

THE FIRST AMENDMENT AND RELIGION IN AMERICA

PSCI 291/291W
Professor Jackson
Fall 2020

SYLLABUS: ASSIGNED READINGS, LECTURES, AND Q&A SESSIONS

Required material: All assigned readings are posted as .pdf files on Blackboard under “Course Materials.” There is no assigned textbook. See later in this page for the required “course components.”

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peacefully to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

--First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States

This course is an examination of the special articulation and role of religion in the United States, particularly as expressed in the two religion clauses of the First Amendment. We will examine some of the key historical and political antecedents to the Constitution’s formulation of religious freedom, and we will read closely and critically key decisions (usually, but not exclusively, from the Supreme Court of the United States) that have shaped, and continue to shape, the application of the First Amendment’s construct to American civil and social life.

Each week (with exceptions noted on this Syllabus and as detailed further in the first posted Announcement for the course on Blackboard as well as the Introductory Lecture on Panopto under “Access to Tools” on Blackboard), there will be three “components” to this course:

1. Assigned readings (identified below), that you should read and study before either 2. or 3. below.
2. A class lecture (or lectures) on Panopto video that you should watch via a Blackboard link. The video(s) of the lecture(s) will be posted not later than 48 hours prior to the “question and answer” (“Q&A”) session for that week.
3. A weekly Q&A session, on Zoom, starting on the “assigned” class day (Tuesday) at 3:30 pm and running up to 30 minutes.

In recognition that this is a four-credit course, in lieu of exams, there will be two essay assignments, one due on October 20th and the other due on December 8th. (The assignments for those enrolled in PSCI 291W are different.) Further details of these assignments can be found in the respective Introductory Lecture for PSCI 291 or PSCI 291W.

September 1 **Overture**

Richard Posner, “Faith-Based Morality and Public Policy” (and related material), <http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2004/12/>

Stanley Fish, “Liberalism and Secularism” (2007),
<http://fish.blogs.nytimes.com>

Biblical Antecedents & Early Christianity: Covenant and Separation

William S. Green & Gary Porton, “Religious Resources for Political Culture: The Case of Judaism,” in J. Neusner, ed., Religion and the Political Order: Politics in Classical and Contemporary Christianity, Islam, and Judaism (Atlanta, Scholars Press, 1996), pp. 109-20

Exodus 19-20; Exodus 24; Exodus 31; Deuteronomy 17:14-20; Judges 8:22-23, 9:1-15; I Samuel 8; Daniel 2-3; Matthew 22:15-21

Bruce Chilton, “Primitive and Early Christianity,” in J. Neusner, ed., God’s Rule: The Politics of World Religions (Georgetown U. Press, 2003), pp. 37-60

September 8 **Europe & Christianity: Persecution to Toleration**

Harold J. Berman and John Witte, Jr., “Church and State,” The Encyclopedia of Religion 3, pp. 489-95

William S. Green, “Religion and Society in America,” in J. Neusner, ed., World Religions in America: An Introduction [Revised and Expanded Edition] (Westminster/John Knox Press, 2000), pp. 246-55

Perez Zagorin, How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West (Princeton U. Press 2003), pp. 1-13

John Noonan, Jr. & Edward Gaffney, Jr., Religious Freedom: History, Cases, and Other Materials on the Interaction of Religion and Government (Foundation Press 2001), pp. 117-31 (hereafter, “Noonan & Gaffney”)

Charter of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations (1663)

Noonan & Gaffney, pp. 131-37
John Locke, A Letter Concerning Toleration (1689)
Bernard Lewis, What Went Wrong: Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response (Oxford U. Press, 2002), pp. 96-116

September 15 **The Colonial Experience & Constitutional Development**

John Witte, Jr. & Joel A. Nichols, Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment (Westview Press, 3rd ed. 2011), pp. 21-40 (hereafter “Witte & Nichols”)
Noonan & Gaffney, pp. 158-65
Thomas Jefferson, Notes on Virginia (Query XVII) (1784)
Noonan & Gaffney, pp. 169-73
James Madison, A Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments (1785)
Noonan & Gaffney, pp. 178-200
George Washington, First Inaugural Address (1789)
Congressional Resolution: Day of Thanksgiving (1789)
George Washington, Farewell Address (1796)
Thomas Jefferson, Letter to the Danbury Baptists (1802)
James Madison, Detached Memoranda (circa 1817)

September 22 **The American Experience Through the Application of the First Amendment to States**

Noah Feldman, Divided by God: America’s Church-State Problem—and What we Should do About It (Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2005), pp. 53-56 (hereafter “Feldman, Divided by God”)
“People v. Ruggles,” 8 Johns. R. 290 (NY 1811)
“Barnes v. First Parish in Falmouth” (Mass. 1810) (Noonan & Gaffney, pp. 222-31)
Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (Book I, Chapter XVII) (1835)
Witte & Nichols, pp. 118-22 & 130
“Reynolds v. United States,” 98 U.S. 145 (1879)
* Note on “Cleveland v. United States”
“Pierce v. Society of Sisters,” 268 U.S. 510 (1925)
“Cantwell v. Connecticut,” 310 U.S. 296 (1940)
*Note on “Murdock v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania”

