

# Religion and Politics

Contact: Leigh Schmidt  
Phone: 314-935-9345  
Email: leigh.e.schmidt@wustl.edu  
Website: <http://rap.wustl.edu>

## Courses

Visit online course listings to view semester offerings for L57 RelPol.

---

### L57 RelPol 120A Religious Freedom in America

The intersection of religion and law in American society has sparked some of the fiercest cultural engagements in recent memory: Should a for-profit religious corporation have a right not to fund birth control for its employees? Can a public college expel campus religious groups whose membership is not open to all students? May a Muslim in prison grow a beard for religious reasons? Should a cake baker or a florist be permitted to refuse services for a gay wedding? Can a church hire and fire its ministers for any reason? These current debates and the issues that frame them are interwoven in the American story. This course introduces students to the major texts and historical arguments underlying that story. Drawing from the respective expertise of the instructors, the course will expose students to a variety of scholarly methods related to the issue: legal history and case law, intellectual history and canonical texts, social history and narrative accounts, and political philosophy and contemporary analyses. This course is for first-year (non-transfer) students only.

Same as I60 BEYOND 120

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH, HUM EN: H

---

### L57 RelPol 201 Religion and American Society

This course explores religious life in the United States in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Comprehensive coverage of such a diverse landscape is not our goal. Rather, we will focus on some of the basic social categories that organize our society and that make religion a social phenomenon. How do religious belief and practice relate to race, class, or gender? How do we understand the role of religion in relation to region and space? How can we understand the many different stories that Americans tell about their own country as a special-even sacred-place? Major themes include religion and race; nation, land, and migration; religion, class, and money; evangelicalism and the religious right; business, class, and prosperity; religion and gender; religious nationalism; and the enduring challenges of religious multiplicity in the U.S.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC, SD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH EN: H

---

### L57 RelPol 203 Religions of St. Louis: Communities of Faith and Practical Action Across the Region

The St. Louis region is home to a diverse array of global religious communities. This course directly introduces students to some of that diversity by revolving around fieldtrips to living institutions and meetings with religious leaders across traditions. In any given semester, our visits may include organizations that identify as Catholic, Pentecostal, evangelical, Jewish (Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, or Reconstructionist), Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Vedantist, Scientological, progressive Baptist, or secular humanist, among others. We will also visit the International Institute of St. Louis and study the politics of immigration and refugee resettlement that have helped shape the city and its religious as well as political multiplicity. Through our visits and conversation, the variety within each religious community will

also become apparent, as we encounter adherents across the political spectrum, embodying different ethnicities, and committed to different degrees of "orthodoxy" or traditional belief and practice. Students should emerge from the course with a fresh sense of the cultural and religious vitality of the St. Louis metropolitan area, illustrative of the United States as a whole. \*All required site visits will take place during the regular class time.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH EN: H

---

### L57 RelPol 207C Modern Political Thought: Text and Traditions

What is power? Why are societies divided along lines of race, class, and gender? When did politics become split between the right and the left? Can religion be reconciled with the demands of modern life? Can democracy? These are some of the questions that will be addressed in this survey of modern political thought. Thinkers covered will include Thomas Hobbes, Immanuel Kant, Karl Marx, WEB Du Bois, Hannah Arendt, and Michel Foucault.

Same as L93 IPH 207C

Credit 3 units. A&S: AMP A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM, IS EN: H

---

### L57 RelPol 209 Scriptures and Cultural Traditions: Text and Traditions

When we think of the word "scripture" in antiquity, we might think of the texts that have been compiled in the different holy books that we currently have today. Yet the function of "scriptures" within a community, and the status given to different texts treated as "scriptural," has changed in different times and places. In this course, we will consider texts that would eventually come to be part of the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and the Qu'ran as well as several of the exegetes and reading communities that shaped their various interpretations. We will explore how non-canonical sources played a role in the formation of the various canons we have today, comparing the authoritative status given to these texts to that given to other works from antiquity, such as the epics of Homer. Special attention will be played to the role of the receiving community in the development of "scripture," and the variety of the contexts in which scripture can function in the construction of and opposition to religious authority.

Same as L93 IPH 209

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH EN: H

---

### L57 RelPol 210 The Good Life Between Religion and Politics

What constitutes a life well lived? How do we imagine answers to that question? Who gets to answer that question for us? Do we ask it as an "us" or as an individual? This course considers the way religious and political thought has shaped considerations of the classical ethical question of how we should live and the way that ethics has often served to connect religion and politics in thought and practice. Do we need a religious basis to answer ethical questions, or can we determine how to live without religious sources of authority? Is ethics a project of an individual or of communities? If the latter, are these political communities, religious ones, or something else? On what basis or with what capacities can we imagine new answers to ethical questions, either in community or on our own? We will discuss these questions and more through a consideration of a range of answers to the question of how we should live.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH EN: H

---

### L57 RelPol 215 Performing Religion, Ritualizing Gender

What's the difference between a wink and a blink? What the difference between graduation, a sacrament, and the electric slide? We make fine-grained distinctions every day in our own enactment and interpretation of these different kinds of practices. This class will introduce you to key academic approaches to "ritual," "practice," and "performance," and will ask whether these distinctions are important or arbitrary. Ritual studies (based in religious studies) also happens to center

around the very same questions that gave birth to gender and queer studies (is gender a performance?), thus a parallel examination of ritual and performance studies necessarily brings religious identity into conversation with broader questions of identity (gender, race, class).  
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC, SD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 225 Religion and Politics in American History**

In a famous 2004 article, historian Jon Butler once remarked that US history textbooks and survey courses tend to pay significant attention to religion during the Colonial Era and early Republic, yet after the Civil War "religion more often appears as a jack-in-the-box" that pops up in historical accounts somewhat randomly and without much elaboration or analysis. To address the gaps in historical understandings that these absences may create, this course will provide a survey of the ways theological ideas and religiously-motivated social movements have shaped US politics and civic life from the Civil War to the present. With a particular emphasis placed on how religion intersects with other social categories such as race, gender, and class, it will examine the complex role that religious beliefs, practices, and identities have played in major political events and debates from the 1860s to today. In doing so, it will also inquire into what it means to study religion as a historical phenomenon, the theoretical and methodological tools that best assist in this work, and the historiographic implications of better attending to religion in historical analyses. No prior coursework in US history or religious studies is required.  
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC, SD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 230 Jews and Jewishness in Black American Thought**

