysis; diplomats and activists; researchers and journalists.

To ensure RelPol’s societal impact and relevance we will follow three separate strategies: (1) we will create an MA programme that includes options for practitioners; (2) we will nourish a close relationship with news media and journalists, including a RelPol blog or special website where our group members and graduate students will post articles based on their research; and (3) we will actively engage with select state bodies by including bureaucrats and politicians in our Guest Lecturer Program, and include practitioners from select state bodies to serve in reference groups in connection with our research projects.⁸ RelPol will thus establish itself as a pool of experts relevant to decision making bodies as well as the media.

Organisation structure

Each cluster will bring together 6-10 RelPol researchers, to create an interdisciplinary group that represents the use of a variety of source materials and research methods. Their main joint activities will be a monthly RelPol Colloquium, the RelPol guest lecture programme, and joint teaching and outreach initiatives. In addition joint research projects will be honed. RelPol members will have primary obligation to one cluster (for at least one year at a time), but may choose to participate in others. Each cluster will have a leader (a position which may ambulate every two years) in charge of driving forward its core activities: developing teaching plans, organising the RelPol Colloquium, and inviting guest lecturers. The three cluster leaders will be part of the RelPol advisory board, which will also include one representative from each of the departments involved and the RelPol coordinator.

RelPol will have a coordinator (position to be announced in 2018) and an advisory board. Together they will form the decision-making body of the initiative. The coordinator will have the overall responsibility for implementing its research and educational ambition. The coordinator will also be responsible for RelPol’s regular activities, including the Pop-up Institute (see Research). Since our plans for a Graduate School will require extensive preparations, progressive implementation, and organisation of teaching resources, and these will be the main tasks of the coordinator, s/he will only have a minor role in active teaching. Furthermore, the coordinator will have an important role to play ensuring that RelPol remains a dynamic inter-disciplinary entity. The coordinator will liaise with the departments, administration and external partners, and will oversee the cluster activities and the Graduate School.

Research

In order to realise our ambition of RelPol becoming an innovative research platform, our cluster based model aims to foster a multidisciplinary research ambiance and also to diminish the wall that separates research and teaching. The clusters will focus on three activities, each offering a different kind of collaboration across disciplines, whether established researchers or PhD candidates and students. It is

⁶ By ‘practitioners’ we mean people who work professionally with issues of the interplay of religion and politics, either in national or international public institutions (UN bodies, MFA, INGOs) or in national organisations or debates.

⁷ We will consider collaboration with existing blogs, e.g. religiongoingpublic.com/no/

⁸ We envisage members of reference groups to come from state departments where we have specific competent individuals in mind: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), The Government Agency for Development (NORAD), and The Norwegian National Commission for UNESCO (at the Ministry of Environment) and The Norwegian Directorate for Immigration (UDI).

our aim that these activities will translate into larger research projects for which we can successfully apply for external funding (ERC and NFR). It is our ambition that at least one RelPol researcher will make a bid for an ERC research grant each year.

The cluster activities are:

1. The RelPol Colloquium: a monthly reading-and-discussion seminar organised by each thematic cluster. Thus each month a total of three colloquia will be arranged. Here researchers, PhD candidates and MA-students will discuss new research literature and receive updated input from the practice field. It can also be used for ‘question-labs’, where scholars from across disciplines come together with the aim of developing new research questions. In this way, the RelPol Colloquium will function as a canopy for current research and education, a productive, efficient and innovative model that does not require much investment. Aim: To deconstruct walls between research and teaching, foster a communicative milieu to create common understandings across disciplines, and help students.

2. The Pop-up Institute is a 1-2 week intensive seminar where researchers and PhD candidates meet in order to reach a concrete goal (joint publication, report, public discussion). Although the format is yet to be decided, we envisage it to be organized once a year. The Pop-up Institute will be crucial to our ambition of developing a multidisciplinary research milieu and excellent research projects. One model we consider is for the Pop-up Institute to address a current religious and political event. The Pop-up Institute will be ambitious and will focus on interdisciplinary theorising and methodology. The concrete goal will be high-end publications or larger research proposals. The long-term aim is to lift RelPol sufficiently to a level in which such activities can rely more on external funding.

