Prof. Kathleen M. Moore Lectures TuTh 9:30 to 10:45 a.m.

[kmoore@religion.ucsb.edu](mailto:kmoore@religion.ucsb.edu) Location PSYCH 1902

HSSB 3074 (office)

Office hrs: Mondays 11-1 or by appt Discussion Section Leaders and Teaching Assistants: Mr Adam Morrison, [a\_d\_m@umail.ucsb.edu](mailto:a_d_m@umail.ucsb.edu), and

Mr. Matthew Wilson, [mwilson@umail.ucsb.edu](mailto:mwilson@umail.ucsb.edu)

**Religious Studies 35**

**Introduction to Religion in Politics**

**Spring 2013**



**Course Description**

This course will give an overview of the intersection of religion on politics in the United States. We will look at both the right and the left of the political spectrum to study people and groups seeking a greater alignment between religious values and public policy. With the historic principle of church-state separation in mind, we will examine the relationship between religion and political mobilization, interest group politics, public opinion, sexuality, race and ethnicity, foreign policy, and elections.

**Course Goals**

By the end of this course you will be able to

* analyze debates regarding religion in politics in the United States
* express this analysis cogently through written and verbal communication
* enhance analytical writing through written assignments
* understand specific characteristics about what Americans *really* believe and why religion (including civil religion) matters for activists, interest groups, faith-based organizations, and political leaders

**Course Requirements**

Please become familiar with the following course requirements and policies. If there is a component that is not understood, please ask for clarification.

Specific assignments:

Weekly:

* participation in discussion sections 20%
* online discussion forums 20%

Quarterly:

* 1,250 word essay 10%
* Midterm 25%
* Final 25%

**Evaluation:**

*Grade Points Grading Scale*

Midterm Exam 50 A: 177 -- 200

Final Exam 50 A-: 171 -- 176

B+: 165 -- 170

Short paper 20 B: 158 -- 164

Forums 40 B-: 152 -- 157

Participation 40 C+: 146 -- 151

*Total: 200* C: 139 -- 145

C-: 133 -- 138

D: 114 -- 132

F: 0 -- 113

To avoid any confusion, here is what I expect for various grades:

A: Superb ability to offer original and insightful analysis of the facts.

B: Solid, very good work. The facts have been grasped and significant moves have been made to analyze the materials.

C: Reasonable efforts made to attend class, and a fair grasp of the materials has been demonstrated. Analytical level is fair – not original, missing certain important facts, but essentially correct about the facts covered.

D: A simplistic familiarity with the material is demonstrated by the student’s work, but much of what is presented could have been gleaned from media (not course assignments)

F: Little or no attempt made to engage with the materials, to respect the requirements of the course and its schedule, or to complete assignments on time.

*Exams***:** On the midterm (25% of course grade) and final exam (25% of course grade) you will have an in-class essay exam. These exams will be on the reading assignments, lectures, and audio-visual materials introduced in class meetings.

*Essay paper***:** (10% of course grade)

In a 1,250 word essay, you will investigate a question relating to the intersection of religion and politics. Your paper must address this prompt: Think of an example of a religious institution or group in the US organizing a political event or supporting a political cause. Describe the event and the organizers. Were these efforts effective? If so, were they more effective than might have been the case if the event had been handled by a non-religious political organization? Why? Your paper should include:

1. An introduction that shows how the specific case you have selected is located in the broader discussion of religion and politics;
2. A presentation of relevant evidence, probably containing facts observed by sociologists, historians, political scientists and others cited in our readings, to apply as criteria for determining whether the efforts were effective and whether the event might have been handled better by a non-religious (secular) organization;
3. Your answer to the questions in the prompt, incorporating a critical assessment of the evidence.

DUE DATE: April 26th by 5 p.m.

Discussion Forums (20% of course grade)

You are required to post on the weekly discussion forums found on the Gauchospace website for this class. Your posts will be evaluated on a scale of 0-2 (ranging from “no content related to the question” to “accurate application of principles of the readings/lectures to the question”). Your posts will be 500 words each and will draw from and respond to the assigned readings, the ongoing discussion in your sections, the lectures and audio-visual materials. They should be thoughtful reflections on the content of the course and/or criticisms of the relevant author’s argument(s). Discussion forums are posted on weeks two through eight, and your lowest score (1 entry) will be dropped. In other words, your grade is calculated on your best six (out of seven) entries.

*Participation and Attendance:* Attendance at lecture twice a week plus a weekly discussion section is required. Your participation in these settings is crucial to the development of the class and will be evaluated (20% of course grade).

