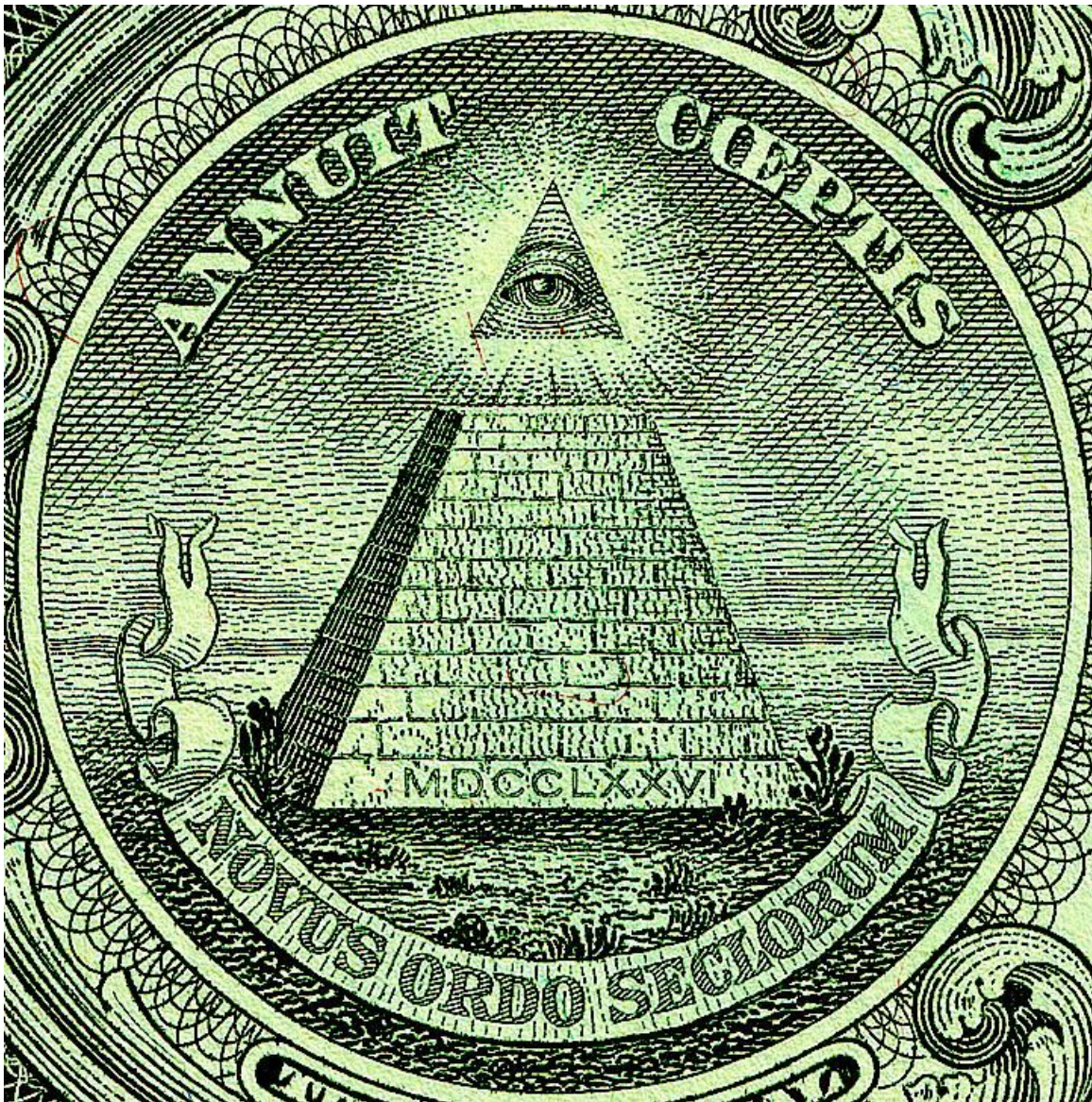


# Religion in America:

## One Nation Under God(s)?

PHR-410-3 / Fall 2018

Phillips Academy



**Instructor:** Mr. Prescott  
**Location:** Chapel 016  
**Email:** kprescott@andover.edu

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

In contemporary American public life, religion is everywhere, and the United States is considered one of the most religious countries in the world. This course will examine the role of religion in American history and politics, from colonial times to the present day. Questions to be addressed include: Is America a Christian country? What role did religion play in the founding of America? Did the founding documents seek to create a separation of church and state? How were religious arguments used to justify or challenge slavery? What are the causes of the rise of fundamentalism in the 20th century? What, looking forward, is America's religious identity in an increasingly diverse and pluralistic society?

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS, EVALUATION, AND POLICIES

### I. Required Texts:

1. Steven Waldman, *Founding Faith: How Our Founding Fathers Forged a Radical New Approach to Religious Liberty* (New York: Random House, 2009).
2. Additional readings will be made available as handouts in class and posted on Canvas

### II. Evaluation

**i. Classroom Participation (28%)** – Much of this class will proceed as a seminar, which means careful reading of assigned work, regular attendance, and participation in class are all essential in order to succeed in the course. A separate handout/rubric will be distributed regarding expectations for classroom participation/discussion.

