



Teaching Religion in Public Schools

A Panel Addressing Recent Changes in Kentucky Law

Tuesday, April 18, 2017, 7 – 8:30 pm

Dr. Brad Bowman, Moderator
Professor of Islamic History at U of L

Davidson Hall, U of L Belknap Campus, Room 110

Free, All Invited to Participate in this Important Discussion
Parking is available in the parking lot next to Davidson Hall.

SB 138 Kentucky Senate Bill: An Act relating to Bible literacy courses in the public schools. Create a new section of KRS Chapter 156 to require the Kentucky Board of Education to promulgate administrative regulations to establish an elective social studies course on the Hebrew Scriptures, Old Testament of the Bible, the New Testament, or a combination of the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament of the Bible; require that the course provide to students knowledge of biblical content, characters, poetry, and narratives that are prerequisites to understanding contemporary society and culture, including literature, art, music, mores, oratory, and public policy; permit students to use various translations of the Bible for the course; amend KRS 158.197 to permit a school council to offer an elective social studies course on the Hebrew Scriptures, Old Testament of the Bible, the New Testament, or a combination of the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament of the Bible. (HB 128, with similar wording, was passed and signed by Gov. Beavin)

PANEL PRESENTERS

Samuel Marcossan - Religion in Public Schools: The Endorsement Line that Cannot Be Crossed

The Constitution permits the discussion of religion in public schools, but it does not permit public school officials (including teachers) to endorse religion or one particular religious viewpoint. Marcossan received his J.D. from Yale Law School, and is a Professor at U of L's Brandeis School of Law. He teaches courses in criminal law, constitutional law, and civil rights; in 2009 he received the University's Distinguished Teaching Award.

Dr. Joe Brennan – The Complexities of Teaching Sacred Texts in the Public School

The proposed legislation is concerning particularly with reference to the qualifications and standards for possible instructors, and the need for an expanded curriculum including other religions and cultures and their contributions to the advancement of civilization. Dr. Brennan obtained his MDiv from Harvard University, and his doctorate in Social Work from the Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Currently he is the Director of the Kentucky Labor Institute.

Siddique Malik - The Dangers of Statutorily Injecting Religion into Public Schools

Malik is an information technology professional with interest in history and political evolution, and a free-lance writer for the Courier-Journal for 15 years.

Dr. Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty - The Moral Imperative of Interfaith Literacy for the Sake of the Commons

Dr. Hinson-Hasty is Chair and Professor, Department of Theology, Director, Peace Studies Minor, Co-Advisor, Women and Gender Studies Minor, Bellarmine University. She received her MDiv from Louisville Presbyterian Seminary and her PhD from Union Presbyterian Seminary.

Dr. Edwin S. Segal - Does the Proposed Legislation Deal Well with Kentucky's Cultural and Religious Diversity?

Dr. Segal, Professor Emeritus at U of L, is a cultural anthropologist who regularly taught Comparative Religious Systems, a course designed to help students become aware of religious diversity both in the U.S. and in the world, during his 40 years tenure at U of L.



THE SALAAM NETWORK

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This panel discussion was organized by The Salaam Network: www.salaamnetwork.org, info@salaamnetwork.org