

HCOL 1500M Freshmen Seminar: Religion in American Politics.

Mon, Wed, Fri 2:20p-3:10p, Old Main 523

Dr. Jonathan Doc Bradley.

Email: jonathan.bradley@uvm.edu or jbradle4@uvm.edu

Office: Old Mill, 5th Floor, #513

Office Hours: M/W/F 11a-12:10p & T/TH 11a-12:30p or by appointment...or just stop by

Course Statement:

This course provides a foundational understanding of the diversity of religion and its effect on American political culture in the US by examining institutional, US Constitutional, governmental and religious actors which have created the religious marketplace of the US. The purpose of this course is not to support any particular policy perspective or ideology on any of these issues, but to employ social science research to understand the diverse positions on these policy areas, to identify assumptions underlying different positions, and to assess the effects of public debate on these issues on democratic governance and civility. In particular, we will examine religions' role in the founding of the US, a critical understanding of religion in the 1st Amendment, how the Courts have been the battle ground of religious liberty, and the marriage of conservative Christian ideology with conservative politics since the 1970s.

Attention: You, the student, are responsible for all information contained in this syllabus. I maintain the right to amend this syllabus as needed to correct mistakes and, with limitations, readjust dates to meet the course needs. However, I, the professor, am also bound by the information and guidelines provided in this syllabus. We are in this together.

Text:

Wald, Kenneth D and Allison Calhoun-Brown. 2018. *Religion and Politics in the United States* 8th edition. Rowman & Littlefield: Boulder. **Referred to as "RPUS" in schedule.**

Additional readings will be posted to Brightspace and emailed out throughout the semester

Suggester Text: Jelen, Ted G. 2010, *To Serve God and Mammon*, 2nd edition, Georgetown University Press: Washington DC. (Not required, but this text will be used for a lot of the lectures.)

Suggested Text: Jones, Robert P. 2017. *The End of White Christian America* Simon & Schuster Paperbacks: New York. (Again, not required, but used throughout the course.)

Grades: Final Grade is Based on a 1000 Point System.

250 points for group presentations, both poster and PowerPoint.

100 points for overall group.

150 points for individual work without group.

400 points for issue/bibliography papers. 50 points each.

150 points for reading presentation and discussion lead.

100 points for reading questions, 10 points each.

100 points for class participation and contributions to discussion

Requirements:

- 1. Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory (duh). It is difficult to earn a passing grade in this class if you are not present for the lectures. Students are responsible for all information taught and provided in class, whether they are present or not. Valid absences for scholastic reasons, religious reasons or medical reasons will be allowed and will not count against overall attendance. Scholastic and religious absences need to be

preapproved. Medical absences need to be proven with medical paperwork from a medical professional concerning the date missed, or from the university. You are allowed 3 unexcused absences without question. More than that and I will subtract points from your overall grade.

