

O wolność wyznawania religii we współczesnym świecie

Przeciwdziałanie przyczynom dyskryminacji
i pomoc prześladowanym na przykładzie chrześcijan

CAS Centrum
Analiz
Strategicznych
INSTYTUTU WYMIARU SPRAWIEDLIWOŚCI

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The Global Crisis of Religious Freedom

A Curriculum for advancing Religious Freedom Education in Secondary Classrooms



A Report Submitted to The Institute of Justice Republic of Poland

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Project Statement

We are witnessing a global crisis in religious freedom. This crisis has profound political, economic, humanitarian, and national security implications, and stands in sharp contrast to the international covenants and declarations from the past 80 years that were designed to recognize and safeguard this basic human right. Based on the conviction that law, while incredibly important and effective, is not sufficient alone to protect this inalienable liberty, the Religious Freedom Institute (RFI) seeks to advance religious freedom by impacting culture at the grassroots level. Believing the classroom to be one of the most effective settings to accomplish this goal, RFI's Center for Religious Freedom Education (CRFE) provides a wide array of resources to teachers and learners. In 2019, RFI commenced a particularly important project when it took years of research and operational experience and created a comprehensive religious freedom curriculum for use in secondary and university classrooms. This flexible-format curriculum develops an ideological framework for decision-making that includes an abundance of empirical evidence regarding the positive correlation between religious freedom and other societal goods including political stability, economic growth, improved health outcomes, social equality, and decreased violence. The curriculum can be used in physical or virtual classrooms and can be an effective tool for building a greater commitment to religious freedom in youth and adult learners. The material and academic resources have already been utilized by teachers and learners in numerous locations around the world, and we propose here to adapt this curriculum, integrated with new research and academic resources, for use in secondary classrooms in Poland. We believe such a curriculum will complement the goals of the current system of religious education in Poland. It will respect the historic faith and traditions of the Polish people while making space for alternative viewpoints. The transformational dialogue that follows, rooted in principle and embraced by conviction, will solidify Poland's role as a model for other nations to emulate. In other words, not only will such a curriculum promote a safe, stable, and prosperous nation, but we believe that Poland has an exceptional opportunity, with its unique voice and religious-cultural-historic perspective to position itself as a thought leader in Europe and beyond on this important issue.

The Global Crisis of Religious Freedom

Studies from multiple sources, including the Religious Freedom Institute's original research and the non-partisan Pew Research Center, show a worldwide decline in religious freedom, characterized by a global increase in religious violence and persecution. In its 2016 report, Pew reported that 83% of

the world's population lived in countries with high or very high restrictions on religion that prevented the full and free exercise of their faith.¹

A particularly troubling element of the Pew report is the growing social hostilities toward and government restrictions on religion in many Western countries. In fact, the two regions where social hostility toward religious freedom experienced its greatest growth were Europe and the Americas. In the west, religious liberty is increasingly, and disastrously, being treated as an illicit claim of privilege by religious people, and a front for bigotry and hatred. This “secularization” effort that seeks to marginalize people of all faiths corresponds to an alarming reemergence of anti-Semitism and continued harassment of other religious minorities.² The ideology behind this resistance often stems from an authoritarian impulse in culture and law that imperils democracy, threatens social cohesion, and reduces the free world's capacity to fight the global upsurge in religious persecution, including religion-related terrorism.

In fact, religion itself is increasingly treated as a waning vestige of an earlier era that will soon disappear or, at best, become a sanctioned private activity that has no place in the public square. Perhaps it comes as no surprise that the rise in hostility toward religion and religious freedom has coincided with a waning commitment to the idea of universal human rights. In such places, the concept of human rights has often dissolved into an ever-shifting list of desired political outcomes making the idea of universal human rights little more than a partisan issue to be continually debated and litigated. The idea of religious freedom, as a first principle that supports other fundamental freedoms in society, is increasingly ignored.

The reality is that religious freedom, when properly understood, mitigates many of these dangerous developments, protects the right to believe or not to believe, allows all ideas to freely compete for the hearts and minds of the general public, and supports the common good in ways that benefit everyone, whatever their beliefs. Despite the overwhelming evidence for this reality, mass detention camps in China, honor killings in Pakistan, fierce persecution of non-Hindu minorities in India, abductions in Nigerian villages, attacks on Synagogues in the US, and a growing list of abuses elsewhere, remind us that the situation is often dire for people of faith. In a series of Landscape reports used by national governments and agencies around the world, the *Religious Freedom Institute* provides significant evidence of government repression, social intolerance, and religiously motivated violence in countries and regions around the world.³ While the rise of anti-Jewish or Muslim sentiment is well documented, it is actually adherents of the Christian faith that are currently harassed in more countries than any other religious group.⁴ While that harassment is consistently harsh, and at times deadly, in parts of the Middle East and North Africa, it is of significance that religious persecution of Christians also occurs in Christian dominated countries at the hands of the government or aggressive social forces.⁵

In response to these disturbing trends, the Unrepresented Nations and People Organization submitted a report in June 2020 to the United Nations General Assembly on Eliminating Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief and the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16). An underlying assumption of this report was that an “important reason why some states resort to the persecution of persons based on their distinct religion or belief is that these governments – which are most often authoritarian – perceive religious or cultural differences as a threat to

[¹] <https://www.pewforum.org/2018/06/21/global-uptick-in-government-restrictions-on-religion-in-2016/>

[²] <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/02/27/5-facts-about-religious-hostilities-in-europe/>

[³] See <https://www.religiousfreedominstitute.org/publications> for more information

[⁴] Christians faced widespread harassment in 2015, but mostly in Christian-majority countries accessed on 11.1.2020 at <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/06/09/christians-faced-widespread-harassment-in-2015-but-mostly-in-christian-majority-countries/>

[⁵] Christians faced widespread harassment in 2015, but mostly in Christian-majority countries accessed on 11.1.2020 at <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/06/09/christians-faced-widespread-harassment-in-2015-but-mostly-in-christian-majority-countries/>

state control.”⁶ To protect individuals and communities from the abuses of authoritarian governments and hostile social orders, we must advance the cause of religious freedom around the world.

