

# Karen Taliaferro

School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership  
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## Experience

August 2017-present Arizona State University: Assistant Professor, School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership

2016-2017 Villanova University: Visiting Assistant Professor, Augustine & Culture Seminar Program

2015-2016 Princeton University: Thomas W. Smith Postdoctoral Research Associate Fellowship, James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions

2014-2015 Georgetown University School of Foreign Service – Qatar: Research Fellow

2006-2008 Peace Corps Volunteer, Tilouguite, Morocco

## Education

August 2015: Georgetown University, Ph.D. with distinction in Government (Political Theory major, Islamic Studies and Comparative Government minors)

Dissertation: *The Possibility of Religious Freedom: Natural Law in Pagan, Islamic and Christian Traditions*

Committee: Joshua Mitchell (co-chair), Timothy Shah (co-chair), and Charles Butterworth (University of Maryland, Emeritus)

2013 Georgetown University, M.A. in Political Theory

2010 Northwestern University, Certificate in Classics (enrolled in Ph.D. program)

2005 Marquette University, Honor's Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and French

## Publications

*The Possibility of Religious Freedom: Early Natural Law and the Abrahamic Faiths*. Cambridge University Press, 2019

“Elitist Democracy and Epistemic Equality: Aristotle and Ibn Rushd on the Role of Common Beliefs,” in *Reason, Revelation and Law in Islamic and Western Theory and History*. Edited by R. Charles Weller and Anver Emon. Palgrave Macmillan Press, March 2021.

“Ibn Rushd and Natural Law: Mediating Human and Divine Law” *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 28, Iss. 1 (Jan. 2017)

“The Early Rawls: What is Justice as Fairness?” in *John Rawls and Christian Social Engagement: Justice as Unfairness*, Lexington, 2015

### *In progress and under contract:*

“A Tale of Two Laws: Gods, Mortals, and the *Decisive Treatise* in Averroes’ *Commentary on Plato’s Republic*” in *Plato Across Civilizations: Novel Perspectives on Averroes’ Commentary on Plato’s Republic*. Edited by Alexander Orwin, expected 2021.

“Disenchantment, Modernity and the Possibility of Truth: A New Look at Medieval Metaphysics.” *New Approaches to Disenchantment*, Institute for Epistemological Studies-Europe, expected 2022.

“Can Mosque and State be Separated? Should They?” in *The Palgrave Handbook of Religion and Politics*. Edited by Shannon Holzer. Palgrave Macmillan Press, expected 2021.

“The Two Axes of Sovereignty: Liberalism, Secularism and the Need for Political Friendship” in *Polis, Nation, Global Community: The Philosophic Foundations of Citizenship*. Edited by Ann Ward, Routledge Press, expected 2021.

Book reviews:

- *Originalism's Promise*. Lee Strang. *Starting Points Journal*. June 18, 2020.
- *Sunnis and Shia: A Political History*. Laurence Louër. *Law and Liberty*, April 20, 2020.
- *Christianity and Natural Law*. Edited by Norman Doe. *Journal of Church and State*, Vol. 61, Iss. 1 (Winter 2019)
- *Taking Back Philosophy: A Multicultural Manifesto*. Bryan Van Norden. Columbia University Press, 2017. In *Expositions*, Vol 12, No. 2. (Winter 2018)
- *Redefining the Muslim Community: Ethnicity, Religion and Politics in the Thought of Alfarabi*. Alexander Orwin. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017. *Interpretation Journal* Vol. 44, Iss. 1 (Fall 2017)

### Select Conference Papers and Invited Talks

2020: *Invited talk*: “Teaching Medieval Arabic and Islamic Philosophy,” National Classical Education Symposium, Phoenix, Arizona

2019: *Invited talk*: “Le Maroc comme Leader pour l’Afrique: une perspective américaine,” Forum International de Tiznit pour les Cultures Africaines, Tiznit, Morocco

2019: “A Tale of Two Laws: Gods, Mortals, and the Decisive Treatise in Averroes’ *Commentary on Plato’s Republic*,” Colloque de la Société Internationale d’Histoire des Sciences et de la Philosophie Arabes et Islamiques, Naples, Italy

2019: *Invited talk*: “Between Gods and Men: Natural Law and Religious Pluralism,” James Madison Program Annual Conference, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ

2018: “Doubt and Faith in Islam and Judaism” panel chair and discussant, Middle East Studies Association Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX

2018: *Invited talk*: “Islam, Western Civilization and Bridging the Gap,” National Association of Scholars conference, Phoenix, AZ

2017: “Epistemic Equality in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy: Beyond Elites and Masses,” American Political Science Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA

2016 “The Role of Religious Authority in Democracy,” American Political Science Association Annual Conference, Philadelphia, PA

2016 “*Antigone’s* Tragedy: Human and Divine, not Natural,” Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting, San Juan, Puerto Rico

2016 “An Islamic Natural Law? Averroes, Aristotle and the Unwritten Law of Nature,” James Madison Program, Princeton University

2015 “Mediating Reason and Revelation: Istihsan and the Necessity of Taqlid,” British Association of Islamic Studies, London, UK

### Select Awards & Fellowships

2020-2023 Fellow, Recovering Truth Project. Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict, Arizona State University

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2019 Jack Miller Center Summer Institute Fellowship

2015-2016 Thomas W. Smith Postdoctoral Research Associate Fellowship, James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, Princeton University

2014-2015 Georgetown University School of Foreign Service-Qatar Predoctoral Research Fellowship

2013-2014 Bradley Foundation graduate student research fellowship

2011-2012 National Security Education Program Boren Fellow (Arabic), Fez and Ouaouizaght, Morocco

### **Select Courses**

- Great Ideas in Ethics and Politics from Comparative Perspective (CEL 100)
- Natural Law and the Common Good: Comparative Medieval Political Philosophy (CEL 394)
- Political Leadership and Statesmanship (CEL 394)
- Statesmanship and American Grand Strategy (CEL 475)
- Religion and Politics: The Trial of Galileo (CEL 394; this was a Reacting to the Past historical role-playing course)
- Ancients and Moderns seminars (Villanova University freshman great books program in Augustine and Culture Seminar Program)

### **Languages**

French – fluent (written and spoken)

Arabic – intermediate (written and spoken)

Berber/Tamazight – proficient (spoken)

Latin – working knowledge (written)

### **Memberships and Service**

Reviewer, *Religions* (2021-present)

Fellow, Recovering Truth Project – Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict, Arizona State University (2020-present)

Reviewer, *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization*, Lahore, Pakistan (2020-present)

Member, Public Justice and Natural Law Working Group (interdisciplinary and international group of scholars working on natural law and contemporary affairs; 2020-present)

Member, Advisory Board – Société Internationale d'Histoire et des Sciences et de la Philosophie Arabes et Islamiques (2019-present)

Affiliate Scholar – Faith and Liberty Discovery Center, Philadelphia, PA (2018-present)

*Select SCETL Service*

Co-facilitator, Faculty Reading Group, 2017-present

Member, Graduate Studies Committee, 2020-present