- a. Do not think about missing days that we have obligations to make public presentations. Missing any of those days without an impressively documented excused absence will result in a 10% deduction from your final grade.
2. **Tardiness:** I loathe tardiness. Constant tardiness will not be tolerated. It is disrespectful to your fellow students, and much more importantly, it is disrespectful to me. **Continued tardiness will result in a lowering of your overall final grade.** I reserve the right to restrict access to the class if tardiness by any student(s) becomes an issue. If you have extenuating circumstances that will cause you to be consistently tardy, please contact me at the beginning of the semester about the situation. I am willing to make allowances for valid reasons.
3. **Readings:** You are expected to have all readings assigned for the week read by the first class of the week they are assigned. This means you are responsible for the readings from the textbook, the scholastic articles assigned and placed in Brightspace, and the various news articles I email to you.
 - a. Each week we will have readings. You will submit one question from each reading via email to me by Sunday night preceding the week's readings.
 - b. I will grade your question based on your understanding of the material and quality of the question.
 - c. Each question should be no more than three sentences. You can use part of the writing to set up your question, but there must be a clear question somewhere in your writing.
 - d. You must complete at least 10 of these, but I will replace 3 of your lower grades with better submissions if you have them.
 - e. Each submission is worth 10 points for a total of 100 points.
 - f. Questions will be submitted to the presenters of Wednesday discussions.
4. **Short Issue/Biography papers:** There will be 8 short papers 1000-1200 words which will consist of biographical/issue. They will be submitted to Brightspace as a pdf. **LET ME SAY THAT AGAIN, SUBMITTED AS A PDF. ONE MORE TIME FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO THINK I AM KIDDING. P-D-F!!!**
 - a. A more detailed explanation of what I expect for each paper will be provided in Brightspace.
 - b. Assignment:
 - i. Williams, Roger: 1603-1683. Founder Rhode Island.
 - ii. Willard, Francis: 1839-1898: President Women's Christian Temperance Movement.
 - iii. Coughlin, Charles E. (Father Coughlin): 1897-1979. Catholic Priest, radio preacher.
 - iv. Day, Dorothy: 1897-1980. Social activist, Catholic Workers Movement.
 - v. Cone, James H.: 1936-2018. Black liberation theologian.
 - vi. Falwell, Jerry L. Sr.: 1933-2007. Minister, co-founder Moral Majority.
 - vii. O'Hair, Madalyn Murry: 1919-1995. American Atheist.
 - viii. Barber, William J II: 1963-present. Minister, social activist.

- c. Assignments are to be turned in on time. You may turn in an assignment late if you have a valid reason and you receive permission from me. I may be willing to accept assignments late if there are extenuating circumstances, but I reserve the right to deduct points automatically from that assignment because it is late. You must keep up with the schedule and when items are due.
 - d. Not every assignment will have a clear explanation of exactly what you need to do. Life is not full of explanations. Sometimes you need to figure some things out on your own.
 - e. Merely doing everything you think you are supposed to do to meet the minimum requirement of the assignment is what an average student does to earn an average grade. "A" grades are not given out for bare-minimum. If you want to be above average or exceptional then you need to turn in above average or exceptional work.
 - f. Every student has the right to contest their grade on an assignment. My door is always open. However, if you wish to contest a grade you need to do it in person within a week of the grade being listed in Brightspace (depending on vacations and end of the semester). You need to come to my office either during office hours or by appointment. You need to be prepared to explain why you think you earned a better grade. Do not ask me to defend the grade you have earned. Do not complain via email.
- 5. Reading Discussions:** Throughout the semester each student will present one article or Supreme Court Case for discussion. Worth 150 points out of 1000, or 15%.
- a. You will submit one question from each of the assigned readings for the upcoming week. These questions are due on the Sunday before the readings are assigned via the prompt in Brightspace.
 - b. For instance, if the syllabus lists a group of readings for the week of January 29. You will submit your questions by Midnight on Sunday, January 28.
 - c. I will grade your question based on your understanding of the material, quality of the question, and if you read the material.
 - d. Each question should be no more than three sentences.
 - e. You can use part of the writing to set up your question, but there must be a clear question somewhere in your writing.
 - f. You must complete at least 10 of these, but I will replace 3 of your lower grades with better submissions if you have them.
- 6. Class Participation:** You are expected to participate in class discussion, contribute your knowledge, be inquisitive, and do your part to facilitate a healthy discussion.
- a. As you have seen, our class has a heavy oral communication component. Between your poster and PowerPoint presentation, discussion lead, and participation, half your grade comes from oral communication.
 - b. I understand that some students have difficulty speaking in public. If this is the case, please come see me to let me know and we will work on a plan to backload your speaking commitment. However, no student will be able to pass the class without speaking in the classroom and in a public forum.
 - c. Ours is a small class. My goal is to create trust and familiarity among the students so public speaking will not be so daunting. It is hard to make it all the way through college without speaking publicly.

