

**PSC 311 – Issues in Public Policy**  
**3hr Lecture/Discussion Course – MW 12:30 to 1:15**

Department of Political Science  
College of Liberal Arts -- Marshall University

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Office Hours: M 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM  
T 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM  
W 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM  
ADDITIONAL HOURS AVAILABLE BY EMAIL

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By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy at [www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies](http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies). Policies covered there include Academic Dishonesty/ Excused Absence Policy for Undergraduates/ Computing Services Acceptable Use/ Inclement Weather/ Dead Week/ Students with Disabilities/ Academic Forgiveness/ Academic Probation and Suspension/ Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students/ Affirmative Action/ Sexual Harassment

### **I. Course Description**

This course does not address a specific public policy, but rather it examines how the issue of religion shapes American public policy. It examines the role religion plays in the formation of some of the most salient public policies of our time. Students will study these crucial public policies through the lens of religion, focusing upon the policy process – initiation through implementation.

i.a. **Catalogue Description:**

A course devoted to a special topic of interest in the policy field, such as energy, health care, transportation, environmental concerns, etc.

### **II. Course Objectives**

This course is designed to provide the student with an introduction to the role religion plays in American public policy. The course will enable students to use religion to analyze public policy in its functions in our political institutions and our public figures. The course will expose students to specific issues that are controversial, crucial, and offer them the opportunity to critically think about the most pertinent topics and literature regarding public policy and religion. This approach will require the student to systematically engage the topic through standard approaches of analysis and problem solving.

### **III. Course Structure:**

I do not intend the course to follow an exclusively lecture format, but rather prefer enough lecturing to cover the basic material and enough discussion to help you further develop your own critical and analytical abilities. You are encouraged to challenge not only what you read, but also what is said by your classmates, and even by your instructor, when you find his positions questionable or his ignorance beyond the limits which a reasonable person should have to endure.

#### IV. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Build competency in the theories, traditions, and norms, that exist in the field of public policy through reading the most pertinent authors
2. Demonstrate the importance and significance of religion within public policy through case-study analysis and white-paper writing
3. Learn how to analyze and understand quantitative and qualitative data relevant to researching and formulating questions and answers to political and policy problems in the field of religion and policy through white-paper writing
4. Discern, through analysis and in-class discussion, the concerns, problems, and processes of religion and public policy.
5. Communicate effectively, in writing and through discussion, significant concepts related to religion and public policy.

#### V. Required Texts and Materials

The Public Clash of Private Values: The Politics of Morality Policy  
Christopher Z. Mooney  
Congressional Quarterly Press  
ISBN: 978-1-88911-940-3

Does God Belong in Public Schools?  
Kent Greenawalt  
Princeton University Press  
ISBN: 978-0691130651

The Influence of Faith: Religious Groups and U.S. Foreign Policy  
Elliott Abrams  
Rowman & Littlefield Publishers  
ISBN-13: 978-0742507630

The God Strategy: How Religion Became a Political Weapon in America.  
Domke, D. and Coe, K.  
Oxford University Press.  
ISBN-10: 0199746745

Various articles assigned by the professor

#### VI. Course requirement and Grading Policy:

<b>Meeting:</b>	25
<b>Outline:</b>	25
<b>Article Review:</b>	100
<b>Book Review:</b>	100
<b>Exam:</b>	100
<b>Rough Draft</b>	50
<b><u>Analytical Paper</u></b>	<u>100</u>
<b>Total Points</b>	500

## VII. Grading Scale:

A = 90-100	450 pts --- 500 pts
B = 80-89	400 pts --- 449 pts
C = 70-79	350 pts --- 399 pts
D = 60-69	300 pts --- 349 pts
F = 1-59	0 pts --- 299 pts

## VIII. Tentative Course Schedule with assignments

Note that schedules are subject to change at instructor's discretion.

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### Week One

### Introductions to the Course

--August 25<sup>th</sup> (Monday) -

Introduction to the course and the syllabus

--August 27<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

*The Public Clash of Private Values*

*The Public Clash of Private Values*

### Are we a Christian Nation?

ch. 5

ch. 8

### Week Two

### Religion and Public Policy

-- September 1<sup>st</sup> (Monday) - **No Class**

*The Public Clash of Private Values*

ch. 1

-- September 3<sup>rd</sup> (Wednesday)

*The Public Clash of Private Values*

ch. 2

### Weeks Three and Four

### Religion and Crime Policy

--September 8<sup>th</sup> (Monday)

--September 10<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

*The Public Clash of Private Values*

ch. 12

--September 15<sup>th</sup> (Monday)

--September 17<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

*The Public Clash of Private Values*

ch. 11

**Meeting is Due by September 18<sup>th</sup>**

### Weeks Five and Six

### Religion and Healthcare Policy

-- September 22<sup>nd</sup> (Monday)

