Political Science 675: Religion and Politics

Texts:


All other readings online or provided.

Requirements:

There will be two in-class essay exams--a **midterm** and a **final**. The midterm will cover materials through the first half of the course (domestic) and the final will cover information from the second half of the course (international) with a comprehensive optional question.

You will be required to participate in the K-State Online **message board discussion** about the readings, in a meaningful way, at least once per week (suggested length of commentary, 1 paragraph). You will also be required to **post a report** on a particular reading once during the semester and be responsible for answering questions about it in class from me and other students. This report should be the length equivalent of 2-3 typed double spaced pages, but should be posted directly to the message board under the thread "Reports." Other students may reply or ask questions either through the message board or in-class. Readings eligible for reporting should come either from the non-group readings listed in the syllabus or they must be approved by me. More than one student can report on the same article, but they should not collaborate. Reports can be done and posted at any time, but must appear by the first day that the topic is being discussed. More on the structure of reports appears at the end of the syllabus. Plagiarism or academic dishonesty of any kind will result in an XF for the class and a mandatory course on academic integrity in accordance with university policy and the **honor system**.

Grading:

Midterm essay exam 100 points

Final essay exam 150 points

Message board report 40 points*

Message board participation 60 points**

*Late reports will have ten points deducted for every week they are late.

**No participation during the week will result in a "0" for that week.

I. Domestic Issues

Background

August 23, 25, 30:
John Locke, "A Letter Concerning Toleration"


**Religion and the Public Sphere**

September 1:

Video: "With God on Our Side," PBS. Waters 244 Reserved 1-2:30 p.m. Please go there on Sept. 1.

September 6, 8:

Wald, Chapter 5, "Religion and American Public Policy."

Wald, Chapter 6, "The Religious Dimension of American Political Behavior."

September 13, 15:

Wald, Chapter 7, "The Political Mobilization of Evangelical Protestants."

Wald, Chapter 8, "Continuity and Change Outside the Evangelical Camp."

**Issues:**

September 20, 22:

**Evolution**


"Expelling Darwin," *Commonweal, September 10, 1999, pp. 5-6*.


"Has Darwin Met His Match?" by David Berlinski, *Commentary*, December 2002, pp. 31-41.

September 27, 29:

**Stem Cell Research**


"Is the Embryo a Person? Arguing with the Catholic Traditions," by Jean Porter, Commonweal, February 8, 2002, pp. 8-13. (Group)


Overture 01-50. On Adopting a Resolution Enunciating Ethical Guidelines for Fetal Tissue and Stem Cell Research-From the Presbytery of Baltimore. Presbyterian Church USA. Group.


**Same-Sex Marriage**

October 4, 6:


Human Sexuality and the Christian Worldview, Southern Seminary, Spring 2004. From the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

October 11: Midterm

**II. International/Foreign Policy**
ISSUES:

October 13: Video--Osama Bin Laden: In the Name of Allah (A & E Biography)

October 18, 20:

**The War Against Terror**


October 25, 27:

**The Arab Israeli Conflict and the Status of Israel**


**Recommended.**

"When Israel is Wrong: Christians Shouldn't Be Afraid to Say So," by Murray Polner and Adam Simms, *Commonweal*, October 11, 2002.


November 1: Video--"Israel in a Time of Terror," Prager Productions.
Islamic Modernism

November 3, 8:

Islam and Politics:


Islam and Western Civilization

November 15, 17:


"Islam and Civilization," Muhammad Farid Wajdi, 135-144, ibid.

Women

"The Rights of Women," Sayyid Ahmad Khan, pp 159-162, ibid.


Islamic Fundamentalism

November 22, 29:

Islam and Politics

"War, Peace, and Islamic Jihad," Sayyid Quth, 223-246, ibid.


Islam and Western Civilization


December 6, 8:


"Westoxication," Jalal Al-i Ahmad, 343-358, ibid.

**Women**


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**Final Exam: Wednesday December 14, 2-3:50**

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**Pointers on reports:**

Reports on articles for the message board should summarize the main points of the article, bring up any facts you found particularly interesting, and provide your analysis of the author's argument and your own opinion on the subject. Remember that other students are reading your report for a summary of the article, so make sure that this part is thorough enough to get the main argument across to all readers. Try to write in brief paragraphs, followed by a space between paragraphs, since the message board will not take double space. Compose your report on a word processor to be 2-3 pages double spaced, and then paste into the message board space.

**Questions to consider:**

What was this article about?

What was the author's point--i.e., what was he/she arguing? If the article was truly objective or a statement, explain this.

What interesting and important facts were raised?

Was the presentation good enough to convince you, or faulty in some ways?

What is your opinion about the issue discussed in the article?

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**Related Issues in Bioethics--these are additional articles that can be reviewed any time before the midterm:**

**Right to Live/Right to Die**

"Annihilating Terry Schiavo," Commentary June 2005. (I have this article--just ask)


Related Issues in Islam and Terrorism--these are additional articles that can be reviewed any time before November 8:

"War, Sex, and God: Religious Terrorism in the Mind of Mark Juergensmeyer," by Roger Friedland, *Tikkun*, May/June 2000 (I have--just ask)


"The Islamization of Europe?" by David Pryce-Jones, *Commentary*, December 2004 (I have).


