

**PSC 314: Religion and the Political Process**  
**Fall, 2006: Dr. Jelen (revised 9/6/06)**

**Contact Information:**

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**Office Hours:**

Tuesday, 11:30 am-12:30 pm  
Thursday, 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
Friday, 10:30-11:30 am

**Required Texts:**

Kenneth D. Wald and Allison Calhoun-Brown, *Religion and Politics in the United States* (5<sup>th</sup> edition)

Clyde Wilcox and Carin Larson, *Onward, Christian Soldiers: The Religious Right in American Politics* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)

Phillip E. Hammond, David W. Machacek, and Eric Michael Mazur, *Religion on Trial: How Supreme Court Trends Threaten Freedom of Conscience in America*

**Objective:**

This course is intended to provide the advanced student with a sophisticated understanding of the legal, behavioral, and institutional aspects of religious politics in the United States. No single normative perspective will be favored; rather, the intention is develop an empirical understanding of the interaction between the sacred and the public spheres, as well as sympathetic, yet critical, appreciation of multiple legal and normative perspectives.

**Grading:**

There will be two essay exams: A midterm exam, given on October 13, and a final exam, given on December 15. Each exam counts for 1/3 of student's final grade. In addition, on or before December 1, each student will prepare a critical review of Phillip Hammond, et. al., *Religion on Trial*. This review, which should be between 5 and 10 double-spaced typed pages, will describe the book's main thesis, examine the evidence and arguments with which the authors support the thesis, and assess the plausibility of the book's thesis. The book review will count for 1/3 of the final grade.

Class participation will be used as a tie-breaker, if a student's grade is on a borderline. Under most circumstances, participation can only help the student's grade, unless the participation is disruptive of class lectures and discussion, or does not demonstrate respect for the sincerely-held views of others.

**Policies:**

Any attempt at academic dishonesty results in failure of the entire course. This includes, but is not limited to, receiving outside assistance on exams, or using unattributed material from other sources.

Exceptions to the final exam schedule and the paper deadline will only be granted in cases of **documented** medical or bereavement considerations. Make-up midterm exams will be administered on December 1.

**Course Schedule:**

- I. Introduction to Public Religion (September 1-8)  
Wald and Calhoun-Brown, 1-2; Wilcox 1.
- II. Religion and the American Political Culture (September 15)  
Wald and Calhoun-Brown 3; Wilcox, 2.
- III. Church-State Relations (September 22-October 6)  
Wald and Calhoun-Brown, 4, Wilcox, pp. 15-18.

**October 13: Midterm Exam**

- IV. Religion and Political Behavior (October 20-November 3)  
Wald and Calhoun-Brown, 6-11; Wilcox pp. 59-87
- V. Religion and Public Policy (November 17-December 1)  
Wald and Calhoun-Brown, 5; Wilcox, pp. 88-96

**December 1: Make-up midterm (2<sup>nd</sup> half of class)**

**December 1: Book Review due**

- VI. Religion and American Democracy  
Wald, 12; Wilcox, 4-5.

**Final Exam: December 15: 11:30 am**

**Disability policies are as indicated on previous syllabus.**