*The Public Clash of Private Values*

ch. 4

-- September 24<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

*The Public Clash of Private Values*

ch. 9

- September 29<sup>th</sup> (Monday)
- October 1<sup>st</sup> (Wednesday)

**Outline is Due**

**Weeks Seven and Eight**

**Religion and Foreign Policy**

- October 6<sup>th</sup> (Monday)  
*The Influence of Faith* ch. 1
- October 8<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)  
*The Influence of Faith* ch. 2

- October 13<sup>th</sup> (Monday)
- October 15<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

**Book Review Due**

**Weeks Nine and Ten**

**Religion and Education Policy**

- October 20<sup>th</sup> (Monday)  
*The Public Clash of Private Values* ch. 13
- October 22<sup>nd</sup> (Wednesday)  
*Does God Belong in Public Schools?* Part II

- October 27<sup>th</sup> (Monday)
- October 29<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)  
*Does God Belong in Public Schools?* Part III

**Weeks Eleven and Twelve**

**Religion and Civil Rights Policy**

- November 3<sup>rd</sup> (Monday)  
*The Public Clash of Private Values* ch. 7
- November 5<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

**Article Review Due**

- November 10<sup>th</sup> (Monday)
- November 12<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)  
*The Influence of Faith* ch. 3

**Weeks Thirteen**

**Religion and Social Welfare Policy**

- November 17<sup>th</sup> (Monday)
- November 19<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)  
*The Public Clash of Private Values* ch. 10  
*The Influence of Faith* chs. 8 & 9

**Rough Draft is Due on November 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Week Fourteen**

**Thanksgiving Break**

- November 24<sup>th</sup> (Monday) - **Thanksgiving Break**
- November 26<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) - **Thanksgiving Break**

## Week Fifteen

## Exam Review

-- December 1<sup>st</sup> (Monday) - Exam Review Session

-- December 3<sup>rd</sup> (Wednesday)

**Exam is Due**

## Week Sixteen

## Finals Week

**Analytical Paper is Due -- Monday December 8th by 10:00 am**

### IX. Assignments:

#### Meeting:

The student will meet with the professor by a specified date to discuss the topic of the student's paper. This meeting can be brief; although it must be substantial. If the student needs assistance with the topic choice, they should meet with the professor prior to this meeting.

#### Outline:

The student will meet with the professor by a specified date to discuss the progress of the student's paper. The student should have prepared an outline that details the flow of the paper. If the student needs assistance with this outline, they should meet with the professor prior to turning in the outline.

#### Article Review:

Students are required to write a short (1 to 2 pages) critical reaction to a selected article on religion and public policy. This article can be found in the library or their online system. The librarians are amazing and overly helpful. Go talk to them; they will help.

#### Article Review

Each student will select a journal article pertaining to religion and public policy. Students will then complete a 1-2 page paper (single spaced, 12-point font) illustrating their understanding of how the event relates to the concepts that we studied in class. Papers must be typed. The following criteria will be used to grade papers. Each paper must have these criteria in them to be considered complete. The **maximum** length of these papers is 3 pages.

1. **Summarize the article (50 pts):** If I did not have the article, I would want to be able to understand what your article is talking about. This portion should be no longer than **1 to 2** pages. Remember a good summary explains who, what, when, where and why.
2. **Critique of the article (50 pts):** This is crucial because this shows how you understand the concepts we study in class and your ability to relate these concepts to research. This portion should be no longer than **1 to 2** pages.

#### Article Requirements

The articles that you select to examine must meet the following requirements:

1. The article must be about an issue that relates to religion and public policy.
2. The article must be published in an academic journal and be peer-reviewed
3. You need to include a copy of the article with your paper. Failure to do so will result in a deduction of 10 points off of the total grade.

#### Book Review:

The book reviews should accomplish a number of things. First, they should demonstrate that you read the book, by descriptively reviewing what the author had to say, demonstrating that you have captured the main ideas presented in the assigned book. This descriptive component should account for at least 50% of your report. Second, they should explain why you think this book is useful for understanding the impact religion has on public policy. Finally, the report should demonstrate your ability to critique (as compared to criticize) the work.

The book review is 5 pages long.

The following sections are appropriate in a book review:

1. The book's thesis and main argument. In less than 1 page, you can discuss the book's main thesis and line of argument (in your words).
2. Overview/description. In this section, you discuss the main points addressed in the book. Avoid using "in chapter 1..." This section could be 2-3 pages long.
4. Critique section. In this section, you can discuss your perspective on the book. To the extent possible, articulate your critique of the text – positive or negative. For instance, if you dislike the book, you only need to state that once and you need to articulate why you dislike the book. In a critique of the book, you are expected to agree and/or disagree with specific arguments by the author.

**Exam:**

The exam will be in the form of short answer. The questions will require the student to know and understand not only information but also the concepts and perspectives that assist the student in making sense of the issues that affect religion and public policy; this information will be presented in the books, classroom discussions, and in lectures, which will require your active engagement with the readings and lectures.