The history of what has been called "Black-Jewish relations" in the United States has a rich and contested history. The stories told about this relationship feature solidarity, controversy, and betrayal. This course will look at this history by attending to the role of Jews and Jewishness in Black thought. How has Jewishness featured in the self-understanding of Black thinkers? Have Jews been regarded as allies or adversaries, role models or competitors? What role have Jewish texts or narrative paradigms played in Black religion and Black politics? What have Black writers made of the Jewish project of national liberation i.e. Zionism? The course will likely include readings from W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, James Baldwin, and Malcolm X among others.  
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC, SD BU: BA EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 235 Puritans, Native Americans, and Revolutionaries: Empire and Encounter in Early America**

This course concerns the history of colonial America from early English settlement and encounters among English and Native Americans to revolution against Great Britain. The making of colonial America involved encounters and exchanges among various people groups--Puritans, Indigenous communities, German Moravians, English liberal thinkers with different ideas about politics--with different political convictions. This course explores those encounters, with a focus especially on Puritan and evangelical missions to Native Americans, southern plantation society and race-based slavery, English notions of religious liberty, and how ideas of political liberty, including rationales for American Independence, conflicted with, criticized, or stood as contradictions to English treatment of Indigenous and African peoples. We will read primary texts that illumine new perspectives on these issues. There is no defining argument or ideological "point" to the course but, rather, a series of observations of how different social, political, and intellectual variables made for shifting understandings of what religious ideas mattered to public life in America and how those ideas ought to shape civil affairs. As we examine these understandings, we will pay attention especially to Anglo-Indigenous interactions, the rise of a national self-consciousness that invested America with great historical purpose, the development of different responses to racial difference in America, and the disestablishment of religion from national political power (encoded in the First Amendment to the Constitution).

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM BU: BA EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 240 Jewish Political Thought**

The question of Jewish belonging in the Christian West has played a defining role in the formation of the modern state, and the afterlives of "the Jewish question" in Europe, America, and Israel continue to have significant influence on how political life is understood and evaluated. This course begins with classical Jewish sources on politics--including the nature of authority, national belonging, and territory--and then moves to a consideration of several crucial modern Jewish thinkers likely including Spinoza, Marx, and Arendt. The course will consistently consider topical contemporary questions about liberal democracy, totalitarianism, nationalism, Zionism, race, and secularism.  
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM BU: BA EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 244 Religion and Music in American Culture**

In this course, students will examine public discourse on popular music as a way of understanding questions of religious identity and community formation. Through case studies ranging from the Pueblo Indian dance controversy of the 1920s to post-9/11 disputes about the Islamic call to prayer, students will consider how debates over what "counts" as sacred or secular music reveal disputes over notions of religious authority and authenticity in American culture.  
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, HUM

---

**L57 RelPol 245 Love and Reason**

Love often seems dramatically unreasonable, and reason can seem coldly rational in a way that excludes any emotion, passion, or affiliation even akin to love. The supposed opposition between love and reason has been used by Christian and secular thinkers throughout modernity to organize ways of knowing and judging, and to criticize claims of faith, belief, and desire. But are love and reason really so distinct? What does it mean to say so, and why might someone make this claim? Can love be reasoned, and even reasonable? Can reason be aided by love, and even driven by it? How might different answers to these questions affect our understanding of other possibly unreasoned categories like faith, belief, and piety? This course offers an introduction to modern Christian thought and Western philosophy through these questions and themes.  
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH, HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 248 Religion, Health, and Wellness in Modern America**

Religion, Health, and Wellness in Modern America will examine changing conceptions of health and wellness in America from the late nineteenth-century to the present. With media, artifacts, and literature drawn from the histories of medicine, religion, and capitalism, this class will cover the proliferation of alternative health regimens, the rise of the medical establishment, claims of divine healing, and the impact of market forces on wellness cultures. Course topics include the raced and gendered dynamics of care, socioeconomic status, technological innovation and media, the role of nature, health activism and radical self-care, and New Age spirituality and mental health. Special attention will be paid to how the politics of the body and its regulation intersect with religious and consumer practices in the modern wellness industry  
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 250 Zionism**

Zionism is often thought of as a commitment to the principle that the Jewish People, as a distinct "people," has a right to self-determination in its own historical land of the biblical Palestine. Yet the history of the term and the set of ideologies show a much more complex understanding. In this course we trace the emergence of a number of different "Zionisms" that would lead to the creation of the modern state of Israel. And we explore how the political principles at the core of these ideologies have fared in the 65 years since the founding of the modern

Jewish state. The course is at its heart applied political theory: a case study of the way that ideas emerge from historical events, take on a life of their own, and then shape real outcomes in the world. The readings will weave together history, philosophy, literature and government.  
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: LCD, SSC Arch: SSC Art: SSC BU: BA EN: S

---

**L57 RelPol 252 Catholicism Confronts Modernity: A Global History from the French Revolution to Pope Francis**

This course explores how the Catholic Church confronted the challenges of modernity—from liberal democracy and human rights; to capitalism and modern science; to fascism and communism. We will examine also how Catholicism itself has shaped modern politics and culture. The course will draw from the experience of Catholics in different countries (with no pretense of being exhaustive) over the past two centuries. We will begin with the French Revolution and the first "culture wars" between Catholics and liberals and end with the ambivalent legacies of Vatican II. We will appreciate how US Catholicism cannot be fully understood without reference to this global context.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 254 Topics in AMCS: A Year in Review: Hindsight is 2020: Piety, Pandemic, and Politics**

What was 2020? This course examines a year that will be remembered alongside 2001, 1968, 1945, 1929, 1865, 1800, and 1776 as one of the most consequential in American history and culture. We will consider how the COVID-19 global pandemic, the bitterly contested 2020 Presidential election, and a summer of renewed protest for social justice reverberated through spheres of American arts, culture, education, energy, health care, labor, religion, sports, the university, technology and more. A series of guest experts from Washington University and around the country will provide instruction via lecture once per week, with students sharing their own experiences and analysis in discussion sections during the other weekly course meeting. The course is open to all, but it is geared toward first-year students and sophomores. It fulfills the Intro course requirement in the AMCS major. This is a variable topics course for courses best suited to the reviewing of a significant year in American Culture Studies. Topics vary by semester, so please see the current course listing.  
Same as L98 AMCS 254

