

THE ROBERTSON SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

GOV 646: Public Syllabus – Religion and Politics in America and England

Oxford Study Program 2006

CONNECTION TO THE PROGRAM OF STUDY

This course is a unique part of the curriculum for the Master of Arts in Government. It is conducted as a hybrid class with pre-on-site-assignments conducted online, and on-site series of class sessions conducted at Hertford College at the University of Oxford and a post-on-site-assignment submitted online. The course focuses in upon several comparative contexts for the study of religion *and* politics: the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Founding Era in American history, pivotal incidents and influential individuals in the religious and political heritage of England, and vital constitutional issues.

FACULTY

Beverly M. Hedberg, Ph.D. – Administrative Professor

Daniel Dreisbach, Ph.D. – Guest Lecturer

Jeffrey Morrison, Ph.D. - Professor

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

Religion and Politics in America and England presents (1) primary Judeo-Christian principles applicable to both the ecclesiastical and civil arenas of governance – with an emphasis upon the jurisdictional sovereignty of each, (2) a discussion of religion and politics based upon primary sources of the Founding Era in American history, and (3) an analysis of particular incidents and individuals relevant to the religious and political heritage of England.

Some of the questions posited for consideration from a Biblical-based perspective are: (1) What are the Judeo-Christian principles relevant to a discussion of religion and politics? (2) What historical implications for the study of religion and politics are set in the Founding Era of America and the expansive history of England? And (3) Can faith – without the threat of a constitutional crisis – be acknowledged as an influence in the political arena?

COURSE GOALS

1. To acquaint students with Biblical principles of religion and politics.
2. To provide students with the historical implications for the study of religion and politics set in the Founding Era of America and in the study of incidents and individuals relevant to the religious and political heritage of England.
3. To explain to students the implications of key Constitutional realities upon discussions of religion and politics.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of Biblical principles of both religion and politics.
2. Articulate the historical implications for the study of religion and politics set in the Founding Era of America and in the study of incidents and individuals relevant to the religious and political heritage of England.
3. Display a thoughtful perception of the implications of specific Constitutional parameters upon issues of religion and politics.

TEXTS

The Bible [any commonly used version].

Frohnen, Bruce, ed. The American Republic: Primary Sources. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2002. ISBN 0-86597-333-4.

Lloyd, T. O., The British Empire 1558 – 1995. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005 (second edition). ISBN 0-19-873133-7.

ASSESSMENTS

1. Participation via readings and on-line dialogue sessions as pre-on-site-assignments conducted before the on-site classes at Oxford
2. Attendance at all classes during the 2-week modular session at Oxford
3. Participation -- as opportunities are provided -- in class discussions

4. Submission of the post-on-site-assignment (submitted on-line) – a five-page personal essay on “The Oxford Experience”

Participation via readings and on-line dialogue sessions as pre-on-site-assignments conducted before the on-site classes at Oxford (30% of course assessment)

The intent of this participation assessment via readings and on-line dialogue sessions conducted before the on-site classes at Oxford is to challenge learners by providing contexts for the assessment of their comprehension of the information and concepts presented in the assigned reading materials. In addition, it is a measure of their ability to interact with other class members around topics referenced in those materials.

Readings are to be completed in their totality **before** the dialogue session to which they are related. The importance of readings cannot be overemphasized.

There must be THREE posts (no more, no less) in Bb per each assigned dialogue question. EACH post must be approximately 200 words with key comments referenced back to specifics in the assigned readings. Dialogue interactions are expected to be posted ACROSS the entire session (i.e., Monday, Wednesday and Friday or Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday).

Assessment of on-line participation is divided equally among the following criteria:

- Logic and clarity of content based upon an understanding of readings
- Interaction with classmates
- Ability to communicate pro-actively in an open and virtual arena
- The quality, quantity and timing of participation

Attendance in on-site modular classes at Oxford (40% of course assessment)

Attendance at ALL class sessions as well as thoughtful and constructive participation when opportunities are provided for class discussions during the on-site modular classes at Oxford are expected. Students are expected to be intellectually and respectfully connected with lecturers and lectures during the 2-week modular sessions.

Participation in class discussions (20% of course assessment)

Students in a master-level class are expected to actively participate in class discussions. Your intellectual connection to lecturers and their topics leads logically to your making thoughtful and constructive comments when the opportunities arise. You will receive an assessment at the end of each week that will reflect the quality and relevance of your oral communications for all five of that week's sessions. Each of these two assessments will be 10% of your total "participation in class discussions" assessment.

Five-page personal essay on "The Oxford Experience" (10% of course assessment)

This essay assignment gives the learner the opportunity to move broadly across the context of the course and of the unique occasion of attending classes on-site at Oxford University. This is a singular educational opportunity and personal essays should reflect an equally singular and well written composition.

The length of the work is to be five (5) double-spaced pages (not including title page). Remember: this assignment is to reflect YOUR opinions and is NOT to include any citations. Originality *and* logic are paramount.

All written assignments are to be submitted as email attachments to the administrative professor (Dr. Hedberg). This document must be formatted in WORD and sent by twelve o'clock midnight (EST) on its respective due date. Please put "Oxford Study Program Summer 2006" in the email subject line to facilitate identification.

Assessment of this document is divided equally among the following criteria:

- Clarity of presentation of thoughts and concepts
- Logic of arguments for particular positions
- Grammar and spelling indicative of graduate-level writing skills

GRADING SCALE:

A+	4.00	Superior	100
A	4.00		94-99.9
A-	3.67		90-93.9
B+	3.33	Good	87-89.9
B	3.00		83-86.9
B-	2.67		80-82.9
C+	2.33	Satisfactory	77-79.9
C	2.00		74-76.9
C-	1.67		71-73.9
D+	1.33	Poor	68-70.9
D	1.00		65-67.9
D-	0.67		63-64.9
F	0.00	Failing	61-62.9
W		Withdrew	
P		Pass/Fail Courses Only	