**Rough Draft:**

The student will turn in to the professor a rough draft of their paper on a specified date. This rough draft should be substantial draft of the paper; it should include enough information that the professor is able to assess whether the student needs further assistance with the framing/construction of the paper.

**Analytical Paper:**

The student will complete an analytical paper on some religion and public policy topic of their choosing. The analytical paper will require the student to present the crucial elements required for writing a major paper on a specific issue in religion and public policy. This paper should be a comprehensive and detailed explanation to a posed analytical question of the specific topic. The analytical paper should be around 10 double-spaced pages. For the style of the paper, as long as it is consistent, MLA, APA, etc. are acceptable.

**Scale:** The analytical papers will be evaluated according to the following scale:

**(A) 90-100:** This is an analytical paper, which reflects a perceptive and thoughtful response to the assignment. It is well organized with excellent development of its ideas and reflects the writer's command of appropriate rhetorical strategies. The paper also will possess an element of creativity.

**(B) 80-89:** This is a very good analytical paper that fulfills the assignment and shows evidence of clear thought and good planning. It is well organized with good supporting details. The writing is fluent with only minor errors.

**(C) 70-79:** This is a satisfactory analytical paper, which fulfills the assignment and is adequately developed. The points are clear and coherent with relatively few errors, but the writer fails to demonstrate any particular strength that would distinguish an above-average paper.

**(D) 60-69:** This is a below-average analytical paper that fulfills the assignment, but exhibits major problems in development. It may have difficulty with the presentation of ideas and with organization of major points.

**(F) 1-59:** This is an analytical paper that relates to the topic but is so poorly presented that it fails to fulfill the assignment. It fails to present its basic ideas, either because of poor organization and/or lack of clarity

## **X. Student Rights and Responsibilities**

**Etiquette:** Although I will spend some of our class time lecturing, we will have many in-class discussions. In these discussions, you are encouraged to use your personal experiences and perspectives, as well as your understanding of the course material and current events. Direct personal attacks against others in the class are not permitted. Improper language is not permitted. Insulting anyone inside or outside the class on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, political belief, or national background is not permitted. Violations of these rules will be reflected in your grade and, if they continue, may result in disciplinary action by the University.

**Social Justice Statement:** Marshall University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and nondiscrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

**Disability Access:** Refer to Marshall University student disability policy and available services. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make proper arrangements with Disability Services.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance in this course is mandatory. The student's grade will be formally reduced for missing class. After three unexcused absences, the student's grade will be reduced a letter for each absence. After six or more absences, the student will receive an 'F' in the course. For successful completion of the learning objectives for this course, one must attend the lectures and participate in the class discussion.

**Makeup Work:** Makeup work and makeup tests will only be allowed if the student has an approved absence that is related to a University activity (see instructor for details). Students must arrange the date and time for the makeup with the instructor immediately upon return to class. If the student misses a test and fails to make it up on the scheduled day, the student will receive a zero for that assignment.

**Email:** Use the Marshall University student email system when corresponding with me. I frequently check e-mail (arthur133@marshall.edu). That is usually the best way to get in touch with me. Please stop by my office to see me if you need to do that. I am more than happy to meet with you if you need me to do that, just email me so we can set up a time. If you need me to get back to you within the same day, definitely contact me before 9PM. I cannot promise I will look at e-mail after that.

**Late Work Policy:** Late work is not accepted unless the student has a university-recognized excused absence. Exams can be made up only for excused absences. Marshall's official policy regarding excused absences can be found on pp 84-85 of the Undergraduate Catalog, [http://www.marshall.edu/ucomm/files/web/UG\\_14-15\\_published.pdf](http://www.marshall.edu/ucomm/files/web/UG_14-15_published.pdf)

**Help:** Marshall University provides students assistance in developing writing, computer, and studying skills.

The Writing Center is located in Drinko Library. The phone number for the Writing Center is 696-6254. Office hours are posted at the center's web address, <http://www.marshall.edu/writingcenter/>

The writing center uses a web-based appointment system, which students can use to make or modify their own appointments: <https://marshall.mywconline.com/>

Student Computing Services are found throughout the campus, but particularly at the Drinko Library. Please contact the Help Desk, 696-3200, or [helpdesk@marshall.edu](mailto:helpdesk@marshall.edu). Information about the help desk is offered at <http://www.marshall.edu/computing/helpdesk/>

Students are eligible for up to two hours per week, per subject, of free Tutoring Services. Paid tutors are also available. Tutoring services are located in Laidley Hall. The number for tutoring services is 696-3169. Their web address is <https://www.marshall.edu/uc/tutoring-services/>

**Disclaimers:**

1. This syllabus is subject to minimal adjustments at the discretion of the instructor.
2. This course addresses sensitive material some may find objectionable. If you are uncomfortable discussing these issues, please see me so that we can work out some sort of substitution.