

Comm 390 - Fall 2009 - C. Knopf Overview "Religion + Messages of Change"



Welcome!

This is *not* a course about religion. We will not be discussing theology, gods, or religious texts.

You do not need to know a lot about religions.

Your own religious beliefs will not be questioned or challenged. My religious beliefs will not be taught or discussed.

This *is* a social scientific course about the communicative and social aspects of public religions - how religions have been used as an agent of change throughout American history and around the world. The course will introduce and address the contested role of public religion in contemporary liberal democracies, examining the conception and appropriateness of the public role of religion in modernity.

Our explorations will cover multiple dimensions of contemporary society (i.e. media, politics, commerce) and examine expressions of religion that range across traditions, emanate from individuals and institutions, and engage with a number of controversial issues. Much of the course is international in focus, providing students with a wide-cross section of cultural exposures.

Analyzing religion's varied interactions with several public institutions and arenas provides an opportunity to develop a portrait of

- a) the position(s) of religion within public space, and
- b) the shifting boundaries of religious and non-religious activity (especially communicative activity).

The goal of the course is to raise awareness of the diverse ways religion engages the political, social and cultural in contemporary society and to provide you a forum in which to critically reflect on the consequences and implications of these encounters.

The movements we will be studying have been both positive and negative, with religion helping to enact changes that modern, liberal (small "L") thought would see as beneficial (like civil rights) as well as changes that have been harmful (like the Holocaust).



Using this Blackboard

Everything you need to navigate this course is (hopefully) available on this course Blackboard site: syllabus, assignment descriptions, due dates, grading outlines, classroom expectations, etcetera. The only thing *not* here is the actual course material; you have to read the text and come to class for that.

To find the information you need, use the menu on the left hand side of your screen. You will also find hyperlinks (underlined words in **bold** print) throughout the site that will zap you quickly to the resources you'll need. You will need to have the Adobe PDF viewer to fully utilize the site. It's free and safe, found [here](#).

Please, please, please take the time to review and familiarize yourself with this site and all the information it contains. This is, essentially, an online and interactive syllabus. It replaces paper copies and handouts that waste money and harm the environment. Plus, even more importantly, it allows me to more easily provide you with lots of detailed information about course requirements and assignments, even linking you to outside resources. (If you prefer paper versions, however, you are welcome and encouraged to print them yourself, and I will try to post printer-friendly versions of most, if not all, material as soon as I can.)



Quick Links

If you can't find what you're looking for, check the [Syllabus](#), or try these Quick Links to some of the key documents:

- [Course Calendar](#)
- [Assignments](#)
- [Grading](#)
- [Attendance](#)

Assistant Professor Christina Knopf

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Work Phone 315-267-2883
Office Location Morey Hall 248
Office Hours Monday~ by appointment
Tuesday~ 12:30-1:45, 5:00-5:30
Wednesday~ by appointment, or online**
Thursday~ 12:30-1:45
Friday~ by appointment

**Online office hours will be held through Facebook chat on Wednesdays from 11:00-1:00!

Notes

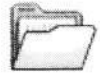
Hi! I'm Dr. K. I've been teaching at SUNY Potsdam since August 2006. I teach Basic Principles of Speech and a variety of courses related to political communication - everything from campaigns and governance, to social movements and suffrage. Some of my courses are more general, others focus in on gender issues or religion.

I live in Colton, just about 10 miles south of the SUNY Potsdam campus, with my cat, who is kind enough to share the house with me. I grew up in the Finger Lakes and I've lived in New York State my entire life, actually, and have four degrees from the SUNY system: an A.A. in liberal arts from Finger Lakes Community College, a B.A. in public relations and journalism from SUNY New Paltz, an M.A. in political communication from SUNY Albany, and a Ph.D. in cultural sociology & political communication from SUNY Albany.

Before teaching, I worked in public relations; I used to write press releases for FLCC, and I did Web design and technical writing for a small telecommunications software company. I also worked in journalism as a photographer, and in politics as a researcher for the New York State Assembly.

I'd be happy to talk about any of my college or career experiences with you, or about my cat, at any time, so feel free to ask. You can also look me up and get to know me on Facebook if you want to!