Before proceeding, we acknowledge that any discussion of religious freedom must rest on a clear definition of religion itself, why religion is an integral part of the human experience, and why its place in society is rightly understood as vital to ensuring human rights and protecting human dignity. To various degrees, scholars of religion emphasize beliefs, rituals, symbols, and communities in their definition of religion. For the purposes of this proposal, we will define religion as *the human search for truths about a greater-than-human source of being and ultimate meaning, and the ordering of one's life in accord with those truths*. Everyone has an interest in such a religion because no one can reasonably be indifferent to these considerations. This search, and the conclusions that result, are foundational to human identity and essential to human dignity. In short, religion is natural to humans. Anthropologists understand this. Cognitive scientists understand this as well. In fact, there is a growing body of interdisciplinary research that suggests that the human desire and capacity to seek an unseen order—particularly a transcendent or divine agent—is deeply rooted in our nature as human beings.⁷

In short, religious freedom is the right of every person to be religious, that is, to search for truths about a greater-than-human source of being and ultimate meaning. It includes the right to order one's life in accord with those truths, both privately and publicly, in a way that draws from all the dimensions of one's personhood—i.e., reason, conscience, will, emotions, body, and soul. To deny an individual the right to pursue these human questions is to deny a fundamental human right and an important source of human dignity.

In the years following World War II, religious freedom began to finally get its deserved recognition and emerge as a universal ideal. It was rightly acknowledged as a vital step toward creating a better world where justice, stability, and human flourishing could take place. In the second half of the 20th century, large numbers of international covenants and national constitutions were written to provide explicit protections for fundamental rights, including religious freedom.

The first significant post-war affirmation of this universal right to religious freedom was undertaken by the United Nations Human Rights Commission in 1947. Charles Malik, a Lebanese diplomat who was later chosen to chair the Commission, proposed the following four principles to guide the work of the Commission:

- The human person is more important than any national or cultural group to which he may belong.
- A person's mind and conscience are his most sacred possessions.
- Any pressure from the state, church, or any other group aimed at coercing consent is unacceptable.
- Since groups, as well as individuals, may be right or wrong, each person's freedom of conscience must be supreme.

Building on the principles established by Charles Malik, the United Nations General Assembly approved in 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by a vote of 48 to 0. Influential drafters included Eleanor Roosevelt of the United States, René Cassin of France, P.C. Chang of China, and Malik himself. The key section pertaining to religious freedom is Article 18 which states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)⁸

[6] The Unrepresented Nations and People Organization (UNPO) Report to the United Nations General Assembly on Eliminating Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief and the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16). (June 2020) Accessed on 10.29.20 at <https://unpo.org/downloads/2619.pdf>

[7] One such example is Cognitive Science, Religion, and Theology: From Human Minds to Divine Minds by Justin L. Barrett.

[8] The Universal Declaration of Human Rights accessed on 10.27.2020 at <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

In the decades that followed, additional covenants and declarations expanded the initial work of the UDHR. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966 and sent to states for signature and ratification. For those states that signed and ratified the ICCPR, it “entered into force” in 1976. The ICCPR affirmed Article 18 when it declared: “No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.”⁹

In 1981, the United Nations General Assembly issued a Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. According to this Declaration, no one should be subject to religious intolerance or discrimination “by any state, institution, group of persons, or person on grounds of religion or other beliefs.” Religious intolerance and discrimination is defined as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on religion or belief and having as its purpose or as its effect nullification or impairment of the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis.”¹⁰ The Declaration also led in 1986 to the establishment of the position of United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief.

It was during these years, that dozens of countries took the additional step of recognizing religious freedom in their national constitutions and guiding legal documents. A small sample would include:

- All persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, [practice,] and propagate religion. *Constitution of India Part III. 25. (1)*
- No law may be passed respecting an establishment of religion or impairing the free exercise of religion. *Constitution of the Federated States of Micronesia-Article IV. Section 2*
- Citizens [shall] enjoy freedom of religious belief. *Constitution of China-Article 36*
- All the inhabitants of the Nation are entitled ... to profess freely their religion. ... No state organ, public organization or individual may compel citizens to believe in, or not believe in, any religion. *Constitution of Argentina-Section 14*
- Freedom of conscience and religion shall be ensured to everyone. *Constitution of Poland-Article 53*

This growing formalization of religious freedom’s importance eventually went beyond legislation to the creation of several national agencies and an international apparatus for promoting its importance as a fundamental human right. In 1998, the United States drew upon the longstanding American commitment to religious freedom and these international declarations when the U.S. Congress passed the *International Religious Freedom Act*, or IRFA, later amended in 2016 by the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act. The goal of IRFA was to advance religious freedom in US foreign policy and to create strategic partnership in this venture.