3. The Guest Lecturer Programme will include both external experts and practitioners from relevant institutions. The programme will be coordinated with existing IKOS fora (Centre for Islamic and Middle East Studies and Oslo Buddhist Forum). We will invite both international scholars and practitioners who will allow us to continuously update and assess our research activities in relation to societal need for knowledge.

4. Annual Cluster Workshops will be organised by each of the three clusters. These will include all members of the cluster plus external invitees and students. The aim of each workshop will be publication or project formulation. The immediate aim of each workshop will be publications, research projects and recruitment of talented students.

Education

Central to the RelPol initiative is our ambition to better integrate research and teaching. We believe that this can best be achieved through a Graduate School in the Study of Religion and Politics that includes both MA-students and PhD candidates. We also believe the Graduate School plan will address several of the University of Oslo’s national-level political ambitions.

1. Internationally attractive study programmes. According to its strategy plan (*Strategisk plan 2020*), a goal for HF is to have a strong inter-disciplinary profile and to provide internationally attractive research education (p.2).⁹ Our plans for a Graduate School in Religion and Politics will contribute towards this goal.

⁹ *Strategisk plan* is available at <http://www.hf.uio.no/om/strategi/strategi-2020/>

2. Strengthen high-level academic education in the critical study of religion and politics. This goal answers a need pointed out in the White Paper on the Humanities (*Humaniorameldingen*), to study topics related to ‘integration, migration and conflicts’.¹⁰ Focusing on the interplay between religion and politics, RelPol will contribute to the need to understand the meaning of ‘identity, values, religion, culture, ethics and languages’ (p.1) in the world today.

3. Integrate education and research. For the humanities and social sciences in much of Europe there is little interaction between MA and PhD programs. This is a missed opportunity. Integration of students into research communities is a government ambition for higher education.¹¹ RelPol will actively integrate MA and PhD students by involving them in the regular RelPol colloquia and the Pop-up Institute (see Research). For MA students, participation in all three colloquia will be mandatory.

4. Recruit talented students, both internationally and domestically, of diverse backgrounds. RelPol will utilise the Faculty’s leading international scholars to attract international students. The planned Graduate School will provide an opportunity to attract more students and take advantage of the unique expertise present in Oslo, and comply with the ambitions expressed in the Ministry of Education and Research’s white paper on quality in higher education.¹²

5. Improve the career opportunities for humanities students. Our Graduate School will accommodate both students with academic and professional career ambitions (e.g. bureaucrats, diplomats, journalists, NGO workers or policy-makers) with a relevant BA. We will also develop a Practice MA where professionals can acquire updated knowledge relevant to their careers. This will be a particularly important element in our strategy for societal impact. In addition students will meet relevant stakeholders and practitioners (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NORAD, UNESCO, NGOs, others) who will be invited to talk at the colloquia and offer students an arena for early stage networking.

As HF has *one* doctoral programme, our plans for the PhD level differ from the American Graduate School system: We will invite PhDs to join alongside our established researchers in their activities (see Research). For the PhD students these activities will be included as part of their PhD education (pending discussion with the PhD programme and the department coordinators).

For the MA level we will progressively and in phases (see below) work towards the establishment of a Graduate School. Currently, there is no specialised MA programme in religion and politics in Norway, and only five comparable programs exist worldwide (see Benchmarking). As the first such initiative outside the UK and US, this program fills an urgent societal need.

