

## **Religion and American Politics**

Fall 2018

Thursday, 12-2:30

Dr. George Hawley

E-mail: ghawley@ua.edu

Office Hours: 11am-noon. Tuesdays and Thursdays

Religion has always been a crucial fault line in American politics. It is not always clear, however, how religious belief, activities, and identification shape politics. Earlier generations of politics scientists often downplayed religion's significance to U.S. politics, but this has changed. In this class, we will explore the literature on religion and politics. We will consider religion's role in the American founding and on American political culture, but most of this course will focus on political behavior. We will also tackle the question of secularization, how it relates to politics, and what it may mean for American political life in the future.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this course, students will:

- understand the basic history of religion's role in U.S. politics
- understand the state of the literature on religion's role in contemporary politics
- be able to discuss and critique different theories of religion in American political life
- be able to discuss and critique different methods used to consider these questions
- complete a high-quality original research paper

### **Course Requirements and Grading (Read Carefully)**

Student preparation and participation is critical for the success of this course, and thus will be a key component of grading. Students **MUST** come to class prepared.

1) Every student is expected to carefully read every assigned reading every week.

2) Each class period, a student is to present an overview of each article or book excerpt read for the course unless I specify otherwise. In their overview, students should highlight

- a) the question the author seeks to address
- b) where the article fits within the debate or literature
- c) the author's hypotheses
- d) competing hypotheses, mentioned by the author or not
- e) description of the research design (if appropriate)
  - f) if the article is dated (more than two decades old), an argument as to why the author's arguments remain valid or need to be reevaluated
- g) a critical evaluation of the author's claims, noting any major flaws.

Beyond presenting each paper to the class, students assigned to a particular paper or book excerpt are to submit a 4-5 page paper that analyzes their article. This paper should be e-mailed to the professor and all other students in the class no fewer than twelve hours before the class meets.

In presenting their analysis of the paper to the class, students should be prepared to speak for five to fifteen minutes.

3) Students NOT presenting papers on the day of class must come to class with a list of four CRITICAL questions based on the readings. These questions will help facilitate discussions in class. At the end of each class period, students will turn in their list of questions.

4) A crucial component of this course will be a research paper. As this course has a wide scope, students have a great deal of discretion regarding their topic. I will accept any topic as long as it deals with the subject of this course, and it has clear political implications. Ideally, this should be original research, rather than a mere replication of earlier work. While this course is focused on the United States, I will accept a paper that analyzes these issues in a foreign context. Ideally, this paper should fit within the student's own larger research agenda.

it

The best papers will be ready, or almost ready, for presentation at an academic conference or even submission at an academic journal. The best papers will include a thorough literature review, a well-developed hypothesis, and an appropriate research design.

On October 18, students are to submit a proposal for their paper, and discuss their proposed topic with the class. This will allow me and fellow students to critique the proposed idea and offer helpful suggestions.

At the end of the course, students will present their papers to the class.

The final paper will be due the last day of class.

Students will be evaluated as follows:

30% of grade, attendance and class participation throughout the semester

30% of grade, individual presentations of the assigned readings

40% of grade, research paper and presentation of research paper

### **Classroom Policies and Instructor Availability**

I expect all students to behave professionally in this course. I am intolerant of disruptive behavior in the classroom, including talking during lectures, reading newspapers, and especially the ringing of cell phones or pagers. Laptops may be used for professional purposes, but not for playing games or surfing the Internet. Students engaging in disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the classroom in order to preserve the learning environment for other students. Class discussions are expected to be civil, rational, and respectful of others' opinions. Please do not intimidate, patronize, or ridicule anyone else during the course of classroom activities.

If students would like to speak with me outside of class time, feel free to stop by my office (306 ten Hoor Hall) during regularly scheduled office hours (Wednesdays and Thursdays 10-11am). If students are unable to attend office hours, but would like to meet with me, please contact me via email (ghawley@as.ua.edu) to arrange an appointment. I am typically quick to respond to such emails. I, unfortunately, cannot guarantee that I will be able to meet with students that come to my office without first scheduling a time to see me.

### **Academic Integrity**

No form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. The University of Alabama has detailed its policies on academic integrity (<http://www.studenthandbook.ua.edu/conduct.html>). Students should acquaint themselves with policies concerning cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and academic interference. Any submission of work by a student in this course constitutes a certificate that the work complies with university policies on academic integrity.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**

The American with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that the university make reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities as defined in the act. Students who feel they need assistance under the ADA guidelines should approach the instructor to discuss such consideration.