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Important dates** | April | May | June |
| NO CLASS | 25 | 30 |  |
| Short paper due | 26 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 1st online disc. forum | 6-9 |  |  |
| 2nd online disc. forum | 13-16 |  |  |
| 3rd online disc. forum | 20-23 |  |  |
| 4th online disc. forum | 27-30 |  |  |
|  | April | May | June |
| Midterm in class |  | 7 |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 5th online disc. forum | | 11-14 |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 6th online disc. | forum | 18-21 |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 7th online disc. | forum |  | 1-4 |
| Final (in class) |  |  | 6 |

**Required Readings:**

Assignments are provided in the **course schedule** below. Please complete the readings before class period – half done before class on Tuesday, and the remaining half done before class on Thursday. Required readings include two books, available at UCEN Bookstore, and a series of articles accessible at the Gauchospace web site for this course (more information on this below).

In addition to the assigned readings, you are strongly encouraged to read online sources of news about religion and politics. You will benefit from following sources of political news while taking this class. Some of the better sources that I recommend are:

* Religion Dispatches (a daily online magazine), [www.religiondispatches.org](http://www.religiondispatches.org)/
* The Immanent Frame (secularism, religion, and the public sphere), [www.ssrc.org/tif/](http://www.ssrc.org/tif/)
* Religion and Ethics Newsweekly, http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/
* Huffington Post, [www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com)
* On Being, with Krista Tippett, [www.onbeing.org](http://www.onbeing.org)
* Meet the Press, NBC, http://www.msnbc.com/news/meetpress\_front.asp
* Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, <http://pewforum.org/religion-politics/>

**Gauchospace:**

The Gauchospace web-based course management system will be used to post grades, messages and a-v materials. Discussion forums will be available for you to use to reflect on the course materials; participation in weekly assigned discussion forums is also evaluated. You can go to the course website at www.gauchospace.ucsb.edu.

**Communication:**

The best way to reach me is by email at [kmoore@religion.ucsb.edu](mailto:kmoore@religion.ucsb.edu). Please write “religion and politics class” in the subject line. Also I am available in my office hours and by appointment to talk about the class, college life, or any subject you need to talk about. Please also rely on your discussion leaders, Mr Adam Morrison and Mr Matthew Wilson, as an excellent resource for the same

Course Policies**:**

***Policy on cheating and plagiarism***: I fully support the University’s policy on academic honesty. Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of ethical behavior when taking examinations and quizzes and when writing assignments. Cheating will result in failure in the course and referral to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

*Make-up Exams*: Make-up exams will be allowed ***only*** in the event of a medical or family emergency and with advance notification. Documentation is required for all make-up exams. As soon as you know that you will miss an exam you need to get in touch with me to schedule a make-up. A long delay in informing me of your situation may result in not being allowed to take a make-up.

*Attendance***:** Your presence is expected at every class.

Extra credit: Opportunities to earn extra credit will be announced during the quarter. Events will be announced in class and put on the Gauchospace web site. You may earn up to five points for attendance at extra credit events, to be added to your final exam grade (which is worth 50 points on the 200 point scale, so with attendance at an extra credit event, a perfect test score would be worth 55 points).

*Assistance***:** Please visit during office hours; make an appointment, or e-mail if you require assistance or wish to discuss the class material further. Also please make use of the teaching assistant for this class.

*Electronic Gadgets in the Classroom*: Turn off all cellphones and other noise making devices before class. You are allowed to bring a laptop computer to class for the purpose of taking notes. Laptops may not be used for other purposes, such as checking e-mail, Facebook, or surfing the net. If I determine that laptop use is becoming too much of a distraction in class, I will ban use for the remainder of the quarter. Please bring the required i>clicker to class to participate in student response forums.

**Course Schedule**

*Week One: Religious Legitimacy (April 1-5)*

*Objectives are to consider how religion can lend legitimacy to governments, political leaders, and opposition movements. Is religion an independent influence on society and politics, or is it no more than a tool of persuasion used by secular, rational actors to serve purely political ends? The main point is to examine how religion is used to justify, legitimize and, at times, undermine political actions and policies. When is religious identity a binding element in the polity, and when is it divisive?*

Readings: Syllabus (4/2)

Peggy Leavitt and Jessica Hejtmanek, “Constructing Religious Pluralism Transnationally” (4/4)

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*Week Two: Civil Religion (April 8-12)*

*Objectives are to familiarize oneself with the concept of “civil religion” – the existence of a public religious dimension in the United States, beginning with the founding documents and carrying through presidential speeches, monuments, and similar icons that convey the nation’s vision of itself.*

Readings: Robert Bellah, “Civil Religion in America” (4/9)

Roof, “American Presidential Rhetoric” (4/10)

Kao et al., “The Pledge of Allegiance and the Limits of Civil Religion”

Questions: What is an American civil religion? Cite an example. Does political authority still need a cultural framework in which to define itself and advance its claims? Why do some people argue that religion is a necessary support for democracy?

