GENERAL INFORMATION

PROFESSOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Lesley Northup
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Office: DM 302
Office Hours: By Appointment
E-mail: northupL@fiu.edu
Website: religion.fiu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

Should a baker be allowed to refuse to make a wedding cake for two men?

Should pastors be able to tell their congregations who to vote for?

Should employers be able to decide if their employee insurance covers birth control?

Should there be a “wall” between government and religion?

Is the U.S. a “Christian nation”?

Is “one nation under God” a problematic national motto?

Do biblical accounts of history deserve “equal time” in the classroom?

This course explores the dynamic, controversial, breaking-news intersection of religion and American law and values.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After successfully completing the course, students will be able to:

• Understand and discuss the religion clauses of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
• Trace the historical trajectory of American thinking on the place of religion vis-à-vis government
• Describe key cases affecting the adjudication of church-state issues
• Critically consider the constant stream of church-state conflicts in today’s news
• Be more informed citizens and voters

ABOUT THE PROFESSOR

Dr. Northup has been at FIU since 1993, when she helped found the Department of Religious Studies. Her areas of teaching are diverse: religion in America, myth and ritual, and women and religion. For the last 10 years, she served as Dean of the Honors College at FIU, where she is a Faculty Fellow and has taught many interdisciplinary courses. She is the recipient of multiple teaching and service awards, and the author of 7 books and numerous articles.
IMPORTANT INFORMATION

POLICIES

Please review FIU's Policies. The policies webpage contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU, as well as additional information about acceptable netiquette for online courses. As a member of the FIU community you are expected to be knowledgeable about the behavioral expectations set forth in the FIU Student Code of Conduct. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWING AND ABIDING BY ALL POLICIES AND CODES.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND SKILLS

Students enrolled in online courses are expected to have moderate proficiency using a computer. Please go to the "What's Required" webpage to find out more information on this subject.

Please visit our Technical Requirements webpage for additional information.

FIU LIBRARY SUPPORT

The FIU library provides a number of services to distance learning students. For example:

- Students can request a chat session in Blackboard for an explanation on how to access library resources.
- Students can request detailed instructions on how to access library resources.
- One-on-One assistance from the Distance Learning Librarian.

Don't struggle through your library research alone! Help is available. For further information, contact Sarah Hammill, Distance Learning Librarian, via email at hammills@fiu.edu or call 305-919-5604.

You can visit the FIU Library at: http://library.fiu.edu/

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION

The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the Center at 305-348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center GC 190.

Please visit our ADA Compliance webpage for information about accessibility involving the tools used in this course.

Please visit Blackboard's Commitment Accessibility webpage for more information.

For additional assistance please contact FIU's Disability Resource Center.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.
Academic Misconduct includes: **Cheating** – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. **Plagiarism** – The use and appropriation of another’s work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student’s own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism.

Learn more about the [academic integrity policies and procedures](#) as well as [student resources](#) that can help you prepare for a successful semester.

### EXPECTATIONS

This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Fully online courses are not independent study courses. You will be expected to interact online with the professor and your fellow students; to do assignments; to meet deadlines; and perhaps to work in virtual groups.

**Students are expected to:**

- Review the “how to get started” information located in the course content
- Introduce yourself to the class during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion forum
- Take the practice quiz to ensure that your computer is compatible with Blackboard
- Participate fully on the Discussion Board
- Review and follow the course calendar
- Read/watch all the assigned materials
- Complete all quizzes and exams

### COMMUNICATION

**Good communication is vital to successful online courses.**

**Contacting me:** Contact me by email at northupL@fiu.edu. If you want an answer to your question or have a problem, this is the way to get me. **DO NOT** try to communicate with me about course housekeeping or problems through the Discussion Board! If you do not email me at that address, I cannot guarantee I will receive your message.

Please notify me via email if you believe you have encountered a quiz or test question that has been mis-graded or for which there is no clear answer listed.

**Technical Problems:** Generally, I cannot solve technical problems with the content or settings of the course and have to refer them to FIU Online. Your best bet is to contact them first. If you can’t resolve the problem, email me and I will get it fixed. Be patient!

For more information on professional writing and technical communication [click here](#).

### ASSESSMENTS

**Discussion Forum**

You are expected to read and view all assigned material and be prepared to discuss it intelligently in the discussion forum, the main mode of interaction for the course. Anyone may begin a discussion at any time on the topic assigned for the week or from preceding lectures or notes. Often, I will post a question for consideration, with the expectation that everyone will respond one or more times to the question and to other respondents.
You should post a minimum of twice per week, beginning with Week 1, to demonstrate your comprehension of the course readings and lecture materials. At least one posting per week should be original (some question or observation based on the week’s materials), and at least one other should respond to other postings by me or your fellow students.

Original postings should be completed by Friday at 11:59pm and response postings must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm. This ensures that there are enough original postings for other students to respond to during the week.

Postings should actually say something. Postings of “I liked X” or “I was surprised by Y”, while welcomed, are not what I’m looking for or will grade on. I would rather you went out on a limb to say what you really think or to introduce some of your thoughts than that you say “safe” things about the material. Do you disagree with what was in the lesson? Why? This is a course full of controversial material. What do think about it? There’s room for argument on all sides. Just always be respectful!

Each discussion week will be graded separately. Lateness will definitely cause a drop in your grade for that week, as will superficial responses. This is a major portion of your grade!

Discussion Forum Debates

From time to time, we will use the Discussion Forum to stage a debate on some question like those at the beginning of this syllabus. The debate will constitute the discussion question for the week. In a debate, contributors are expected to rationally defend one or the other position on the question. You may choose to argue either point of view (as long as everyone doesn’t argue the same side!) Of course, this won’t be a formal debate, so you may (and should) respond to each other freely—logically, politely, and with reference to reliable sources. Everyone must participate.