In order to carry out this new international religious freedom policy, the US Congress took several key steps including the creation of the *Office of International Religious Freedom* headed by an Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom who reports directly to the Secretary of State and the creation of the *United States Commission on International Religious Freedom* (USCIRF), an independent, bipartisan U.S. federal government advisory commission dedicated to advancing religious freedom around the world. For its part, USCIRF is led by a group of Commissioners appointed by the President and/or Congressional leadership and a professional staff led by an Executive Director.

Other countries soon followed. In the UK, the “*All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief*” exists to raise awareness and profile of international freedom of religion or belief as a human right among Parliamentarians, media, government and the general public in the UK”¹¹

[⁹] International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights accessed on 10.27.2020 at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>

[¹⁰] Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief accessed on 10.27.2020 at <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ReligionOrBelief.aspx>

[¹¹] All Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief/About US accessed at <https://appgfreedomofreligionorbelief.org/about/>

while the *International Panel of Parliamentarians for Freedom of Religion or Belief* (IPPFoRB) exists as “a network of parliamentarians and legislators from around the world committed to combatting religious persecution and advancing freedom of religion or belief.”¹² The *International Contact Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief* was established by Canada in June 2015 and remains an important international working group for advancing religious freedom globally.¹³

In Europe, the *European Parliament Intergroup on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Religious Tolerance* was established in 2015 as “a group of like-minded MEPs dedicated to promote and protect FoRB in the EU’s external actions.”¹⁴ The EU *Special Envoy for Promotion of Freedom of Religion or Belief Faith and Freedom Summits* also highlights Europe’s expanding commitment in this area.

One particularly strategic development that highlights the growth of global infrastructure to support religious freedom is the series of highly visible *Ministerials To Advance Religious Freedom*, the first of which was held in 2018 in Washington DC. The 3rd annual ministerial was scheduled to meet in Warsaw in the summer of 2020 before the global pandemic necessitated a move to largely virtual events. It was at the second ministerial that the International Religious Freedom Alliance – an alliance of 27 like-minded countries—was first announced. Launched in early 2020, the Alliance is just the latest example of how the nations of the world are working to develop a support structure to defend this precious human right. Poland has taken an active role in many of these working groups and alliances. Poland was an early member of the International Contact Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief, a prominent player in the aforementioned ministerial, and is well-positioned to take a greater leadership role.

The results of this growing commitment to religious freedom have been noticeable. According to a recent report from the Pew Research Center, 155 countries around the world offered constitutional or other legal guarantees of religious freedom and the momentum continues to grow. Stated another way, in 2016 83% of countries with a population of at least two million offered constitutional guarantees of religious freedom, and another 8% offered additional legal guarantees of religious freedom. From this perspective, the outlook seems encouraging.

Unfortunately, these legal guarantees have too often been ignored or proven ineffective in increasing numbers of nations around the world. In 2019, the Pew Research Center issued its tenth annual report on the status of religious freedom globally. It found that government restrictions on religion, and social hostilities toward religion, have actually risen even as these same governments continued to give lip service to the contrary.¹⁵ So, ironically, while the rationale and infrastructure to support religious freedom enjoy widespread support like no time in the history of the world, protection of religious freedom by governments is eroding worldwide and hundreds of millions of people are subject to severe restrictions on their religious freedom, many of them suffering violent persecution. In fact, the Pew Research Center reported that in 2018 that “the global median level of government restrictions on religion – that is, laws, policies and actions by officials that impinge on religious beliefs and practices” had reached an all-time high since Pew began tracking these trends in 2007.¹⁶ In March 2020 the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) presented findings to the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief that showed, paradoxically, “that most countries

[12] <https://www.ippforb.com/about>

[13] International Contact Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief accessed at https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/human_rights-droits_homme/freedom-religion-liberte-group_groupe.aspx?lang=eng

[14] European Parliament Intergroup on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Religious Tolerance/About accessed at <http://www.religiousfreedom.eu/about-us/>

[15] A Closer Look at How Religious Restrictions Have Risen Around the World accessed on 11.02.2020 at <https://www.pewforum.org/2019/07/15/a-closer-look-at-how-religious-restrictions-have-risen-around-the-world/>

[16] https://www.pewforum.org/2020/11/10/in-2018-government-restrictions-on-religion-reach-highest-level-globally-in-more-than-a-decade/?utm_source=adaptivemailer&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=rel%20-%202011-10%20religious%20restrictions&org=982&lvl=100&ite=7471&lea=1650228&ctr=o&par=1&trk=

that systematically violate religious freedom have a constitution that protects the right.”¹⁷ There is an abundance of evidence from governmental and non-governmental sources that corroborates this disturbing trend and a series of landscape reports released by the Religious Freedom Institute in recent years further chronicles the situation.¹⁸

It would seem that the international enthusiasm for religious liberty that seems to be growing is either a vapor destined not to last or, more likely, a practice that was never fully supported. What we must conclude is that the rapid deterioration of religious freedom and the growth of violent religious persecution in many parts of the world today – including in states with legal protections for religion and religious freedom—demonstrates that laws and covenants are not enough. If a commitment to religious freedom is to be truly embraced and sustained, its value must be understood, and it must be protected, in both law and culture.