*Week Three: Religion as a Basis for Understanding the World: Beliefs, Doctrines, Worldviews and Motivation (April 15-19)*

Objectives are to examine religion as a source of motivation for social and political actors to oppose existing power structures, and to begin to examine how religions’ claim on a monopoly of “the truth” – with its certainty about what is right and what is wrong – can influence people’s motivation for political action. Is religion an independent variable, or is it a type of discourse used in a calculated fashion to reach a goal defined by self-interest?

Readings: David L. Chappell, *A Stone of Hope: Prophetic Religion and the Death of Jim Crow*, pp. 1-43 (4/16)

Silberman, et al., “Religion and World Change: Violence and Terrorism vs Peace (4/18)

Antonin Scalia, Jr., “God’s Justice and Ours” (4/18)

Questions: Does it matter when public leaders act on their religious understandings? Should religion stay out of politics or be in politics? Why? How do an individual’s personal beliefs and personality influence their decisions? Can humans sacrifice self interest for the pursuit of the common good?

*Week Four: Racial Segregation and the Civil Rights Movement April (22-26)*

Objectives are to learn about the cultural changes behind the civil rights movement of the 1960s. What are the intellectual roots of the black southern movement’s nonviolence? What role do the (Black and white) churches play in the south during the civil rights movement?

Readings: Chappell, *A Stone of Hope*, pp. 44-152 (4/23)

Questions: How does the reading define liberalism in the postwar period in the US, and what is the liberal attitude toward social action? Why did the dominant voices in American politics fail to achieve anything for Black rights prior to the civil rights movement? How is the word “fundamentalist” used in Chappell’s account? What are the “worldly” and prophetic sources of meaning in constructing racial segregation and the desegregation movement?

**Due Date: April 26, by 5 p.m. Writing Assignment #1**

*Week Five: Conclusions to the Civil Rights Movement (April 29-May 3)*

Readings: Chappell, *A Stone of Hope*, pp. 153-190 (4/30)

Excerpts from The Bible and American Culture, Seltzer et al., editors, pp. 181-191 (4/30)

Week Six: Midterm and Introduction of Second Half (post-WWII revival and crusades) (May 6-10)

**MIDTERM EXAMINATION IN CLASS TUESDAY May 7 (bring blue book)**

Screening of “Soul of a Nation (PBS) (5/9)

*Week Seven: Nationalism, Identity Politics and Religion (May 13-17)*

*Objectives are to comprehend how social construction of identity uses religious sources of meaning to build a public identity; how religion, like other aspects of human social experience, is best understood as fluid; and to pay attention to personal narratives that identify the relevant factors and their relation to each other.*

Readings: Martha Nussbaum, *The New Religious Intolerance*, pp. 1-97 (5/12)

EJ Dionne, “The Promise of National Service: A (Very Brief) History of an Idea (5/14)

Questions: Has 9/11 changed the way Americans think of the obligations of citizenship? Why and how do people put aside self-interest to serve the common good? In terms of community building, do Americans draw on religious sources of value? Why are only some identities worthy of discussion and representation in the public sphere? What are the constitutional arguments for the accommodationist position and the wall of separation position with respect to the separation of religion and state?

*Week Eight: Religious Symbols, the Public Sphere and Deliberative Politics (May 20-24)*

Readings: Nussbaum, The New Religious Intolerance, pp. 98-138 (5/21)

Nussbaum, The New Religious Intolerance, pp. 139-187 (5/22)

Questions: Is there a way to reduce bias in our laws and institutions?

*Week Nine: Transnationalism and Overcoming Fear (May 27-31)*

Objectives are to learn about transnational ties and religious commitments that influence the political commitments U.S. citizens have; and examine the recent cases of the “Ground Zero Mosque” controversy and the ‘ban on shari’a’ legislation.

Readings: Nussbaum, The New Religious Intolerance, pp. 188-245 (5/28)

NO CLASS MAY 30.

Questions: The United States is now more diverse than the old categories of Protestant, Catholic, and Jew could possibly capture. How will this affect American commitments to tolerance and pluralism?

*Week Ten: Drawing Conclusions (June 3-7)*

Final Lecture (6/4)

Final exam (in class) (6/6)