September 29 **Free Exercise at the Supreme Court**

- “Sherbert v. Verner,” 374 U.S. 398 (1963)
- * Note on “McGowan v. Maryland” and “Braunfeld v. Brown”
 - * Note on “Wisconsin v. Yoder”
 - * Note on “United States v. Lee”
- “Employment Division, Dept. of Human Resources of Oregon v. Smith,” 494 U.S. 872 (1990)
- * Note on “Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye, Inc. v. Hialeah”
 - * Note on “City of Boerne v. Flores” and Historical Analysis of Free Exercise

Congress Enters the Fray

- Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993
- * Note on “City of Boerne v. Flores” and Section 5 of the 14th Amendment
 - * Note on “Gonzales v. O Centro Espirita Beneficente Uniao do Vegetal”
- Religious Exemption Law Map of the United States
- Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000
- * Note on “Cutter v. Wilkinson”

Free Exercise and Corporations

“Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc.,” 573 U.S. ____ (2014)

October 6 **No Video Lecture; No Q&A Session (Work on First Essay)**

No further assigned reading.

October 13 **No Video Lecture; No Q&A Session (Work on First Essay)**

No further assigned reading.

October 20 **First Essay Assignment Due**

“Religion” and its “Exercise”

“United States v. Seeger,” 380 U.S. 163 (1965)

October 27 **Perspectives on the Free Exercise of Religion**

Martha Nussbaum, Liberty of Conscience: In Defense of America's Tradition of Religious Equality (Basic Books 2008), pp. 116-20, 151-58, 164-74 (hereafter "Nussbaum, Liberty of Conscience")

Kent Greenawalt, Religion and the Constitution Volume I: Free Exercise and Fairness (Princeton University Press 2006), pp. 124-56

Paul Horwitz, "The Hobby Lobby Moment," 128 Harv. L. Rev. (2014), pp. 154-189

"Thomas v. Review Board," 450 U.S. 707 (1981)

*Note on "United States v. Ballard"

November 3 **The Establishment Clause and State Aid to Religious Schools**

Feldman, Divided by God, pp. 57-71, 86-92

"Everson v. Bd. of Education," 330 U.S. 1 (1947)

"Lemon v. Kurtzman," 403 U.S. 602 (1971)

"Zelman v. Simmons-Harris," 536 U.S. 639 (2002)

Tax Exemptions to Religious Organizations

"Walz v. Tax Comm. of the City of New York," 397 U.S. 664 (1970)

"Standing" and the Ability to Challenge Monetary Aid

*Note on Taxpayer Standing

November 10 **Prayers, Pledges, and the First Amendment**

"West Virginia State Bd. of Education v. Barnette," 319 U.S. 624 (1943)

"Lee v. Weisman," 505 U.S. 577 (1992)

"Town of Greece v. Galloway," 572 U.S. ____ (2014)

*Note on "Newdow v. Rio Linda Union School District"

Commandments and Symbols

"Stone v. Graham," 449 U.S. 39 (1980)

"Allegheny County v. Greater Pittsburgh ACLU," 492 U.S. 573 (1989)

November 17 **Commandments and Symbols (cont.)**

"Van Orden v. Perry," 545 U.S. 677 (2005) (including "Appendix")

"McCreary County v. ACLU of Kentucky," 545 U.S. 844 (2005)

Whitte & Nichols, pp. 231-34
“American Legion v. American Humanist Assn.,” 588 U.S. ____ (June 20, 2019)

Religious Speech and the Establishment Clause

“Widmar v. Vincent,” 454 U.S. 263 (1981)
“Good News Club v. Milford Central School District,” 533 U.S. 98 (2001)
*Note on “Faith Center Church Evangelistic Ministries v. Glover”
*Note on “Christian Legal Society v. Martinez”

Exercise vs. Establishment

“Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbia, Inc. v. Comer,” 582 U.S. ____ (2017)
*Note on “Locke v. Davey”
*Note on “Espinoza v. Montana Dept. of Revenue”

Exercise *and* Establishment

“Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church & School v. EEOC,” 565 U.S. 171 (2012)
*Note on “Our Lady of Guadalupe School v. Morrissey-Berru”

November 24 **Academic Views on the Supreme Court and the Religion Clauses**

Michael W. McConnell, “Religious Freedom at a Crossroad,” 59 U. Chicago Law Review (1992), pp. 115-94
Kathleen M. Sullivan, “Religion and Liberal Democracy,” 59 U. Chicago Law Review (1992), pp. 195-223
Noah Feldman, “A Church-State Solution,” NY Times Magazine (July 3, 2005)
Andrew Koppelman, “And I Don’t Care What It Is: Religious Neutrality in American Law,” 39 Pepperdine L. Rev. (2013), pp. 1115-1124
Nussbaum, Liberty of Conscience, pp. 225-32
Steven Smith, “The Last Chapter?,” 41 Pepperdine L. Rev. (2014), pp. 903-936
John Witte, Jr. & Joel Nichols, “ ‘Come Now Let Us Reason Together’; Restoring Religious Freedom in America and Abroad,” 92 Notre Dame L. Rev. 427 (2016)

December 1 **No Video Lecture; No Q&A Session (Work on Second Essay)**

No further assigned reading.

December 8 **Second Essay Due; Concluding Thoughts and Discussion**

No further assigned reading.

Additional course information:

Academic honesty: All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. More information is available at:

www.rochester.edu/college/honesty

The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the Office of Disability Resources at:

[http://disability@rochester.edu](mailto:disability@rochester.edu); (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.