Syllabus



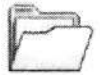
Outcomes & Goals



Course Calendar



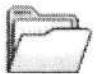
Required Materials



Reading



Grading



Assignments



Attendance Policy



Classroom Rules

Outcomes & Goals



Course Goals

Cognitive Outcomes:

- You will be able to *understand* and *articulate* at least two opposing perspectives in the liberalism/public religion debate. This will require that you *conduct research*, *process information* and *apply knowledge*.

Toward this end, you will write two position papers. The **first paper** will ask you to explain and refute a perspective with which you disagree. The **second paper** will ask you to explain and support a perspective with which you agree. Each paper is worth 15 points. (See the **Calendar** and **Assignments** for more information).

Social Outcomes:

- You will be exposed to a variety of cultures and learn to consider alternative viewpoints – or *relate culturally*.

Toward this end, you will write a **short essay** discussing one religion or peoples that you learned something about during the semester. This essay will ask you to describe what, if anything, you already knew about the group and what preconceived notions you held about the specific group or about the use/presence of public religion. Then, you will explain what you learned and how your understanding and perspective was changed or reaffirmed. The paper is worth 10 points.

- You will improve interpersonal skills and *relating to others*.

This course will be discussion heavy and you will be expected to show respect for the variety of backgrounds, affiliations, and emotions related to the topic of “religion” that will be present in the classroom.

Affective Outcomes:

- This course will encourage you to improve their *organizational* skills, both in terms of time management and information consumption, while also asking you to *internalize* the material and ideas that are presented.

Toward this end, no exams will be given in the course. Instead, you will be held accountable for every assigned reading by posting **reading responses** to the course Blackboard. These responses will not be reading summaries, but will be thoughtful, well-articulated critiques, questions, or applications of the information. Through these responses, you will be expected to keep up with course material in a timely manner and will need to internalize material, not just memorize or “regurgitate” it. Responses are worth 60 points total, 4 points each.

General Education Outcomes



This is an SA, Social Analysis, course. As such it is geared toward the following purposes:

Systematically studies human behavior, human social interactions and relations, and contemporary social institutions (those practices, conventions, groupings, and organizations which most significantly structure social life in the world today).

This course looks specifically at communication behavior, group interactions, and religious and governmental institutions.

a. introduce the historical and philosophical origins and scope (boundaries) of the discipline or subject and consider how the discipline is evolving within a changing society;

In order to understand the case studies in the readings, and the relevant contemporary issues, I will begin the course with an introduction to civil religion (a concept that is primarily understood as a rhetorical tool of national or collective identity), public religion (a sociological reconsideration of the relation between religion and modernity), and conceptualizes of the public sphere (from Jurgen Habermas and beyond). From this starting point, we will be in a better position to consider the place of religion and its messages, or rhetoric, in public life, and specifically in efforts for or periods of social change.

Discussions will also include the exploration of potentially constructive models of religious engagement in public life which aim to respect religious plurality, in addition to the potentially harmful models, and debates about the meaning of liberal "neutrality" and American separationism.

b. illustrate and evaluate several methods of data collections, interpretation, and analysis including quantitative methods where appropriate;

The case studies we will be reading rely largely on ethnographic and textual analysis. Including in class discussion will be questions regarding author agenda, researcher bias, and the nature of the information presented and the conclusions reached.

c. explore alternative theoretical frameworks and consider their ability to explain the observations in question;

In addition to studying movements as public religions, we will also consider them as social movements and New Social Movements (NSMs) in and of themselves. This will allow discussion about whether religion was being indeed acting as an agent of socio-political change or if that change was a by-product of a more self-serving movement.

We will also be discussing liberalism and the liberal viewpoint on what drove or benefited the social movements under study.

d. consider a contemporary social issue from the point-of-view of alternative theoretical frameworks and consider their utility for making public policy decisions.

Contemporary issues of religion and/in politics will be discussed in relation to the revelations made regarding public religions. These include religious lobbying, the First Amendment, separationism, and American Exceptionalism. These considerations will take place so in the light of current theoretical and constitutional debates about toleration, pluralism, secularism, and "public reason," and against the background of recent manifestations both of destructive religious fanaticism and of wholesome religiously-inspired democratic engagement.

