

POS 386: RELIGION AND POLITICS IN THE UNITED STATES

University of Maine
Spring 2012, T&TH, 12:30-1:45pm
North Stevens 237

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Electronic Materials: First Class Conference

Course Objectives and Focus

Many of you are probably familiar with the old saying that it is impolite to discuss religion or politics with strangers and dangerous to do so with friends. We are going to purposely ignore this advice, and spend the entire semester talking about these two subjects, devoting particular attention to how religion and politics intersect in the United States. Not long ago it was widely assumed that modernization would eventually eliminate religion as a significant force in American society. As recently as the 1970s, conventional wisdom held that religion no longer mattered in American politics. These claims have proven to be completely and utterly wrong. The United States is and always has been a religious society. Along the same lines, religion has historically played a substantial role in American politics, and continues to do so today. This interaction between religion and politics will be the focus of this course. Over the course of this semester students will be expected to engage in a thoughtful and critical examination of the many different ways that religion affects American politics, and also ways in which politics affects matters of religion.

As a result of successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- recognize the role played by religion in the early years of the American republic
- ascertain the religious elements present in American political culture
- thoughtfully examine and discuss issues of church and state
- increase their awareness of the religious diversity within the United States
- more fully understand how religion affects political behavior and policy outcomes in the American context

Course Requirements

I have attempted to structure this course so that there will be many and diverse opportunities for students to perform well. Below is a list of the components that will determine a student's final course grade, along with a brief description of each.

Examinations: There will be **two** examinations—a midterm and a final. The midterm exam will be given during the regular class period on **February 21** and will be worth 25% of your final grade. The final examination will be worth 35% of your final grade, and **will be cumulative**. The date, time, and location of the final exam will be posted on the Office of Student Records website later in the semester, and will be announced in class. The format of each exam will be a mixture of multiple choice and/or true-false questions, identification questions, short answer questions, and essay questions, with the final exam obviously consisting of many more questions. For identification, short answer, and essay questions, students will always be given some element of choice as to which questions they answer.



Papers: Each student will be required to complete **two** short (5-8 pages in length) analytical papers. The topics for each paper assignment will be announced by the instructor later in the semester. The first paper is due **in class** on **March 29** and the second paper is due in class on **April 26**. Outside research is not required for these papers, but of course is allowed. **Late papers will be penalized a full letter grade for each day that they are past due, and a paper is considered a day late the minute class is over on the assigned due date.** Extensions to the deadlines for the paper assignments must be requested in writing (e-mail is acceptable) at least 48 hours in advance, and will be granted only in extreme situations. Each paper will be worth 15% of your final grade.

Attendance and Participation: As will be further explained below, each student is expected to attend class faithfully. You are also expected to actively participate in class discussion. Attendance and participation will be worth 10% of your final grade.

Summary of Course Grade Components:

Midterm Exam:	25%
Final Exam:	35%
Paper #1:	15%
Paper #2:	15%
Attendance and Participation:	10%

Student Responsibilities

As noted above, I expect students to attend all classes. However, you are all adults and the decision about whether or not to attend class is ultimately up to you. Attending class is in your best interests. In addition to the 10% of your final grade that is determined by attendance and participation, class attendance will significantly enhance your ability to perform well on examinations. The material presented in class will not simply be a rehashing of the required readings. Although there will certainly be some overlap, new material will be introduced, and other matters will be explored in greater depth. Additionally, some of the most rewarding portions of this course will come during discussions with your peers. These discussions should not be missed. I realize that there will be times when a student is simply unable to attend class for a legitimate reason. If this should occur, please let me know. Students who know they will need to miss a class in advance should let me know as soon as possible, and arrange to get notes and any other class material they miss from a classmate.