Growing Evidence for Religious Freedom’s Benefits

There is a growing effort made by certain groups to portray religious freedom as a tool used by powerful interests to the detriment of minority or marginalized groups when, in fact, the opposite is true. Religious freedom not only protects the fundamental human rights of all, but it accelerates the prospects for individual and social flourishing. This is true in fragile, conflict-prone settings where the intersection between the chaos of crisis and religious minority status dramatically increases vulnerability.¹⁹ This is also true in prosperous, relatively stable settings where law and order have been traditionally prized as fundamentally important. The key point is that the evidence suggests that religious liberty is central to the bundled group of fundamental freedoms that enable democracy to take root and thrive regardless of circumstances. Evidence from the field of social science confirms that the deeper religious liberty is embedded in a given society, the more that society is opened to a wide range of other liberties. As sociologist Brian J. Grim notes, “at the core of religious expression is freedom of speech and at the core of freedom of worship is freedom to assemble. Therefore, the repression of one freedom will inevitably lead to the repression of another.”²⁰

Research undertaken by the Center for Religious Freedom at the Hudson Institute also illustrates that religious liberty strongly correlates with civil and political liberty, freedom of the press, and sustainable democracy. Thus, it seems appropriate that many refer to religious freedom as “the thin end of liberty’s wedge.” Certainly, an important part of religious freedom’s appeal is the ideological foundation it provides for the political norms on which democracy rests. Without a commitment to religious freedom, the authoritarian impulse referenced earlier in this report tends to overwhelm a culture and its commitment to protecting basic human rights.

One recent example of this is what has been referred to as the securitisation [sic] of religion in the name of national security.²¹ Prevalent in countries that have an ideological doctrine as a basis for their legitimacy, it allows governments to frame religious practices as subversive to the state and its interests thereby permitting extraordinary, and occasionally brutal, measures to suppress any “dissent” to the status quo. Some of the most obvious examples include the Uighur education camps in China

[17] UNPO Submission – Report to the UN GA – Freedom of Religion and the Achievement of SDG 16 p.3 accessed on 10.28.2020 at <https://unpo.org/downloads/2619.pdf>

[18] Religious Freedom Institute’s Landscape Reports available at <https://www.religiousfreedominstitute.org/publications>

[19] The Religious Freedom Institute released Protecting Vulnerable Religious Minorities in Conflicts & Crises that was jointly commissioned by the United Kingdom’s (UK) Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Department for International Development (DFID) to issue guidance on assisting distinctly vulnerable religious minorities.

[20] Grim, B., & Finke, R. (2010). *Frontmatter. The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge Studies in Social Theory, Religion and Politics, pp. I-Vi). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[21] For more info read the UNPO Report to the United Nations General Assembly at <https://unpo.org/downloads/2619.pdf>

and anti-extremist legislation in Russia that is conveniently used to silence opposition groups mainly on religious grounds.

But beyond a commitment to the principles of democracy, the appeal of religious freedom surely must include its relationship to other desirable social outcomes including public order, economic growth, better health outcomes, more equality for women, less government corruption, and less violence including religious extremism and terrorism. Dr. Brian Grim's research again provides an important connection between religious freedom and various social outcomes (see Figure 1, *Faith by the Numbers: The Socio-Economic Impact of Religion in the U.S.*).

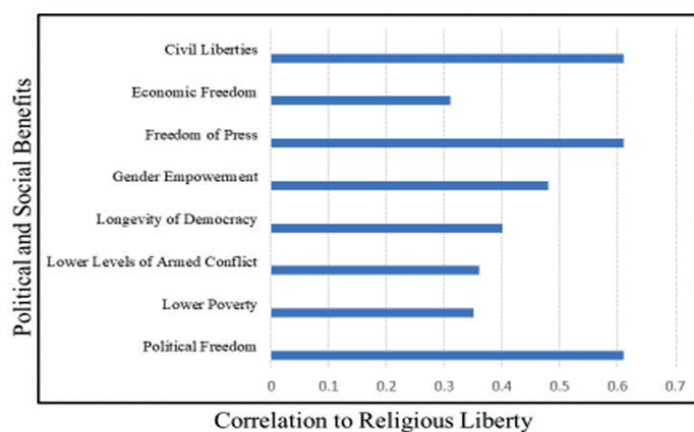


Figure 1, *Faith by the Numbers: The Socio-Economic Impact of Religion in the U.S.*

One correlation that is often overlooked is religious freedom's connection to economic development. Grim's research established a strong correlation between religious freedom and economic freedom. His conclusions were supported by the findings of the Center for Religious Freedom at the Hudson Institute that also finds religious liberty strongly correlates with economic freedom and flourishing. In explaining the connection between religious freedom and economic development, Timur Khan explains that "religious freedom generally promotes economic advancement by boosting other freedoms that are essential to economic development. Where religious freedoms are respected, people find it more natural to respect political, artistic, and social freedoms." In contrast, he notes that "restrictions on producing, sharing, or executing ideas can limit economic development. Religious restrictions can hold back economic development by constraining what can be discussed, by narrowing the social spaces in which new ideas can be shared, by limiting communication among social groups, and by ruling out certain ideas merely because of their religious associations."²² In other words, religious freedom aids economic development by allowing the free exchange of ideas within a non-threatening environment that respects diversity of opinion.