Course Calendar



Schedule

| Date | Reading Due | HW Due | Discussion Topic (subject to change) | <i>in-class</i> <i>(tentative)</i> |
|-----------|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Tu, 09/01 | none | none | course introduction, syllabus overview | attendance & enrollment issues |
| Th, 09/03 | none | none | The Public Sphere | |
| Tu, 09/08 | none | none | | |
| Th, 09/10 | Audi & Wolterstorff selection on Bb | Audi & Wolterstorff Reading Reaction | Liberalism, Separationism, Establishment Clause | |
| Tu, 09/15 | Casanova selection 1 on Bb | Casanova Reading Reaction | Public Religions | |
| Th, 09/17 | Smith Intro | Smith Intro Reading Reaction | Religion as social capital | Film: <i>Soul Searching</i> |
| Tu, 09/22 | none | Paper #1 | | Film Clip: <i>Malcolm X</i> |
| Th, 09/24 | Chapter 1 | Ch. 1 Reading Reaction | Religion in the Civil Rights Movement | Film: |
| Tu, 09/29 | none | none | | |
| Th, 10/01 | Chapter 2 | Ch. 2 Reading Reaction | Radical Islam | |
| Tu, 10/06 | none | none | | Film: <i>Strike</i> |
| Th, 10/08 | Chapter 3 | Ch. 3 Reading Reaction | The Solidarity Movement in Poland | [continued] |
| Tu, 10/13 | none | | Fall Recess | no class |
| Th, 10/15 | Chapter 4 | Ch. 4 Reading Reaction | Religion & labor | |
| Tu, 10/20 | none | Paper # 2 | | |
| Th, 10/22 | Chapter 5 | Ch. 5 Reading Reaction | | |
| Tu, 10/27 | none | none | | |
| Th, 10/29 | Chapter 6 | Ch. 6 Reading Reaction | Religion & apartheid | Read Aloud: |

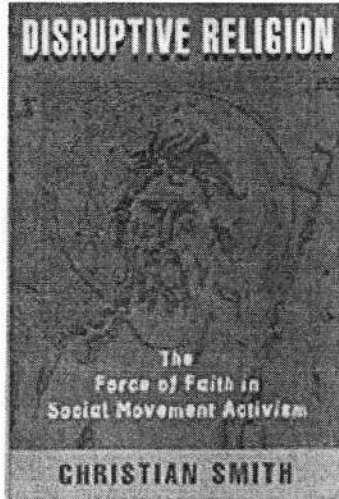
| | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Tu, 11/03 | none | none | | |
| Th, 11/05 | Chapter 7 | Ch. 7 Reading Reaction | Religion & Hitler | Film: <i>The Occult History of the Third Reich</i> |
| Tu, 11/10 | none | none | Class Cancelled (Dr K @ N'tnl Comm Assoc conference) | no class |
| Th, 11/12 | Chapter 8 | Ch. 8 Reading Reaction | Class Cancelled (Dr K @ N'tnl Comm Assoc conference) | no class |
| Tu, 11/17 | none | none | The Pro-Life Movement (Protestant) | Film: <i>Soldiers in the Army of God</i> |
| Th, 11/19 | Casanova Selection 2 | Casanova 2 Reading Reaction | The Pro-Life Movement (Catholic) | |
| Tu, 11/24 | Chapter 9 | Ch. 9 Reading Reaction | Religion & Politics in America | |
| Th, 11/26 | none | none | Thanksgiving | no class |
| Tu, 12/01 | none | none | | |
| Th, 12/03 | Chapter 10 | Ch. 10 Reading Reaction | Religion & Politics in America | Film: <i>With God on Our Side</i> |
| Tu, 12/08 | Knopf Selections | Knopf Reading Reaction | New Agers & Feminist Spirituality | Music: The Best of Pagan Song |
| Th, 12/10 | none | none | | |

Monday, December 14th @10:15-12:15 - **Final Paper** Due

Required Materials



Textbook



Disruptive Religion: The Force of Faith in Social Movements

By: Christian Smith

Routledge.



Recommended Supplies

- A notebook
 - Computer access
-

Reading



Responsibilities and rationales

In my opinion, and probably yours too, there is nothing more boring than a class in which the instructor just reads out loud from the text or does nothing but repeat material that is just as easily provided in the text.

I try really hard not to do that.

But for me to not spend class time having you write down the same information that is already written down in the textbook you paid good money for, we have to work together.

If you have questions about the readings, I'm happy to answer them and to go over material you might have had trouble understanding. Otherwise, I would much rather ask you questions about the readings and give you chances to apply that knowledge you gained from doing the reading or to challenge the information the text provides.

