

POLITICAL SCIENCE 232 *RELIGION IN AMERICAN POLITICS*

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Denny Hall 13
Hours: M 4-5; F 2-4; By Appt.

Dickinson College
Spring 2017
MWF 12:30 – 1:20
Denny Hall 203

Course Overview

This class will provide an overview of the role of religion in American politics. The course will have four major units. In the first unit we will study the basics of religion and politics, including the Puritan legacy, the functions of the First Amendment, and the various ways in which religion impacts political behavior. The second part of the course will review the distinctive politics of a series of important religious groups, including the Christian Right, the Christian Left, Catholics, Jews, Mormons and Muslims. In the third unit we will explore the intersections between religion and public policy in areas like education and healthcare. Finally, we will conclude by examining the most important recent developments in the relationship between religion and politics, i.e. the growth of politically influential mega-churches.

Assignments

Establishment Clause Paper (10%) – You will be asked to write a **4-5 page** paper about a specific controversy involving a Christmas display on public property in Arkansas. Instructions will be distributed on February 1, and the paper will be due on **February 13**.

Report on the Political Activities of a Religious Organization (20%) – You will be asked to research and evaluate the political activities of a religious organization of your own choosing. Instructions will be distributed in class on February 15. The final report will be approximately **5-6 pages** long and will be due at the end of class on **March 8**. All students will be expected to give a 5-10 minute informal presentation to the class on their reports on either March 8 or 10.

Book Review (10%) – You will be asked to write a review of a scholarly book on a topic relating to religion and American politics. This review is meant to mirror the types of reviews found in academic journals. You are free to choose the book you would like to review, but selections must be approved by me via email by **February 24**. The review should be between **700-800 words** and follow a specific structure. Further instructions will be distributed in class. The review will be due by the end of class on **April 3**.

Response Paper (20%) – You will be asked to respond to a prompt on Stephen Carter's book *The Culture of Disbelief* in an approximately **5-6 page** paper. The prompt will be distributed on April 7. The paper will be due on **April 26**.

Final Exam (25%) – A final exam will be administered during the College's exam days. The exam is scheduled for **May 15 at 2:00 PM**. The exam will be cumulative, but a review sheet will be provided. A make-up will only be offered in the event of a family or medical emergency.

Participation and Attendance (15%) – This specific part of your grade will be calculated as follows: First, your participation will be judged as to whether it is of excellent, above average, average, below average, or low quality. Note, *quality* does not necessarily mean *quantity*. Excellent participation is worth 15 points, above average participation is worth 14 points, average participation is worth 13 points, below average participation is worth 12 points, and low quality participation is worth 11 points.

Attendance will also be taken at the start of each class by means of a sign-in sheet. It is your responsibility to sign-in. This is the official record of your attendance. Absences will be excused only in the event of my prior approval or a family or medical emergency. Two (2) unexcused absences will be forgiven over the course of the semester. After that, each additional absence will result in a 1 point deduction.

For example, consider a student whose participation is above average but who has four unexcused absences. This student will receive 12 points for participation and attendance (14 for participation and a 2 point deduction for the four absences).

Learning Goals

Through completing this course, students should:

- Understand the complex nature of religion's influence on politics. Students should be able to identify political differences both within religious traditions (i.e. the differences between white and Hispanic Catholics), as well as the political differences between religious traditions (i.e. the differences between Catholics and Protestants).
- Describe the positive and negative impact that religion has had on American politics.
- Explain why compromise can be so difficult when it comes to the teaching of evolution, sex ed curriculums, medical treatment laws, Charitable Choice and other similar policies.
- Engage in respectful conversation with people who have different religious and moral beliefs than their own.
- Improve their writing skills through different types of assignments.

Accommodations for Disabilities

Dickinson values diverse types of learners and is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded an equal opportunity to participate in all learning experiences. If you have (or think you may have) a learning difference or a disability – including a mental health, medical, or physical impairment – that would impact your educational experience in this class, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to schedule a meeting with Director Marni Jones. She will confidentially discuss your needs, review your documentation, and determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. To learn more about available supports, go to www.dickinson.edu/ODS, email DisabilityServices@dickinson.edu, call (717) 245-1734, or go to ODS in 106 Dana Hall.

If you've already been granted accommodations at Dickinson, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can meet to review your Accommodation Letter and complete your "Blue Form" Implementation Plan. If you will need test proctoring from ODS, remember that you will need to provide them with at least one week's notice.