Quizzes

There are 14 quizzes throughout the semester. See the course calendar for the availability dates—basically, you can take it any time during the week of the matching lesson. The 24-hour availability period for each quiz starts at 12:00 am and ends at 11:55 pm. Each student has one attempt at each quiz. There will be 10 questions, worth one point each. The quiz will be different for each student. To take a quiz, click on "Quizzes" under "Course Menu." Once you open the quiz, you will have ten (10) minutes to save all the answers and submit it.

The quizzes will reflect the lectures AND the assigned reading. Please study all course material prior to the quizzes and be prepared.

You need to do the quizzes and exams by yourself. Any interaction with others in any form will constitute cheating, and will have serious repercussions. I may not catch everyone who does this, but I sure will catch a lot of them.

Exams

Exams are intended to assess your comprehension, retention, and knowledge of the materials covered in lectures and the assigned texts. The midterm (Exam 1) will cover the first half of the course; the final (Exam 2) covers only the second half. You have only 1 attempt to take each exam. Exams will be available for a 24 hour period from 12:01 am to 11:55 pm. There will be one hundred (100) questions on each exam. Once you open the exam, you will have 2 hours to complete and submit the exam. Once the time expires, you cannot save any more answers but only can submit it. Failure to take the exam in the allotted time period will result in a zero (0).

Exam questions will be taken from the quizzes, but since there are more questions in the database than the number of questions on the exam, you will probably get different questions than you did on the quizzes. Multiple choice questions are randomized across students so no two students will have the same questions.

Notes for quizzes and exams:

- In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the "Practice Quiz" from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer meets the minimum hardware requirements.
• Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and cannot be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet. If you need technical assistance, please contact FIU Online Support Services.
• (Remember not to touch the computer Back button—use the arrow to scroll backward.)

ASSIGNMENTS

In addition to participation in the Discussion Forum, you will have a final paper. I will post the topic sometime after the midterm. Your paper will be graded primarily for clarity of thought, logic, accuracy, originality, and responsible judgment of sources. It will not be graded on length, but thorough discussion of the topic will count—that is, your paper should be as long as it needs to be to say what you want to say, and no longer. Having said that, I would say that it would probably have to be at least 5-6 pages to get the job done.

GRADING

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<td>C</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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REQUIRED READINGS

There is no required textbook for this course. However, there will be short assigned readings and films related to individual lessons. These materials are required! Some quiz and exam questions will reflect information from them.

WEEKLY COURSE CALENDAR

Module 1
## August 20-26

### Getting Started
- See the Getting Started page in the Course Content of Blackboard CE6.

### Lesson 1: Western Church-State History in a Nutshell
- View Lesson 1 PowerPoint
- View film: Catholic Church vs. European Monarchs
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aegRxxwCRxo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aegRxxwCRxo)

Quizzes/ Assignments

Write your bio in the "Student Bio" topic area of the Discussion Forum

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<th>Quiz #1</th>
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## Module 2

### August 27-September 2

### Lesson 2: The U.S. Historical Background
- View Lesson 2 PowerPoint
- Read (anywhere online):
  - The Mayflower Compact
  - Roger Williams' Plea for Religious Liberty
  - American Toleration Act
  - Jefferson’s Letter to Danbury Baptist Association

Quiz #2

Available
8/27-9/2

## Module 3

### September 3-9

### Lesson 3: The Founders and the Constitution
- View Lesson 3 PowerPoint
- View video: The Story of the Bill of Rights
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V2_AheOxX7E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V2_AheOxX7E)

Quiz #3

Available
9/3-9/9

## Module 4

### September 10-16

### Lesson 4: American Civil Religion
- View Lesson 4 PowerPoint
- Read: Robert Bellah, “Civil Religion in America”
  [http://www.robertbellah.com/articles_5.htm](http://www.robertbellah.com/articles_5.htm)

Quiz #4

Available
9/10-9/16
### Module 5

**September 17-23**

**Lesson 5: A Christian Nation?**
- View Lesson 5 PowerPoint
- View: Does the President Have to Be a Christian? [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a15T_iWk9Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a15T_iWk9Q)

**Quiz #5**
- Available 9/17-9/23

### Module 6

**September 24-30**

**Lesson 6: Interpreting the Constitution**
- View Lesson 6 PowerPoint
- Read: “Fourteen Ways to Interpret the Constitution” [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/brad-reid/fourteen-ways-to-interpre_b_12735744.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/brad-reid/fourteen-ways-to-interpre_b_12735744.html)

**Quiz #6**
- Available 9/24-9/30

### Module 7

**October 1-7**

**Lesson 7: Free Exercise (1)**
- View Lesson 7 PowerPoint

**Exam 1:**
- Available 10/7 Noon
- Due: 10/8 Noon

### Module 8

**October 8-14**

**Lesson 8: Free Exercise (2)**
- View Lesson 8 PowerPoint

**Quiz #8**
- Available 10/8-10/14

### Module 9

**October 15-21**

**Lesson 9: Establishment (1)**
- View Lesson 9 PowerPoint

**Quiz #9**
- Available 10/15-10/21

### Module 10
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<tr>
<td>- View brief summary of Scientology case</td>
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<td><a href="https://www.10news.com/newsy/scientologys-billiondollar-battle-for-religious-tax-exemption">https://www.10news.com/newsy/scientologys-billiondollar-battle-for-religious-tax-exemption</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 14: Religion and Social Politics</strong></td>
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<td>- View Lesson 14 Powerpoint</td>
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**EXAM 2**
Available: December 3, Noon

Due: December 6, Noon