There is also a growing awareness that religious freedom can play an important role in sustainability issues. In 2016, prepared notes for the United Nations Environment Programme [sic] in Nairobi, explored "the nexus between environment, religion and culture" for the stated purpose of understanding and appreciating "how culture and religion can contribute to the protection and preservation of the natural environment." The committee found evidence that there was significant common ground between various religious perspectives on the importance of stewardship of the planet's resources. Therefore, the committee concluded that inter-faith dialogue and religious leadership could be an important factor in achieving the UN sustainability goals because of the "considerable financial,

[²²] Religious Freedom Promotes Economic Development accessed on 10.29.2020 at <https://www.religiousfreedominstitute.org/cornerstone/2016/6/14/3dyuqwbsghmkwbbor7g15wndftdgzc>

moral and ethical influence at their disposal.”²³ Without the freedom to interject religious influence, sustainability and other issues will suffer and lack the moral imperative and perspective these issues might otherwise enjoy.

It is important to note that just because religious liberty “correlates” with other good things, that doesn’t necessarily mean that religious liberty “causes” those other good things. But the evidence presented by modern research and corroborated by historical evidence strongly suggests that religious liberty is a central feature of the bundled group of fundamental freedoms that enable democracy to take root and thrive. Without religious freedom in the bundle, the evidence suggests, the other freedoms and their benefits are unlikely to be sustained over time. History also suggests that when allowed to flourish, faith-based actors and groups establish public facing charities, hospitals, schools, and other entities that benefit the common good.

In this sense, religious freedom is rightly understood to be not simply a private function, or even the mere absence of physical persecution or restrictions. Rather, it is a set of institutions, laws, and habits that yield equality under the law for all religious actors and ideas and allows for the free public expression of those ideas and values. The establishment of legal norms has been an important step, but laws clearly are insufficient for securing religious freedom for everyone, everywhere. True religious freedom requires the presence of a mutually reinforcing web of government protections, established freedoms, and social norms and practices. In short, a full-out cultural commitment is needed.

Thus, legal protections, while important, must also be embraced by culture – that is, by ordinary citizens and non-governmental civil society organizations – if religious freedom is to yield its benefits. This highlights the need for a focused program that emphasizes freedom of religion as the “wedge” that embeds other civil liberties into a society’s psyche.

Research and Adaptation of Religious Freedom Curriculum

how can a cultural framework that reinforces and gives meaning to the legal framework be attained when legal protections prove incomplete? Certainly, the answer won’t be found in more legislation and litigation. This does not diminish the potential importance of these activities but it does underscore the importance of a strategy that embraces an organic, grassroots approach. The nation’s youth must be allowed to explore the advantages of religious freedom, embrace the truths they discover, and express those truths in ways advantageous for themselves, their communities, and future generations. To this end, a school-embedded curriculum is the surest way to guarantee wide coverage in this vital demographic. We believe a curriculum that incorporates the unified voices of religious leaders, government officials, educators, scientists, and others will capture student interest and build a culture of success, stability, and respect, that positions Poland for long-term success as a thought leader in Europe and around the world. We propose this curriculum begin at the upper secondary level as research suggests that students at this level have both the intellectual capacity and inquisitive nature that ideally suits them for a course of study like the one we propose. The curriculum can also be most easily adapted for more or less advanced audiences from this level.

[²³] UNEP (2016). Environment, Religion and Culture in the Context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi. accessed on 11.1.2021 at https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/8696/-Environment_religion_and_culture_in_the_context_of_the_2030_agenda_for_sustainable_development-2016Environment_religion_and_culture_in_the_context_.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y

Proposal of Services: An Introduction

In 2019, the Center for Religious Freedom Education housed at the Religious Freedom Institute (Washington DC, USA) took years of research and operational experience in the field of religious freedom and developed a curriculum for use in secondary and university classrooms. One of many curricula developed by the Center, this particular curriculum is a comprehensive exploration of the foundational principles of religious freedom that also uses empirical evidence regarding the positive correlation between religious freedom and other desired social outcomes (e.g. economic prosperity, social justice, human equality, personal safety, etc.). This varied approach equips students to safeguard these values and advance them throughout their sphere of influence. The curriculum that we herein propose would heavily draw from an existing AFFC curriculum © and other resources connected to RFI Publications, global partnerships, and operations.

Impact Statement

By equipping students in Poland with the knowledge and skills they need to become champions of religious freedom, they will become positive voices for a strong, free, just, and equitable Poland where human rights are defended, human dignity is valued, and human beings are free to flourish according to the dictates of their consciences.

Course Design

This flexible-format curriculum can be used in physical or virtual classrooms making its appearance a timely addition to help address the challenges of virtual or hybrid learning that schools and educators around the world are facing. Furthermore, the sequence of lessons can be integrated into an existing course or used as a stand-alone unit giving educators additional flexibility in its use.

The curriculum will consist of a 4-unit course of study containing a total of 20 lessons. Each of the 20 lessons is designed to require 4⁰–5⁰ contact minutes to adequately cover which, in most academic settings, approximates to 1 class period. The “spotlight on learning” sections provide several project-based options that allows the student to explore complex questions in an authentic and engaging format. Thus, total coverage time depends on the extent to which the classroom teacher uses these resources as the “spotlight on learning” sections provide optional activities that can be used to deepen student learning. These supplemental learning activities are made available to the teacher and can be printed or distributed electronically to the students. The flexible utilization of these activities also allows the curriculum to function as either a dedicated course of study or a supplement to another course. The program could also be expanded in a sequenced fashion to include Middle schools or universities at the end of a pilot period.