### **Calendar**

\* Indicates that the reading is required, but it will not be assigned to individual students for discussion

#### **Week 1 August 23**

Intro to the class. No readings

#### **Week 2 August 30**

##### **What is religion and how do we measure it?**

Putnam and Campbell, *American Grace*, Chapters 1 and 5

Hanson

Wald, Kenneth D., Adam Silverman, and Kevin Fridy. 2005. "Making Sense of Religion in Political Life." *Annual Review of Political Science* 8: 121–141.

Thomas

Smidt, Lyman Kellstedt, and James L. Guth. 2009. "The Role of Religion in American Politics: Explanatory Theories and Associated Analytical and Measurement Issues." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and American Politics*, edited by James L. Guth, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and Corwin E. Smidt. Oxford Handbooks. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

Rogers

Steensland, Brian, Jerry Z. Park, Mark D. Regnerus, Lynn D. Robinson, W. Bradford Wilcox, and Robert D. Woodberry. 2000. "The Measure of American Religion: Toward Improving the State of the Art." *Social Forces* 79 (1): 291–318.

Kimball

### **Week 3 September 6 Perspectives on politicizing religion**

Kristi Andersen, "Sources of Pro-Family Belief," *Political Psychology* 9 (1988): 229-243

Orfanos

Thomas K. Bias et. al., "Catholics & the Death Penalty: Religion as a Filter for Political Beliefs." *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion* 7: Article 10

Kimball

Gary Adler, "Congregational Political Activity and Same Sex Marriage," *Sociological Quarterly* 55 (2014): 555-586

Hanson

Anna Greenberg, "The Church & the Revitalization of Politics and Community," *Political Science Quarterly* 115 (2000), 377-394

Matheson

Larry Iannaccone, "Voodoo Economics: Reviewing the Rational Choice Approach to Religion," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 34 (March, 1995), 76-88

Rogers

### **Religion and the American founding and early republic**

Willmoore Kendall and George Carey, *The Basic Symbols of the American Political Tradition* (Excerpt to be distributed)

Orfanos

Thomas Pangle, *The Spirit of Modern Republicanism* (Excerpt to be distributed)

Thomas

Mark Henrie, "Thomas Pangle and the Problems of a Straussian Founding." *Modern Age* (Winter 1994)

Hanson

Finke, Roger, and Rodney Stark. 2005. *The Churching of America, 1776-2005: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy*, Revised and Expanded Edition. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. Chapters 1-4

Rogers

Goldman, Samuel. 2018. *God's Country: Christian Zionism in America*. University of Pennsylvania Press. Chapters 1-2

Thorn

### **Week 5 September 20 Religion and Contemporary Party Politics 1**

Layman, Geoffrey. 2001. *The Great Divide: Religious and Cultural Conflict in American Party Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press. Chapter 1-3 (Excerpt to be distributed)

Kimball

Layman, Geoffrey. 2001. *The Great Divide: Religious and Cultural Conflict in American Party Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press. Chapter 4-6 (Excerpt to be distributed)

Matheson

Campbell, David E., John C. Green, and Geoffrey C. Layman. 2011. "The Party Faithful: Partisan Images, Candidate Religion, and the Electoral Impact of Party Identification." *American Journal of Political Science* 55 (1) (January): 42–58.

Thorn

Campbell, David E. 2002. "The Young and the Realignment: A Test of the Socialization Theory of Realignment." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 66: 209–234.

Rogers

### **Week 6 September 27 Religion and Contemporary Party Politics 2**

Campbell, David E. 2006. "Religious 'Threat' in Contemporary Presidential Elections." *The Journal of Politics* 68 (01) (February): 104-115.

Thomas

Green, John C. 2007. *The Faith Factor: How Religion Influences American Elections*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group. (Excerpt to be distributed)

Thorn

Leege, David C., Kenneth D. Wald, Brian S. Krueger, and Paul D. Mueller. 2002. *The Politics of Cultural Differences: Social Change and Voter Mobilization Strategies in the Post-New Deal Period*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Excerpt to be distributed)

Kimball

Andrew Lewis. 2018. *The Rights Turn in Conservative Christian Politics*. New York: Cambridge.  
(Excerpt to be distributed)

Thorn

### **Week 7 October 4 Rise of the Religious Right**

Daniel K. Williams. 2010. *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapters 2-5

Hanson

Daniel K. Williams. 2010. *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapters 8-10

Matheson

Christopher Baylor. 2018. *First to the Party*. University of Pennsylvania Press. Chapters 7-10.