- d. Trust me on this. I've done this before. We will get through it together.
7. **Communications:** I believe most problems can be prevented by effective and clear communication. Expect me to be one of your most communicative professors. Never be afraid to ask me questions or request clarifications.
- Email communications must be via UVM student email or through Brightspace. Do not send an email via Google, Yahoo, or other commercial providers. I will not answer emails sent in any medium other than UVM's student email system. I have no dedicated phone line so use email for all communication.
 - Please avail yourself of my office hours. I am here to help you and teach you. I am thrilled by visits from students (honestly) who are seeking to learn and understand. My email address, office location, and office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus.
8. **Grading:**
- 250 points for group presentations, both poster and PowerPoint.
 - 100 points for overall group.
 - 150 points for individual work without group.
 - 400 points for issue/bibliography papers. 50 points each.
 - 150 points for reading presentation and discussion lead.
 - 100 points for reading questions, 10 points each.
 - 100 points for class participation and contributions to discussion
 - 100% = A+, 99.9% - 93% = A, 92.9%-90% = A-, 89.9%-87% = B+, 86.9%-83% = B, 82.9%-80%=B-, 79.9%-77% = C+, 76.9%-72% = C, 71.9% -70% = C-, 69% - 60% = D below 60% = F
9. **Check your Grades:** Your grades will be posted on the class Brightspace site after each exam and homework. If you have a question about your exam, or if the grade is entered incorrectly in Brightspace, you must contact me within 72 hours after the posting of the grade to rectify the issue. You must check your grades at the very least once a week.
- FINAL GRADE:** For the final exam, this time period is 48 hours. I will post a final letter grade for you to review in Brightspace. You will have 24 hours from the posting to review and alert me if there are any mistakes. After these 24 hours, your final grade as shown in Brightspace will be submitted formally to the university's grading system. Final grades will not be curved. Final grades will be figured by hand because Brightspace' mathematic calculations have proven to be less than reliable. **DO NOT RELY ON BRIGHTSPACE FOR YOUR FINAL GRADE.**
10. **Classroom Behavior:** Every student is entitled to a distraction-free classroom. Students may not behave in any manner that interferes with the learning of another student or my teaching. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- You must arrive and be prepared to begin class on time. **I loathe tardiness.** Let me say that again "I loathe tardiness." If late arrivals become a problem, the doors will be locked once class has started. If you have a valid reason to be tardy, please inform me at the beginning of the semester. Do not be continually tardy and then try to explain to me at the end of the semester about the reasons. I am willing to be lenient on limited tardiness if there are extenuating circumstances and I am made aware of them before they happen.
 - Cell phones must be turned off and stored out of sight.** Texting, accessing the internet (unless I request it), or reading email during class is absolutely prohibited

and will result in your being asked to leave the classroom. Continual cell phone use during the class will result in a lowering of your class participation grade. I have no tolerance for cell phones in class. We have survived in various forms of society for 8,000 years without cell phones. You can survive for a few hours without yours. I don't even want to see them out. If they are out I will assume you are using it and I will ask you to put it away. Unless you are a brain surgeon on call or in possession of the nuclear launch codes there is absolutely no reason you need to be talking or texting on your cell phone in our class.

- c. Laptops and tablets are allowed in class ONLY to take notes. You are not to access the internet (unless I request you to do so), check email or perform any other function on your computer that is not class related. I reserve the right to discontinue the use of all or individual electronic devices in class if they disrupt the learning environment.
- d. No "side-bar" conversations. Ignoring this rule will result in your being asked to leave the classroom. I do not tolerate students who are disruptive or inconsiderate of other students.
- e. Recording devices are allowed in class to record the lecture, but each recording must be converted into an mp3 or some easily playable file and emailed to me before the next class.
- f. No food or beverages (except water in a sealable container) are allowed in the classroom.
- g. Classroom behavior should always be courteous, respectful of others, and consistent with the expectations set forth by the university.

Schedule: is done by weeks. You are expected to have all the readings assigned completed by the first class of the week.