Students are also expected to complete all readings assigned for a particular class meeting before coming to class that day. As you will notice in the course schedule outlined below, there is a good deal of assigned reading for this course. **If for any reason you think that you may be unable to complete all of the assigned readings on time, I suggest you drop the course now.** A good portion of this course will be conducted in a discussion format, and students who have not done the assigned reading will be hard pressed to contribute to the discussion in a constructive manner. Failure to do the reading will also negatively affect your performance on exams. **I cannot stress strongly enough the importance of doing the assigned readings before coming to class.**

Religion is a topic that can sometimes elicit strong passions and feelings. In discussing a topic of this nature it is imperative that we respect all viewpoints, especially those that are different from our own. Along similar lines, remember that this class is not a forum for evangelization, proselytization, or conversion. Both of these points are of the utmost importance, and failure to heed them will not be tolerated. In addition, the discussions we will have in this course will at times involve critical examination of specific religious traditions, beliefs, and practices. If you feel that you would not be comfortable having your own tradition, beliefs, and practices discussed in such a manner, then this course might not be for you.

I expect each student to be aware of what is going on in American politics and society. In other words, I expect you to follow the news. At a minimum, this should entail watching a national news broadcast or listening to the national news on NPR once a day. Ideally students will read a good national newspaper such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, or *The Christian Science Monitor* every day. All of these are available online at no charge. *The Wall Street Journal* is also acceptable, and is available in both print and online for free through Fogler Library.

Cheating and plagiarism constitute much more than serious violations of University of Maine policy. They indicate a lack of respect for those fellow students who will have worked hard to earn their grade. As such, cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. Any cheater or plagiarist will, at a minimum, automatically receive a failing grade in this course. Additional disciplinary action will be pursued within the University. It is unfortunate that this must be emphasized in a course syllabus, as most students perform honestly. Please refer to the UMS Student Conduct Code for definitions and procedures. The UMS Student Conduct Code can be viewed at: http://www.maine.edu/system/policy_manual/policy_section501.php

Assistance

My office hours are listed on the first page of this syllabus. I am also available by appointment. If you are having difficulty with the course material or need help with any other facet of the class, please do not hesitate to come and discuss the matter with me. E-mail is generally the best way to get in touch with me. If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, please contact Ann Smith, Director of Disability Support Services via telephone at 581-2319, e-mail at ann.smith@umit.maine.edu, or in person at 121 East Annex as early as possible in the term.

Required Readings

Three books are required for this class. They are:

Kenneth D. Wald and Allison Calhoun-Brown, *Religion and Politics in the United States*, Sixth Edition, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011. Make sure that you purchase the sixth edition. This is the textbook.

Clyde Wilcox and Carin Robinson, *Onward Christian Soldiers?* Fourth Edition, Westview Press, 2011. Make sure that you purchase the fourth edition.

Eric L. McDaniel, *Politics in the Pews*, University of Michigan Press, 2008.

These books are available at the University Bookstore.

There are also many required readings (all readings are required) that are not included in any of the books listed above. I was going to have a course reader prepared, but the cost was prohibitive and I am reluctant to ask students to pay such a high price for a reader (especially given the cost of the required books). Instead, these readings are listed as (**reserve**) in the following course schedule and are available at Fogler Library via hard copy reserve (one copy only) and e-reserve. A few readings are also available on the World Wide Web via links that will be posted in our first class conference folder. Such readings are indicated on the schedule below. I recommend making copies of these readings. If you do not wish to do this, then you should take good notes while you are doing the readings at the library or online.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

In the event of disruption of normal classroom activities, the format for this course may be modified to enable completion of the course. In that event, you will be provided an addendum to this syllabus that will supplement, modify, and/or supersede this version.

Course Schedule

The following will be our agenda for the semester. Remember, you are expected to complete the readings listed below *prior* to the class meeting for which they are assigned. This schedule is subject to change by the instructor, depending on the progress we make in covering course material.

I. RELIGION AND AMERICAN SOCIETY

January 10: Course Introduction

January 12: No Class Meeting; Professor at a Conference

January 17: The United States: A Religious Society?