Doing the readings helps you to get better grades. Plus, we can have more interactive classes and tune in to more media (like movies, TV shows, and music).

Also, to be honest, some of these readings are quite challenging. In fact, a few are graduate level (which will be such a cool accomplishment for you to brag about to your parents, spouses, children, or whoever).

Do your best with them. Don't let yourself get weighed down by wordy (and sometimes dull); focus on the sections or even just the sentences that are clear to you. We'll work through the readings, when necessary, in class.

If you see words or historical references that are unfamiliar to you, *look them up*. This is one of the rare times when I support the use of Wikipedia for schoolwork.



Reading Reactions

For each chapter, you will post a 1-2 paragraph response to what you read on "**Reading Reactions**" board on Blackboard. These posts are due by class time on the day the reading is due. Each week/chapter has its own discussion board forum set up where you will post your responses, or Reading Reactions.

These responses will not be reading summaries, but will be thoughtful, well-articulated critiques, questions, or applications of the information. Through these responses, you will be expected to keep up with course material in a timely manner and will need to internalize material, not just memorize or "regurgitate" it. Reactions can be points of agreement or disagreement with the readings, connections between the reading and current events or other

classes, questions about the reading, applications of the information to your own lives, things you found interesting, etcetera. They will not be statements of how boring you found the author or summaries of the chapters.

These reactions replace exams in this course by showing me that you've done the reading and indicating areas of confusion or interest that deserve extra attention in class. They also help you to better manage your time in relation to course assignments and to maximize your in-class experience by being prepared to participate in discussions or to apply knowledge in unique ways.

Each post is worth 4 points, for a total of 60 points (or 60%) of your grade. Full credit is awarded for timely, thoughtful, and careful completion. Use good writing skills! Points are deducted for lateness, vagueness, incompleteness, or excessive grammatical &/or spelling errors.

Everyone is encouraged to read one another's posts and to engage in dialogue both in class and on the forums (*there may be extra credit in doing that!*) Be polite.

If you need help figuring out how to post your Reactions, there is a **guide** on the **Help with Blackboard** page.



Reading Schedule

Readings *are due* on the day noted.

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Thursday, Sept. 10 | Audi & Wolterstoff selections on Bb |
| Tuesday, Sept. 15 | Casanova selection 1 on Bb |
| Thursday, Sept. 17 | Smith Intro |
| Thursday, Sept. 24 | Chapter 1 |
| Thursday, Oct. 1 | Chapter 2 |
| Thursday, Oct. 8 | Chapter 3 |
| Thursday, Oct. 15 | Chapter 4 |
| Thursday, Oct. 22 | Chapter 5 |
| Thursday, Oct. 29 | Chapter 6 |
| Thursday, Nov. 5 | Chapter 7 |
| Thursday, Nov. 12 | Chapter 8 |
| Thursday, Nov. 19 | Casanova Selection 2 on Bb |
| Tuesday, Nov. 24 | Chapter 9 |
| Thursday, Dec. 3 | Chapter 10 |
| Tuesday, Dec. 8 | Knopf Selections on Bb |

Grading



Grading Philosophy

Grades are earned by you, they are not awarded or deducted by me. You start this class and every assignment at "zero;" you should understand each grade as being a level of achievement, rather than a level of loss. (That is to say, don't ask "What did I lose points on?" instead ask "How could I have earned more points?")

When you get scores on assignments I'm not *giving* you a grade, you're earning it. Part of my job, and part of what you're paying for, is an honest evaluation of what you do. Sometimes you may not like what you hear, and I'll try to tell you how well you did in the most positive way I can think of, but you can't improve unless you know what mistakes you're making or what weaknesses you have as well as what you're doing well.

I prefer intrinsic motivations, and therefore, am frankly not a fan of giving a lot of graded assignments. I believe this extrinsic reward is too often the only motivation for students to complete assignments, which takes attention away from the ultimate goal of individual and community growth through learning. A college education should be viewed as a privilege and an opportunity to become informed and scholarly. However, for lack of a better system and a larger population recognizing that even non-graded assignments are important, grades will be assigned in this class.

Work that meets the minimum requirements of an assignment, is completed on time and displays average involvement with the course content is deserving of a 2.0. A 2.0 is a "satisfactory" grade that indicates the *minimum* has been achieved.