Thomas

### **Week 8 October 11 Religion and Ethnicity 1**

McDaniel, Eric L. 2008. *Politics in the Pews: The Political Mobilization of Black Churches*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapters 3-6

Matheson

McKenzie, Brian D., and Stella M. Rouse. 2013. "Shades of Faith: Religious Foundations of Political Attitudes Among African Americans, Latinos, and Whites." *American Journal of Political Science* 57 (1) (January): 218–235.

Thorn

Djupe, Paul A, and Jacob R. Neiheisel. 2012. "How Religious Communities Affect Political Participation Among Latinos." *Social Science Quarterly* 93 (2): 333–355

Thomas

McClerking, Harwood K., and Eric L. McDaniel. 2005. "Belonging and Doing: Political Churches and Black Political Participation." *Political Psychology* 26 (5) (October): 721–734.

Hanson

## **Week 9 October 18 Religion and Ethnicity 2**

McKenzie, B. D. 2004. "Religious Social Networks, Indirect Mobilization, and African-American Political Participation." *Political Research Quarterly* 57 (4) (December 1): 621–632

Rogers

Valenzuela, A. A. 2014. "Tending the Flock: Latino Religious Commitments and Political Preferences." *Political Research Quarterly* 67 (4) (December 1): 930–942.

Hanson

Kelly, Nathan J., and Jana Morgan Kelly. 2008. "Religious Traditionalism and Latino Politics in the United States." *American Politics Research* 36 (2): 236–263.

Matheson

Lee, Jongho, and Hary P. Pachon. 2007. "Leading the Way: An Analysis of the Effect of Religion on the Latino Vote." *American Politics Research* 35 (2): 252–272.

Thomas

## **October 25 (No Class)**

## **Week 10 November 1 Religion and American Political Institutions**

Davidson, James D., Rachel Kraus, and Scott Morrissey. 2005. "Presidential Appointments and Religious Stratification in the United States, 1789-2003." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 44: 485–495.

Hanson

Oldmixon, Elizabeth Anne, and William Hudson. 2008. "When Church Teachings and Policy Commitments Collide: Perspectives on Catholics in the U.S. House of Representatives." *Politics and Religion* 1: 113–136.

Kimball

Hertzke, Allen D. 2009. "Religious Interest Groups in American Politics." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and American Politics*, edited by James L. Guth, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and Corwin E. Smidt. Oxford Handbooks. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

Kimball

Wahlbeck, Paul J. 2009. "Religion and Judicial Politics." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and American Politics*, edited by James L. Guth, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and Corwin E. Smidt. Oxford Handbooks. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

Orfanos

### **Week 11 November 8 Culture War?**

Hunter, James Davison. 1991. *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America*. New York: BasicBooks. Chapter 1.

Orfanos

Fiorina, Morris P., and Samuel J. Abrams. 2008. "Political Polarization in the American Public." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (1) (June): 563–588.

Rogers

Abramowitz, Alan I., and Kyle L. Saunders. 2008. "Is Polarization a Myth?" *The Journal of Politics* 70 (02) (April): 542-555

Thomas

Layman, Geoffrey C., and John C. Green. 2006. "Wars and Rumours of Wars: The Contexts of Cultural Conflict in American Political Behaviour." *British Journal of Political Science* 36 (1) (January 1): 61–89

Orfanos

### **Week 12 November 15 Secularization 1**

Stark, Rodney, "Secularization, RIP," *Sociology of Religion*, 60(1999)

Matheson

Bruce, Steve, "Christianity in Britain, RIP," *Sociology of Religion*, 62(2001)

Kimball

Vaos, David and Mark Chaves, "Is the United States a Counterexample to the Secularization Thesis?" *American Journal of Sociology* 121(2016)

Orfanos

Schnabel Landon, and Sean Bock, "The Persistent and Exceptional Intensity of American Religion: A Response to Recent Research," *Sociological Science* 2017

Thorn

### **Week 13 November 29 Secularization 2**

Hout, Michael and Claude S. Fischer, "Why More Americans Have No Religious Preference," *American Sociological Review* 67(2002): 165-90

Rogers

Vargas, Nicholas, "Retrospective Accounts of Religious Disaffiliation in the United States: Stressors, Skepticism, and Political Factors," *Sociology of Religion* 73(2010): 200-223

Matheson

Djupe, Paul A., Jacob R. Neiheisel, and Anand E. Sokhey. "Reconsidering the Role of Politics in Leaving Religion: The Importance of Affiliation" *American Journal of Political Science* 62(2018): 161-75

Orfanos

Margolis, Michelle, *From Politics to the Pews: How Partisanship and Political Environment Shape Religious Identity*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018. (Excerpt to be distributed)

Thorn

### **Week 14 December 6 Final Class**

Students will present their research papers on this day.