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 255 Religion, Environmentalism, and Politics**

This course explores the intersections of anthropology, theology, economic interests, and activism. We will draw on a range of sources including social-scientific theories about religion and ritual, discussions of disenchantment and re-enchantment, and indigenous claims to land. These theoretical frameworks will provide context for discussing contemporary religious responses to ecological disaster, including both environmentalist and anti-environmentalist movements.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 260 Religion in the African American Experience: A Historical Survey**

This course introduces students to important themes in the history of African American, and thus in American, religious history, among them slavery, emancipation, urbanization, migration, consumer culture, sexuality, politics, and media technologies. Primary attention is given to Afro-Protestantism in North America and the cultural, social, and religious practices and traditions of these black communities. However, students will also be introduced to specific expressions of religious diversity and varying religious traditions and practices in African American communities.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC, SD BU: ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 280 African-American Religions**

This course is an introduction to African-American religions. This course attends to change wrought in indigenous African religions by enslavement, the adoption of Christianity (and severe critiques of it) by slaves themselves, the building of African-American denominations, the rise of new black religious movements, and the role of religion in contemporary African-American life. At every stage of the course, religion is discussed with reference to key political developments in broader African-American history African diasporic history. The course proceeds in three parts. The course begins with a brief introduction to key themes and problems in the study of African-American religions. For example, is there such thing as a "black church," and how does the study of African-American religion differ from the study of other religious groups or traditions? The second part, the bulk of the course, moves chronologically and situates African and African-American religions in their shifting cultural and political contexts from the beginning of the European slave trade to the present. We will discuss African-Americans' practice of several religious traditions: creole African religions, Islam, Protestant and Catholic Christianity, and new religious movements. The final part of the course focuses on several key issues and debates that are informed by the study of African-American religions and that have important connections with contemporary American life.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, ETH, HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 285 Islam in America**

This course explores various Muslim discourses and practices in America with a special focus on the intersections of race, gender, and religion. In this course, students will first study the history of Islam and Muslims in America in light of the narratives of enslaved West African Muslims and some of the early narratives of immigrant Muslims. Students will then explore some later historical narratives that represent the impact of religious and racial structures on identity formations, such as the formation of the Nation of Islam, and transnational religious connections in Cold War America. Students will also examine the construction of Muslim identities and institutions in light of some of the US structures and discourses about Islam and Muslims, with regard to the racialization of Muslims, and in connection to the broader Americas. Students will also use popular culture as a site to observe the intersection of race, religion, and gender in Muslim practices.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, ETH, HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 288 Muslims in the Media and Popular Culture**

In the post 9/11 context of the United States, Muslims have been a constant presence in news media, typically cast in a negative light as political others who are backwards, threatening, and inherently prone to violence. This pattern has long been replicated in films in which Muslims serve as static and dehumanized perpetrators of violence and/or as symbols of a backwards and depraved culture, antithetical to U.S. values and interests. In recent years, however, Muslims have become increasingly visible in the entertainment industry as protagonists and producers of their own media, including G. Willow Wilson's "Ms. Marvel," Hulu's "Ramy," and Netflix's "Man Like Mobeen." This course explores a selection of recent media projects created by Muslim writers, actors, musicians, and comedians. We will be pairing films, television shows, music, and comics with scholarship on Islam and religion in the media to analyze Muslim representation and storytelling in contemporary popular culture. We will evaluate these works on their own terms, noting the ways in which gender and racial hierarchies dictate who gets to represent American Muslims while also assessing how these new media both disrupt and further reify Muslims' construction as religious and political outsiders.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD, SC Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, ETH

---

**L57 RelPol 290 Islamophobia & U.S. Politics**

The presence of Muslim minorities in the West is increasingly divisive as political leaders appeal to voters' fear of the 'Other' to promote Islamophobic agendas that reshape immigration and asylum policies and redefine Western identity as Christian. Politicians further exploit the rise of extremist groups like ISIS to justify anti-Muslim rhetoric and critique multiculturalism, claiming that Islam and the West are inherently antithetical. In this course we examine the phenomenon of Islamophobia as a form of anti-Muslim racism that parallels hostility towards other religious and racial minorities in the US. We explore how while the post-9/11 context gave way to an increase in incidents of anti-Muslim violence, contemporary manifestations of Islamophobia are deeply rooted in state level anti-black racism from the early twentieth century, as well as in anti-Muslim attitudes that date back to the colonial period. By examining academic literature, political speeches, and news media sources, we situate Islamophobia within its historical context and also analyze how US anxieties about Islam and Muslims are not only gendered and racialized, but also exist across the political spectrum.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH, HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 305 Between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr.: Race, Religion, and the Politics of Freedom**

This course focuses on the political and spiritual lives of Martin and Malcolm. We will examine their personal biographies, speeches, writings, representations, FBI files, and legacies as a way to better understand how the intersections of religion, race, and politics came to bear upon the freedom struggles of people of color in the United States and abroad. The course also takes seriously the evolutions in both Martin and Malcolm's political approaches and intellectual development, focusing especially on the last years of their respective lives. We will also examine the critical literature that takes on the leadership styles and political philosophies of these communal leaders, as well as the very real opposition and surveillance they faced from state forces like the police and the FBI. Students will gain an understanding of what social conditions, religious structures and institutions, and personal experiences led to first the emergence and then the assassinations of these two figures. We will discuss the subtleties of their political analyses, pinpointing the key differences and similarities of their philosophies, approaches, and legacies; we will then apply these debates of the mid-20th century to contemporary events and social movements in terms of how their legacies are articulated and what we can learn from them in struggles for justice and recognition in 21st-century America and beyond.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC, SD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 307 Solidarity and Silence: Religious Strategies in the Political Sphere**

