

University of Arkansas at Little Rock
School of Public Affairs
Fall 2016
Ross Hall 119, T/Th 9:25-10:40am

Dr. Rebecca Glazier
Ross Hall 614
Office Hours: Wed. 10:00am-11:30am
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POLS 4341/5341 Religion and Electoral Politics

Course Syllabus



Description: This course analyzes the role of religion in politics by examining the beliefs and behaviors of religious individuals and institutions. In particular, we explore the role that religion and religious groups have played in American elections. This is also a research practicum course, and students in the course are required to participate in hands-on scholarly research. Students will work with religious groups in the Little Rock community to collect and analyze information about religious and political beliefs and behaviors. Students will analyze this data and draw conclusions in an original research paper.

Course goals: In this course, students are expected to gain substantive knowledge about religion and politics through the study of theories, facts, and cases, and through observing and interacting with religious believers and organizations. One of the major purposes of this course is to provide students with unique opportunities to conduct original research and to engage with the religious community in Little Rock. At the end of this course, students should be able to thoughtfully analyze issues of religion and politics and express their analysis through written and verbal communication. Students will also gain experience designing and conducting empirical research, improve their writing, apply critical thinking and analytic skills to challenging readings, and gain experience working in groups, discussing complex and controversial topics, analyzing qualitative and quantitative data, and presenting findings and arguments in a professional manner.

Required readings:

- American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us. Robert D. Putnam and David E. Campbell, Simon & Schuster, 2010.
- Scholarly articles and readings posted online.

Course assignments and grading standards: Letter grades will be based on the traditional scale (90-100 is an A, 80-89 is a B, 70-79 is a C, 60-69 is a D, and below 60 is an F). There will be no opportunities for extra credit. Course assignments and their percentage of the total grade are as follows:

- Participation: 15%
- Critical response papers: 15%
- Congregation report: 10%
- Data collection and compilation: 15%
- Hypothesis Testing Assignment (two parts): 10%
- Final Paper: 35%

Expectations: Students are expected to attend all lectures on time, have the assigned readings completed by the beginning of class each day, participate in class discussions, complete all course assignments on time, and ask questions. Students are expected to be respectful in their interactions with the professor and with their fellow students. Students are required to have reliable access to the Internet. Cell phones should be turned off in class and the owner of any cell phone that rings will be required to bring treats for the rest of the class.

Email policy:

The best way to get a hold of me is through email. If you want to receive a reply, please make sure to 1) put a reasonably informative subject in the subject line, 2) address the email to Dr. or Professor Glazier, and 3) close with your name. Please feel free to ask me any questions about the course, but out of courtesy please check the syllabus and the course website to see if the answer is already available. If you want to make any special arrangements or for any reason want me to remember something, please send it in an email. If I don't have it in email, it never happened.

Attendance policy:

Participation is a critical part of this course, and constitutes 15% of your final grade. If you are not in class, then you cannot participate. You get two free misses without consequence. Use them wisely (or not at all). If you miss three class meetings, your participation grade drops to a C; if you miss four class meetings, it drops to a D; if you miss five class meetings, it drops to an F. I will take roll every day to keep track of attendance. If you are late to class and miss the roll, you are out of luck. Be on time. If you need to miss class, you do not need to tell me before hand or give me any documentation afterwards. I don't distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get notes from your peers. I do not give out my lecture notes or my PowerPoint slides.

Paper submission:

Each week, you are required to submit a typed, one-page critical response to the assigned readings for that day. I encourage you to use this assignment as an opportunity to raise questions and insights for class discussion. Hard copies of your critical response papers are due at the end of class each Thursday (that way, you can refer to them throughout the discussion).

The final research paper for the course must be submitted through Blackboard using the Safe Assign tool on the homepage of the course Blackboard site. Your paper must be submitted electronically by 8:00 am on Tuesday, December 13 (feel free to turn it in earlier!). A hard copy of the paper must also be turned in by 8:00 am on Tuesday, December 13 (seriously, don't wait until the last minute!). All papers will be run through plagiarism screening software, which will compare the material used to online sources, library books, and papers submitted by other students. Plagiarism will not be tolerated

and will be reported to the Dean of Students. Please read the plagiarism handout very carefully, as well as the cheating policy described below. Late papers will be docked one full letter grade for each day they are late. If a paper is more than 5 days late, it will not be read and will automatically receive an “F.” A “practice paper” submission is currently set up on the course Blackboard page. You should submit any past research paper using the Safe Assign tool to make sure you are familiar with it.