Take a Dickinsonian to Lunch and Food for Thought Programs

In an effort to encourage interaction between students and college faculty, the Office of Leadership & Campus Engagement and the Student Senate have made vouchers available for use at various local restaurants. Vouchers can be picked up in the Student Life Office on the lower level of the HUB, weekdays from 8:30am - 4:30pm and are valued at \$8 per person. Participating restaurants include: Back Door Cafe, Dickinson College Cafeteria, Dickinson College Union Station, Issei Noodle, Market Cross Pub, Miseno's II, Mt. Fuji, North Hanover Grill, Redd's Smokehouse, and the White Elephant.

Additionally, the Food for Thought program provides faculty with tickets to share breakfast, lunch or dinner with students in the Dining Hall.

I make an effort to get to know each student who takes a class with me. I encourage you to take advantage of one of these initiatives, or at the very least to make use of my office hours at some point this semester.

Course Outline

The purchase of the following four books is required:

- Putnam, Robert D. and David E. Campbell. 2010. *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Williams, Daniel K. 2010. *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Carter, Stephen L. 1994. *The Culture of Disbelief: How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Waldman, Amy. 2012. *The Submission*. New York: Picador.

Additional readings will be found in PDF format on the class' Moodle website. These other readings are marked with an **(M)** on the outline. You should read the Waldman novel at your leisure. We will discuss the book following our classes on Muslim politics on **March 22 and 24**.

Students are expected to complete all readings prior to class for which they are assigned.

Introduction

January 23

Unit 1: The Basics of Religion and Politics

Religion in Early American Political History

January 25

- Bellah, Robert N. 1967. "Civil Religion in America." *Daedalus* 96 (Winter): 1-21 (M)

January 27

- Dreisbach, Daniel L. 2011. "The Bible in the Political Rhetoric of the American Founding." *Politics and Religion* 4 (December): 401-427 (M)

January 30

- Hecllo, Hugh. 2007. "Is America a Christian Nation?" *Political Science Quarterly* 122 (Spring): 59-87 (M)

Church, State, and the Constitution

February 1

Instructions for Establishment Clause Paper Are Distributed

- Holmes, David L. 2006. *The Faiths of the Founding Fathers*. New York: Oxford University Press (M 39-51; 79-89; 143-160)

February 3

- Rogers, Alan. 2013. *The Child Cases: How America's Religious Exemption Laws Harm Children*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press (M 99-126)

February 6

- Dierenfield, Bruce J. 2007. *The Battle Over School Prayer: How Engel v Vitale Changed America*. Lawrence, KN: University Press of Kansas (M 137-162)

February 8

In class screening of *Lee v. Weisman* documentary by Duke University's Voices of American Law

Contemporary Religion and Political Behavior

February 10

- Finke, Roger and Rodney Stark. 2005. *The Churaching of America, 1776-2005*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press (M 1-35; 244-266; 281-283)

February 13

Establishment Clause Papers are Due

- Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press (M 309-330)
- Campbell, David E. 2004. "Acts of Faith: Churches and Political Engagement." *Political Behavior* 26 (June): 155-180 (M)

Unit 2: Religious Groups and Their Political Activities

The Christian Right

February 15

Instructions for Religious Organization Report Are Distributed

- Hunter, James Davison. *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America*. New York: Basic Books (M 35-47)
- Williams, *God's Own Party*, 1-11; 18-24; 36-47; 62-67; 78-88

February 17

- Williams, *God's Own Party*, 105-120; 159-185

February 20

- Williams, *God's Own Party*, 194-198; 202-205; 210-220; 227-235; 251-263

The Christian Left

February 22

- Swartz, David R. 2012. *Moral Minority: The Evangelical Left in an Age of Conservatism*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press (M 68-85)

February 24

Book Review Selection Must Be Approved

- Miller, Steven P. 2016. "Between Hope and Despair: Obama and Evangelical Politics." In *Faith in the New Millennium: The Future of Religion and American Politics*, eds. Matthew Avery Sutton and Darren Dochuk. New York: Oxford University Press (M 199-216)

Catholic Politics

February 27

- Stephen T. Mockabee. 2007. "The Political Behavior of American Catholics: Change and Continuity." In *From Pews to Polling Places: Faith and Politics in the American Religious Mosaic*, ed. Matthew J. Wilson. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press (M 81-104)

March 1

- Formicola, Jo Renee. 2009. "Catholic Moral Demands in American Politics: A New Paradigm." *Journal of Church and State* 51 (Winter): 4-23 (M)

Jewish Politics

March 3

- Shapiro, Edward. 2001. "Right Turn? Jews and the American Conservative Movement." In *Jews in American Politics*, ed. L. Sandy Maisel. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield (M 196-211)

Mormon Politics

March 6

- Campbell, David E., John C. Green and J. Quin Monson. 2014. *Seeking the Promised Land: Mormons and American Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press (M 227-245)
- Campbell, David E. and J. Quin Monson. 2007. "The Religious Test." *USA Today*, January 21.
- Linker, Damon. 2007. "The Big Test." *The New Republic*, January 15.