**ii. Essays (44%)** – Two different analytical/argumentative essays will be assigned throughout the term. More specific information about the expectations for these assignments will be provided in a separate handout.

- a. Essay 1a: Colonial Position Statement (5.5%)** – Due Friday, September 21
- b. Essay 1b: First Amendment Response (5.5%)** – Due Tuesday, September 25
- c. Essay 2: SCOTUS Argument Reconstruction (22%)** - Due Tuesday, October 23
- d. Essay 3: Indian Religious Liberty Essay (11%)** - Due Monday, November 5

**iii. Student Journal (11%)** – Students are expected to maintain a journal throughout the course, which will be collected and assessed for effort and completion at four different points throughout the term.

**iv. Final Reflection (17%)** - All students will complete a final reflection (due during finals week) that draws from material in their journals.

**III. Extensions** – Generally speaking, I do not grant extensions. In addition to allocating class time for papers, prompts are also handed out at least one week in advance of the due date, so the expectation is that students will plan ahead and manage their time appropriately. The only exception to this policy is when a student has three or more **major** assignments due on the same day, in which case students are expected to follow the protocols outlined on p. 51 of the Blue Book under “Workload & Assignments” (which includes 24-hours advance notice).

**IV. Late Work Policy** – All written assignments are due at the beginning of class (please upload to Canvas). Any work handed in after this point will be counted as late. Please note that problems with technology are **not** an excuse for lateness. Anticipate that the printer will break, that files will be lost, or that your computer will die! **Any work handed in after the due date will receive a grade no higher than a 3+.**

**V. Revision Policy** – Students may rewrite any essay in the course (except for the final), though note that revisions must be substantial; it is not sufficient simply to plug in the instructor’s feedback. To that end, I strongly encourage students to meet with me if they are electing to complete a revision. The grade for the rewrite will be averaged with the first grade to determine the final grade for the assignment. All rewrites are due one week after the initial essay is returned. Please note that I do not accept rewrites for unauthorized late essays.

**VI. Absences** - As noted above under Classroom Preparation/Participation, regular attendance is essential if one is to succeed in this course! However, I realize that this course is not your only commitment this term, just as I realize that circumstances inevitably arise that are outside of your control. First and foremost, I ask that you communicate with me (the earlier the better). Please note that students are responsible for all announcements or changes made in class. Regarding **Personal Time**, I ask that students follow the procedures outlined on pp. 54-55 of the Blue Book. Finally, in the event that an assignment is due on the day a student is sick (with an excused absence from the Health Center), said assignment will be due at the beginning of the next class meeting.

**VII. E-mail** – I will respond to all e-mail within 24 hours. However, please note that any e-mail sent after 7:00 PM will not receive a response until the following morning, so please plan ahead!

**VIII. Religious Observances** – Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that fall during the term. Should you have a religious observance that conflicts with participation in the course, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations.

**IX. Disabilities** – Students with learning, physical, or psychiatric disabilities who may require disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to see me as soon as possible to discuss your particular needs. All discussions will remain confidential, though I may consult Student Health Services to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested.

**X. Technology** – Although we live in an increasingly digitized world, please note that I do not allow the use of computers/tablet/phones during class unless otherwise specified.

## SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

### **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 – INTRODUCTION TO THE AMERICAN RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE**

- No assigned readings

## *Unit 1: The Origins of “Religious Liberty”*

### WEEK 1 – RELIGIOUS (IN)TOLERANCE AND THE AMERICAN COLONIES

#### **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 – RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE IN COLONIAL AMERICA**

- Read: Steven Waldman, “Christian America,” in *Founding Faith: Providence, Politics, and the Birth of Religious Freedom in America* (New York: Random House, 2008), 3-17.
- Read: John Winthrop, “A Modell of Christian Charity,” in *Religious Intolerance in America: A Documentary History*, eds. John Corrigan and Lynn S. Neal (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 29-31.

#### **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 – MASSACHUSETTS BAY AND THE “AMALEKITES”**

- Read: John Corrigan and Lynn S. Neal, “Religious Intolerance in Colonial America,” “The Amalekites in Old Testament Accounts,” and “Colonial Depictions of Native Americans as Amalekites,” *Religious Intolerance in America: A Documentary History*, eds. John Corrigan and Lynn S. Neal (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 17-27, 31-33.

#### **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 – NO CLASS**

### WEEK 2 – THE RISE OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

#### **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 – RELIGIOUS VIEWS OF ENSLAVED AMERICANS**

- Read: Albert J. Raboteau, “African Americans, Exodus, and the American Israel,” in *Religion and American Culture: A Reader*, ed. David Hackett (New York: Routledge, 2003), 73-88.

#### **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 – A CANAANITE PERSPECTIVE**

- Read: Robert Allen Warrior, “A Native American Perspective: Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians,” in *Biblical Studies Alternatively*, pp. 400-405.