- Class syllabus is based on a weekly structure.
- Weekly structure will be:
 - Monday-Wednesday professor lectures,
 - Wednesday-Friday student discussion leaders,
 - Friday-class material discussions-poster/powerpoint presentation.
- Readings are to be completed by the start of the week they are assigned. You are expected to have all the readings completed by the Monday of the week they are to be discussed.

Schedule (This is subject to change as needed):

Week of Jan 17: Intro, Syllabus; What is Religion? What is Politics.

Read:

- RPUS Chapter 1
- Article: Geerts, Clifford & Michael Banton. 1966. "Religion as a cultural system (edited)"

Jan 22: A Foundation in Political Science and Religious Studies

Read:

- Federalist 10 (Brightspace)
- Article: Laborde, Cecile. 2011. “Political Liberalism and Religion...”
- Article: Marshall 2002 “Behavior, Belonging, and Belief.”

Jan 29: Why is the U.S. so religious...or is it?

Read

- RPUS Chapter 2
- WIKIPEDIA’S “The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism”
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Protestant_Ethic_and_the_Spirit_of_Capitalism
- WIKIPEDIA’S “Theory of religious economy”
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theory_of_religious_economy
 - If you want, you can read Anthony Downs (1957) “An Economic Theory of Political Action...” but only if you really want to.

Jan 30: Roger Williams short paper due as PDF by midnight via Brightspace.

Feb 2: Francis Willard short paper due as PDF by midnight via Brightspace.

Feb 5: History of Religion and Politics in the U.S.

Read:

- RPUS Chapter 3
- Article: Jelen 2006 “Rel & Pol in US” (*more for next week*)

Feb 6: Charles Coughlin short paper due as PDF by midnight via Brightspace.

Feb 9: Dorothy Day short paper due as PDF by midnight via Brightspace.

Feb 12: Modern History of Religion and Politics in the U.S.

*** Explanation of basic beliefs of Evangelical, Charismatic, Fundamentalist Christians.

Read:

- RPUS Chapter 4
- Article: Mann & Ornstein 2013 “Finding Common Good in...”
- Article: Campbell 2021 “Rel as Pol Tribalism”

Feb 13: James Cone short paper due as PDF by midnight via Brightspace.

Feb 16: Jerry Falwell Sr. short paper due as PDF by midnight via Brightspace.

Feb 19: President’s Day Break

Feb 21: Religion, American Culture and Political Culture

Read:

- RPUS Chapter 4 & 12
- Article: Jelen 2005 “Political Esperanto.”

Feb 20: Madalyn Murry O’Hair short paper due as PDF by midnight via Brightspace.

Feb 23: William Barber short paper due as PDF by midnight via Brightspace.

Feb 26: The Religious Left & The Struggle of Minorities in Religion & Politics in the US.
Read

- RPUS 10 & 11
- Article: Olson 2011 “Rel Left in Am Pol.”

Mar 7: Town Hall Meeting Day: Democracy, 1789 Style!

Mar 4: Religion as a Political Tool

Read:

- RPUS Chapter 5
- Article: Reingold et al 2021 “Anti-abortion policy making”

11-15 Spring Break: Be smart, be careful, have some stupid-safe fun.

Mar 18: Religion and Political Action

Read:

- RPUS Chapter 6
- Article: Billings and Scott 1995 “Religion and Political Legitimation (Activism)...”

Mar 25: Antisemitism & Islamophobia

- Fuerst, Ilyse R (12/6/2016) “Tracking Hate: Islam and Race After the Presidential election,” *Religion and Politics*,
<https://religionandpolitics.org/2016/12/06/tracking-hate-islam-and-race-after-the-presidential-election/>
- Additional readings forthcoming.

Apr 1: Religion and the Courts Part I: Free Exercise.

