

Political Science 4291: Religion & Politics in the United States



Department of Political Science
University of Florida

Charles Dahan COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor:	Charles Dahan	Term:	Spring 2013
Office:	Anderson 305	Class Meeting Days:	Mon/Wed/Fri
E-Mail:	cdahan@ufl.edu	Class Location:	Anderson 004
Office Hours:	Mondays, 11:00am-1:30pm & by appt.	Class Meeting	Period 7

I. **Welcome!**

POS 4291 Religion and Politics in the United States examines the contested history of religion in American political life, surveying the historical origins of the institutional and informal relationships between religion and politics through contemporary mobilization of religious groups in political controversies.

The major themes of the course are the influence of religion in American political life, the compatibility of faith and political participation, and the utilization of religiosity as a motivator for political action. Students will be able to both identify major events in the history of the relationship between religion and politics in the U.S., as well as analyze scholarly literature addressing these topics.

This course also offers students an opportunity to hone their writing and research skills. A major component of the course's second half will be the completion of a research project. Students will propose, write, and present research concerning an issue regarding religion and politics in the United States.

II. Required Texts and Materials

The four required texts are widely available. Each should be available through the university book store, local retailers, and online. Additionally, articles will be assigned throughout the course which will be accessible online through the University of Florida.

- **Haidt, Jonathan. The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion. ISBN: 0307377903**
- **Wald, Kenneth. Religion and Politics in the United States. 6th edition. ISBN: 1442201525**
- **Putnam, Robert. American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us. Paperback Edition. ISBN 1416566732**
- **Wilson, Matthew J. From Pews to Polling Places. ISBN: 9781589011724.**

III. Basis for Final Grade

Assessment	Percent of Final Grade
Attendance	10%
Midterm	20%
Quizzes	10%
Response Papers	15%
Final Paper, Rough Draft	5%
Final Paper, Final Draft	20%
Final Exam	20%

Grading Scale: A (100-94); A- (93-90); B+ (89-87); B (86-84); B- (83-80); C+ (79-77); C (76-74); C- (73-70); D+ (69-67); D (66-64); D- (63-60); F (59-0)

Your grade should reflect your mastery of course material and your contribution to the course.

Please note, per UF privacy policies, grades cannot be discussed over email.

Details about grades:

- No exams will be given earlier than the time and date scheduled for the course.
- No makeup exams will be granted without demonstration of significant hardship.
- Plagiarism is a serious offense. Students are bound to the University of Florida's Student Code of Conduct. Cheating on examinations and plagiarism are violations of the academic honesty standards of the University of Florida, and will have a serious effect upon your grade in this course, and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action.

Make-ups will be given only under the most extreme circumstances, which will necessarily require verifiable written documentation of an emergency or unavoidable legal obligation.

No assignment is subject to a “curve”, and letter grades for the final grade in the course will be assigned as:

Attendance & Participation: 10%

Attendance will be taken intermittently.

Attendance Policy:

- 1) Attendance will be taken intermittently throughout the course, at the beginning of the lecture period. This course starts on-time. Students who are late when attendance is taken will not receive credit.
- 2) Any appeals for a missed class must be submitted by the next class period the student attends. If, for example, a student is ill and misses a Monday and Wednesday course, the student must submit their appeal with written documentation on the Friday they return to class. ***Failure to submit a timely appeal will negate any opportunity to make up work due during the missed days and any attendance lost.***
- 3) **The use of laptop computers and all portable electronics is restricted to exclusively to note-taking.**

Midterm: 20%

The first section of the course attempts to build a solid foundation for you to understand the history of religion and politics in the United States. The first midterm is designed to ascertain the extent to which you have absorbed this foundation, and identify any areas that will require additional detail.

Quizzes: 10%

Quizzes will be given intermittently in class to ensure students complete the readings. These quizzes will be simple and short, asking students to, for example, identify the thesis statement from a set of readings.

Response Papers: 15%

Two, 2-4 page response papers will be due during the course.

First Final Paper Draft: 5%

Final Draft: 20%

Students will be required to submit a research paper on a topic of their choice relating to religion and politics. Timely submission of the paper's first draft (with all required portions completed) will receive an automatic 5%, with the graded final draft worth 25%.

Final exam: 20%

The final exam will include all material discussed after the midterm.

Disability Resource Center

If there is any reason why you need extra time on the examinations and/or require special physical accommodation in lecture and/or discussion sections, please contact me in confidence as soon as possible at the beginning of the course. Every effort will be made to accommodate your needs within the guidelines set forth by the University. Students with special needs will need to coordinate with Student Services at 202 Peabody Hall, and we stand ready to assist any way we can. ***In order to have time to arrange appropriate and necessary accommodations, you must contact me at least 7 class days prior to the assignment or exam in question.***

Office Hours:

I keep regular office hours to ensure that I am available to assist you. I encourage you to consult with me on course readings, assignments, problems you may be having with the course, or if you simply wish to discuss your interests in Religion and Politics or Political Science. My office hours for the fall semester are Mondays, from 11am-1:30pm, in Anderson Hall Room 305. I also am available by appointment, and often meet with students at Pascal's Coffee Shop.

