

**POLS 410: The Christian and Politics
Concordia University Wisconsin
Spring 2018**

**Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
Loeber 101D**

Professor Jeff Walz, Ph.D.
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Office Hours in LU 205D:
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.; 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

CUW Mission

Concordia University Wisconsin is a Lutheran higher education community committed to helping students develop in mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and in the world.

Political Science Program Mission

The mission of the Political Science program is to provide students with a generalist knowledge base of the field, encourage students to serve others in the public square within the context of their faith, and prepare students to pursue professions in politics, government, law, and/or graduate study.

Professor Information

Jeff Walz, Ph.D.
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Communication Policy

Office Hours: By appointment

The best way to communicate with me electronically is at Jeff.Walz@cuw.edu.

I will respond to email within 24 hours, except during University breaks.

Required Resources: Texts

The three works below are required and are available at the University bookstore. Be sure to both purchase your personal copy of each work as early in the course as possible and bring the appropriate work to class for discussion purposes! You may not share books. A failure to adhere to these textbook requirements will seriously hinder your class participation, and thus negatively impact your participation grade.

Dreher, Rod. 2017. *The Benedict Option*. New York: Penguin Random House.

Fowler, Robert Booth et al. 2014. *Religion and Politics in America, 5th Edition*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. 1995. *Render Unto Caesar . . . And Unto God*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House.

A Bible.

Course Description

POLS 410 THE CHRISTIAN AND POLITICS examines the relationship between religion and politics in the United States and how Christians may respond to and be a part of the public square. Prerequisites for Political Science minors: POLS 101 and POLS 201. 3 credits

Course Objectives

The Christian and Politics examines the important connection between two words not often found together: Christian and politics. For some, the words “politics” and “government” suggest corruption, lying, and abuse of power. In the Bible, however, the Lord Jesus Christ encourages His believers to take an active, supportive role in the affairs of the state. Toward that end, this course will address several objectives:

1. To explore what we mean by the link between religion and politics. Even though the United States was founded in part on the principal of religious neutrality, religious people and groups have not forsaken political involvement. Rather, consistent with De Tocqueville’s observation, Americans have taken their religion into the public square.
2. To investigate various approaches, or models, to the church and the state. Based on Niebuhr’s classic model, Christians since America was founded have had differing interpretations of religion and politics. We will probe each of these models for their strengths and weaknesses and usefulness today.
3. To learn more about the Lutheran model of church and state. Termed the “two-kingdom” perspective, Lutherans have historically engaged in a careful balancing act between the earthly and heavenly kingdoms.
4. To examine and critique current scholarly work on religion and politics: Robert Booth Fowler et al.’s *Religion and Politics in America*; LCMS’s *Render Unto Caesar . . . and Unto God*; and Rod Dreher’s *The Benedict Option*.
5. To explore the potential for student participation in political affairs, in the context of the 2018 elections. Devoted Christians are essential to the maintenance of the political square.

Credit Hours: 3 credit hours

Course Prerequisites: None

Teaching Strategies

The methods used to facilitate learning include: readings, quizzes and exams, plenary and small-group discussion, written assignments, experiential learning and oral presentations.

Course & Instructor Policies: Attendance, Participation & Learning Environment

Each student is required to: attend the entirety of each class (Three participation points may be deducted for each absence; two participation points may be deducted for each late arrival.); complete all assigned readings by their due dates; participate in class discussions and exercises; take all assigned quizzes and exams; and complete all written assignments.

*****The following are prohibited during class time: texting and the use of laptops or similar electronic devices.***** This will allow all of us to concentrate and focus on the political discussion at hand. The only exception to this is use of electronic versions of the Patterson text.

This will require that each student study 3-5 hours per week for this class!

All written work is expected to be typed, double-spaced, with one-and-one-quarter inch margins. To encourage well-attended and thus interactive, productive, and efficient classes, students who attend the entirety of each class on time, and hand in each assignment on time, will receive a **BONUS** of 15 points!

Attendance is essential to student success in this course. The professor will abide by CUW's attendance policy with respect to reporting student absences and course withdrawal. It is important to communicate with the professor regarding class absences. You are responsible for any work or information you miss when not in class.

