

Political Science Senior Seminar

Mark David Hall
Spring 2017
Class time: MWF 9:00-9:50
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Office Hours: MWF, 8:15-8:50, 10:00-11:50

PSC 490
Center Street House

This course is intended to be the pinnacle of your major at George Fox University. Over the past four years you should have taken at least ten politics courses, completed an internship, and thought deeply about a variety of political issues. Hopefully your horizons have been broadened, your knowledge increased, and your critical skills sharpened. Most significantly, you should be convinced of the need for Christians to approach politics in a thoroughly Christian manner. This course is designed to help you think through some of the implications of your course of study to date and to plan for the future.

More than any course you have taken thus far, this class is designed to be a seminar where you will join me in discussing texts and issues. I will never lecture, and you are expected to regularly attend class and be prepared to contribute to class discussion. As well, you will be required to make a variety of public presentations. Your participation and preparation is worth 10% of your final grade.

Each student will write five four-five page papers (10% of grade each) on topics noted below. Papers are due at the beginning of the class days as indicated on the syllabus.

As well, you will write a marvelous 15-page research paper on a topic of your choosing but subject to my approval. Papers should be typed, double spaced, and in twelve-point font. I'll pass out a style guide with additional instructions.

Papers must be meticulously researched and documented. Your thesis should be clear and your arguments rigorous. If your subject overlaps with other work you have done or are doing, you must clearly explain the overlap to me. You may discuss your topic with other students, and they may proofread your essay, but all research and writing must be done by you alone. Plagiarism will result in an automatic "F" on the paper or, if flagrant enough, the course. See my style guide for additional information. Due dates include: January 25—paper topic; February 10—thesis and one page list of sources (1% of grade); March 8—outline (3% of grade); April 3—draft (paper should be at least 85% complete and decently written (10% of grade)); April 19—final paper (26% of grade).

All written assignments must be turned in by hand and on paper (no e-mail submissions). Late assignments will be penalized 3 points every 24-hour period they are late (excluding weekends). Absolutely no extensions will be given for computer/printer problems. A final letter grade based upon the percentage of points you earn in this course will be given based on the following scale: 93-100 A; 90-92.99 A-; 87-89.99 B+; 83-

86-99 B; 80-82.99 B-; 77-79.99 C+; 73-76.99 C; 70-72.99 C-; 67-69.99 D+; 60-66.99 D; 0-59.99 F.

Please note: I have kept the reading assignments for this course quite light for a 400 level course. I expect you to supplement it regularly by doing your own outside reading and research. This work should be reflected in your classroom participation and papers.

Reading Assignments

January

9. Introduction.

How should faith impact society/politics? Pick one of the following books to read for assignment #1. You may suggest a thoughtful alternative, but not a popular polemical work by someone like Pat Robertson or Jim Wallis.

H. R. Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*

D.A. Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited*

Craig A. Carter: *Rethinking Christ and Culture: A Post-Christendom Perspective*

John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus*

David Koyzis, *Political Visions & Illusions*

Darryl Hart, *A Secular Faith*

Miroslav Volf, *A Public Faith*

Peter Goodwin Heltzel, *Jesus and Justice: Evangelicals, Race, and American Politics*

Richard John Neuhaus, *The Naked Public Square*

Sandra Joireman, ed. *Church, State, and Citizen*

Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and Social Crises*

James Davidson Hunter, *To Change the World*

Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What is the Mission of the Church?*

Note for this and all other assignments: you may not select a book you have read before, or are reading for another class this semester. If you want to read book not on this list, let me know. I must approve it ahead of time. Students must read different books. If two students would like to read the same book, we'll flip a coin.

11. No class.

13. No class.

16. No class, MLK day.

18. Paper #1 due.

We will spend the first part of class picking books for each remaining assignment. These include:

Assignment #2. Read a biography (approved by me) of a Christian statesperson/political activist. To what extent does your subject attempt to integrate his/her faith with politics? Did he/she succeed? Biographies must be solid books, ideally critical biographies, and at least 220 pages long. They should cover the entire life of your subject. Possible subjects include: Abraham Kuyper, William Wilberforce, Dorothy Day, Roger Williams, John Winthrop, Martin Luther King, Jr., Roger Sherman, Theodore Frelinghuysen, Grimke sisters, William Lloyd Garrison, William Jennings Bryan, Pope John Paul II, Septima Poinsette Clark, Charles Colson, William Penn, William Gladstone, John Bright, etc.