Higher grades are awarded to work that goes above and beyond the minimum standards to produce papers and presentations that reflect superior intellectual effort, excellence in critical analysis and overall creativity in the approach towards any given assignment. A 4.0 is attainable but will require much more than minimal effort.



Grading Breakdown

Your final course grade is based on 100 possible points you can earn during the semester. Each assignment is worth a certain number of points. The total number of points you achieve will be your final grade. (See **Assignments** or **Outcomes** for how much each assignment is worth toward the final grade).

Grades *in this class* are divided as follows:

| | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 4.0 (A) = 96-100 | 3.7 (A-) = 91-95 |
| 3.3 (B+) = 86-90 | 3.0 (B) = 80-85 |
| 2.7 (B-) = 76-79 | 2.3 (C+) = 71-75 |
| 2.0 (C) = 67-70 | 1.7 (C-) = 61-66 |

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1.3 (D+) = 57-60 | 1.0 (D) = 51-56 |
| 0.0 (F) = | 50-0 |



Challenging a Grade

If you identify an error in grading, I am always willing to admit to a mistake and correct it.

If you want me to *reconsider* a grade, follow these steps:

1. Wait at least 24 hours before deciding to seek reconsideration, but no longer than one week.
2. Write a 1-2 page explanation of why the grade should be reconsidered, following the same guidelines for all written work, identifying what type of change you seek and providing a reasoned argument and evidence in support of that change. The burden of proof in any disagreement over evaluation of student performance rests with the student.
3. Resubmit the original work (complete with grade & comments) along with the rationale.
4. Allow two weeks for reconsideration. *Be aware that in reconsidering a grade, I may find that it earned a lower grade than it originally received.*
5. Accept the final decision, whether the grade stays the same, is raised, or lowered. *I will reconsider each assignment only once.*



Due Dates & Late Work

LATE ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT ACCEPTED except in extreme circumstances with documentation. (Note: Extreme circumstances are things like college sanctioned events, hospitalization, serious illness, religious observances, or death in the immediate family. They do not include events like hangovers, colds, roommate disputes, funerals, romantic troubles, vacations, weddings, various appointments, work conflicts, or exams and papers in other classes. Documentation must come from official sources like coaches, doctors, lawyers, or clergy. They are not notes from your parents.)

If you know in advance you will not be in class when an assignment is due, turn it in early.

I don't like being rigid about deadlines but they are a fact of life and there's no good reason why this class should be any different. In the working world, lateness carries serious consequences - from having to make-up for missed time, to reduced pay, to termination. Besides, it's not fair to the people who made the effort to do the work on time to pretend the deadlines don't matter.

Academic Integrity (aka "cheating")



As stated in the Undergraduate Catalog, the following pledge is made on all academic work done by students at SUNY Potsdam. This pledge is regarded as an indication that you understand and have complied with the requirements and assignments as set forth by the course instructor and as stated in this Academic Honor Code.

"On my honor: I will not give nor receive any inappropriate assistance on any academic work in accordance with the SUNY Potsdam Academic Honor Code and the directions given to me by each course instructor."

To plagiarize is to pass off ideas or words of someone else as your own or to use created productions without crediting the source. It is literary and intellectual theft when you present work that someone else did as being new and original. If you aren't concerned by how much you personally lose by plagiarizing, consider how much it sucks when someone else takes credit for *your* idea or *your* effort, and remember that if you're tempted to deliberately plagiarize or simply do sloppy work.

For these reasons, you will be responsible for authenticating any assignment submitted in this course. If asked, you must be able to produce proof that the assignment you submitted is in fact your own work. Therefore, I recommend that you keep copies of all drafts of your work, make photocopies and/or careful notes of research materials, save drafts or versions of assignments under individual file names on computer disks, etc. (This is a good practice for any and all classes. Not only will it protect you should you ever be accused of academic dishonesty, but it also protects you in instances of computer malfunctions, stolen bags, spilled coffee, and bad filing systems.) In addition to requiring a student to authenticate his/her work, I may employ other means of ascertaining the authenticity or originality of your assignments – such as engaging in internet searches, requiring students to explain their work and/or process orally, etc.

I have a zero tolerance policy on plagiarism. Any time you incorporate the words and/or ideas of another person into your work, whether from a book, a film, T.V., the Internet, or any other source, without giving their creator the credit, you have plagiarized. In the event of plagiarism on an assignment in this course you will A.) Definitely fail the assignment. B.) Possibly fail the course.