- Wald and Calhoun-Brown, Chap. 1 and 2
- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, pp. 299-318 (reserve)
- Martin E. Marty, *Religion and Republic*, Chap. 1 (reserve)

January 19: Religion and American Politics: A Historical Perspective

- Jon Butler, Grant Wacker, and Randall Balmer, *Religion in American Life*, pp. 51-73 (reserve)
- John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity" (reserve)
- Samuel Langdon, "Government Corrupted by Vice, and Recovered by Righteousness" (reserve)

January 24: Religion and American Culture: A Civil Religion?

- Wald and Calhoun-Brown, Chap. 3
- Robert Bellah, "Civil Religion in America" (reserve)
- Will Herberg, "America's Civil Religion: What it is and Whence it Comes" (reserve)
- George Washington, "First Inaugural Address" (reserve and WWW)
- Samuel F. Smith, "America" (reserve and WWW)
- Julia Ward Howe, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" (reserve and WWW)
- Abraham Lincoln, "The Gettysburg Address" (reserve and WWW)
- Abraham Lincoln, "Second Inaugural Address" (reserve and WWW)
- Katherine Lee Bates, "America the Beautiful" (reserve and WWW)
- John F. Kennedy, "Inaugural Address" (reserve and WWW)

II. RELIGION AND THE STATE

January 26: Religion and the Constitution

- John G. West, Jr., "Religion and the Constitution" (reserve)
- Wald and Calhoun-Brown, Chap. 4

January 31: The Establishment Clause

- James Madison, "A Memorial and Remonstrance" (reserve and WWW)
- Thomas Jefferson, "Letter to the Danbury Baptist Association" (reserve and WWW)
- James Madison, "Letter to the Rev. Jesper Adams" (reserve)
- Robert L. Cord, *Separation of Church and State*, Chap. 1 (reserve)
- *Everson v. Board of Education of Ewing Township* (reserve)
- *Engel v. Vitale* (reserve)
- *Lemon v. Kurtzman* (reserve)
- *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* (reserve)

February 2: The Free Exercise Clause

- Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Query XVII (**reserve and WWW**)
- Thomas Jefferson, “Act for Establishing Religious Freedom” (**reserve and WWW**)
- *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (**reserve**)
- *Employment Division, Department of Human Resources of Oregon v. Smith* (**reserve**)
- *Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aye v. City of Hialeah* (**reserve**)

February 7: Religion and the Policy Process

- Wald and Calhoun-Brown, Chap. 5 and 11
- Jeffrey K. Hadden, “Religion and the Construction of Social Problems” (**reserve**)

February 9: Temperance/Prohibition

- Andrew Sinclair, *Prohibition*, Chap. 4 (**reserve**)
- Thomas E. Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum*, Chap. 6 (**reserve**)

February 14: The Abolitionist Movement

- John R. McKivigan and Mitchell Snay, “Religion and the Problem of Slavery in Antebellum America” (**reserve**)
- Theodore Dwight Weld, “The Bible Against Slavery” (**reserve**)
- Sarah M. Grimke, “An Epistle to the Clergy of the Southern States” (**reserve**)
- Nathan Lord, “A Letter of Inquiry to Ministers of the Gospel of All Denominations, On Slavery, By a Northern Presbyterian” (**reserve**)
- George D. Armstrong, “The Christian Doctrine of Slavery: God’s Work in God’s Way” (**reserve**)

February 16: The Abortion Issue

- Karen O’Connor, *No Neutral Ground?* Chap. 3 and 4 (**reserve**)
- N.E.H. Hull and Peter Charles Hoffer, *Roe v. Wade: The Abortion Rights Controversy in American History*, Chap. 5-6 (**reserve**)

February 21: Midterm

III. RELIGION AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

February 23: The Clergy in Politics: Martin Luther King, Jr. as Case Study

- Laura R. Olson and Sue E.S. Crawford, “Clergy in Politics: Political Choices and Consequences” (**reserve**)
- Frederick L. Downing, “Martin Luther King, Jr. as Public Theologian” (**reserve**)
- Martin Luther King, Jr., “I Have a Dream” (**reserve and WWW**)
- Martin Luther King, Jr., “I See the Promised Land” (**reserve and WWW**)

