

CPRL/POSC 381 Religion & Politics in the USA

This course is cross-listed with two departments: Comparative Religion and Political Science. It is the exact same course, in the same room, etc.

When POSC 381 is listed as CLOSED, please check CPRL 381 #20079 – it might still be open!

Prerequisite: Completion of GE D.1 Introduction to the Social Sciences.

General Education:

This course fulfills GE area D.5 Explorations in Social Sciences. (The “home” department for this course is CPRL; it is cross-listed with POSC. Thus, if you are pursuing a major in Political Science you can double count this course with GE and as one course toward your upper division elective units for the major, because POSC is not the home department. However, if you are a major in Religious Studies you may count this as one course toward your “Experience of Religion” major requirement, but it cannot count for GE. If you are a Minor in Political Science, or a Minor in Religious Studies you can “double count” this course for GE and the minor—up to nine units of GE courses from one department may be used to meet minor requirements.)

Below is the Syllabus from Fall 2012. Of course, there may be changes for Spring 2013.

COMPARATIVE RELIGION 381 RELIGION & POLITICS IN THE USA

Fall 2012

Instructor: Dr. Benjamin J. Hubbard **Office:** UH 308 **Office Hours:** M & W 11:30-noon, 3:45-4:30 or by appointment. **Telephone:** 657.278.3452 (office),
E-mail: bhubbard@fullerton.edu

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: **Prerequisite:** completion of GE category D1. Relationship of politics and religion, especially in the U.S. The colonial and constitutional experience, Supreme Court decisions on religious issues, the principal theorists of moral discourse in the public forum, contemporary issues of concern. (*The course fulfills the GE requirement in Category D5.*)

AIMS: The course seeks to provide (1) an understanding of the origins of the Constitution, especially the first Amendment, and of the key theorists who have shaped our political philosophy; (b) an overview of key Supreme Court decisions in religion-state cases and the rationale for these decisions; (3) a balanced

appreciation for current controversies involving religion and government; (4) enhanced ability to discuss with your peers sensitive questions in the church-state arena and in other areas; (5) heightened interest in current events that impact citizens' lives; (6) improved writing and research skills.

Learning Goals:

General Education Learning Goals for Area D.5

Students completing courses in subarea D.5 shall:

- a. Examine problems, issues, and themes in the social sciences in greater depth; in a variety of cultural, historical, and geographical contexts; and from different disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives—**specifically, the interface of religion and politics.**
- b. Analyze and critically evaluate the application of social science concepts and theories to particular historical, contemporary, and future problems or themes, such as economic and environmental sustainability, globalization, poverty, and social justice.
- c. Analyze and critically evaluate constructs of cultural differentiation, including ethnicity, gender, race, class, and sexual orientation, and their effects on the individual and society. **Our focus will be on the complex relationships between different religious traditions and how these affect political differences.**
- d. Apply theories and concepts from the social sciences to address historical, contemporary and future problems confronting communities at different geographical scales, from local to global (Does not apply to this course.)

GE Writing Requirement:

The writing assignments discussed below are designed to meet the General Education writing requirement. The substance as well as the manner of organization and expression of the information and ideas will be evaluated. In other words, the content as well as the style and grammar of the paper will be graded. To encourage you to advance your writing competence, the assessment of all papers will include suggestions for improvement on later papers and for future courses.

Grading Criteria : 70% of your grade on these assignments will be based on content, 20% on clarity and 10% on grammar.

Department of Comparative Religion Student Learning Goals & Outcomes:

All students majoring in Religious Studies shall achieve competence in the following domains of skill and knowledge:

A. Skills

Learning Goal: Students possess the ability to perform research and interpret materials related to the study of religion.

Outcome 1: Students can analyze written materials related to the study of religion.

Outcome 2: Students have acquired information literacy in the study of religion.

Learning Goal: Students can effectively communicate in written and spoken mediums.

Outcome 3: Students are able to write well-organized critical and analytical research papers related to the study of religion.

Outcome 4: Students are able to speak clearly and effectively using relevant and adequate supporting evidence. *Does not apply to this course.*

B. Knowledge

Learning Goal: Students can demonstrate an understanding of the beliefs, rituals, texts, and figures related to a variety of religious traditions.

Outcome 5: Students can describe the basic teachings and practices of major religious traditions and can compare and contrast the principal similarities and differences between them.

Outcome 6: Students are able to identify the history and development of specific religions and their contemporary relevance.

Outcome 7: Students can compare key theories and theorists in the study of religion. *Does not apply to this course.*

Outcome 8: Students can interpret key thinkers and figures within religious traditions.