Our ambition to create a Graduate School which will attract excellent MA students and PhD candidates will require a carefully monitored evolution. We will initiate construction of master level courses early. In the first phase (2018-2020) we will investigate the possibilities of offering individual RelPol courses to existing MA programmes. The study programmes that will be approached include the History of Religions, Media Studies, History, Asian and Middle East studies, Political Science, Social Anthropology, etc. In a second phase (2020-2022) we will evaluate experiences and work towards establishing our own MA programme. This programme will be open to applicants with varied backgrounds, e.g. BA in History of religions, Political Science, History, Languages, etc. To ensure that

¹⁰ White paper (Stortingsmelding) from the Ministry of Education, no. 25 (2016-2017), *Humaniorameldingen*: ‘I en verden med klimaendringer, migrasjonsbølger og raske teknologiskifter er det nødvendig å forstå betydningen av identitet, verdier, religion, kultur, etikk og språk.’ See <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/meld.-st.-25-20162017/id2545646/sec1>

¹¹ White paper (Stortingsmelding) from the Ministry of Education, no. 16 (2016-2017) *Kvalitet i høyere utdanning*, ch.3.1. See <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/meld.-st.-16-20162017/id2536007/>

¹² White paper (Stortingsmelding) from the Ministry of Education, no. 16 (2016-2017) *Kvalitet i høyere utdanning*, ch.3.8. See <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/meld.-st.-16-20162017/id2536007/>

the most motivated students are admitted we will consider entrance interviews (via Skype) in addition to formal admission criteria have been applied. Since RelPol's MA is an ambitious inter-disciplinary programme with students from varied academic backgrounds, we will also consider up to 50 ects as mandatory. This will also ensure a closer knit student group and stimulate the students' academic development (as called for in *Strategisk plan 2020*, p.3). As a part of our vision for an integrative approach to research and education, we will also consider offering two paths: one practice oriented option that includes one semester where they acquire relevant experience and connections helpful to a future career, and one path with a 60 ects MA thesis, which may be combined with field work or tuition abroad. Also, a 60 ects thesis can eventually be expanded into a PhD project.

At PhD level we will invite PhD candidates from the faculty's doctoral programme to join our clusters. We will work closely with PhD coordinators at the various departments to develop PhD courses, particularly in connection with our Pop-up Institutes. We will also investigate possibilities for collaboration with existing NFR-financed PhD schools: Peace and Conflict (at PRIO) and Religion, Values and Society (MF, Norwegian School of Theology).¹³

Independently of this, we will investigate the possibility of creating special educational avenues for employees from relevant state institutions (etterutdannelse). This will be seen in connection with the practice PhD financing by NFR (OFFPHD) that already exists.¹⁴

Possible MA structure:

First semester: (1) **The RelPol Colloquium I** (10 ects) is a new course in which MA students are required to actively participate in our three monthly colloquia. Their fourth week will be dedicated to a follow-up seminar. (2) **Religion and Politics: Multidisciplinary Treatments I** (10 ects) is a new, intensive course developed especially for this program. We will consider different models, to ensure the twin target of benefitting from existing courses and also creating a course with a solid structure. The course will introduce students to seminal empirical studies and important theoretical texts in the study of religion and politics.¹⁵ In addition, we will develop an interdisciplinary canon for this academic field, as this does not yet exist. (3) **Topics and project development** (10 ects) is modelled on existing topics courses at Asia and Middle East programme. It will include a three-day seminar in the middle of the semester where students work on their MA proposals and are assigned a mentor.

Second Semester: (1) **RelPol Colloquium II** (10 ects) and (2) **Religion and politics: multi-disciplinary treatments II** (10 ects) are continuation of the first semester courses. (3) **Methodological approaches** (10 ects) is also a new course and will require active student participation. Students will be introduced to the RelPol methodological tool-box, including ethnographic field research, semi-structured interviews, questionnaire surveys and statistics, critical discourse analysis, semiotics, and archival research.

Third and Fourth Semester: Students will choose between a 60 ects and a 30 ects MA thesis. For the latter option, the third semester will consist of (a) an *internship* (at a Norwegian embassy or a NGO),

¹³ See <http://www.peaceconflictresearch.org/> and <http://rvs.mf.no/>

¹⁴ From 2017 this Practice PhD is open only to projects within Helath, Education and IKT, see <https://www.forskningssradet.no/no/Utlysning/OFFPHD/1254021813069/p1173268235938?progId=1253995410398&visAktive=true>

¹⁵ Including works by Talal Asad, Peter Beyer, José Casanova, Michel Foucault, René Girard, Jürgen Habermas, Martha Nussbaum, John Rawls, and Charles Taylor.