Explanation of Terminology

Student Lessons:	Content-rich, student lessons focused on a particular theme or topic. Pedagogical format is an adaptation of the successful 5-E instructional design
Portraits in Leadership:	Biographical sketches and corresponding learning resources of individuals that serve as inspirational models for students to imitate in life and career
Spotlight on Learning:	Focused and innovative learning activities that help students deepen their understanding of the lesson content
Assessments:	Evaluation instruments designed to assess student learning and acquisition of intended learning outcomes

Course Content

Assessment: Pre-Course Diagnostic Test

A diagnostic test consisting of a core values index and religious freedom literacy questions will be administered prior to the first lesson. The test will consist of approximately 1⁵–20 multiple choice and Likert scale questions. The test will be readministered at the conclusion of the curriculum using a value-added modeling approach. Results will be collected, analyzed, and distributed to relevant parties to evaluate program effectiveness and enhance future decision making.

Unit I. How is Religious Freedom Rooted in Human Nature?

Overview: Using the lens of anthropology and human geography, this unit considers how religion and the right to its free exercise are rooted in human nature itself. The study of human culture strongly suggests a universal desire to search for truths about a greater-than-human source of being and ultimate meaning that is greater than ourselves. We are seemingly hard wired by creation – obliged by our consciences – to orient our lives to that truth once it is realized. Therefore, to repress religion and its free exercise or to coerce any person to believe in what his conscience tells him is not the truth is to deny the very essence of what it means to be human.

Learning Objectives: After completing this lesson, the student will:

- 1.1. Define the meaning of religion from the perspective of anthropology
- 1.2. Explain how human beings are naturally inclined toward religion
- 1.3. Summarize the significance of religion to human identity
- 1.4. Contrast the meaning of natural rights with legal rights
- 1.5. Explain why individuals need religious freedom to fulfill obligations to their conscience
- 1.6. Construct an interdisciplinary case for embracing religious freedom

Lesson 1: What is Religious Freedom and Why is it Important?

This lesson will define religious freedom and broadly relate its correlation to a political and civic culture that protects fundamental human rights and supports democratic institutions and processes.

Lesson 2: The Moral Case for Religious Freedom

This session will use evidence from the social sciences to help participants recognize and articulate the universal nature of religion. After making the case that religion is universal and natural, its free exercise as a fundamental human right and essential role in protecting human dignity will be further explored.

Lesson 3: Portraits in Leadership

Religious Freedom and a Sense of Shared Justice: Religious leaders who used their religious influence and freedoms to create a more just society will be highlighted.

Lesson 4: Spotlight on Learning

This session will be a guided experience where students complete project-based exercises linked to lessons 1–3.

Unit II. Do Global Religions Support Religious Freedom?

Overview: This unit explores how adherents of different religious traditions—with an emphasis on Christianity, Islam, and Judaism—draw on their own sacred sources to make explicitly religious arguments for religious freedom. In the process, it will be established that religious freedom is not a limited, sectarian impulse but rather a global practice with wide support from the human community.

Learning Objectives: After completing this lesson, the student will:

- 2.1 Explain, in broad terms, how religious freedom is supported by various faith traditions
- 2.2 Describe the ideological and theological contributions of select historic figures to the cause of religious freedom
- 2.3 Provide examples of historical antecedents to modern notions of religious freedom
- 2.4 Create a comprehensive case for religious freedom from the perspective of a single, chosen faith tradition

Lesson 5: The Theological Case for Religious Freedom

This session demonstrates how followers of different religious traditions can draw on their own sacred sources to make explicitly religious arguments for religious freedom thereby allowing them to acknowledge the freedom of others to draw conclusions different than their own without sacrificing their own beliefs and identity.

Lesson 6: A Brief History of Religious Freedom

This session will explore the significant milestones in the growth of religious freedom around the world.

Lesson 7: The Theological Case for Religious Freedom: A Dialogue

This session provides an opportunity for participants to engage in a dialogue that asks and answers the challenges to religious freedom for all by their own faith tradition and context.

Lesson 8: Portraits in Leadership

Focus: *Religious Freedom and Civic Duty*. Religious leaders who used their collective religious influence to create a more educated and civic-minded society will be highlighted.

Lesson 9: Spotlight on Learning

This session will be a guided experience where students complete project-based exercises linked to lessons 5–8.

Lesson 10. Assessment-Exam #1

A 40-question exam will assess content from lessons 1–9.

Unit III. Are there Political Reasons to Support Religious Freedom?

Overview: This unit explores the fundamental relationship between religious freedom and other civil liberties and social goods. It is relatively easy to see that at the core of religious expression is freedom of speech and at the core of freedom of worship is freedom to assemble. But research shows a positive correlation between religious freedom and a host of other civil liberties. This lesson will establish a theoretical framework for understanding this relationship, discuss practical applications of that relationship, and then explore how a proper understanding of these correlations should frame modern debates about the relationship of religion and the social order.

Learning Objectives: After completing this lesson, the student will:

- 3.1 Identify what equality under the law provides to all religious actors
- 3.2 Explain the relationship between religious freedom and other societal goods
- 3.3 Describe how religious freedom contributes to a civil and stable society
- 3.4 Explain how religious freedom is foundational to political freedom
- 3.5 Construct a meaningful path of engagement for people of faith in the public square

Lesson 11: The Political Case for Religious Freedom

This session explores the fundamental relationship between religious freedom and effective political governance. True politics, when properly understood and appropriately practiced, is not mere partisanship but rather a necessary tool for society in maintain order, promote justice, ensure equality, and support the common good.