Other forms of dishonesty or cheating are also not tolerated and will result in a failure of the assignment and/or class. These include, but are not limited to: using non-sanctioned notes on an exam, using electronic devices to get answers for an exam, copying others' assignments, using work from "paper mills," turning in work from another class without seeking permission from me and the other instructor.... If you think you are engaging in questionable behavior, you probably are, so either don't do it or seek clarification.

Assignments



Grading Breakdown

You can earn up to 100 points in this class. Your overall course grade is the number of points you achieve. Each assignment is worth a certain number of points:

- 60 points = **Reading Reactions (15 reactions, 4 points each)**
- 15 points = **Paper #1**
- 15 points = **Paper #2**
- 10 points = **Final Paper**

Attendance Policy



Rationale

I know many students think mandatory attendance in college is a drag or is unfair. After all, you're paying for college so you should have the right to show up or not.

That's why I don't set a certain number of allowable or excusable absences.

But attendance is mandatory and not showing up to class can impact your grade on multiple levels. Furthermore, I reserve the right to lower your grade if poor attendance or excessive tardiness has been disruptive to the overall teaching and learning environment.

Attendance is mandatory and is graded in many classes for a variety of reasons, such as:

1. As instructors we are the sort-of "guardians" of your college education. We have a responsibility to maintain the integrity and reputation of SUNY Potsdam. If you want your diploma to mean anything to employers, to your families, or to you, we have to set standards - otherwise, you might as well buy a diploma through one of those Internet offers.
2. Showing up is a big part of most things in life - socializing, voting, working... you have to show up. School's no different. You may face employers who have even stricter attendance policies than your teachers have, so think of attendance policies as part of your career preparation while in college.
3. Your attendance impacts more than just you. Class dynamics and activities change drastically depending on the number of students in the room. When you sign up for the class, you are taking on a responsibility - to yourself, to your instructor, and to your classmates.
4. If you don't come to class, you're wasting a lot of money.
5. Signing up for a class is a sort of contract, like having a job.



Expectations

If you cannot be to (nearly) every class on time, then you should not take this class.

Regular, timely, attendance is expected. In-class work and assignments that are missed during an absence cannot be made up, except in extreme circumstances with documentation. (Note: Extreme circumstances are things like college sanctioned events, hospitalization, serious illness, religious observances, or death in the immediate family. They do not include events like hangovers, colds, roommate disputes, flues, funerals, romantic troubles, vacations, weddings, various appointments, work conflicts, or exams and papers in other classes. Documentation must come from official sources like coaches, doctors, lawyers, or clergy. They are not notes from your parents.)

If you feel that you have an important reason for missing or skipping all or part of class, that is your choice to make. *Only you can weigh the costs and benefits of that decision and determine whether or not you are comfortable with the consequences.* And only **you are responsible** for those consequences.

In the case of prolonged absences from class of one week or more, you must notify me immediately in order to make arrangements. Consecutive absences of one week or more, without notice from you, will result in a failure.



Late Arrivals

Late arrivals are frowned upon. But, hey, life happens. We all have bad days, and I would rather see you arrive late, with wet hair, mismatched shoes, and only a gum wrapper to write on than have you miss the class completely.

Frequent tardiness, however, is counterproductive and will be noted. In this case, you will be asked to either adjust your schedule so that you can be on time or to withdraw from the class. I don't like to be so harsh, especially knowing that sometimes jobs or even other classes can create timing issues for some students, but a lot of "housekeeping" is done at the start of each class meeting and regular tardiness, no matter how justifiable, creates many problems.

When you arrive late, please enter the classroom quietly at an appropriate moment, and take the first available seat. *Do not* make a lot of noise, *do not* interrupt to offer apologies, and *do not* intrude upon the entire class by searching for a seat you like or cutting across the front of the room. Being late is not an accomplishment that earns you a grand entrance and special attention.



Incompletes

Incompletes, or other arrangements for course completion, can be planned only in extreme circumstances with documentation. Extreme circumstances do not include events like hangovers, colds, roommate conflicts, flues, funerals, romantic troubles, vacations, weddings, various appointments, work conflicts, or exams and papers in other classes. They are things like hospitalization, serious illness, religious observances, death in the immediate family, or some other serious *emergency* so late in the semester that there isn't time to make up what you miss. **If you have a substantial amount of work that you cannot finish, you should withdraw from the course, not seek an incomplete.**

Classroom Rules



Electronic Devices

All electronic devices must be turned off and put away, out of sight, prior to the start of class.

