

COMM390 * Rhetoric of Civil & Public Religion * Fall 2007 T/Th 9:30-10:45 * C. Knopf

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Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday afternoons *by appointment*, Mon/Wed/Fri 9:30-10:00 & 11:00-12:30**COURSE MATERIALS:**

Course reader pack: available at the campus bookstore.

R. Audi & N. Wolterstorff, Religion in the Public Square. (ISBN: 0-8476-8342-7): bookstore & online retailers.

Computer access to access the course Blackboard

A dedicated notebook is strongly recommended.

COURSE DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES: This course will explore a variety of ways of looking at and trying to understand the rhetorical relationship between religion and government. Some say the public arena demands moral justifications grounded in the divine. Others argue that references to the sacred in public affairs are simply a practical response to the separation of church and state. In other instances, religious traditions actually challenge dominant political and social forces. Topics discussed in this course will include the intersection of religion and American politics, religion in American media, and religion's role in social movements around the world.

By the end of the course, you should have a better understanding of how religion operates rhetorically, as well as socially, in public life and government in the U.S. and around the world. You should be able to articulate informed opinions about the interaction of politics and religion. And, you will have new tools of to evaluate the news you hear about the separation of church and state, the religious beliefs of candidates, and faith-based policies.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING: All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade. Late assignments will be accepted only in extenuating circumstances and if you have made arrangements with me prior to the due date. Regardless, the final grade will be reduced 10% for each day it is late (including Saturdays and Sundays).

Grades are figured using the following chart:

4.0	97-100	2.0	77-79
3.7	93-96	1.7	73-76
3.3	90-92	1.3	70-72
3.0	87-89	1.0	66-69
2.7	83-86	0	0-65
2.3	80-82		

Reading Reactions: Worth 45% of your final grade

For each reading (see attached calendar for due dates) you will write a 1-page, typed in 12-point Times New Roman or Courier font, double-spaced, reaction to the reading. *This is not a summary of the reading!* Reactions may be any combination of the following: substantiated/explained opinions about the reading (positive or negative), relating the reading to current events or other classes, questions or things you didn't understand, making comparisons between readings, ideas or insights that the reading gave you, etcetera.

These will be graded as: A (4.0) – very well done. B (3.0) – good work. C (2.0) – completed somewhat satisfactorily. F (0.0) – not done or done poorly. Grades will be based on the thought put into the paper and on the evidence displayed that you did the reading. They are not graded as to whether you were “right” or “wrong” or whether or not I agreed with your opinions.

In-class and Take-home activities: Worth 20% of you final grade.

Throughout the semester we will be engaging in class discussions, debates, and activities. You are expected to participate productively. You will also be asked to engage in some of the following assignments as homework: short analyses of speeches, analyzing or exploring current events

Final exam: Worth 35% of your final grade.

There will be a final, essay-style, exam. This will be open book. Regular attendance and note-taking is, therefore, to your advantage. The exam is scheduled for December 10, 2:45-4:45.

REQUESTS FOR REEVALUATION: The burden of proof in any disagreement over evaluation of student performance rests with the student. If you desire reevaluation of a grade for an assignment or activity, you must submit your rationale in writing. Your request should identify the specific change requested and provide a reasoned argument and evidence in support of that change. Any request for reevaluation must be made within one week of receiving the original evaluation.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: You are expected to uphold the college's standards or academic integrity. Plagiarism of any kind is not tolerated in this class and will result in failure of the course.

Calendar of Readings

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Source</u>
Tu	28-Aug	Course policy			
Th	30-Aug	Introduction to concept			
Tu	4-Sep	religion defined	Durkheim		1 Bb
Th	6-Sep	religion defined	Geertz		4 Bb
Tu	11-Sep	religious rhetoric	Burke	pp. 273-294	pack
Th	13-Sep	religious rhetoric	Burke	pp. 295-316	pack
Tu	18-Sep	Civil religion	Bellah		9 pack
Th	20-Sep	Civil religion	Davis		Bb
Tu	25-Sep	Religious myths	Hughes	Intro	Bb
Th	27-Sep	Religion & politics	Dionne	Forward & Intro	Bb
Tu	2-Oct	Religion & the presidency	Hart	Prelude & 1	Bb
Th	4-Oct	Religion in public debate	Audi		1 book
Tu	9-Oct	RECESS			
Th	11-Oct	Religion in public debate	Audi		2 book
Tu	16-Oct	Islam	Bellah		8 pack
Th	18-Oct	Islam	Monshipouri		Bb
Tu	23-Oct	Religion & protest	Smith	intro	Bb
Th	25-Oct	Public religion	Casanova		2 pack
Tu	30-Oct	Religion & change	Casanova		3 Bb
Th	1-Nov	Religion & change	Smith		2 pack
Tu	6-Nov	Religion & change	Smith		7 pack
Th	8-Nov	Religion & feminism	Zink-Sawyer & Knopf	Intro, and all	Bb
Tu	13-Nov	NCA?			
Th	15-Nov	NCA			
Tu	20-Nov	Religion & civil rights	Houck		Bb
Th	22-Nov	TURKEY			
Tu	27-Nov	Religion & civil rights		Intro	
Th	29-Nov	Religion & civil rights			
Tu	4-Dec	Religion & the media	Hoover		1 Bb
Th	6-Dec	Religion & the news	Silk		4 pack