Lesson 12: How does Religious Freedom Support the Common Good?

This session explores the evidence for the proposition that religious freedom is an inalienable human right that positively correlates to a host of other civil liberties that are fundamental to stable and flourishing democratic societies.

Lesson 13: Portraits in Leadership

Focus: *Religious Freedom and the Common Good*. Religious leaders who envisioned a society where religious freedom would safeguard the people, support free elections, inhibit public corruption, and promote economic prosperity will be highlighted.

Lesson 14: Portraits in Leadership

Focus: *Religious Freedom and Equal Rights for Marginalized Communities*. Religious leaders who believed that religiously-motivated action was a productive way to end discrimination, hostility, or violence against marginalized communities will be highlighted.

Lesson 15: Spotlight on Learning

This session will be a guided experience where students complete project-based exercises linked to lessons 11–14.

Unit IV. Is Religious Freedom a Universal Ideal?

Overview: This lesson considers how religion and its free exercise are not exclusive to any one nation or people. Since World War II, many international declarations, universal covenants, and national constitutions have recognized and codified religious freedom as a fundamental human right and central to human dignity. However, the growing support for protecting religious freedom that exists in some parts of the world coincides with the rapid deterioration of that same freedom elsewhere.

The student will:

- 4.1 Assess how recent international agreements and covenants define religion and religious freedom
- 4.2 Identify examples of resistance to the otherwise growing embrace of religious freedom
- 4.3 Analyze global interdependencies in the quest for universal religious freedom
- 4.4 Use established legal principles to articulate thoughtful responses to modern critical debates
- 4.5 Demonstrate insight into the political and cultural complexities of securing religious freedom
- 4.6 Explain how religion and religious freedom can be a force for good in an era of globalization

Lesson 16: The Global Commitment to Religious Freedom: International Declarations and Covenants, Part One

This session considers the legal and ethical standards that have been embraced by the global community through numerous declarations, legal covenants, and national constitutions.

Lesson 17: The Global Commitment to Religious Freedom: International Declarations and Covenants, Part Two

Building on Part One, this session considers contemporary challenges to translate modern declarations and covenants into reality around the world.

Lesson 18: Portraits in Leadership

This session will be devoted to the life and legacy of Pope John Paul II and his continued influence around the world.

Lesson 19: Spotlight on Learning

This session will be a guided experience where students complete project-based exercises linked to lessons 16–18.

Lesson 20. Assessment-Exam #2

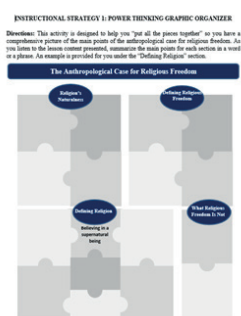
A comprehensive 60-question exam covering lessons 1–19. 40 questions cover lesson 11-19 material and 20 questions review lessons 1–9.

Assessment: Post-Course Diagnostic Test

A diagnostic test consisting of a core values index and religious freedom literacy questions will be re-administered to measure participant change and program effectiveness.

Embedded learning Exercises

The curriculum will utilize existing learning exercises from academic resources developed by RFI and also contain new resources developed exclusively for this curriculum. From a learner perspective, these exercises will be a combination of printable and web-based resources designed to connect with a variety of cognitive preferences. From a pedagogical perspective, these exercises will complement the curriculum's 5E instructional design and allow teachers to customize their classroom choices (if permissible).



INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY 41: "WHY RELIGIOUS FREEDOM?"

WHY RELIGIOUS FREEDOM?

Directions: Read the following list of pairs. For each pair, determine which one is a more important motivation for supporting religious freedom. Put a check in the appropriate box and then add up your total score based on the directions below. Your classroom instructor will explain your results to you.

	A	B
11 Economic Opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	12 Freedom to Assemble
13 Personal Autonomy	<input type="checkbox"/>	14 Social Harmony
15 Free Speech	<input type="checkbox"/>	16 Human Dignity
17 Personal Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	18 Character Integrity
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TOTAL SCORE

WHY RELIGIOUS FREEDOM?

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TOTAL SCORE

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- Religious Freedom and the Common Good: The Importance of Religious Actors and Ideas in Public Life by Thomas Farr at <https://www.cardus.ca/research/law/reports/religious-freedom-and-the-common-good/>
- Religious Freedom As the First Freedom by Matthew J. Frank at <https://www.religiousfreedominstitute.org/cornerstone/2016/6/14/religious-freedom-as-the-first-freedom?rq=Free%20Exercise>
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The Truth about Religious Freedom by Michael Novak at <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2006/03/the-truth-about-religious-freedom>

Universal Declaration of Human Rights at <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

Voices: Are houses of worship essential? A look at the science by Joshua Hays & Byron R. Johnson at <https://www.baptiststandard.com/opinion/voices/are-houses-of-worship-essential-a-look-at-the-science/>

What in the World is Religious Freedom? by Thomas Farr at <https://www.religiousfreedominstitute.org/blog/what-in-the-world-is-religious-freedom>

Who Are You? Reaffirming Human Dignity by Andrew Bennett and Aaron Neil at <https://www.cardus.ca/research/law/reports/who-are-you-reaffirming-human-dignity/>

Would America Be Better Off without Religion? by Casey Chalk at <https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2020/06/61385/>

Promotion of Curriculum

An important part of the success of any education resource is its ability to access those individuals it seeks to serve. The majority of the RFI staff have a background as professors, scholars, and administrators in secondary and/or higher education settings. Additionally, the RFI offers robust student programming that includes an innovative internship program and several student leadership programs—both virtual and on-site. Thus, the RFI has leveraged its relationships and programming to create an extensive network of academic partnerships, both domestic and international, from which to recruit. The RFI Communications team and the Center for Religious Freedom Education typically utilize this network, targeted marketing strategies, and traditional social media techniques to recruit students and promote a new curriculum.