Thoughtful contribution during class discussions is expected from all students, in order to enhance the learning experience. You are expected to be prepared for class by having reading and written assignments completed on time. Assignments are considered late if they are turned in after the start of class and you have not contacted the professor prior to the deadline; you will lose 10% of the total points each day the assignment is late. Arriving late to class when an assignment is due will result in a loss of 10% of points.

A safe, productive learning environment is a top priority for this class. Students are encouraged to be open and express their opinions in a respectful manner. Additionally, active listening and non-disruptive behavior is a requirement (e.g., cell phones silenced, no side-talking, no texting, full attention, etc.). Mutual respect between students and professor will be observed by arriving to class on time, concentrating on learning and making this course an academic priority. Students are expected to abide by the policies outlined in the CUW student code of conduct.

Political Science Program Policies

Honor Code Statement: Plagiarism and cheating are defined in the Student Handbook (under Academic Dishonesty); the Political Science Program at CUW will tolerate neither. A first violation of the honor code in a particular class will result in a ZERO on the assignment with a chance for re-doing the assignment left to the discretion of the instructor. A second violation of the honor code will result in a WITHDRAWAL/FAILURE from the course.

CUW Policies

CUW Disability Policy: In accordance with the Americans and Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination and assured services and accommodations that provide equal access to the activities and programs of the university. Students with a documented disability who require accommodation in order to obtain equal access to this course should inform the instructor, and must also contact Disability Support Services at (262) 243-4299 or <https://www.cuw.edu/Departments/lrc/dss.html>

CUW Academic Integrity Policy: CUW expects all students to display honest, ethical behavior at all times and under all circumstances. Academic dishonesty is defined as follows:

Cheating: includes, but is not limited to: a) the use of unauthorized assistance in taking any type of test or completing any type of classroom assignment; b) assisting another student in cheating on a test or class assignment, including impersonation of another student.

Plagiarism: includes, but is not limited to: a) failure to give full and clear acknowledgement of the source of any idea that is not your own; b) handing in the same assignment for two different courses without the consent of the instructors.

Fabrication: the forgery, alteration, or misuse of any University academic document, record, or instrument of identification.

Academic Misconduct: intentionally or recklessly interfering with teaching, research, and/or other academic functions.

Sanctions: Faculty members who find evidence of academic dishonesty have sole discretion to determine the penalty, using their professional judgment. This can include a failing grade in the course, or removal of the student from the course. Additional sanctions will be imposed when a student is found to have violated the academic integrity policy more than once; these sanctions may include suspension or expulsion from the university.

Relationship to the Curriculum

This course is a requirement for graduation with a political science major or minor and fulfills a University elective for other students.

Connection to CUW Mission

This course addresses CUW's university-wide learning outcomes at several points: effective communication, analytical reasoning & scientific literacy, creative thinking, inquiry & lifelong learning [Liberal Arts]; Political Science theory, Political Science [Disciplinary Thinking]; citizenship, cultural understanding, servant leadership, info & technology literacy [Global Citizenship]; all within the context of a Biblical worldview.

Political Science Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

This course addresses the following SLOs: #1 Knowledge Base of Political Science, #2 Research Methods in Political Science, #3 Critical Thinking Skills in Political Science, #4 Application of Political Science, #5 Values in Political Science, #6 Info & Technology in Political Science, #7 Communication Skills, and #8 Sociopolitical & International Awareness.

Grades will be determined as follows:

Participation	100 points
Quizzes	245 points
Current Events Paper	20 points
Reaction Papers (3)	60 points
Debate	25 points
Critiques (2)	150 points
Final Project	120 points
Total:	720 points

Course grades (out of **720** total points) will be based on the following point and percentage breakdowns:

A's	(90% and above)
B's	(80% to 89%)
C's	(70% to 79%)
D's	(60% to 69%)

Accumulating a grade of less than 60% will result in a course grade of F. Please keep a record of your grades.

Grades of incomplete will be given in this class only when a student, due to illness, military service, hardship (as determined by the instructor), or death in the immediate family, is unable to complete the requirements.