Although political action is often considered a problem of making oneself heard, religious practices of silence, self-effacement, and withdrawal from certain worldly struggles have guided many significant political and social movements, particularly forms of non-violent resistance. This course considers the role of religious thought and practice in such movements in the twentieth century. The history of these movements presents an apparent paradox: how can political action emerge from the supposedly "private" realm of religion in the modern era, particularly its most individualistic formations in contemplative and mystical practices? Does the historical role of these practices in the political sphere complicate their portrayal in some scholarship as private, individual, and depoliticizing? With these questions animating our investigations, we will consider the work of authors and activists including Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, Jr., Simone Weil, and William Barber, as well as the history of movements associated with their work. Toward

the end of the semester, we will turn to contemporary movements against economic inequality, intimate violence, racially motivated violence, and discrimination toward transgender persons to discuss the use of religious strategies or religiously-derived strategies in current political and social activism.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 3081 City on a Hill: The Concept and Culture of American Exceptionalism**

This course examines the concept, history, and culture of American exceptionalism—the idea that America has been specially chosen, or has a special mission to the world. First, we examine the Puritan sermon that politicians quote when they describe America as a "city on a hill." This sermon has been called the "ur-text" of American literature, the foundational document of American culture; learning and drawing from multiple literary methodologies, we will re-investigate what that sermon means and how it came to tell a story about the Puritan origins of American culture—a thesis our class will reassess with the help of modern critics. In the second part of this class, we will broaden our discussion to consider the wider (and newer) meanings of American exceptionalism, theorizing the concept while looking at the way it has been revitalized, redefined and redeployed in recent years. Finally, the course ends with a careful study of American exceptionalism in modern political rhetoric, starting with JFK and proceeding through Reagan to the current day, ending with an analysis of Donald Trump and the rise of "America First." In the end, students will gain a firm grasp of the long history and continuing significance—the pervasive impact—of this concept in American culture.

Same as L98 AMCS 3081

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM BU: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 310 Religion and Violence**

Is religion intrinsically connected with violence or merely manipulated to justify political positions and incite supporters? How has religion been the motivation and justification behind violent conflict, aggression and persecution? Does religion have a greater power to make war or peace? People have debated these questions for centuries as believers waged war in the name of their god(s). We'll study several critical theories about religion and violence and test them on historical and recent "religious" conflicts. Our investigation will be organized around five types of violence: 1) martyrdom and redemptive suffering, 2) claims on sacred space, 3) the violence of social stratification and "othering," 4) war and 5) apocalyptic and spiritual warfare. Case studies ranging from early Christian martyrs and crusades to attacks on abortion clinics and Tokyo subways will help clarify patterns and types of religious violence.

Same as L23 Re St 3100

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: FAAM, HUM BU: ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 3105 American Holidays: Civic and Religious Celebrations in American Culture**

This seminar examines a variety of religious holidays and civic rituals in American history and culture. Topics include: public conflicts over Christmas, African-American emancipation celebrations, the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, Roman Catholic street festivals dedicated to the Virgin Mary, modern renderings of Hanukkah, as well as the memorialization of the Union and the Confederacy. Various interpretive approaches are explored, and the intent is to broach a wide range of questions about history and tradition, gender and race, public memory and consumer culture, religion and nationalism, through this topical focus on holidays and holy days.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 314 Global Circuits: Religion, Race, Empire**

This seminar explores how American entanglements of race and religion shape and are part of larger global processes. Over the course of the semester, we will investigate these entanglements through conceptual, historical, and ethnographic questions and insights on the remapping of religious traditions and communal experiences onto imperial terrain. We will examine this through a range of problem spaces including: colonial rule, missions, and racial hierarchies; migration and its relationship to religion; the racialization of religion; diaspora and empire; and persecution and power.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: LCD, SSC Arch: SSC Art: SSC BU: BA, ETH EN: S

---

**L57 RelPol 315 Virtues, Vices, Values: Regulating Morality in Modern America**

This course takes morality and the question of "what's right" seriously as a lens through which to understand and assess modern American history. "Morality" is, of course, a devilishly flexible rhetoric, a language invoked to tell people how to act and how to be good, or, conversely, to criticize and to shame. When the state or a community wants its citizens or members to be "good," it crafts laws and creates customs to encourage or inhibit behaviors. Yet "good" is a contested concept, especially in a diverse, multiracial society. Thus this class examines a) how state and non-state actors, including religious leaders, have attempted to regulate the lived experiences of Americans and b) the conflicts that emerge over what, exactly, is correct, or right, or good for individuals, society, and the state. To what degree does calling something moral or immoral articulate or obstruct policy solutions? What do political coalitions oriented around "values" accomplish? Is it possible to hew to moral frames and remain inclusive and tolerant? Topics may include marriage, abortion, immigration, alcohol, incarceration, disease, money, and medical care.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SD BU: ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 3160 American Unbelief from the Enlightenment to the Present**

This course examines American secularism, humanism, freethought, and atheism from the Enlightenment forward to the present. Topics to be explored include: the tensions between secular and Christian conceptions of the nation's founding, blasphemy and irreligious cartoons, the civil liberties of atheists and nontheists, the battles over religion in the public schools, atheism and gender politics, the culture wars over secular humanism, and the contemporary growth of the religiously disaffiliated or "nones." The course considers not only the intellectual dimensions of skeptical critiques of religion, but also the underlying politics of secularism (and anti-secularism) in a nation routinely imagined as "under God."

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM

---

**L57 RelPol 3180 The Abuse Crisis in Modern Christianity**

For over a quarter-century, journalists have broken story after story about sexually abusive clergy in the U.S., many of them serial abusers of children and adolescents. While most accounts have focused on Catholic priests, many have also emerged of abusive evangelical and other Protestant ministers. The stories have illuminated how church bureaucrats have consistently protected abusers and subverted the efforts of victims and their families to seek recompense, accountability, and justice. These protections have often succeeded because of churches' political connections to law enforcement and legislators who have helped hide perpetrators and stymie survivors. Together we will analyze this cautionary tale about religion and politics by contextualizing it within the broader history of Christianity in the United States and beyond. Is this a case simply of a few bad apples or of institutional corruption? How has the church's response been shaped by fear of scandal, antipathy toward secularism, and theological teachings on gender and homosexuality? How does sexual abuse fit into the history of the church as a hierarchical institution? What

challenges has the crisis posed to people of faith who are committed to the church, and can trust be repaired? Readings include legal case studies, internal church correspondence, victims' statements and criminal justice reports, documentary films and memoirs, and both journalistic and scholarly analysis of the clergy sex abuse crisis in the U.S. church. WARNING: Many of our readings contain difficult accounts of abuse as well as the subsequent trauma most victims suffer. If this subject matter is triggering for you and you'd like to speak with me about whether or not to take it, I'll be glad to help you think through it. Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 321 American Religion, Law, and Sexual Politics**

