

POLITICAL SCIENCE 232 *RELIGION IN AMERICAN POLITICS*

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Denny Hall 13
Hours: M 4:30-5:30; F 2-4; By Appt.

Dickinson College
Fall 2018
MWF 9:30 – 10:20
Denny Hall 311

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. Instructions will be distributed on September 12, and the paper will be due on **September 24**.

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 September 26. The final report will be approximately **5-6 pages** long and will be due at the end of class on **October 17**. All students will be expected to give a 5-10 minute informal presentation to the class on their reports on either October 17 or 19.

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 **October 5**. 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 **November 7**.

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 November 12. The paper will be due on **December 5**.

Final Exam (25%) – A final exam will be administered during the College's exam days. The exam is scheduled for **December 18 at 9:00 AM**. The exam will be cumulative, but a review sheet will be provided. A make-up will only be offered in the event of a documented 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

By 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 Program

In an effort to encourage small group interaction between students and college faculty/staff, students and college employees can request vouchers to take each other out to lunch at various local restaurants, the Union Station or the college cafeteria. This program is funded by the Student Senate and administered by the Office of Leadership & Campus Engagement. 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 \$10 per person.

Participating restaurants include: Grazery, Dickinson College Cafeteria, Dickinson College Union Station, Helena's Chocolate Cafe, Market Cross Pub, Miseno's II, Mt. Fuji, North Hanover Grill, Redd's Smokehouse, Spoons Cafe, Carlisle Thai, Denim Coffee, PB's Italian Kitchen, and Pizza Grille.

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

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 **October 26 and 29**.

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

Introduction

September 3

Unit 1: The Basics of Religion and Politics

Religion in Early American Political History

September 5

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

September 7

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

September 10

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

Church, State, and the Constitution

September 12

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)

September 14

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

September 17

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

September 19

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

Contemporary Religion and Political Behavior

September 21

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

September 24

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

September 26

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

September 28

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

October 1

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

The Christian Left

October 3

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

October 5

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)
- Chozick, Amy. 2018. *Chasing Hillary: Ten Years, Two Presidential Campaigns, and One Intact Glass Ceiling*. New York: Harper Collins (M 189-194)

Catholic Politics

October 8

- 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)

October 10

- 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

October 12

- 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

October 15

- 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.

October 17

Religious Organization Reports are Due

- Student Presentations

October 19

- Student Presentations on Reports Continue

October 19-24

Spring Break

Muslim Politics

October 24

- 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)

October 26

- Waldman, *The Submission* (entire)

October 29

- Waldman, *The Submission* (continued)

Unit 3: Religion and Public Policy

Religion and Education

October 31

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

November 2

- 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)

November 5

- 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

November 7

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)

November 9

- 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

November 12

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)

November 14

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

November 16

- 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

November 19

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

November 20-26

Thanksgiving Break

Religion and Homosexuality

November 26

- 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

November 28

- 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: Georgetown University Press (M 1-31)

Unit 4: The Frontiers of Religion and Politics

Rise of the Mega-Churches

November 30

- 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"

December 3

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

Religion and American Democracy

December 5

Response Papers are Due

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

December 7

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

Religion in Politics: A Force for Good or Ill?

December 10

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

December 12

- No Assignment

December 14

Last Class

December 18

Final Exam * 9:00 AM