

## Christianity and Politics in the United States

PSCI 440  
TTH 2:45-4:00

Fall 2009  
Stevens 207

Professor Mark Hall  
Office: Center Street House, Room 12  
Phone: (W) x2674 (H) (503) 554-0324 (before 9:00 p.m.)  
Office Hours: MWF 2:00-4:00; TTH 8:15-10:30; or by appointment.

This course explores the relationship between Christianity and politics in the United States. We will look at three fundamental questions: (1) how have religion and politics been related historically? (2) how are they related today? (3) how should they be related? Everyone is expected to prepare for each class, attend regularly, and be prepared to discuss reading assignments. Students will take three exams (each worth 20% of the final grade), review and present one book (15%), and write an extremely thoughtful six-page paper about how one's faith should inform one's political activity (15%). A participation grade of 10% will be awarded based on attendance, preparation, and article summaries (see below).

Students should read the New York Times and other media regularly for news about religion and politics/religion and society. Every Tuesday students must bring to class a one-paragraph summary and commentary on an article (with an emphasis on the commentary). Each summary/commentary should be typed and provide citation information. Articles can be on current events or about recent historical discoveries/arguments. These summaries/commentaries will count toward a 10% participation grade. Most of your articles should be about America, but some may be about other nations. You should be prepared to discuss your article in class. A good source of information is the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (<http://pewforum.org/news/>).

Book reviews should be 1,000 words long and should summarize *and critique* the work in question. Books must be approved by me. You may not read a book you have read or are reading for another class. Reviews will be submitted and presentations made throughout the semester at appropriate times.

All written assignments must be printed and turned in to me (no e-mail submissions). Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments will be penalized 3 points every 24-hour period they are late (excluding weekends).

Required Texts:

The Bible, any edition

Daniel L. Dreisbach and Mark David Hall, *The Sacred Rights of Conscience*.

Robert Booth Fowler et al., *Religion and Politics in America*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.

Jon Meacham, *American Gospel*.

### Reading Assignments

The following assignments must be completed on the indicated day. Reserve material is indicated by a star "\*". I reserve the right to change any assignment or due date.

#### September

1. Introduction.
3. No class, but read: Meacham, 3-63; *Sacred Rights of Conscience* (SRC), xxi-xxxiv.
8. SRC, 83-103, 110-120.
10. SRC, 122-132, 173-179, 215-224, 229-238.
15. Meacham, 64-113, SRC, 239-256.
17. SRC 266, 276-78, 290-297, 307-316, 335-47.
22. SRC, 346-375, 381-82 (Martin).
24. SRC, 405-33, 441-454.
29. SRC, 468-479, 520-537, 588-595.

#### October

1. TBA.
6. Test #1,
8. The use and abuse of history: Introduction to *The Forgotten Founders on Religion and Public Life*; Hall, "Jeffersonian Walls and Madisonian Lines."

13. Nineteenth Century: Meacham, 114-152; SRC; 14, George Sawyer on slavery, in Bruce Frohnen, ed. *The American Republic*, 665-89, available at: Online Library of Liberty; Lincoln's Second Inaugural (find online).

15. Handout: Mark David Hall "Beyond Self-Interest"; "Seneca Falls Declaration" (find online); spend 15 minutes reading about the Blaine Amendments at: <http://www.blaineamendments.org>.

20. Handout: Gary Wills, *Under God*, 97-164.

22. Meacham, 153-226, Martin Luther King, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," "I have a Dream."

27. Meacham, 227-250, 267-73.

29. Fowler, chapter 1, TBA.

November

3. Test #2

5. Religion and Politics Today  
Fowler chapters 2-4.

10. The new religious left: <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/865/sizing-up-the-religious-left>  
The election of 2008: John Green, "What Happened to the Values Voter?" *First Things* (available online); TBA (Pew study?).