(b) *tuition abroad*,¹⁶ or (c) *ethnographic fieldwork abroad*. The 60 ects option will also entail fieldwork abroad or tuition abroad. In order to realise our strong ambitions for this programme we will work to enlist a number of highly relevant internships. Here we will use the practitioners in the Guest Lecturer Programme to create synergy and high-quality internships.

All courses will be in English and advertised internationally.

Activity Plan

Being both ambitious and charting new waters, the RelPol initiative will require flexibility in organisation and constant readjustment of both teaching format and research collaboration. Evaluations will be conducted by user groups: students, PhDs, research peers, and practitioners throughout the period. We plan to establish a group of practitioners as an advisory board to give feedback on our research and outreach activities. We foresee three phases:

Phase I (2018–Spring 2020): All regular research activities (colloquia, Guest Lecture Program) commence spring 2019, including outreach activities. The position as coordinator will be filled in the preparatory period from among existing RelPol members and an advisory board will be established. A position as RelPol coordinator will be advertised and filled (Ass. Prof. in religion and politics at IKOS). Preparations for our Graduate School start. A small number of courses will be considered for adaption to RelPol's programme.¹⁷ We will thoroughly discuss with existing study programmes to ensure RelPol courses can be included. To give a kick start to our research, the first Pop-up Institute will be arranged spring 2019. We will enter into conversation with relevant ministries (Foreign Affairs, Defence, Education, others) on Practice MAs and PhDs.

Phase 2 (autumn 2020-2021): The number of RelPol courses will be expanded, and we will consider new constructions (e.g. a 30 ects 'package'). By the end of 2021 we will have a decision on how to proceed towards a full Graduate School. The Clusters will welcome PhD students. Pop-up Institutes will continue, and members of the RelPol group will regularly apply for NFR or ERC grants.¹⁸

Phase 3 (2022-2023): Start of RelPol MA programme, including MA for practitioners, and start of Practitioner PhD programme. The final evaluation of RelPol will be conducted in spring 2023 to allow time for decisions to be made concerning the future of RelPol activities.

Collaboration and Benchmarking

Taking seriously the recommendations in NFR's report *Evaluation of the Humanities in Norway* (2017), about the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, RelPol will gather experts in a joint effort which will significantly strengthen the academic study of religion at our faculty. We will specifically address the concerns expressed by Panel 7 *Religion and Theology*, when they refer to 'the

¹⁶ We can use existing exchange agreements, but also create new ones. Other possible universities, with which members of the RelPol team have good relations, include SOAS, Leiden University, Groningen University, Kyushu University, Tohoku University, Université de Nantes, University College London and King's College London.

¹⁷ The adaptation will include translation, adjust lecture themes and perspectives, new or revised syllabus to MA level. The work load will vary (e.g. REL3020 (Religion of Politik), RUS1501). This work will be led by the RelPol coordinator.

¹⁸ Especially interesting in this regard is the current plans at EUI to establish an MA in Governance directed at EU and government officials. This opens possibilities for student exchange and other collaboration. Oliver Roy, will follow up on this.

historical gap between Theology and the Academic Study of Religion' (p. 41), by including theologians in our Guest Lecture Programme and explore the interface of religion and theology by systematically engaging in open academic discussions. We will also strengthen our research collaboration,¹⁹ and engage with research projects that are thematically close to RelPol.²⁰ An ambitious inter-disciplinary initiative like this necessarily implies collaboration. In addition to EUI and our collaboration with Professor Olivier Roy who is currently Professor II at IKOS,²¹ there are several larger research milieus in Europe and elsewhere with which individual RelPol members already collaborate. We will systematically pursue these contacts.²² Especially useful in this regard is our plans for an extensive Guest Lecturer Program which will allow us to invite possible collaboration partners on a regular basis. Closer to home we will collaborate on research activities with the Centre for the study of Holocaust and Religious Minorities and the Centre for the Study of Extremism (C-Rex at Political Science),²³ and with the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) with which IKOS has an agreement to intensify collaboration in both teaching and research,²⁴ and the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI).²⁵

In order to excel, we will engage in necessary benchmarking internationally. This entails both comparison and collaboration. Keeping in mind that RelPol is both a research platform and a Graduate School, we have identified *five* institutions with MA programmes comparable to ours²⁶ and *two* similar research platforms.

