

Melissa Rogers

Melissa Rogers is a nonresident senior fellow with Governance Studies at Brookings. She also serves as director of Wake Forest University Divinity School's Center for Religion and Public Affairs. The Center promotes research, study, and dialogue regarding the intersection of religion and public affairs and provides resources for the academic, policy, and faith communities on these issues.



Melissa Rogers teaches classes on Christianity and public policy and church-state relations in the United States. In 2008 Baylor University Press published a casebook co-authored by Rogers, *Religious Freedom and the Supreme Court*. She previously served as the executive director of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life and as general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee on Religious Liberty.

President Barack Obama appointed Rogers chair of his first Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships in 2009. Rogers has testified before the Judiciary Committee to the U.S. Senate on religious freedom issues. In 2004 National Journal recognized her as one of the church-state experts "politicians will call on when they get serious about addressing an important public policy issue." During her tenure at the Baptist Joint Committee, Rogers helped lead a diverse coalition that was instrumental in bringing about the enactment of the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act. She also served as a draftsman for several amicus briefs in church-state cases heard by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Rogers serves on the steering committee of the Religion, Politics, and the State Group of the American Academy of Religion and as co-chair of the First Amendment Issues Group of the American Constitution Society for Law and Policy. She is a member of the Board of Directors of Public Religion Research Institute. Rogers also serves on the Religion, Public Values, and Public Policy Task Force of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy and the Face to Faith U.S. Advisory Group of the Tony Blair Faith Foundation. She is a member of the Advisory Board on Religious Organizations and the Law, a body formed by W. Cole Durham and Robert T. Smith of Brigham Young University Law School.

Rogers is a panelist for the *On Faith* page of The Washington Post, and she has appeared on numerous television and radio broadcasts, including NBC Nightly News, CNN, Fox News, PBS, and NPR, and her opinion-editorials have been published by media outlets such as ABC News, *The Washington Post*, *The Baltimore Sun*, *The Fort-Worth Star Telegram*, *Legal Times*, and *Religion News Service*. Rogers earned her law degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, where she was a member of the National Moot Court Team. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Baylor University.