In addition to traditional social media pages, we have found it effective to utilize teacher message boards, resource sites, and educational vendors. Also, academic conferences, trade journals, and associations can be fertile platforms for promoting programs and concepts.

Curriculum Team

Lead Designers and Project Directors

DAVID K. TRIMBLE, J.D.

Vice President for Public Policy. Director, Center for Religious Freedom Education

After serving as a principal and Of Counsel at the leading D.C. firm of Van Scoyoc Associates for many years, Mr. Trimble now leads the Religious Freedom Institute's nationwide and international initiatives in secondary and higher education. Within that context, he brings a wealth of experience to the academy and civil society in international affairs, foreign policy, higher education, and shaping domestic and international public policy. With a degree in law, expert knowledge from working with the executive and legislative branches of the US federal government at the highest levels, plus years of teaching religion at the graduate level, Mr. Trimble understands the vitally important role of education to stable societies and the myriad threats that challenge both academic and religious freedom.

Throughout his career, Mr. Trimble has focused on the intersection between religion and policy. He is recognized in the U.S. and abroad for his international religious freedom advocacy on behalf of ethnic and religious minorities and for his acute knowledge of legislative process. Mr. Trimble's leadership at the RFI's Center for Religious Freedom Education is based on classroom expertise, launching seminal programs in education, and driving new policies and innovation. Under his leadership, the Center is committed to supporting the free exercise of religious freedom for all through education with a voice that informs tomorrow's young leaders and shapes sound policies for a more civil America. Mr. Trimble holds a Juris Doctorate from Texas A&M University School of Law, a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and a Bachelor of Arts from Campbellsville University. In addition, Mr. Trimble has completed post-graduate studies at both Southwestern and Baylor University.

DR. JIM BENNETT, ED.D.

Associate Director, Center for Religious Freedom Education and Senior Fellow, North America Action Team

Jim is a Fulbright recipient and teaching and learning specialist with nearly 30 years of experience in curriculum design, instructional coaching, and digital learning. He is currently the Associate Director for the Center for Religious Freedom Education and Senior Fellow, North America Action Team at the Religious Freedom Institute (RFI). He also serves as an Adjunct Professor of Global Learning and Innovation at a US University. Prior to these current roles, he spent 5 years as the Director of Global Education Initiatives for Clemson University (South Carolina, USA) and served as adjunct faculty in the Department of Youth, Family, and Community Studies. He was also the founding director of Clemson's Global Leadership Institute and the primary content developer for the Global Learning Institute for faculty where he assisted with the internationalization of the university curriculum. Before that, he was the Senior International Officer at a small university in Wisconsin.

In addition to his responsibilities at RFI, he serves as the Senior Director for Global Learning at the EDGE Institute, a non-profit that provides educational programs to youth in fragile contexts around the world. He also spent 11 years as the instructional coordinator for the summer language programs at Sichuan University in Chengdu, China.

Over the last three decades, he has held a variety of faculty and administrative positions in secondary and higher education including social studies teacher, professor, department chair, college dean, and several VP positions. His interest in international exchange and partnerships has taken him to six continents and nearly fifty countries to lecture at universities, lead study abroad programs, direct

teacher training programs, develop curricula, contribute to ethnographic research projects, participate in humanitarian efforts, and consult with officials on national and regional issues. He has a B.S. in Social Studies Education, M.Ed. in History, and Ed.D in Curriculum and Instruction with post-doc work in cultural engagement.

Consultants and Contributing Authors

DR. KENT HILL, PH.D.

Kent Hill, a co-founder of the Religious Freedom Institute (RFI) and its first Executive Director, now serves as RFI's Senior Fellow for Eurasia, Middle East, and Islam. For the previous six years, he was Senior Vice President at World Vision, U.S., the founding and biggest national office within World Vision International -- one of the largest faith-based relief and development organizations in the world.

Previously Hill served for two years as Vice President of the John Templeton Foundation and eight years as Assistant Administrator for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) where he was responsible for U.S. foreign assistance to the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Earlier in his career, Dr. Hill was President of Eastern Nazarene College (Quincy, MA) for nine years, President of the Institute on Religion and Democracy for six years, and Associate Professor of History at Seattle Pacific University for six years. His Ph.D. is from the University of Washington and he has published a book on religion in the Soviet Union.

DR. JOHN HITTINGER, PH.D.

Dr. Hittinger is the Director of the Saint John Paul II Institute at the University of St. Thomas and brings a wealth of education and experience in John Paul II studies. He is a Professor of philosophy who has spoken to more than 100 audiences and published numerous articles on the thought of John Paul II. A seasoned traveler throughout Poland, having visited more than a dozen times, he regularly collaborates with scholars at a number of Polish universities and institutes, including the University of Silesia/Katowice, the Catholic University of Lublin, the Josef Tischner Institute/Krakow, the Warsaw John Paul II Center and the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow. He teaches both graduate and undergraduate courses on John Paul II.