#### **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 – RESEARCH WORKSHOP**

- Note: Each student will be assigned a delegate from the first Continental Congress to research in preparation for a simulation of the drafting of the First Amendment

### WEEK 3 – THE FIRST AMENDMENT

#### **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 – FIRST AMENDMENT SIMULATION**

- Due: Position statement on religious freedom (1-2 pages)

#### **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 – INTERPRETING THE FIRST AMENDMENT**

- Due: Response to First Amendment

#### **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 – EBI FRIDAY**

- Note: No Class

## Unit 2: The First Amendment in Practice

### WEEK 4 – RELIGIOUS LIBERTY TESTED: MORMONISM AND CATHOLICISM

#### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2 – MORMONISM: THE AMERICAN RELIGION

- Read: John Corrigan and Lynn S. Neal, “Anti-Mormonism,” *Religious Intolerance in America: A Documentary History*, eds. John Corrigan and Lynn S. Neal (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 73-81.
- Read: “Joseph Smith Recounts His First Vision,” in *A Documentary History of Religion in America to 1877* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2003), 338-341.

#### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4 – TESTING THE FIRST AMENDMENT: REYNOLDS V. UNITED STATES

- Read: [\*Reynolds v. United States\*](#) (1878)

#### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5 – THE RISE OF IRISH CATHOLICISM

- Read: John Corrigan and Lynn S. Neal, “Anti-Catholicism,” in *Religious Intolerance in America: A Documentary History* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), pp. 49-55.

### WEEK 5 – RELIGIOUS (IN?)TOLERANCE IN THE 20TH CENTURY

#### MONDAY, OCTOBER 8 – ANTI-CATHOLICISM AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

- Read: Josiah Strong, excerpt from *Our Country: It's Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* and Cardinal James Gibbons, excerpt from *A Retrospect of Fifty Years* in *A Documentary History of Religion in America Since 1877*, eds. Edwin S. Gaustad and Mark A. Noll (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), pp. 21-23.

#### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11 – EVERSON V. BOARD OF EDUCATION

- Read: *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947)

#### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12 – THE AMERICAN CIVIL RELIGION

- Read: Robert Bellah, “Civil Religion in America,” *Daedalus* 117.3 (1988): 97-118.

### WEEK 6 – RELIGION AND THE SUPREME COURT

#### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16 – ARGUMENT RECONSTRUCTION: WORKSHOP

- Read: Selected court cases (majority opinion and dissents)

#### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18 – RESEARCH WORKSHOP

- Due: Essay Outline

#### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19 – RELEASE TIME

- Note: Mr. Prescott available for one-on-one conference

## Unit 3: Beyond Protestant America

### WEEK 7 – RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND NATIVE AMERICANS

#### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23 – THE INDIAN OF THE AMERICAN IMAGINATION

- Due: Supreme Court Case Project

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25 – INDIAN RELIGIOUS FREEDOM?**

- Read: Carter Revard, “Report to the Nation: Claiming Europe,” *Writing the Cross Culture: Native Fiction on the White Man’s Religion*, ed. James Treat (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2006), pp. 4-8.
- Read: Chief Justice John Marshall, Majority Opinion in *Johnson and Graham’s Lessee v. William M’Intosh*, excerpt, in *Religious Intolerance in America: A Documentary History*, eds. John Corrigan and Lynn S. Neal (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), pp. 132-134.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26 – SACRED SPACE AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT**

- Read: Vine Deloria Jr., “Sacred Lands and Religious Freedom,” *For This Land: Writings on Religion in America* (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 203-213.

**WEEK 8 – LYNG AND THE CHALLENGE OF SACRED LAND**

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30 – RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND NATIVE AMERICANS**

- Read: Justice O’Connor, Majority Opinion, [\*Lyng v. Northwest Indian Cemetery Protective Association\*](#)

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1 – LYNG V. NORTHWEST: DISSENT**

- Read: Justice Brennan, Dissenting Opinion, [\*Lyng v. Northwest Indian Cemetery Protective Association\*](#)

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2 – WRITING WORKSHOP**

- No assigned readings; work on essays

*Unit 4: Religious Intolerance and “Cults” in the Late 20th Century*

**WEEK 9 – NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS AND RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE**

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6 – HEAVEN’S GATE**

- Due: Essay #3

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8 – WACO AND THE BRANCH DAVIDIANS**

- Read: John Corrigan and Lynn S. Neal, “Branch Davidians and Waco: The Culmination of Religious Intolerance,” *Religious Intolerance in America: A Documentary History*, eds. John Corrigan and Lynn S. Neal (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 215-219.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9 – JONESTOWN**

- Read: “Fatal Movements: Jonestown” in *A Documentary History of Religion in America Since 1877*, eds. Edwin S. Gaustad and Mark A. Noll (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), pp. 596-600.

**WEEK 10 – FINALS WEEK**

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12 – CONFERENCE PERIOD**

- Work on final paper

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14 – DUE: FINAL REFLECTION**

- Due: Final Reflection