(SU2015 U16 Hist 3675 31)

Religion, Race & the Culture Wars

Steven P. Miller, Ph.D.

Washington University in St. Louis (University College)
Summer Session 3 (2015), ONLINE (6/8/15-7/31/15)

Email: spmiller@wustl.edu (the best way to reach me)
Phone: 314-853-5495 (for emergencies only; no after 8:30 p.m., please!)

About me: I have taught U.S. and World history at Washington University and Webster University since 2006. I am the author of Billy Graham and the Rise of the Republican South (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) and the recently published The Age of Evangelicalism: America’s Born-Again Years (Oxford University Press, 2014). Along with my wife and two kids, I live in the Tower Grove South neighborhood of St. Louis city.

Course Description and Themes
Religion and politics often are seen as topics best avoided in polite company. Yet matters of faith have exerted a powerful influence in American public life. For the last two decades, analysts have debated the existence of “culture wars” dividing Americans on issues of values, lifestyles, and beliefs. This course traces the relationship between American religion and politics from the Cold War through the Civil Rights Movement and up to the present. We will explore how faith has driven diverse, often conflicting forms of political engagement. We will devote particular attention to civil rights activism (and opposition) in the 1950s and 1960s and to the growing prominence of evangelical Christianity since the 1970s. Case studies include civil rights leaders Martin Luther King, Jr., and Fannie Lou Hamer, as well as influential evangelicals like Billy Graham and Marabel Morgan. The course will allow students to critique interpretations of the place of religion in American life, exploring links (as well as differences) between the recent past and present headlines.

Required Books/Readings (Please let me know if you are using the Kindle edition of either book. Thank you.)

- Shorter readings posted on, or linked via, Blackboard course home page in dated folders. I have made every effort to keep these readings balanced by week.
### HANDY WORDS OF ADVICE ABOUT THIS ONLINE COURSE

1. Before doing anything else, take a moment to do the following:
   - First, orient yourself to the course website. Take a brief tour before jumping in. As you will notice, the weekly folders (Week 1 and so on) are your gateway to content.
   - Make sure that all materials are loading properly. Check your web browser, Java, and Adobe Flash Player settings for necessary updates. Blackboard functions best with the Mozilla Firefox browser. Make sure your computer can open .pdf files. If you do not have Adobe installed in your computer, download the free version of Adobe Reader [here](#).
   - *Technical Support*  This is a fully online, technology-based course. Because computers are not perfect, plan on having technical issues *at least once* during the term. While this can cause some incredibly frustrating moments, the overall benefits of the technology do outweigh any issues that may arise. Just be ready to contact technical support in the event of difficulties. Send an email to blackboardhelp@wustl.edu with any questions/problems concerning Blackboard. (This is technical support for any problems you experience within the _Blackboard_ classroom only, not other external software). For additional Blackboard resources and assistance, visit the Blackboard Answers & Support page <[https://ucollege.wustl.edu/node/1333>](https://ucollege.wustl.edu/node/1333) on the University College Website.
   - Then, return to the Course Information and Introduction folder. Read the syllabus thoroughly. If this is your first online course, you might pay special attention to the information about “netiquette” and participation (see information below Assignment #1 in the syllabus).
   - Think about your ideal calendar for completing weekly course materials. Here is an approach that would work well for most weeks: Dedicate the first part of the week to engaging course materials and participating in the online discussion(s). (The weekly discussions are much more rewarding when students are participating in them well before the end of the week.) During the second part of the week, work on the written assignment. (Keep in mind that our “weeks” run from Monday to Sunday.)
   - Finally, look at the Week 1 folder. You will find that week’s activities, course notes, non-textbook readings, and assignment. For each week, begin by browsing the activities. Then, work your way through the course notes.

2. Keep in mind the following:
   - Your life will be a lot easier if you work your way through the weekly materials, step-by-step, engaging the readings and (when feasible) the videos as they appear in the course notes.
   - Your life also will be a lot easier if you stay on schedule. Staying on schedule also means not working ahead. The course takes the full semester to complete.
   - Please have the textbook in hand before you begin the course. The textbook is your friend in times of need. You are expected to read the assigned textbook passages, of course. On another level, though, the textbook also is a resource for details that, because of space and time constraints, might not appear in other course materials. Thus, you should consult the textbooks for all written assignments.
3. Questions or concerns?
- When in doubt, first check the syllabus. It will remind you of the flow of the course.
- If you have additional questions, no worries! I am always available via email, which I will check several times each weekday. In the case of a particularly pressing situation, my cell phone number is on the syllabus. No calls after 8:30 p.m. CST, please.

Assignments
#1 Online Participation and Discussions, beginning at the start of each week (20% of grade, or 200 points/1000; calculated twice; after Week 4 and at the end of the term)
- The Blackboard course page is your gateway to participation in the class. Your instructor can see how often you log in to the course and how involved you are in discussions.
- Discussions are the primary way in which students can demonstrate their engaged participation in the course. (Responding to instructor emails in a timely manner is another way.) Each week features one or more online discussions concerning course content. I will post specific questions or prompts, accessible via the “Discussions” link.
- Typically, I will offer several rounds of discussion questions. You do not need to respond to every question. My concern is with the quality of posts, not the quantity of them. Generally, my expectation is that in each discussion you will contribute at least one substantive response to one of my questions and at least one substantive (and respectful!) response to a classmate’s contribution. Keep your responses succinct (2-5 polished sentences) and on point. Finally, you always are welcome to raise further questions as part of your discussion contribution. As the discussion progresses, we may very well wander away from the specific discussion questions. This is ok—good, even!—so long as we stay on topic.
- As noted above, the weekly discussions are much more rewarding when students are participating in them well before the end of the week.
- A few words on “netiquette”:
  o Keep in mind that our online discussions are the equivalent of face-to-face discussions. Use the same degree of common sense and courtesy that you would use in the classroom. Please be respectful of the social, economic, ethnic, racial, cultural, religious, lifestyle, and political differences that are present in all University College courses. As you know, all electronic communication is a permanent record.
  o Communicate in complete, proofread sentences. Check spelling before you post. Avoid using ALL CAPS, which is difficult to read and comes across as shouting. Profanity or similarly inappropriate language is not permitted in online discussions.
  o Sign your name at the bottom of all posts.

