

HIST-204-302: Religion and Politics in America from the Puritans to the Religious Right

The University of Pennsylvania

Fall 2015

M 2-5 p.m.

Rittenhouse Labs (DRLB) 3C6

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How is it that America came to see itself as "God's country" or a Christian nation, why did Protestant denominations proliferate in the 19th century after disestablishment, why were certain groups' religious practices restricted despite religious freedom, when did presidents start ending inaugural addresses with "God Bless the United States of America"?

This course traces the intersection of religion and politics in America from the colonial period to the present. We will cover such topics as Puritan theocracy and early experiments with religious freedom in the colonies, the move towards separation of church and state in the new nation, the rise of religious voluntarism, constitutional challenges, civil religion and the presidency, and religious pluralism and the limits of democracy and religious tolerance.

Required Texts * **All sources listed are available for purchase at Penn Book Center and on reserve in Van Pelt Library**

Robert Booth Fowler, Allen D. Hertzke, Laura R. Olson, and Kevin R. De Dulk, *Religion and Politics in America*, 5th ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2013). ISBN: 978-0813348513

Mark A. Noll and Luke E. Harlow, eds., *Religion and American Politics: From the Colonial Period to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). ISBN: 978-0195317152

John F. Wilson and Donald L. Drakeman, *Church and State in American History: Key Documents, Decisions, and Commentary From the Past Three Centuries* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003). ISBN: 978-0813365589

John Witte, Jr., *Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment*, Second Edition (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2005). ISBN: 978-0813342313

David L. Holmes, *The Faiths of the Founding Fathers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). ISBN: 978-0195300925

Noah Feldman, *Divided By God: America's Church-State Problem—And What We Should Do About It* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006). ISBN: 978-0374530389

Randall Balmer, *God in the White House: A History: How Faith Shaped the Presidency from John F. Kennedy to George W. Bush* (New York: HarperOne, 2009). ISBN: 978-0060872588

The following two texts are Recommended but NOT Required:

Stephen Prothero, *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know—and Doesn't* (New York: Harper, 2007). ISBN: 978-0060859527

Catherine L. Albanese, *America: Religion and Religions*, 4th ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2006). ISBN: 978-0534627393

* Please use the specific editions listed here—other editions are available, but they often have different page numbers (this can be a problem in class discussions). Additional material for class and papers will be available as a PDF or links on Canvas (see below).

Course Format and Policies

The course consists of lecture/discussion, Canvas assignments, quizzes, mid-term and final exams, and three short research papers. Regular attendance is expected. If you have to miss class for some reason, it is up to you to review what was covered that day on the syllabus and obtain any notes from a classmate (do not ask me what you missed). If you are a student athlete, it is your responsibility to inform me of absences due to game schedules. Please come to class on time with the assigned text for each class. Turn all phones, etc off upon entering class (or set phones to vibrate if absolutely necessary)—texting during class will lower your participation grade. Use of laptops and tablets will be discussed on the first day of class. They will only be allowed when we are discussing reading assignments comprised of PDFs and/or links.

Your quizzes and papers and related assignments will be significant parts of your grade—but there also will be regular brief writing assignments on Canvas. The course website on Canvas will contain an updated version of this syllabus, contact info, reading assignments and questions, and other course material. You are advised to check Canvas regularly for course updates. I will also send email to the class via Canvas. Canvas assignments should be submitted ideally by midnight before the following class but no later than noon on the day of class.

I place a high value on participation. In addition to keeping up with Canvas assignments, everyone will be asked to lead discussion in groups of two or three twice during the semester, and I also expect to hear from you regularly throughout the semester in class discussions. I hope to create a lively, stimulating class environment where you will feel welcome to ask questions, comment, and debate issues.

For your paper assignment, it may be helpful for you to consult a writing reference guide such as *A Pocket Style Manual* by Diana Hacker; Gordon Harvey, *Writing With Sources: A Guide for Students* (Hackett, 1998); or “*They Say / I Say*” by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein. All papers must conform to the Chicago or MLA format.

Grades will be determined by a combination of the following criteria:

1) class attendance	10%
2) participation (includes Canvas assignments & class participation)	10%
3) three quizzes	30%
4) research essay (12-15 pages)	50%

Research Essay

In this class you will be writing a substantial research essay based upon original materials and your own observations. You will be producing a work of historical analysis—a smaller version of the type of work we will be reading each week. While your inclination may be to work on what you consider to be a “big” topic, you should begin by finding an area of interest and narrowing your project around the available primary documents—most likely you will have to narrow your interest. Think of the search for the project as the search for a question—a question that can be answered by doing some historical research. Your thesis then becomes the answer to the problem as found in the primary materials. Other historians may have already worked on your problem—the body of their analysis (i.e., their theses/answers) can be thought of as the “historiography” of your topic.

Although the entire semester may seem like a long time, it is not. By the fifth class (September 28), your document analysis is due. For this assignment, you need to find at least four primary documents on your topic (copies of which you will provide) and write a two-page summary and analysis of the documents. By early October, you should have a topic, a question, and a primary source base sketched out: the first short proposal, which should be no more than three pages and a bibliography, is due October 12. At this point, you are required to set up a meeting with me to discuss the project. With a clearer project and more sources, you will draft your final proposal/research plan and submit it to me on November 2. The first draft of your essay (roughly 8-10 pages) is due November 16. A final manuscript (12-15 pages) is due on the last day of class, when you will give a brief presentation of your essay and its arguments to the class.