Following philosopher Michel Foucault's vital insight that "sexuality is a major transfer point in the relations of power," this course will explore the complex ways in which theological ideas and religious movements have shaped legal doctrines relating to sex, gender, and sexuality in the United States from roughly the turn of the twentieth century to the present. It will examine how and why religious groups have mobilized within the legal arena at various points in US history, the devotional commitments that influence their activism, the constitutional claims and counterclaims that have emerged over time as a result of legal contestation, and the lived impact of various judicial decisions. To do so, the course will be structured thematically around three overlapping constitutional domains: (1) equal protection rights for women and sexual minorities, (2) substantive due process commitments to privacy and bodily autonomy, and (3) free speech principles related to sexual self-expression. The impact of religious advocacy on contemporary controversies such as drag show bans, restrictions on reproductive healthcare, religious exemptions to LGBT non-discrimination laws, pornography regulation, gender-affirming care access, and more will all be covered. By applying the theories and methods of critical religious studies, this course also takes questions of American religion and sexual politics as a starting point for introducing undergraduate students to legal studies more generally. Through classroom conversations and course texts, students will become familiar with the structure of the American legal system, different methods of constitutional interpretation, theoretical concerns that shape legal thinking, and critical reading skills that may be used to approach legal texts such as judicial opinions. Students from all academic backgrounds interested in gaining increased literacy in American law are encouraged to enroll-no prior exposure is required. Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC, SD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 3230 Jews and Jewishness in Black American Thought**

The history of what has been called "Black-Jewish relations" in the United States has a rich and contested history. The stories told feature solidarity, controversy, and betrayal. This course will look at that history by attending to the role of Jews and Judaism in Black thought. How has Jewishness featured in the self-understanding of Black writers? Have Jews been regarded as allies or adversaries, role models or competitors? What role have Jewish texts or narrative paradigms played in Black religion? What have Black writers made of the Jewish project of national liberation?

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 330 Native American/Euro-American Encounters: Confrontations of Bodies and Beliefs**

This course surveys the history and historiography of how Native Americans, Europeans, and Euro-Americans reacted and adapted to one another's presence in North America from the 1600s to the mid-1800s, focusing on themes of religion and gender. We will examine the cultural and social implications of encounters between Native peoples, missionaries and other European and Euro-American Protestants and Catholics. We will pay particular attention to how bodies were a venue for encounter-through sexual contact, through the policing of gendered social and economic behaviors, and through

religiously-based understandings of women's and men's duties and functions. We will also study how historians know what they know about these encounters, and what materials enable them to answer their historical questions.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD, SC, SD Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 334 Religion, Race, and Migration: Borders of Difference?**

This seminar is an experiment in studying the intersections of religion, race, and migration through the idea of difference. We discuss how particular understandings of religion, race, and migration inform contemporary scholarship and shape national and international legal and governmental practices. Specifically, this course explores how difference-of community, body, and place-produces conditions of possibility. Over the semester, we will investigate various borders of difference, using binaries to guide our analysis. We will examine this through a range of problem spaces including: religion/secularism; race/ethnicity/sect; terrorist/citizen; and refugee/migrant. Ultimately, this course aims to critically unpack the relations of power by which people, places, and ideas are differentially constructed, maintained, and transformed

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, ETH

---

**L57 RelPol 3345 The Politics of Play and Protest: Religion and Sports in America**

Play is an essential component of human life. Yet, while the word play evokes leisure and frivolity, it can be serious work. Cultural values, spiritual truths, and social politics arise from play, particularly when they are codified in sports. From raucous games of Chunkey in pre-Columbian North America to Tim Tebow's gameday prayers, sports have long been used as instruments of social cohesion and as a way to connect a people to their gods. This course will examine the close relationship between religion and sport in modern American history and will push students beyond the sports-as-religion paradigm to consider sport as a medium of exchange between the overlapping influences of celebrity, national politics, religion, and the economy. We will cover how sports and religion intersect with topics like nationalism, gender, race, sexuality, identity formation, commercialism, mass-media, recreation, and labor. Concepts like ritual, collective effervescence, and sacred space will be used to analyze key historical movements and organizations, such as muscular Christianity, the YMCA, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Olympics, amateurism and the NCAA, and Black Lives Matter. Key figures for examining sport as a site of piety and protest include Muhammad Ali, Serena Williams, Tim Tebow, Jackie Robinson, Colin Kaepernick, and Abe Saperstein. Throughout the course we will ask: How, where, and when do sports act religiously? What do sports and religion accomplish together that they cannot accomplish alone?

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 340 Pilgrims and Seekers: American Spirituality from Transcendentalism to the Present**

This seminar focuses on the formation of "spirituality" in American culture from the Transcendentalist world of Ralph Waldo Emerson on through more recent expressions of the "spiritual-but-not-religious" sensibility. How did "spirituality" come to be seen as something positively distinct from "organized religion"? What are the main contours of spiritual seeking in American culture, especially among those who claim no specific religious affiliation? The course also explores the social, political, and cultural consequences of this turn to the spiritual over the religious: for example, the consecration of liberal individualism, the relationship of religious exploration to both environmentalism and consumerism, the politics of cultural appropriation, the negotiation of religious pluralism, and the pursuit of the spiritual in art.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM BU: ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 345 Religion and Race in the United States**

Race and ethnicity are central to how religious pluralism is worked out in America. How do the categories of race and religion intersect to produce concepts of a normative American identity? In this course, we examine the construct of race across various American congregational communities in order to understand debates on American identity and belonging. We also explore the idea of an American civil religion, and we engage with the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion of particular religious groups within this category based upon racialized criteria.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, ETH, HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 354 Christian Thought and Politics in the Modern World**

This course introduces students to Christian thought in the modern period and its relation to notions of social justice and political action. It takes these issues chronologically, beginning with the Protestant Reformation and challenges to Catholic monarchies, through Puritanism and revolution, evangelicalism and anti-slavery, nineteenth-century liberalism and social reform, twentieth century issues of the Cold War and civil rights, to twentieth century concerns with race and environmentalism. Throughout the course, we will read texts that relate theological claims (about, for example, the nature of God, Christ, and redemption) to social and political matters. The course will end with attention to Christian belief and contemporary political crises.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH, HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 355 The FBI and Religion**