12. Fowler 5-6.

17. Fowler 7-8.

19. No class, work on papers.

24. Fowler 9-10.

26. Thanksgiving

December

1. Fowler 11-12.

3. SRC 3-27.

8. SRC, 39-51, 76-79, TBA.

10. Student presentations on proper relationship between religion and politics/church and state.

16. Test #3, 3:00.

Possible Books [set date for presentation with me]

#### Selective Bibliography

Abzug, Robert. Cosmos Crumbling: American Reform and the Religious Imagination (1994)

Bellah, Robert, et al. Habits of the Heart (1985)

Bonomi, Patricia. Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America (1986)

Buckley, Thomas E., Church and State in Revolutionary Virginia, 1776-1787 (1977)

Carwardine, Richard J. Evangelicals and Politics in Ante-Bellum America (1994)

Davis, Derek H. Religion and the Continental Congress, 1774-1789: Contributions to Original Intent (2000)

Dreisbach, Daniel. Thomas Jefferson and the Wall of Separation Between Church and State (2002)

Fisher, Louis, Religious Liberty in America: Political Safeguards (2002)

Fowler, Robert B. A New Engagement: Evangelical Political Thought, 1966-1976 (1982)

Fox, Richard. Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography (1987)

Hall, David W. The Genevan Reformation and the American Founding (2003)

Hamburger, Philip. The Separation of Church and State (2002)

Hart, Darryl A. A Secular Faith: Why Christianity Favors the Separation of Church and State (2006).

Hatch, Nathan O. The Sacred Cause of Liberty: Republican Thought and the Millennium in Revolutionary New England (1977)

Hatch, Nathan. The Democratization of American Christianity (1989)

Hertzke, Allen. Freeing God's Children: The Unlikely Alliance for Global Human Rights (2004)

Heineman, Kenneth J. God is a Conservative: Religion, Politics, and Morality in Contemporary America (1998).

Hofrenning, Daniel. In Washington but Not of It: The Prophetic Politics of Religious Lobbyists (1995)

Hoffman, Ronald and Peter Albert, eds. Religion in a Revolutionary Age (1994)

Hunter, James D. Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America (1991)

Hutson, James H. Forgotten Features of the Founding: The Recovery of Religious Themes in the Early American Republic (2003)

Lambert, Frank. The Founding Fathers and the Place of Religion in America (2003)

Layman, Geoffrey. The Great Divide: Religious and Cultural Conflict in America (2001)

Lienesch, Michael. Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right (1994)

Miller, Perry. Errand Into the Wilderness (1956).

Miller, William Lee. The First Liberty: Religion and the American Republic (1986)

Murphy, Andrew. Conscience and Community: Revisiting Toleration and Religious Dissent in Early Modern England and America (2001)

Neuhaus, Richard. The Naked Public Square (1984)

Niebuhr, H. Richard. Christ and Culture (1951)

----- The Kingdom of God in America (1937)

Niebuhr, Reinhold. Moral Man and Immoral Society (1932)

Noll, Mark. Ed. Religion and American Politics: From the Colonial Period to the 1980's (1990)

Novak, Michael. The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism (1991)

----- On Two Wings: Humble Faith and Common Sense at the American Founding (2002)

Penn, William. The Political Writings of William Penn. Ed. Andrew Murphy (2002)

Rauschenbush, Walter. Christianity and Social Crisis (1924)

Jonathan D. Sassi, A Republic of Righteousness (2001)

Shain, Barry. The Myth of American Individualism: The Protestant Origins of American Political Thought (1995)

Smith, Christian. The Secular Revolution (2003)

Stout, Harry S. The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England. (1986)

Tinder, Glenn. The Political Meaning of Christianity (1989)

Waldman, Steven, Founding Faith (2008).

West, John G. The Politics of Revelation and Reason (1996)

Witte, John. The Reformation of Rights (2007).

Wood, Richard. Faith in Action: Religion, Race, and Democratic Organizing in America (2002).

Wuthnow, Robert. The Restructuring of American Religion (1988)

----- Saving America (2004)

Yoder, John Howard. The Politics of Jesus (1972)