Makeup exams will be given for illness only when the instructor can verify the illness through a nurse and/or doctor and/or appropriate University channels. **If you must miss class due to an illness, you must present documentation for it to be considered an excused absence.** Each student may have one conference-related excused absence. Make-ups for any other reason are at the instructor's discretion, but will be hard to obtain. Make-ups must be requested prior to the exam.

The papers are due at class time on the assigned dates. **Late papers & exercises will not be accepted!** All papers must be numbered, and stapled in the upper left-hand corner. A failure to do either of these will result in a full letter grade penalty. **All essays must be typed and double-spaced, with one-and-one-quarter inch margins.** Please do not use title pages.

If you will be missing class to participate in any school-related activity (athletics, band, etc.), you must give me **written notice** of the absence **prior** to the event. Otherwise, your absence will be considered unexcused.

Academic dishonesty, such as cheating or plagiarism, will not be tolerated. If you have any questions about either of these, or anything about the course, I strongly encourage you to come in and see me!

In accordance with the Americans and Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination and assured services and accommodations that provide equal access to the activities and programs of the university. Students with a documented disability who require accommodation in order to obtain equal access to this course should inform the instructor, and must also contact Disability Support Services at (262) 243-4299 or <https://www.cuw.edu/Departments/lrc/dss.html>.

Participation (100 points)

Participation is central to this course! I will grade your participation based on the guidelines below.

90-100 points: You come to each class prepared to discuss the readings, their integration with earlier literature, and your analysis of them. Your comments are pertinent, insightful, and build upon literature and discussion from earlier in the course. Furthermore, you *consistently* build upon other students' comments in a thoughtful, respectful, and productive manner.

80-89 points: You come to each class prepared to discuss the readings, their integration with earlier literature, and your analysis of them. Your comments are pertinent and insightful. *At times* you build upon other students' comments in a thoughtful, respectful, and productive manner.

70-79 points: You come to each class and are *sometimes* prepared to discuss the readings, their integration with earlier literature, and your analysis of them. Your comments *at times* are pertinent and insightful.

60-69 points: You come to each class and are *rarely* prepared to discuss the readings, their integration with earlier literature, and your analysis of them. Your comments *at times* are pertinent and insightful.

Less than 60 points: You do not come to each class and you are *rarely* prepared to discuss the readings, their integration with earlier literature, and your analysis of them. Furthermore, you make *very little* effort to participate in class discussions.

Quizzes (245)

Quizzes will consist of questions from readings due that week.

Short Papers (80 points)

Some weeks this semester you will be produce a paper responding an individualized topic assigned by your instructor.

Debate (25 points)

You and a colleague will debate one time during the semester.

Critiques (150 points)

You will write critiques on the final two works.

Final Project (120 points)

TBD

Course Activities and Assignments

Jan. 29	Getting Started: Intros, Niebuhr, Syllabus, Faith and Politics In 2018	Purchase Books Current Events Paper due
Feb. 5	Theories of Religion, Culture, and & Politics; Religion & Political Culture	Read Fowler chapters 12 & 1 Reaction Paper due (All)
Feb. 12	Christianity & its Branches; Judaism, Islam, & Others	Read Fowler 2 & 3
Feb. 19	Voting and Religion in American Politics; Organized Groups	Read Fowler 4 & 5 Reaction Paper due (Group A) Debate #1
February 26	Religion and Elites; Religion, Civil Society, and Culture	Read Fowler 6 & 7 Reaction Paper due (Group B) Debate #2
March 5	Religion in the Legal System; Church and State in Court	Read Fowler 8 & 9 Reaction Paper due (Group A) Debate #3
March 12	Spring Break – No Class!	
March 19	Latino and African-Americans; Gender, Religion, & Politics	Read Fowler 10 & 11 Reaction Paper due (Group B) Debate #4
March 26	LCMS in Society 1 No Class on Friday, March 30 (Good Friday)	Render Unto Caesar 1-54
April 2	LCMS in Society 2 No Class on Easter Monday, April 2	Render Unto Caesar 55-92 LCMS Analysis Due
April 9	Benedict Option I	Read TBA
April 16	Benedict Option II	Read TBA
April 23	Benedict Option III	Read TBA On God's Side Critique due

April 30 **Film Festival**

May 7 &14 Final Project Seminar

Final Project TBD