TEXTBOOKS (available at Little Professor Bookstore and Gaustad's book at Univ. Bookstore):

1. Gaustad, Edwin, *Proclaim Liberty throughout the Land—A History of Church and State in America* (abbrev. **G**)
2. Wald, Kenneth & Allison Calhoun-Brown, *Religion and Politics in the United States* (abbrev. **W**)

GRADING:

- 1) Book review: 20%
- 2) Candidate analysis: 10%
- 3) Mid-Term Exam: 20%
- 4) Take-home Final Exam: 20%
- 5) Research Paper: 25%
- 6) Class Participation & Attendance: 5%

GRADE RANGES:

98-100: A+ 94-97: A 90-93: A- 87-89: B+ 83-86: B 80-82: B-
76-79: C+ 70-75: C 68-69: C- 65-67: D+ 62-64: D 60-61: D-

EXPLANATION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Book Review:** Read *Proclaim Liberty* and (a) summarize its main points, (b) discuss its most valuable insights in your opinion and any points of disagreement, and (c) briefly reflect on how it has affected your thinking on the religion-state issue. Length: about three pp./900-1,000 words. **Due: Sept. 19**

2. **Candidate Analysis:** Choose either of the major party presidential candidates (Obama or Romney) and briefly summarize his position on each of the following eight topics: Immigration, gay marriage & civil unions, abortion, teaching evolution in public schools, prayer in public schools, global warming/climate change, and gun rights. Fact checking is important for the assignment: See factcheck.org, politifact.com, etc. Length: two pp./6-700 words. You will have a chance to report succinctly on your findings on the assignment's due date, **Oct. 10**

3. **Research Paper:** Choose a topic in consultation with the prof, and write a paper of 7-8 pages (typed, double spaced=2,100-2,400 words) plus a *bibliography*. Begin by consulting the bibliographies in the textbooks, and I will provide additional suggestions, including Internet sites. During the final two class periods (Dec. 10 & 12), you will present a brief *oral*, and *one-page typed*, summary of your paper to your classmates. **Due: Dec. 19** (may be submitted earlier **but will not be accepted later**).

4 **Examinations:** The mid-term exam on **Oct. 17** will be based on review questions distributed in the previous class. The take-home final will consist of essay questions distributed on Dec.12. **Due Dec. 19** (may be submitted earlier **but will not be accepted later**).

5. **Class Participation:** Because this course will stress teacher-student interaction and include several small-group discussions, attendance is essential. Asking pertinent questions both in class and via email will help your participation grade. Also, the quality of your oral report and written summary on the research paper may help your participation grade. **Attendance at the final two class meetings when students will present their research reports is mandatory. Failure to attend except for a medical reason or other emergency will result in a lowering of your class participation grade.**

Policy on Late Papers: There will be a 10% deduction per class day (M-F) late. The take-home final and research paper are due at the time of the scheduled final exam (**Dec. 19 at 2:30 in H-224**).

Policy on Dishonesty: Cheating on the exam and plagiarism are not acceptable, and campus policies on these infractions will be enforced.

Policy on Electronic Devices: Please turn off your cell phones and put away laptops and pads.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Date	Topic	Assignment
Aug. 27, 29	a) Why study these "undiscussables"?	W 1 & 2

- b) A brief overview of the current religious & political landscapes (Pew Forum Reports)
- c) Religion in colonial America

Watch Republican National convention on Aug. 27, if possible

Sept. 3 **LABOR DAY—NO CLASS**

Watch Democratic National Convention on Sept. 3, if possible

- Sept. 5 a) Evolution of Constitution **G** Intro & chs. 1, 2 & 3
 b) Jefferson, Madison & 1st Amendment **W** ch. 3
 c) DVD: “God in America” (Puritans)

- Sept. 10, 12 a) The Supreme Court & church-state cases **G** chs. 4, 5 & 6
 b) Small-group work on key cases **W** ch. 4

- Sept. 17, 19 **NO CLASS ON SEPT. 17—BOOK REVIEW PREP**
 a) Establishment Clause & public school cases **G** chs. 7 & 8
 b) Private-school cases
BOOK REVIEW DUE ON SEPT. 19

- Sept. 24, 26 a) Free exercise clause & religious liberty Read **Hubbard**
 b) The current Sup. Court & future cases chap. on Titanium
 c) DVD: “God in America” (Revivalism/Great Awakening)

- Oct. 1, 3 a) Lecture by Justice Eileen Moore & Judge James Jackman (10/1)
 b) DVD: “God in America” (Lincoln)

Watch 1st Presidential Debate on Oct. 3, 6-7:30 p.m., PBS

- Oct. 8, 10 a) Backgrounder to religious issues in presidential race
 b) Student reports on Candidate Analysis (Oct. 10)
CANDIDATE ANALYSIS DUE ON Oct. 10

Watch Vice-Presidential Debate on Oct. 11, 6-7:30, ABC

- Oct. 15, 17 a) Why religion gets political **W** 5 & 6
 b) The religious backgrounds of the Pres. & VP candidates
 c) Exam review

MID-TERM EXAM (Oct. 17)

Watch 2nd Presidential Debate on Oct. 16, 6-7:30, CNN