This seminar examines the relationship between the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and religion (i.e., faith communities, clerics, and religious professionals) as a way to study and understand 20th-century religion and politics. The course will investigate the history of the FBI as well as the various ways in which the FBI and religious groups have interacted. The course will pay particular attention to what the professor calls the four interrelated "modes" of FBI-religious engagement: counter-intelligence and surveillance, coordination and cooperation, censorship and publicity, and consultation.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM BU: BA, ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 357 God in the Courtroom**

The U.S. Constitution holds a promise to secure freedom of religion through its First Amendment. Its two religion clauses declare unconstitutional any prohibition on the free exercise of religion and laws respecting the establishment of religion. The consequence is that, whenever a group demands to be recognized as religious and to be granted the right to exercise its religion, a court, a legislature, or an administrative official must determine whether the religious practice in question is legally religious. This means that law plays a uniquely important role in defining religion in the United States. In this seminar, we will explore the relation between law and religion in America. We will study the religion clauses in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, the histories of their interpretations by American courts in landmark cases, and the ways that religious studies scholars have understood and critiqued these cases.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH, HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 358 Conscience and Religion in American Politics**

Conscience is as American as apple pie and baseball, but its meaning and implications are deeply contested in American religion and politics. What is conscience? To what extent is conscience laden with theological -- and, more specifically, Christian -- commitments? What role should conscience, whether religious or ethical, play in political life? By considering what conscience means and what vision of politics it implies, we will reflect on what it means to be American: how

religion should relate to politics, how individuals should engage with democratic laws and norms, and how religious and political dissenters might oppose American politics. We will focus on key moments in the history of American religion and politics through the lens of conscience, from the Interwar Period, the perceived threat of communism during the Cold War, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Vietnam War to the "culture wars" on abortion, marriage equality, LGBTQ rights, and the death penalty. This course draws on interdisciplinary sources from religious studies, political theory, law, and history in 20th- and 21st-century American politics.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 360 Religion and the Modern Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1968**

The modern Civil Rights Movement is a landmark event in the nation's political, civic, cultural, and social history. In many contexts, this movement for and against civil and legal equality took on a religious ethos, with activists, opponents, and observers believing that the net result of the marches, demonstrations, and legislative rulings would redeem and/or destroy "The Soul of the Nation." This seminar examines the modern Civil Rights Movement and its strategies and goals, with an emphasis on the prominent religious ideologies and activities that were visible and utilized in the modern movement. The course pays particular attention to the Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and Islamic traditions, figures, and communities that were indifferent, combative, instrumental, and/or supportive of Civil Rights legislation throughout the mid-twentieth century.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC, SD BU: BA EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 362 Islam, Gender, Sexuality**

In this course, we examine discourses of gender and sexuality across historical period and geographical region. We analyze encounters with Western imperialism, investigating how gender informs social, political, religious, and family life in Islamic cultures. Our course materials include histories, ethnographies, graphic novels, and films, and we examine how these sources approach the study of Islam, gender, and sexuality through the lens of various topics: from women in the earliest years of Islam in 7th century Arabia to revolutionary Iran and American Muslim women in the 21st century. Throughout the course, we examine how notions of gender and sexuality have changed over time and played various roles in the political and social life of Muslim nations, societies, and communities. By the end of the course, students will be able to critically assess scholarly and non-scholarly (media) discussions of gender in Islam.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, HUM, IS EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 365 Slavery, Sovereignty, Security: American Religions and the Problem of Freedom**

The goal of this course is to think critically about freedom as an ideology and institution. What does it mean to be free? What are the relationships among individual liberties, national sovereignty, and civil rights? In what ways has freedom been defined in relation to -- and materially depended on -- unfreedom? At the same time, this course will treat American "religions" in a similar critical fashion: as a historically contingent category that has been forged and inflected within the same context of white Christian settler empire. Religion and freedom have intertwined throughout American history, including in the ideal of religious freedom. Our critical interrogation of freedom should help us think carefully about power, working with but also beyond tropes of domination and resistance.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 368 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion**

What is religion, and how can we study it? Do we need an answer to the first question to pursue the second? Why, and toward what ends, might we undertake such study? This course considers these questions through the investigation of significant attempts to study religion over the past century, paying particular attention to the methods, motivations, and aims of these works. Is the study of religion an effort to disprove or debunk it, or perhaps to support it? What would each mean? Is it an effort to describe the indescribable, or perhaps to translate complex beliefs and practices into a language in which they can be discussed by others? Why would such a translation be helpful, and to whom? Is the study of religion an investigation of a social phenomenon, an organization of communities, a specific formation of individuals, or perhaps a psychosis or illusion, evidence of the workings of power on our lives and the difficulty of bearing it? What is at stake in defining religion in these ways, and then in undertaking its study?

Same as L23 Re St 368

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 370 Religion and the Origins of Capitalism**

This course examines the relationship between religion and the development of a capitalist economy in Europe, England, and America from 1550 to 1800. It relies on intellectual, social, and economic histories. We cover major thinkers from the early mercantilist thinkers such as William Petty to Adam Smith.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 380 American Religion, Media, and Technology**

American religious communities have often been cast as technological laggards, whether willfully ignorant or generally backwards. Such narratives, fueled by stories about religious leaders condemning cultural trends conceal the ways religions have in fact innovated in the media sphere. Ranging from the time of the earliest printing presses to contemporary social media platforms, this course reframes the question of American religions and media technologies by asking the following questions: How have media technologies shaped religious practice, identity, and belonging? Were religious critiques of mass media valid, particularly around questions of access, constraints, and consumption? And how have religious groups experimented with communications technologies to reimagine their use, message, and audience? These moments of technological encounter reveal how religious communities have not only worked with media technologies, but have driven much of what makes these technologies innovative and modern.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 385 Jesus, Jazz, and Gin: the 1920s and the History of Our Current Times**

This course is a historical survey of the dynamic relationship between religion and politics during the 1920s. The 1920s were a tipping point for a great deal of the fundamental issues that shaped the twentieth century in the U.S. This course seeks to investigate how religious activism, evangelism, discourse, practice, and reinvention contributed to and was shaped by such change.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 385A Topics in Jewish Studies: Race and Religion in the North American West**

Consult Course Listings for current topics. Please note: L75 585A is intended for graduate students only.