SPRING BREAK—No Class Meetings February 28, March 1, 6, & 8

March 13: The Religious Dimension of Political Behavior

- Wald and Calhoun-Brown, Chap. 6 and 7
- Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality*, Chap. 11 (**reserve**)

March 15: The Political Behavior of Roman Catholics

- Wald and Calhoun-Brown, pp. 247-267, 294-299
- Mark D. Brewer, *Relevant No More? The Catholic/Protestant Divide in American Electoral Politics*, Chap. 3 (**reserve**)
- William Prendergast, *The Catholic Voter in American Politics*, Chap. 9 (**reserve**)

March 20: The Political Behavior of Mainline Protestants

- Wald and Calhoun-Brown, pp. 267-274
- Jeff Manza and Clem Brooks, “The Changing Political Fortunes of Mainline Protestants” (**reserve**)
- Randall Balmer and Lauren F. Winner, *Protestantism in America*, Chap. 2 (**reserve**)

March 22: The Political Behavior of Evangelical Protestants, Part I

- Wald and Calhoun-Brown, Chap. 8
- Wilcox and Robinson, Chap. 1-2

March 27: The Political Behavior of Evangelical Protestants, Part II

- Wilcox and Robinson, Chap. 3-5

March 29: The Political Behavior of African-American Protestants, Part I

- **PAPER #1 DUE IN CLASS**
- McDaniel, Introduction, Chap. 1-3

April 3: The Political Behavior of African-American Protestants, Part II

- McDaniel, Chap. 4-7

April 5: The Political Behavior of Jews

- Wald and Calhoun-Brown, pp. 274-281
- Anna Greenberg and Kenneth D. Wald, “Still Liberal After All These Years?” (**reserve**)

April 10: New Entrants: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Muslims in American Politics

- Wald and Calhoun-Brown, pp. 300-309
- Malise Ruthven, “The Mormon’s Progress” (**reserve**)
- Kenneth L. Woodward, “A Mormon Moment” (**reserve**)
- Karen Isaksen Leonard, *Muslims in the United States*, Chap. 1 (**reserve**)
- Fawaz A. Gerges, “Islam and Muslims in the Mind of America” (**reserve**)

April 12: Religious Salience: The New Cleavage?

- James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars*, Chap. 1 and 4 (**reserve**)
- Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, Chap. 9 (**reserve**)
- Geoffrey Layman, *The Great Divide*, Chap. 1 (**reserve**)

April 17: Catholic/Protestant Violence in Pre-New Deal America

- Ray Allen Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860*, Chap. 1 and 4 (**reserve**)
- Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross*, Chap. 6 (**reserve**)
- United Klans of America, “Ideals of a Klansman” (**reserve**)

April 19: Religion, Violence, and the Pro-Life Movement

- Faye Ginsburg, “Rescuing the Nation” (**reserve**)
- James Risen and Judy L. Thomas, *Wrath of Angels*, Chap. 14 (**reserve**)
- Randall Terry, Selection from *Operation Rescue* (**reserve**)

April 24: Religion and the Contemporary Racist Right in the United States

- R.G. Butler, “This is *Aryan Nations*” (**reserve**)
- R.G. Butler, “Twelve Foundation Stones to Establish a State for our Aryan Racial Nation” (**reserve**)
- The Covenant, the Sword, and the Arm of the Lord, Selected Readings (**reserve**)
- James A. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*, Chap. 2 (**reserve**)
- Andrew MacDonald (a.k.a. William Pierce), Selections from *Turner Diaries: A Novel* (**to be distributed in class**)

April 26: Religion in Politics: Positive or Negative?

- **PAPER #2 DUE IN CLASS**
- Wald and Calhoun-Brown, Chap. 12

FINAL EXAMINATION—Date, time, and location to be announced by the Office of Student Records