Among the MA programmes, the two more similar include Northwestern University and SOAS. Northwestern has a Graduate School where Religion and Politics is among available certificates and which is akin to the RelPol profile. However, it differs in being a collaboration between science of religion and political science. The other one is SOAS in London, which has an impressively broad scope even if its MA in Religion in Global Politics is an assembly of available courses either in religion or area studies. In sum, the RelPol Graduate School will have the wide global competence in

¹⁹ Associate Professor Anne-Hege Grung, and Professor Oddbjørn Leirvik are already members of the Value Politics research group at IKOS lead by Anne Stensvold. Professor Trygve Wyller at TF leads a UiO: Nordic research project "Nordic Hospitalities in a Context of Migration and Refugee Crisis", which resonates well with RelPol's research interests. See <http://www.uio.no/forskning/satsinger/forskergrupper/nordhost>

²⁰ Professor Trygve Wyller at TF leads a UiO: Nordic research project 'Nordic Hospitalities in a Context of Migration and Refugee Crisis' which resonates well with our cluster theme on mobilisation: www.uio.no/forskning/satsinger/norden/forskning/forskergrupper/nordhost/

²¹ Roy is chair of the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute in Firenze: www.eui.eu/DepartmentsAndCentres/RobertSchumanCentre

²² For instance Professor Birgit Meyer (University of Utrecht) has a large research program (2016-2024) on 'Religion matters in an entangled world', which tallies especially well with our Communication cluster. See www.religiousmatters.nl https://www.mpg.de/153514/erforschung_gesellschaften?section=kw

²³ Center for Research on Extremism. The Ideology, activism and organisation research group includes several RelPol members <http://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/topics/ideology-activism-and-organization/index.html>

²⁴ For a presentation of the UiO-PRIO partnership see <https://blogs.org/2017/02/oslo-a-global-knowledge-centre-for-peace-and-conflict-studies/>

²⁵ Contact will be managed by Brynjar Lia who is professor II at the FFI.

²⁶ (1) SOAS, MA Religion in Global Politics: www.soas.ac.uk/religions-and-philosophies/programmes/ma-religion-in-global-politics/ (2) Birmingham, MA Religion, Politics and Society: www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/taught/thr/religion-politics-society.aspx; (3) Lancaster, MA in Religion and Conflict www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/postgraduate-courses/religion-and-conflict-ma/; (4) Northwestern certificate in 'Religion and Global Politics': www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/programs/clusters-and-certificates/religion-and-global-politics/; (5) Boston's Graduate School offers an MA in International Relations and Religion: www.bu.edu/pardeeschool/academics/graduate/irrn/

area studies and languages found in SOAS' program as well as the clear focus on the interface of religion and politics around the world found at Northwestern.

The two research platforms include UC Berkeley²⁷ and the Exzellenzcluster Religion und Politik at the University of Münster.²⁸ With 200 researchers this is a broad collaboration organised in several smaller teams working on themes that correspond to the RelPol clusters. The Münster Exzellenzcluster has several PhD students but lacks a comparable educational component to what we plan for our Graduate School. UC Berkeley's Religion, Politics and Globalization Program is a research platform comparable to ours, with a similar open forum for PhDs, Postdocs and established researchers. Another institution which has several projects and a number of PhDs and Postdocs working on themes close to RelPol is European University Institute. This institution is uniquely dedicated to doctoral education and research, and we will have extensive opportunities for collaboration through Olivier Roy. Especially interesting in this regard is the current plans at EUI to establish an MA in Governance directed at EU and government officials. Since we also plan to create educational avenues for practitioners, this opens interesting possibilities for collaboration, including exchange programmes.