#2 Reflections, four in total, due at end of relevant weeks (20%)
- When prompted, prepare a brief (600-800 words) reflection on major themes for that week. I will provide prompts. This is not a formal essay, but do pay attention to clarity and grammar. Demonstrate that you are taking into account relevant course materials from the week.

#3 Response essays on God’s Long Summer and The Age of Evangelicalism (40% total—20% each)
- These somewhat longer essays will ask you to analyze each book in light of course themes.

#4 Final exam take-home essay (20%)
- This capstone assignment will ask you to respond to the culture wars thesis (outlined throughout the term) in light of course readings and themes.
Grading Scale:

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<td>A</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
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Accommodations and Resources

- Washington University is committed to providing equal opportunity for students with disabilities. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) assists students with disabilities by providing services and arranging for reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access and equal academic opportunities. Students wishing to request services or accommodations must register and provide appropriate documentation to the DRC at cornerstone.wustl.edu. The DRC serves as a resource and advisor to students with disabilities and welcomes opportunities to consult with students, families, faculty, and staff. [Source: University College Online Teaching Manual]

- I encourage you to take advantage of the many resources offered by the Writing Center: www.artsci.wustl.edu/~writing, 314-935-4981, writing@artsci.wustl.edu.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

- Students are bound by the University College policy on academic integrity in all aspects of this course. All students are responsible for following the rules outlined in the document regarding the university academic integrity policy: http://ucollege.wustl.edu/faculty/academic_integrity. [Source: University College Online Teaching Manual]
Course Schedule

Week 1 (6/8-6/14)*: Talking about Religion and Politics
READING (in addition to course notes):
- Robert N. Bellah, “Civil Religion in America” (1967)
- Michael Kazin, “The Father of America’s ‘Civil Religion’ Has Died” (2013)
VIDEO (accessible online):
- Clips showing the spectacle quality of American public religion
(Discussion, Reflection) *For this online course, our “weeks” run from Mondays to Sundays.

READING:
- Norman Vincent Peale, “Let the Church Speak Up for Capitalism” (1950)
- Billy Graham, “A Christian America” (1955)
- Reinhold Niebuhr, “Varieties of Religious Revival” (1955)
- Bob Dylan, lyrics to “With God on Our Side” (1963)
- Abraham Joshua Heschel on the Vietnam War (1967)
- Mary Daly, “After the Death of God the Father” (1971)
VIDEO:
- Billy Graham sermon (1958); Joan Baez sings “With God on Our Side” (1965)
(Discussion, Reflection)

Week 3 (6/22-6/28): The Sixties Reformation
READING:
- Michael Kazin and Maurice Isserman, from America Divided (2008)
- Amanda Porterfield, from The Transformation of American Religion (2001)
VIDEO:
- Clip from God in America (2011)
(Discussion, Reflection)

Week 4 (6/29-7/5): The Civil Rights Movement: Divided By Faith
READING:
- Martin Luther King, Jr., “Pilgrimage to Nonviolence” (1960); and “Letter from Birmingham City Jail” (1963)
- “Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Statement of Purpose” (1960)
- “Billy Graham Makes Plea for an End to Intolerance,” Life, 1 October 1956
- Jerry Falwell, “Ministers and Marches” (1965)
VIDEO:
- Short clip from Eyes on the Prize (1987); clip from God in America
(Discussion, Reflection)
Week 5 (7/6-7/12)  
**God’s Long Summer**

**READING:**
- *God’s Long Summer* (1997)

**VIDEO/AUDIO:**
- Fannie Lou Hamer at the 1964 Democratic National Convention  
  (Discussion, Response Essay on *God’s Long Summer*)

Week 6 (7/13-7/19)  
**Born Again!**

**READING:**
- Tom Wolfe, “The ‘Me’ Decade and the Third Great Awakening” (1976)
- Marabel Morgan, from *The Total Woman* (1973)
- “If the Moral Majority Has Its Way, You’d Better Start Praying” (*New York Times*, 1980);  
  “They have labeled Moral Majority the Extreme Right because we speak out against Extreme Wrong!” (*New York Times*, 1981)
- James Davison Hunter, “America at War with Itself” (1992)

**VIDEO:**
- Trailer for *A Thief in the Night* (1972); clip from *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (1979)  
  (Discussion)

Week 7 (7/20-7/26)  
**An Age of Evangelicalism?**

**READING:**

**VIDEO:**
- Clip from *God in America*  
  (Discussion, Response Essay on *The Age of Evangelicalism*)

Week 8 (7/27-7/31)  
**New Actors and Old Questions**

**READING:**
- Diana Eck, from *A New Religious America* (2011)
- *Religion & Politics* article of your choosing  
  (Discussion of chosen articles, Final Exam Essay factoring in the week’s readings)