Assignment #4. Each student will read, review, and report on a recent book on international relations or comparative government. Among other things, the review should critique the book from a Christian perspective. Students may not review the same book. Books must be approved by me. Your book must be at least 220 pages long and it must be substantial, but not necessarily academic. You may not read a book you have read before or will use in another class. Please do not pick an edited volume. You *may* pick a book that you will use in your final paper. For example:

- (1) Thomas Friedman and Michael Mandelbaum, *That Used to Be Us: How America Fell Behind in the World It Invented and How We Can Come Back*
- (2) Peter A. Smith, *Democracy in Latin America*.
- (3) Martin Jacques, *When China Rules the World*.
- (4) Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World*.
- (5) John Foran, *Taking Power: On the Origins of Third World Revolutions*.
- (6) Richard McGregor, *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers*.

Assignment #5. Each student will read, review, and report on a recent book on contemporary American politics. Among other things, the review should critique the book from a Christian perspective. Students may not review the same book. Books must be approved by me. Your book must be at least 220 pages long and it must be substantial, but not necessarily academic. You may not read a book you have read before or will use in another class. Please do not pick an edited volume. You *may* pick a book that you will use in your final paper. Examples:

1. John DiIulio, *Godly Republic: A Centrist Blueprint for America's Faith-Based Future*.
2. Patrick J. McGuinn, *No Child Left Behind and the Transformation of Federal Education Policy, 1965-2005*.
3. Kay S. Hymowitz, *Marriage and Caste in America: Separate and Unequal Families in a Post-Marital Age*.
4. Earl and Merle Black, *Divided America: The Ferocious Power Struggles in American Politics*.
5. Stanley A. Renshon, *The 50% American: Immigration and National Identity in an Age of Terror*.
6. Charles Murray, *Coming Apart: The State of White America, 1960-2010*.

After we have selected books, we will begin presentations on your first paper. You should be prepared to present a thoughtful review of your book to the class. Each student will have 10-15 minutes to present an overview and critique of the book. We'll then discuss it. Two students will go each day.

20. Presentations continued.

23. Presentations continued.

25. Presentations continued. **Big paper topic due. Over the next two weeks you must visit with me about your major paper topic. I have given you a lot of free time here so you can start doing research on your topic to make sure it is feasible.**

27. Finish presentations.

30. No class.

February

1. No class.

3. No class.

6. Paper #2 due. Student presentations on biographies.

8. Continue presentations

10. Continue presentations.

13. Finish student presentations. VISIT IDEA CENTER FOR ASSIGNMENT #3. Note: You may need an appointment.

15. Paper #3 due. Begin presentations.

Assignment #3

Turn in: (1) resume, (2) descriptions and contact information for four *real and realistic* entry level jobs for which you could apply (you may simply cut and paste the advertisement), and (3) your obituary (3-4 pages). The latter should describe your ideal career, accomplishments, and reflect on the extent to which you balanced your career with other parts of life [assume you live to be at least 70 years old]. This assignment is intended to help you think about what you want to do with your life from this point forward, and how you plan to get there. Feel free to dream, but be realistic as well. You will be graded upon the care you take with your resume, the usefulness of the job listings, and the thoughtfulness of your obituary.

17. Continue presentations. Go hear Jay Bruce and earn bonus points toward your participation grade.

20. Finish presentations.

22. No class. Between today and March 10, visit with me about your progress to date.

24. **Paper #4 due.** Begin presentations.

27. Continue presentations.

March

1. Continue presentations.

3. Continue presentations. John Inazu speaks on March 2. Attend and receive bonus points for your participation grade.

6. Finish presentations.

8. **Paper #5 due.** Begin presentations.

10. Continue presentations.

13. Continue presentations.

15. Continue presentations.

17. Finish presentations

20. No class.

22. No class.

24. No class.

27-31. Spring Break.

April

3. Begin student presentation of major papers. Each presentation should be at least 30 minutes long, followed by 20 minutes of Q&A/discussion. Presentations should be very professional. The use of a Power Point presentation (or something similar) is *highly* recommended. Order will be randomly determined by me and sent to students via email.

5. Presentations.

7. Presentations.

10. Presentations

12. Presentations

14. Presentations.

17. In class editing exercise. Each student will bring to class a polished final version of his/her paper. I will distribute the papers to your peers who will edit them for grammar, style, and substance. You will then get your paper back and will have a chance to revise it.

19. Presentations.

21. Presentations.

26. 10:15-12:15: *Final Exam Period*. Finish presentations.

Please note: I reserve the right to change any aspect of this syllabus, **especially to hold class on days that are currently designated “no class” days**. If I make a change I will announce it clearly and unambiguously in class and I will send an e-mail to everyone in the course.