We will expand our contacts with these institutions. We will actively engage with them firstly through our Guest Lecture Programme. Beyond these there are individual scholars engaged in research akin to ours and with whom RelPol members are connected. We will systematically pursue these contacts and include them in our Guest Lecture Programme. They include Professor Ute Hüsken of University of Heidelberg (previously at the University of Oslo), Carool Kersten at King's College, and Birgit Meyer at the University of Utrecht, to name a few. The Guest Lecturer Programme is specifically designed to allow us to invite possible collaboration partners on a regular basis. Our main strategy will therefore be inclusion and collaboration and building on experiences from similar initiatives.

RelPol after 2023

In the announcement of the faculty's FP III initiative it is stated that departments participating in an application should account for how the initiative will proceed after the financial support from the faculty ends in 2023. In its strategic plan adopted in September 2017 IKOS has made the strengthening of research and education within the study of religion a focal point, and has emphasised the need for drawing on the relevant resources from across its various sub-sections. If the RelPol initiative succeeds IKOS will make it a high priority to follow up and nurture its research platform and the plans for a graduate school. IKOS has already devoted one full new position in its plan for positions to be announced to the field of religion and politics. While funding for this is sought from the faculty's FPIII announcement in order to fill the position at an early date, IKOS will take over the financing after the end of FPIII, while exploring with our partner IMK the possibility of making this a joint position between our departments.

In collaboration with IMK we will also secure continued support for the Graduate School. We will use the project period to achieve a gradual rearrangement of our use of resources to make this possible. The level of continued support for research groups and new initiatives will depend on the financial resources of the departments and the degree of external funding that RelPol will be able to attract. In the course of the first five years, RelPol will build a culture for applying for external funding that will hopefully generate more research also beyond the period of faculty financial support.

²⁷ rpgp.berkeley.edu/

²⁸ www.uni-muenster.de/Religion-und-Politik/forschung/index.html

Budsjett faglige prioriteringer 2019-2023

Legg inn tekst, årsverk og beløp i de gule inputfeltene. Beløp blir automatisk beregnet på bakgrunn av gjennomsnittlige lønnstrinn. Lønnsøkning er inkludert. For rekrutteringsstillinger blir det brukt rundsum.

Institutt:	IKOS, IMK
Fagområde:	RELPOL
Beskrivelse:	

Aktivitet	Beskrivelse	Hva legges inn?	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Professor	frikjøp (tilpassing og utvikling nye emner+ cluster-ledere)	Legg inn årsverk	200 %	160 %	140 %	130 %	100 %
1. amanuensis	ny stilling på IKOS (kan vurdere deling med IMK)	Legg inn årsverk	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
Lektor		Legg inn årsverk					
Prof II	1 prof. II	Legg inn årsverk	20 %	20 %	20 %	20 %	20 %
Postdok		Legg inn årsverk					
Stipendiat		Legg inn årsverk					
Adm.støtte	adm. støtte	Legg inn årsverk	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
Drift 1	månedlige RelPol Colloquium for hvert "cluster"	Legg inn beløp	20 000	20 000	20 000	20 000	20 000
Drift 2	workshoper for hele gruppa, studenter og eksterne	Legg inn beløp	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000
Drift 3	gjesteforeleserprogram og formidlingsaktiviteter	Legg inn beløp	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000
Drift 5	Pop-up Institute	Legg inn beløp	500 000	500 000	500 000		
Drift 5	støtte til prosjektutvikling	Legg inn beløp	100 000	100 000	100 000	100 000	100 000

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Sum
Professor	1 979 378	1 623 090	1 455 708	1 385 522	1 092 431	7 536 129
1. amanuensis	808 981	829 206	849 936	871 184	892 964	4 252 271
Lektor	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prof II	188 272	192 979	197 803	202 748	207 817	989 619
Postdok	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stipendiat	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adm.støtte	598 856	613 828	629 173	644 903	661 025	3 147 785
Drift	1 020 000	1 020 000	1 020 000	520 000	520 000	4 100 000
Sum	4 595 487	4 279 102	4 152 621	3 624 358	3 374 237	20 025 805

kommenta

r: emnene er allerede tilpasset. Kun frikjøp til seminarundervisning tilsvarende 5 emner pr. semester (et halvdagsseminar pr. uke)