If you can't make it through one class meeting without being "wired" then you should not be in the class.

If there is some medical reason for leaving a pager or cell phone on, make sure it is on vibrate and in your pocket.

I will not tolerate phone calls, text messaging, gaming, or the use of personal entertainment media during class. Leave the class to do these things! Not only is the use of these devices rude to the instructor, distracting to your classmates, interfering with your learning, but it is also inconsiderate to those around you who may not have the resources to multitask with gadgets in a similar fashion.

Recording the class without all involved parties giving permission may have legal ramifications for you, so don't do it.

Five points will be deducted from your final grade for each instance you violate this code. In the grand scheme of life, our class meetings are not that long, so there should be no need to break the code.



Attitude

Your enthusiasm and a positive attitude will not only make the semester more enjoyable for me and for your fellow classmates, but for you, too, and it will help you to do better in the course. If you have no enthusiasm for the course, fake it. You might just trick yourself into feeling it for real.

Smile. Participate. Attack the work in this course as if it were important to you and your life – because it is.



Etiquette & Behavior

The success of this course is directly related to the sense of community that we will develop in this classroom. Participation is essential to this process. I encourage you to share your views and listen to those of others. Debate and discussion are an important part of the learning process. While there will no doubt be disagreements, I expect the members of this community (including myself) to challenge ideas in a manner that reflects respect and recognition of opposing viewpoints without attacking individuals.

Though I do not have a problem with the use of curse words in the classroom, I ask that you be considerate and judicious in your use of them. Occasional

use is one thing. Relying on curse words to express yourself is in indication of a small vocabulary, a disregard for the feelings of others, and perhaps a small mind. And though I do not mind you swearing in front of me, swearing at me will never have a good outcome for you and I reserve the right to determine what that outcome will be as I see fit.

In most circumstances, I should not see curse words in your written work. That forum is not the appropriate place for such language use; the English language has many rich alternatives for expression. Swearing in written assignments where better alternatives are available will negatively affect your grade.



Disruptions

I will never stop anyone from answering the calls of nature – whether for thirst, hunger, or other needs. If you are uncomfortable, you will not be able to focus. However, **do not be disruptive**. You will not see me leaving the classroom on a regular basis to use the bathroom, nor will you see me crunching on a bag of chips or chewing on a Big Mac. If I can survive through the class, you probably can, too. (If you have so little time during the day that you need to regularly use this class for a bathroom break or meal hour, than you should consider cutting something from your schedule. At the very least, discuss extenuating circumstances with me.)

Do not pack up before I dismiss you. You never know when I may say something important or give a last minute assignment. You're going to want to have that pen and paper handy. Besides, it's just never a good idea to be rude to the teacher.

Paper #1 *instructions*



Paper #1: Due Tuesday, September 22

Identify an argument made in the liberalism/religion debate (i.e. the appropriateness or inappropriateness of religion in public life, presented in the **Audi & Wolterstorff readings**) with which you disagree.

Briefly explain the argument, and then explain your reason(s) for disagreeing with it.

Use the material discussed in class and provided in the **Audi & Wolterstorff readings** on Blackboard.

I strongly recommend this **helpful guide on writing position papers**, courtesy of Xavier University.

Keep in mind that a "Mature Reasoner" recognizes that these are ongoing arguments - they have been debated in the past, and will be debated in the future. Remember that you are making a contribution to this dialogue, not solving the world's problems, and that you, and those who think differently than you, are influenced by unique life experiences.



Format

- Each paper should be 3-4 pages in length:
 - 1 page will describe the perspective in question.
 - 2-3 pages will discuss your position on the perspective – using evidence from course or outside reading with proper **APA citations**.
 - Papers will be typed, double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman or Courier, 1-1.25" margins.
 - Papers will use correct Standard English usage.
 - Basically, that means write like someone who is educated well enough to be in college (complete sentences, good grammar, correct spelling). Written assignments are not text messages. If you do not write using complete words and complete sentences you will not get a passing score. If you think you could use some help with your writing I encourage you to make use of the College Writing Center.
-



Grading

This paper is worth 15 points (15%) of your overall course grade.