Same as L75 JIMES 385

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: IS EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 390 Mormon History in Global Context**

The focus of this seminar is Mormonism, meaning, primarily, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which is the largest Mormon body. Mormons in the United States have gone from being one of the most intensely persecuted religious groups in the country's history to the fourth largest religious body in the U.S., with a reputation for patriotism and conservative family values. Because of its vigorous missionary program, the LDS Church now has more members outside the U.S. than inside. This seminar will introduce the basic practices and beliefs, and explore issues regarding economics, race, gender, and sexuality within the faith. These issues include: How did conflicts over Mormonism during the 19th century, especially the conflict over polygamy, help define the limits of religious tolerance in this country? How have LDS teachings about gender and race, or controversies about whether or not Mormons are Christian, positioned and repositioned Mormons within U.S. society? What does the LDS faith look like in other parts of the world, and how does its identification with U.S. prosperity and politics shape its growth in other places?

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, SC, SD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 395 Topics in Religion and Politics: Jewish Women and American Culture**

How have Jewish women shaped American politics and culture? How much of our modern world do we owe to what Jewish women have created? And how have these women transformed Judaism itself? This course examines the writings, ideas, and lives of Jewish-American women. From explicitly religious organizations like Hadassah and the National Council of Jewish Women, to more secular Jews who subtly incorporated religion into their style and their ethics, we will consider Jewish-American women in all of their fascinating variety. Students will gain a thorough picture of Jewish-American women's social impact from the ground up. Our reading will extend from colonial community builders like Bilhah Franks, to early feminists like Rosa Sonneschein, to revolutionaries like Emma Goldman and reformers like Lillian Wald; from the philosopher Hannah Arendt to the labor leader Rose Schneiderman and the novelist Ayn Rand; from America's first woman rabbi, Sally Priesand, to modern-day leaders and celebrities like Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Judy Blume, Adrienne Rich, and Dianne Feinstein. Students will have the opportunity to conduct self-directed research as well as to try out creative projects and collaborative reflection. This course will teach students to thoughtfully analyze texts in historical context, to conduct sensitive conversations with generosity and curiosity, and to broaden their pantheon of American cultural giants. As we explore multiple genres, decades, and perspectives, students will build a rich and collaborative understanding of the vibrant Jewish-American women's intellectual tradition.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 4060 Senior Seminar: Religion, Politics, and Community**

Religion is a powerful social, economic, and political force across the globe. Its formal authorities and informal influences have changed over time and across space and traditions. Yet even where regular religious practice has become less common, religion remains a means of constructing communities, be it a diaspora, a unique nation within a state, or state-wide national identity or nationalism. Religion intersects with race, gender, and other important social identities, and it overlaps with organized political power from the grassroots to the government. Human relationships with the divine have influenced everyday norms and values, have marked key moments in our life cycle, and have provided material and social psychological resources for communities. In this course, we will examine the political relationships between religion and community from a variety of social scientific perspectives. As a core part of this inquiry, you will conduct an original research paper on a topic of your choice relating to religion, politics, and community. We will work through each step of the scientific method

over the course of the semester-using religion and community as a lens and set of thematic examples-and hold guided workshops to facilitate your research process. Prereq: L32 263 OR L32 363 OR department approved equivalent

Same as L32 Pol Sci 4060

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: SSC EN: S

---

**L57 RelPol 407 Solidarity and Silence: Religious Strategies in the Political Sphere**

Although political action is often considered a problem of making oneself heard, religious practices of silence, self-effacement, and withdrawal from certain worldly struggles have guided many significant political and social movements, particularly forms of non-violent resistance. This course considers the role of religious thought and practice in such movements in the twentieth century. The history of these movements presents an apparent paradox: how can political action emerge from the supposedly "private" realm of religion in the modern era, particularly its most individualistic formations in contemplative and mystical practices? Does the historical role of these practices in the political sphere complicate their portrayal in some scholarship as private, individual, and depoliticizing? With these questions animating our investigations, we will consider the work of authors and activists including Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, Jr., Simone Weil, and William Barber, as well as the history of movements associated with their work. Toward the end of the semester, we will turn to contemporary movements against economic inequality, intimate violence, racially motivated violence, and discrimination toward transgender persons to discuss the use of religious strategies or religiously-derived strategies in current political and social activism.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 410 The FBI and Religion**

This seminar examines the relationship between the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and religion (i.e., faith communities, clerics, and religious professionals) as a way to study and understand 20th-century religion and politics. The course will investigate the history of the FBI as well as the various ways in which the FBI and religious groups have interacted. The course will pay particular attention to what the professor calls the four interrelated "modes" of FBI-religious engagement: counter-intelligence and surveillance, coordination and cooperation, censorship and publicity, and consultation.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM BU: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 4121 American Religion, Politics, and Culture: Catholicism and Contemporary American Politics**

Twenty-five percent of Americans identify as Roman Catholics, making Catholicism the largest Christian church in the country. With the exception of George W. Bush in 2000, no presidential candidate since 1960 has won the White House without winning a majority of Catholic voters. This course will examine the complex role of Roman Catholics in American politics, looking at how Catholics have shaped American history and political life and how American history and politics have shaped Catholicism. Topics will include the nature and influence of "the Catholic vote," the role of Catholic social teaching in forming Catholic voters, and the influence that Catholics continue to exercise over public policy and in our national institutions, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H



---

**L57 RelPol 4122 American Religion, Politics & Culture:**

**Commentary from Alexis de Tocqueville to Contemporary Pundits**

This research-oriented seminar involves in-depth historiographical investigation of leading scholarship at the busy intersections of American religion, politics, and culture. The second semester focuses on classic and contemporary commentaries on the American religious and political scene from Alexis de Tocqueville through today's leading pundits. Some sessions will include a visiting scholar engaged in cutting-edge research--a feature that will allow seminar members to work with important scholars from beyond the university. Possible topics include: church-state relations, religion and foreign policy, religion and civil rights, religion and the science wars, the rise of the Religious Right, and the role of religion in national elections. The seminar is taught under the auspices of the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics and is offered two complementary parts (though enrollment in either one of the two is certainly possible). Its ambition is to build up a community of inquirers engaged in the core questions that animate the Danforth Center. PREREQ: Advanced undergraduate or graduate standing in AMCS, History, or Religious Studies or permission of instructor.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM

---

**L57 RelPol 4125 The First Amendment in an Age of Fracture**

This seminar will explore the constitutional and civic dimensions of engaging across difference in a divided and fractured society. Topics will include free speech, the right of association, religious freedom, public forums, online forums, public funding, protests, boycotts, and strikes.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 425 Law, Religion, and Politics**

What is the role of religious argument in politics and law? What kinds of arguments are advanced, and how do they differ from one another? Are some of these arguments more acceptable than others in a liberal democracy? This course will explore these questions through the work of legal scholars, theologians, and political theorists. Our topics include the nature of violence and coercion in the law, constraints on public reason, the relationship between religion and government, and the nature of religious practice and tradition.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA, ETH EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 430 Spiritual But Not Religious: The Politics of American Spirituality**

What does it mean to be "spiritual but not religious"? What are the social and political consequences of foregrounding spiritual seeking and religious experimentation over the "organized religion" of churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples? How did this contemporary view of spirituality take shape historically? The seminar focuses on a series of debates that have arisen over spirituality in American culture: the entwining of religious practices with consumer culture and corporate capitalism, the rise of therapeutic models of meditation and mindfulness, the politics of Euro-American appropriations of Native American and Buddhist religious practices, the implications of embracing religious variety and eclecticism, and the relationship between spiritual seeking and social justice.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 435 Sabbath Politics: Rest and Refusal in Religion and Politics**

The Jewish Sabbath arrives every week to disrupt ordinary life with a wholly different way of living, abstaining from some activities in divinely commanded rest. Is this different way of life strictly a break from the ordinary, or also a guide to it-and to how it might require disruption, reformation, and repair? Sabbath traditions have inspired radical political action including movements against debt, income

inequality, environmental destruction, and racial injustice. This course will consider the ways that 20th and 21st century American Jews have practiced Shabbat and thought about its significance in political life. Students will read a range of texts including Abraham Joshua Heschel's classic 1951 book *The Sabbath*, and consider them in relation to movements of contemporary radical politics that have been inspired by Sabbath traditions, including Strike Debt, reparations for the descendants of enslaved people, and agonistic democratic politics. Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 440 Religion, Politics, and the University**

This course explores in depth current issues related to pluralism, difference, and belonging in matters pertaining to religion and other important issues, with a particular focus on how these play out in the university context. The instructors, John Inazu and Eboo Patel, are two of the leading national commentators on these issues. Prerequisite: Students enrolling in this class must submit a brief statement of interest to Professor John Inazu. Details on how and where to submit this statement can be found at <http://law.wustl.edu/COURSES/INAZU/seminar1/summaries/>.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 4491 American Unbelief from the Enlightenment to the Present**

This seminar examines American secularism, humanism, and atheism from the Enlightenment forward to the present. Topics to be explored include: the tensions between secular and Christian conceptions of the republic, the civil liberties of atheists and nontheists, the battles over religion in the public schools, the culture wars over secular humanism and science, and the contemporary growth of the religiously disaffiliated or religious "nones." The course considers not only the intellectual dimensions of skeptical critiques of religion, but also the underlying politics of secularism (and anti-secularism) in a nation routinely imagined as "under God."

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: SSP Art: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 4564 American Pragmatism**

This course examines the history of American pragmatism through three of its primary founders, the philosophers Charles Peirce, William James, and John Dewey. It considers pragmatism as a response to the experience of uncertainty brought on by modernity, and contextualizes it amidst late nineteenth and early twentieth century thought and politics, namely, scientific methodology, evolutionary theory, the probabilistic revolution, Transcendentalism, the rise of secularism, slavery, Abolitionism, and the Civil War. Major essays by each thinker will be read as well as three intellectual biographies and one critical survey.

Same as L22 History 4564

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 480 Readings in African American Religious History**

This course is an introduction to the history and variety of African-American religions in the New World Diaspora. The approach will be chronological, from the earliest years to the New World, to contemporary expressions. We will also explore some of the major historiographical themes that have catalyzed current scholarship, the purpose and effectiveness of black nationalist movements, issues of class and gender, the persistence of African elements of new world religious practice, performance, and popular culture.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 485 Christian Nation, Secular Republic**

The United States has often been imagined as both a deeply Christian nation and a thoroughly secular republic, and those conjoined framings have created recurrent conflict throughout American history. This seminar is designed to introduce advanced undergraduates and graduate students to current discussions of religion, secularism, and unbelief in American religious and political history. The course also places a complementary emphasis on close readings of crucial primary works, say, about the rise of deistic toleration or the persisting political power of Christianity-in textual particularities. The course takes as its starting point Charles Taylor's monumental account *A Secular Age* and works from there through various episodes of the Enlightenment and its long aftermath.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 490 Monuments, Museums, and Mountains: Religion and the Politics of Place in Modern America**

Some of the most intense battles in American culture are fought over hallowed places and public memory. This class will examine various contested sites on the borders of pilgrimage, tourism, religious display, and civic commemoration. Among the topics to be considered are: Confederate monuments and plantation tours, Mount Rushmore and the Black Hills, the "Ground Zero Mosque" controversy, the Museum of the Bible and evangelical visions for the nation's capital, the public display of the Ten Commandments and the Satanic Temple's monumental interventions, Holy Land pilgrimages, and such alternative religious landscapes as Sedona and Salvation Mountain. Students will also have the opportunity to identify and explore sites of their own choosing as places of religious and political drama within modern American culture. There are no prerequisites for this course, and it is open to both undergraduates and graduate students.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

---

**L57 RelPol 495 Religion and the State: Global Mission, Global Empire**

This course explores the complex intersections among U.S. political power on a global stage, and religious institutions and identities. Readings and discussions are organized around two very broad questions. First: how has this nation's history been shaped by religious "others" both inside and outside its borders? Second: How have perceptions of those others in turn affected U.S. responses to circumstances of global consequence--including, for example, foreign policy and diplomacy, missionary activity, and economic practices?

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

---