

Center Director Miroslav Volf to co-teach Faith & Globalization course with former British Prime Minister Tony Blair this fall:

Miroslav Volf, Center Director and Henry B. Wright Professor of Theology at Yale Divinity School, will co-teach a course this fall with former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Titled “Faith and Globalization,” the course is being designed jointly with Yale Divinity School and Yale School of Management.

“The effects of toxic versions of faith are vividly displayed before the eyes of the world—of faith that maims and kills, that blinds and misleads, of faith that undermines human flourishing. But many of us have experienced faith’s incomparable healing effects as well. One of the great challenges of the 21st century is how to eliminate toxins from the world of religion, and let faith do its proper job—help mend what is broken and guide people into the land of promise. From my perspective, this is what the exploration of the relationship between faith and globalization is all about,” Prof. Volf said recently.

The seminar, which will be open to a small number of Yale graduate and undergraduate students, will each week examine a single element of the overall topic, including the role of faiths in the processes of globalization, faith and violence, the public role of faith in a liberal democracy, and faith and reconciliation. The course will be taught three successive fall terms. As Mr. Blair said in late May when the plan was

announced, “The idea is to create a course which, over time, can become an enduring part of Yale’s teaching; can be spun off to other universities in different parts of the globe; can stimulate original research and be a resource for those working in this field.”

The course will partly draw on Prof. Volf’s research on forgiveness, non-violence, reconciliation, and memory, as well as the Center’s work on faith in public life and Muslim-Christian relations. It will also draw on the work and involvement of the Yale School of Management. A number of universities expressed interest in participating with Mr. Blair’s Faith Foundation; he chose to become involved in a partnership with Yale in part because of the imaginative way in which the two schools were willing to work together in this field.

A public website is being developed for the site which will include reading material for the course and podcasts of portions of the class sessions. A link to that website will be available from here when the course site goes live. Additional information about Mr. Blair’s Faith Foundation can be found at <http://tonyblairfaithfoundation.org/>