March 8

Religious Organization Reports are Due

- Student Presentations

March 10

- Student Presentations on Reports Continue

March 10-20

Spring Break

Muslim Politics

March 20

- Paden, Catherine. 2012. "Political Advocacy Through Religious Organization? The Evolving Role of the Nation of Islam." In *Faith and Race in American Political Life*, eds. Robin Dale Jacobson and Nancy D. Wadsworth. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press (M 189-206)

March 22

- Waldman, *The Submission* (entire)

March 24

- Waldman, *The Submission* (continued)

Unit 3: Religion and Public Policy

Religion and Education

March 27

- Hecl, Hugh. 2003. "The Wall That Never Was." *The Wilson Quarterly* 27 (Winter): 68-82 (M)

March 29

- Genesis 1-2 (M)
- Berkman, Michael and Eric Plutzer. 2010. *Evolution, Creationism, and the Battle to Control America's Classrooms*. New York: Cambridge University Press (M 5-10; 32-40; 115-146; 215-227)

March 31

- Luker, Kristin. 2006. *When Sex Goes to School: Warring Views on Sex- and Sex Education- Since the Sixties*. New York: WW Norton (M 5-11; 89-118; 142-148; 183-191)

Religion and Civil Rights

April 3

Book Reviews are Due

- Chappell, David L. 2004. *A Stone of Hope: Prophetic Religion and the Death of Jim Crow*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press (M 1-5; 67-75; 87-104)

April 5

- Friedland, Michael B. 1998. *Lift Up Your Voice Like a Trumpet: White Clergy and the Civil Rights and Antiwar Movements, 1954-1973*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press (M 113-139)

Religion and Medical Politics: Stem Cell Research, Assisted Suicide and Abortion

April 7

Prompt for Response Paper is Distributed

- Mintrom, Michael. 2008. "Competitive Federalism and the Governance of Controversial Science." *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 39 (November): 606-631 (M)

April 10

- Rosenbaum, Ron. 1991. "Angel of Death: The Trial of the Suicide Doctor." *Vanity Fair*, May (M)

April 12

- Wilson, Robin Fretwell. 2015. "The Erupting Clash Between Religion and the State Over Contraception, Sterilization, and Abortion." In *Religious Freedom in America: Constitutional Roots and Contemporary Challenges*, ed. Allen D. Hertzke. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press (M 135-169)
- Putnam and Campbell, *American Grace*, 406-414

Religion and Gender Issues

April 14

- Putnam and Campbell, *American Grace*, 180-195; 233-246

Religion and Homosexuality

April 17

- Feldblum, Chai R. 2008. "Moral Conflict and Conflicting Liberties." In *Same-Sex Marriage and Religious Liberty: Emerging Conflicts*, eds. Douglas Laycock, Anthony R. Picarello, Jr., and Robin Fretwell Wilson. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield (M 123-130; 142-156)
- Putnam and Campbell, *American Grace*, 396-406

Religion and the Provision of Social Services

April 19

- Black, Amy E., Douglas L. Koopman and David K. Ryden. 2004. *Of Little Faith: The Politics of George W. Bush's Faith-Based Initiatives*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press (M 1-31)

Unit 4: The Frontiers of Religion and Politics

Rise of the Mega-Churches

April 21

- Harris, Fredrick C. 2010. "Entering the Promised Land? The Rise of Prosperity Gospel and Post-Civil Rights Black Politics." In *Religion and Democracy in the United States: Danger or Opportunity?*, eds. Alan Wolfe and Ira Katznelson. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press (M 255-278)
- Putnam and Campbell, *American Grace*, 54-69; 320-334

Rise of the "Nones"

April 24

- Putnam and Campbell, *American Grace*, 16-18; 120-133

Religion and American Democracy

April 26

Response Papers are Due

- Carter, *The Culture of Disbelief*, 3-66

April 28

- Carter, *The Culture of Disbelief*, 124-135; 156-182; 233-262

Religion in Politics: A Force for Good or Ill?

May 1

- Putnam and Campbell, *American Grace*, 443-461; 479-501; 526-550

May 3

- No Assignment

May 5

Last Class

May 15

Final Exam * 2:00 PM