The Religion and IR (REL) section is a new section, officially founded at the meeting of the ISA Governing Council on April 2, 2013, in San Francisco, in a unanimous vote (without abstentions). The acting executive committee consists of a section chair (Ron E. Hassner), vice-chair (M. Steven Fish), secretary (Nukhet Sandal), program chair (Isak Svensson), communications chair (Turan Kayaoglu), treasurer (Sara Silvestri), awards chair (Jocelyne Cesari) and two members at large (Yosef Lapid and Patrick James). A permanent executive committee will be elected at our business meeting at the 2014 ISA in Toronto.

We celebrated the formation of our section in two ways. We held our first business meeting in San Francisco in which we introduced the acting executive committee and collected ideas for future activities from the audience. Later that day, we held a festive reception, sponsored by U.C. Berkeley’s Religion, Politics, and Globalization Program. It was a well-attended (over 100 participants) and joyous event.

Since our founding, half a year ago, our section has grown to 139 members and our operating budget is $888.52.

We are in the process of gathering nominations for an advisory board for our section. Our awards chair has successfully applied for two awards, to be considered in future years, one for the best graduate student paper and one for the best book. With the assistance of ISA staff, our communications officer has expanded our web site to include information about awards, reports and news. We intend to expand the website further to provide information about section members, academic opportunities and academic resources related to religion and IR.

We have planned a business meeting and a reception for ISA 2014 (the latter sponsored by the Religion, Politics and Globalization Program, U.C. Berkeley, and by the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University. We were allotted five panels for ISA 2014 but, through the diligence of our program chair, have managed to sponsor and co-sponsor eight panels in total. We will report on these panels in the 2014 annual report.