Read: (Don’t freak out! You will be reading a synopsis of the cases listed)

- Bill of Rights Institute “Religious Liberty: Landmark Court Cases.”
 - <https://billofrights.org/e-lessons/religious-liberty>
- From *Reynolds v US (1879)* to *Estate of Thornton v Caldor, Inc. (1985)*
- *Griswold v Connecticut (1965)* (Brightspace)
- *Roe v Wade (1973)* (Brightspace)
- *Planned Parenthood v Casey (1992)* (Brightspace)
- *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue (2020)* (Brightspace)
- *Dobs v Jackson (2021)* (Brightspace)
- *303 Creative LLC v Elenis (2022)* (Brightspace)

- *Burwell v Hobby Lobby (2014)* (Brightspace)
- *Obergefell v Hodges (2015)* Brightspace)

April 5: Final Posters Due to HCOL

April 8: Eclipse Day. Hope for blue skies.

April 10: 5:05p-6:20p: Marsh Life Science 129. Poster Displays

Apr 10: Religion and the Courts Part II: Establishment.

Read:

- Bill of Rights Institute “Religious Liberty: Landmark Court Cases.”
 - <https://billofrightsinitiative.org/e-lessons/religious-liberty>
- *Goldman v Weinberger (1986)* to *Christian Legal Society v Martinez (2010)*
- *Engel v Vitale (1962)*
- *County of Allegheny v. American Civil Liberties Union, Greater Pittsburgh Chapter (1989)*
- *Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization v. Winn (2011)* (Brightspace)
- *Carson v Makin (2021)* (Brightspace)
- *Kennedy V Bremerton School District (2021)* (Brightspace)
- *Town of Greece v Galloway (2014)* (Brightspace)
- *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia (2021)* (Brightspace)
- *Groff v Dejoy (2023)*

Apr 15: Religion and the Courts Part III: Continued

Apr 22: The Religious Right & The End of White Christian American

Read:

- RPUS Chapter 8
- Selected readings from Public Religion Research Institute.

April 29: 5:05p First Year Research Symposium at the Grand Maple Ballroom

Apr 29: Religion & Environmentalism in the US

- Article: Jenkins & Chapple 2011 “Religion and Environment.”
- Article: Peifer et al 2016 Political “Con, rel, environ...”
- Article: Arbuckle & Konisky 2015 “Role of Rel in Environment...”

The Minutia

UVM’s Department of Political Science Classroom Protocol:

a) Students are expected to attend and be prepared for ALL regularly scheduled classes.

b) Students are expected to arrive on time and stay in class until the class period ends. If a student knows in advance that the student will need to leave early, the student should notify the instructor before the class period begins.

c) Students are expected to treat faculty and fellow students with respect. For example, students must not disrupt class by leaving and reentering during class, must not distract class by making noise, and must be attentive to comments being made by the instructors and by peers.

Academic Integrity:

Remember the University of Vermont's motto: Studiis et Rebus Honestis ("For honorable studies and pursuits"). The University strives to provide an environment that encourages all students (undergraduate, medical, graduate, and continuing education) to learn, create, and share knowledge responsibly. As society entrusts our students and faculty to pursue knowledge and report their discoveries truthfully, any deliberate falsehood or misrepresentation undermines the stature of the University. These standards are also necessary for evaluating the quality of student work in a fair manner. The policy addresses plagiarism, fabrication, collusion, and cheating.

<https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/UVM-Policies/policies/acadintegrity.pdf> (PDF link)

Athlete Student & Academic Absences

If you are the member of a UVM recognized sports team and you need to miss class for a University sanctioned event please provide me with the relevant documentation before your absence. A simple "hey, I got a game next Monday" will not cut it. If you need to miss class for a University sanctioned academic event please provide me with the relevant documentation before your absence. A simple "hey, I got a thing next Monday" will not cut it.

Counseling & Psychiatry Services (CAPS)

Phone: (802) 656-3340

If you are concerned about a UVM community member or are concerned about a specific event, we encourage you to contact the Dean of Students Office (802-656-3380). If you would like to remain anonymous, you can report your concerns online by visiting the Dean of Students website at <https://www.uvm.edu/deanofstudents>.