Your paper and related assignments will be significant parts of your grade—but there also will be regular brief writing assignments on Canvas. You are encouraged to meet with me during office hours throughout the semester as needed to approve topics and discuss progress on any assignment. It is wise to turn in all assignments on time, as work inevitably will pile up. Extensions or excused absences will be granted *very* rarely (only in case of documented medical emergency or participation in away games by student athletes), and late papers will be marked down ½ letter grade per class day late. You must complete all assignments to pass, and I will not give any Incompletes at the end of the semester.

I will comment extensively on your writing, and I will devote some class time to writing workshops. The Writing Center offers further assistance with writing tutors, and I strongly recommend their services as you work on drafts of your writing assignments (it *will* help your grade). Visit http://writing.upenn.edu/critical/writing_center/ to make an appointment.

A Note on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

I expect that you will adhere to the strictest standards of academic integrity in all of your work. Students may work together on certain projects, but all written work must be completed individually. Any student who is found to have violated the university's code of academic integrity (in the *Pennbook*) will fail the class. If you need help in learning how to cite materials, the library has a helpful website at <http://gethelp.library.upenn.edu/PORT/documentation/>

All papers for this course will be submitted in hardcopy and electronically via the course's Canvas website to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism.

Disability Services

Any student who needs an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Student Disabilities Services (<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/sds/>) to coordinate reasonable accommodations. In order for a disability to be considered in the evaluation of student performance, the professor must receive documentation provided by this office.

Weekly Course Schedule

Note: we will try to stick to this, but it is *not* cut in stone—I will let you know if/when there are any changes). Reading Assignments listed for each class (as well as any related Canvas assignments) should be completed ideally by midnight before the following class but no later than noon on the day of class.

Week One

Monday, August 31: Introduction

Reading Assignment: Witte, Intro and Ch. 1; Wilson, Intro and Ch. 1; Noll and Harlow, Intro and Ch. 1; Fowler, Intro and Ch. 1; Feldman, Intro.

Week Two

Monday, September 7: **LABOR DAY**

Week Three

Monday, September 14: **ROSH HASHANAH**

Week Four

Monday, September 21: Lecture and Discussion

Reading Assignment: Wilson, Ch. 2-3; Witte, Ch. 2-4; Noll and Harlow, Ch. 3-4; Feldman, Ch. 1; Holmes

Sat, Sept. 26 – Sun, Sept. 27: **Papal visit to Philadelphia**

Week Five

Monday, September 28: Lecture and Discussion

RESEARCH ESSAY PART I: PRIMARY SOURCES DUE

Reading Assignment: Locke, “Letter Concerning Toleration”; Voltaire, Letter “On the Presbyterians”; Madison, *Federalist Papers* 10 & 51; Tocqueville, selections from *Democracy in America* [all texts available under Links on Canvas]

Week Six

Monday, October 5: **QUIZ #1**

Reading Assignment: Witte, Ch. 5-6; Noll and Harlow, Ch. 5-7; Wilson, Ch. 4

Week Seven

Monday, October 12: Lecture and Discussion

Film clip: *The Mormons*. Dir. Helen Whitney. PBS, 2007.

Reading Assignment: Wilson, Ch. 5; Feldman, Ch. 2; Noll and Harlow, Ch. 8-9, 11, 14; Fowler, Ch. 10

RESEARCH ESSAY PART II: BRIEF PROPOSAL DUE

Week Eight

Monday, October 19: Lecture and Discussion

QUIZ #2

Reading Assignment: Feldman, Ch. 3-4; Noll and Harlow, Ch. 10

Week Nine

Monday, October 26: Lecture and Discussion

Film clip: *Monkey Trial*. PBS American Experience. WGBH, Boston. 2002.

Reading Assignment: Balmer; Fowler, Ch. 4-6; Noll and Harlow, Ch. 12-13, 15

Friday, October 30: **Last day to withdraw from a course**

Week Ten

Monday, November 2: Lecture and Discussion

Film clips: *With God On Our Side*. Dir. Calvin Skaggs, David Van Taylor, Ali Pomeroy. First Run Features, 2004; and *The Jesus Factor*. Dir. Raney Aronson. PBS Frontline, 2004.

RESEARCH ESSAY PART III: FINAL PROPOSAL DUE

Reading Assignment: Noll and Harlow, Ch. 16, 19-20; Feldman, Ch. 6-8; Fowler, Ch. 11-12; Wilson, pp. 402-410.

Week Eleven

Monday, November 9: Lecture and Discussion

Writing Workshop: Intro to Historiography (the writing of history) and Evaluating Web Sites

Reading Assignment: Feldman, Ch. 5; Witte, Ch. 7-8 and Conclusion; Fowler, Ch. 8-9; Wilson, Ch. 6-7 (to p. 402).

Week Twelve

Monday, November 16: Lecture and Discussion

RESEARCH ESSAY PART IV: ROUGH DRAFT DUE

Reading Assignment: Noll and Harlow, Ch. 17-18; Witte, Ch. 9 and Conclusion; Fowler, Ch. 7

Week Thirteen

Monday, November 23: **RSH AWAY**

Week Fourteen

Monday, November 30: Lecture and Discussion

QUIZ #3

Week Fifteen

Monday, December 7: **RESEARCH ESSAY PART V: FINAL DRAFT DUE
CLASS PRESENTATIONS**