Grading is as follows:

| | |
|--|----------|
| On time | 1 point |
| Proper length & format | 1 point |
| Well organized | 1 point |
| Good grammar, punctuation, & style | 2 points |
| Solid explanation of perspective/argument (is fair & demonstrates comprehension) | 5 points |
| Well-supported personal position on perspective/argument | 5 points |

If you're careful, take your time, and do your best, you are bound to do fairly well on this assignment.

Paper #2 *instructions*



Paper #2: Due Tuesday, October 20

Identify an argument made in the liberalism/religion debate (i.e. the appropriateness or inappropriateness of religion in public life, presented in the **Audi & Wolterstorff readings**) with which you agree.

Briefly explain the argument, and then explain your reason(s) for agreeing with it.

Use the material discussed in class and provided in the **Audi & Wolterstorff readings** on Blackboard. Support your position with examples drawn from the other readings to date, as well.

I strongly recommend this **helpful guide on writing position papers**, courtesy of Xavier University.

Keep in mind that a "Mature Reasoner" recognizes that these are ongoing arguments - they have been debated in the past, and will be debated in the future. Remember that you are making a contribution to this dialogue, not solving the world's problems, and that you, and those who think differently than you, are influenced by unique life experiences.



Format

- Each paper should be 3-4 pages in length:
 - 1 page will describe the perspective in question.
 - 2-3 pages will discuss your position on the perspective – using evidence from course or outside reading with proper **APA citations**.
 - Papers will be typed, double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman or Courier, 1-1.25" margins.
 - Papers will use correct Standard English usage.
 - Basically, that means write like someone who is educated well enough to be in college (complete sentences, good grammar, correct spelling). Written assignments are not text messages. If you do not write using complete words and complete sentences you will not get a passing score. If you think you could use some help with your writing I encourage you to make use of the College Writing Center.
-



Grading

This paper is worth 15 points (15%) of your overall course grade.

Grading is as follows:

| | |
|--|----------|
| On time | 1 point |
| Proper length & format | 1 point |
| Well organized | 1 point |
| Good grammar, punctuation, & style | 2 points |
| Solid explanation of perspective/argument (is fair & demonstrates comprehension) | 5 points |
| Well-supported personal position on perspective/argument | 5 points |

If you're careful, take your time, and do your best, you are bound to do fairly well on this assignment.

Final Paper *instructions*



Due December 14, by 12:15 pm

This essay will ask you to describe what, if anything, you already knew about the group and what preconceived notions you held about the specific group or about the use/presence of public religion. Then, you will explain what you learned and how your understanding and perspective was changed or reaffirmed. The paper is worth 10 points.

This is a reflective paper grounded in research.

The primary research needed for this paper comes from what you have done by completing the assigned readings in this course. *You should also conduct, and use, a little additional research (the Internet is fine, as long as you use no form of online, or print, encyclopedia) to get more background or details on the group or movement about which you are writing.* (For example, if you choose the Bolivian Tin Miner case, go beyond just what was presented by Christian Smith; dig a little deeper.)

I strongly suggest you take a look at this [useful guide on the reflective essay](#), courtesy of the Australian National University.



Format

- The paper should be 5-7 pages in length:
 - Papers will be typed, double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman or Courier, 1-1.25" margins.
 - Papers will use correct Standard English usage.
 - Basically, that means write like someone who is educated well enough to be in college (complete sentences, good grammar, correct spelling). Written assignments are not text messages. If you do not write using complete words and complete sentences you will not get a passing score. If you think you could use some help with your writing I encourage you to make use of the College Writing Center.
 - It will contain 3 parts, in no particular order-
 - what you thought/felt/knew prior to the course about a specific movement, group, or idea,
 - what you learned about that group, movement, or idea
 - how that changed or reinforced your previous thoughts/feelings/knowledge of the group, movement, or idea
 - The paper should use evidence from course and outside reading with proper **APA citations**.
-

**Grading**

This paper is worth 10 points (10%) of your overall course grade.

Grading is as follows:

| | |
|---|----------|
| On time | 1 point |
| Proper length & format | 1 point |
| Well organized | 1 point |
| Good grammar, punctuation, & style | 1 point |
| Research (evidence from both in-class & out-of-class resources) adequately used to demonstrate learning &/or change | 3 points |
| Careful & thoughtful personal reflection | 3 points |