Late Work Policy: No late work will be accepted.

Essay Commentary Policy: Any assignment may be submitted early for written commentary.

Turinitin.com:

In this course we will utilize turnitin.com, an automated system that instructors can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>. Essays are due at turnitin.com the same day as in class.

Important Dates:

1/25: Response Paper #1 Due
2/13: David Campbell In Class
2/13: Response Paper #2 Due
2/20: Midterm
3/15: Paper Proposals Due
4/5: Paper Drafts Due
4/15: Final Papers Due
5/2: Final Exam

IV. Schedule

Date	Finish This Work Before Class	Topics to be Discussed
1/7	None	Introductions
1/9	Pew Religious Survey: http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf (Chapters 1-3)	Historical and contemporary U.S. religious landscape
1/11	Watch: A New Eden (God in America Episode 2) http://www.pbs.org/godinamerica/view/	
1/14	Wald Chapter 1 & 2	Religion in the American Context
1/16	Wald Chapter 3	Political Culture
1/18	Wald Chapter 4 Ward, Thomas. "Adam Smith's Views on Religion and Social Justice".	Religion and the State
1/21	No Class	MLK Day
1/23	Wilson Chapter 1 Watch: A Nation Reborn (God in America Episode 4) http://www.pbs.org/godinamerica/view/	Political & Religious Mobilization
1/25	Putnam Chapter 1, "The Prosperous Community: Social Capital & Public Life." http://prospect.org/article/prosperous-community-social-capital-and-public-life	Response Papers Due; Introduction to social capital
1/28	Putnam Chapter 3 & 4	Religiosity in America
1/30	Putnam Chapter 5 & 6	Religious Innovation
2/1	Putnam Chapter 9	Diversity & Religion
2/4	Putnam Chapter 11	Religion & Politics
2/6	Putnam Chapter 13 & 14	Religion & Neighborliness
2/8	Putnam Chapter 15	Sustainability of Religious Diversity
2/11	Wilson, Chapter 5	American Mormons;
2/13	Campbell in class	Response Papers Due; Campbell in class
2/15	Wald Chapter 7; FP Article...	Religion, Public Opinion, & Foreign Policy
2/18	None	Review
2/20	None	Midterm
2/22	Ostrom Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ByXM47Ri1Kc Wald Chapter 5	Collective Action Problems & Mobilization
2/25	Wald Chapter 6 Garrett Hardin, Tragedy of the Commons: http://goo.gl/2NsnG	Religion & Political Action
2/27	Iannaccone, "Introduction to the Economics of Religion". http://goo.gl/lgzRV	Economics of Religion
3/1	Wald Chapter 8, Wilson Chapter 2	Mobilization of Evangelical Protestants
3/4	No Class	

3/6	No Class	
3/8	No Class	
3/11	Wilson Chapter 3 & Wald Chapter 10	Religious Left & Religious Minorities
3/13	Wilson Chapter 7	Latino Political & Religious Attitudes
3/15	Wilson Chapter 8	Proposals Due ; Jews
3/18	Peer Editing	Peer Editing
3/20	Wald Chapter 9	Catholics
3/22	Wald Chapter 11 & Putnam Chapter 8	Women & Homosexuality
3/25	Haidt Chapter 1, TED Talk: http://goo.gl/MeibZ	What is Morality?
3/27	Haidt Chapters 2 & 3	Intuition & Political Belief
3/29	Haidt Chapter 4 & 5	Morality & Preferences
4/1	Haidt Chapters 6 & 7	Moral Foundations of Politics
4/3	Haidt Chapter 8; Wilson Chapter 2	Conservative Moral Advantage
4/5	Haidt Chapter 9 & 10	Draft Due ; Group Preferences
4/8	Peer Edit	Peer Edit
4/10	Haidt Chapter 11 & 12	Religious Alliances & Constructive Disagreement
4/12	Haidt, Conclusion	Possibilities of Cooperative Discourse
4/15	Final Draft Due	Final Draft Due ; In Class: God in America Film
4/17	Wald Chapter 12	Contemporary Debates
4/19	TBD	Religion in Contemporary Elections
4/22	TBD	Religion in Contemporary Elections
4/24	Review Session	
5/2	Final	

Links:

Pew Religious Survey: <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf>

Putnam, Robert. "Social Capital and Public Life". *The American Prospect*.
<http://prospect.org/article/prosperous-community-social-capital-and-public-life>

Jon Haidt TED Talk: <http://goo.gl/MeibZ>

Elinor Ostrom Collective Action Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ByXM47Ri1Kc>

God in America, Episodes 2 & 4: <http://www.pbs.org/godinamerica/view/>

Larry Iannaccone, "Introduction to the Economics of Religion". <http://goo.gl/lgzRV>

Garrett Hardin, Tragedy of the Commons: <http://goo.gl/2NsnG>

Thomas Ward, "Adam Smith's Views on Religion and Social Justice". <http://goo.gl/JiEv1>