Counseling and Psychiatry Services: <https://www.uvm.edu/health/CAPS>

There is honor in seeking help and fools refuse it when they need it. And hopefully you will never need this, but it is better to have it and not need it than need it and not have it: The Suicide Prevention Hotline: 800-273-8255.

Course Evaluation

All students are expected to complete an evaluation of the course at its conclusion. These evaluations are anonymous and confidential. They are important for faculty to consider when designing and improving courses, and for the annual review and promotion considerations of faculty.

FERPA

The purpose of this policy is to communicate the rights of students regarding access to, and privacy of their student educational records as provided for in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. <https://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/ferpa.pdf> (PDF link)

Grade Appeals:

If you would like to contest a grade, please follow the procedures outlined in this policy:

<https://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/gradeappeals.pdf> (PDF link)

Physical Health:

The University of Vermont's number one priority is to support a healthy and safe community. College is stressful. The professor wants you to pay attention to your physical and mental health. If you feel that either one of them are in jeopardy in any way, please contact the UVM Center for Health & Wellbeing.

If a student will not be able to attend in-person classes for qualifying health reasons, Student Health Services (SHS) will send a notification to the appropriate student services office or designated staff member informing them of this along with the dates the student is unable to attend. The SHS notification will specify whether the request for flexibility is only around in-person class attendance or includes additional flexibility for assignments and tests because the student is too ill to participate. Students are responsible for working with their faculty to make up class content and work they miss due to a documented illness.” You can also add your own expectations or plans regarding how students who miss class will be able to make up missed work.

According to the Center for Disease Control and the university health policy, if you have been exposed to covid19 you are to wear a mask but continue with your normal daily routine. Please refer to the chart at the end of the syllabus if you have symptoms or have had close contact.

<https://www.uvm.edu/health>

Student Accessibility Services (SAS)

In keeping with UVM policy, any student with a documented disability interested in utilizing ADA accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS), the office of Disability Services on campus for students. SAS works with students and faculty in an interactive process to explore reasonable and appropriate accommodations, which are communicated to faculty in an accommodation letter. All students are strongly recommended to discuss with their faculty the accommodations they plan to use in each course. Faculty who receive Letters of Accommodation with Disability Related Flexible accommodations will need to fill out the Disability Related Flexibility Agreement. Any questions from faculty or students on the agreement should be directed to the SAS specialist who is indicated on the letter. For more info see: <https://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/disability.pdf> (PDF link)

Religious Holidays: Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. Each semester, students should submit in writing to their instructors as early as possible and at least one week before their documented religious holiday the date(s) of the conflict or absence. Faculty must permit students who miss work or exams for religious observance to make up this work.

Tutoring

UVM provides you with a tutoring center.

https://www.uvm.edu/academicsuccess/tutoring_center

However, remember my office hours. If you are needing extra understanding of the material in this course please come to my office hours or make an appointment with me at both our conveniences.

UVM Writing Center

Need some help with your writing? We all do from time to time. UVM provides an undergraduate writing center to help you start, work-on, and complete your writing assignments. Please avail yourself of this service: <https://www.uvm.edu/undergradwriting>

Final Examinations:

The University final exam policy outlines expectations during final exams and explains timing and process of examination period.

<http://catalogue.uvm.edu/undergraduate/academicinfo/examsandgrading/>

Statement on Alcohol and Cannabis in the Academic Environment

As a faculty member, I want you to get the most you can out of this course. You play a crucial role in your education and in your readiness to learn and fully engage with the course material. It is important to note that alcohol and cannabis have no place in an academic environment. They can seriously impair your ability to learn and retain information not only in the moment you may be using, but up to 48 hours or more afterwards. In addition, alcohol and cannabis can:

- Cause issues with attention, memory and concentration
- Negatively impact the quality of how information is processed and ultimately stored
- Affect sleep patterns, which interferes with long-term memory formation

It is my expectation that you will do everything you can to optimize your learning and to fully participate in this course.