Cheating policy: Academic dishonesty is taken very seriously in this course. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, cheating on an exam, unauthorized collaboration on an assignment, and plagiarism. Professors are REQUIRED to report any academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students, and students caught cheating will receive an F for the assignment and may receive an F for the course. In order to ensure that you understand what constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty, please thoroughly review the plagiarism handout provided and read the complete description of the UALR policy on academic dishonesty, which is available in the student handbook at www.ualr.edu/www/handbook/student_rights.html.

Students with Disabilities:

Your success in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to create inclusive learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have a documented disability (or need to have a disability documented), and need an accommodation, please contact me privately as soon as possible, so that we can discuss with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) how to meet your specific needs and the requirements of the course. The DRC offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process among you, your instructor(s) and the DRC. Thus, if you have a disability, please contact me and/or the DRC, at 501-569-3143 (V/TTY) or 501-683-7629 (VP). For more information, please visit the DRC website at ualr.edu/disability. Please do plan ahead. Accommodations will not be provided on the day of the exam without prior notification.

Contested grades: If you believe a grade is inaccurate, you must wait at least 24 hours before coming to speak with the professor. If there is a math mistake or an overlooked an answer, please let me know and I will correct it. However, if you are actually contesting your grade, you must write a letter that explains why you believe a mistake in grading was made. Grades on exams or papers can only be contested within two weeks of when they are handed back. Course grades can only be contested within 60 days of the end of the quarter.

Schedule and Reading Assignments:

Week One, August 18: Introduction and Survey Administration Logistics

Week Two, August 23 and 25: Measurement and Terminology

Readings: 2006 Faith Matters Survey; Politics in Churches, Pew 2016; Glazier “Bridging Religion and Politics” methods section; 2016 Little Rock Congregations Study Survey Draft

CITI certification must be complete by August 30
Congregation Assignments Made

Week Three, August 30 and September 1: Researching Religion

Readings: Campbell, et al “Church-Based Health Promotion Interventions: Evidence and Lessons Learned”; Putnam and Campbell, Chapter 1 “Religious Polarization and Pluralism in America”; Wood, “Faith in Action” (recommended)

Survey questions finalized and IRB submitted by September 1

Week Four, September 6 and 8: Religion in American Politics

Readings: Wald, et al “Making Sense of Religion in Political Life.” Finke and Stark: “Is the clash of civilizations really true?”; “Religious Persecution in Cross-National Context: Clashing Civilizations or Regulated Religious Economies?”; Putnam and Campbell, Chapters 3 and 4 (recommended); Finke and Stark, Chapter 7 “Why Mainline Denominations decline (recommended)

Week Five, September 13 and 15: Religion as a Political Mobilizer

Readings: Glazier “Bridging Religion and Politics”; Guth et al, Chapter 16 “The Political Relevance of Religion: The Correlates of Mobilization”

Week Six, September 20 and 22: Religious Polarization and Secularization

Readings: Putnam and Campbell, Chapters 14 “A House Divided?” and 15 “America’s Grace: How a Tolerant Nation Bridges its Religious Divide”; Norris and Inglehart, Chapter 1 “The Secularization Debate”

Week Seven, September 27 and 29: Religion and Elections

Readings: Putnam and Campbell Chapter 11 “Religion in American Politics; Smidt, et al., Chapter 6 “Religion and Election Day: Voter Mobilization in 2008”; Smidt et al, Chapter 7 “Religion and Election Day: Voting Patterns”

In Weeks 8-10 we will study specific religious traditions, generate testable hypotheses, and test them in publicly available data and data collected in the 2012 Little Rock Congregations Study.

Week Eight, October 4 and 6: Catholics and Mormons

Readings: Putnam and Campbell Chapter 7 (Catholic section, pp. 211-230); Putnam and Campbell Chapter 10 (Mormon section, pp. 351-368)

Week Nine, October 11 and 13: Black Protestants and Jews

Readings: Putnam and Campbell Chapter 9 “Diversity, Ethnicity, and Religion”; Putnam and Campbell Chapter 7 (Bethel AME section, pp. 195-211); Putnam and Campbell Chapter 10 (Jewish section, pp. 334-351); Marsh, Introduction.

Week Ten, October 18 and 20: Evangelical and Mainline Protestants

Readings: Putnam and Campbell Chapter 7 (Lutheran section, pp. 180-195); Putnam and Campbell Chapter 10 (megachurch section, pp. 320-334)

Congregation visits must be completed and write ups handed in by October 20

Surveys administered in the Jewish temple on Friday, October 21.

Week Eleven, October 25 and 27: Congregation Dynamics

Readings: Putnam and Campbell Chapter 12 “Echo Chambers: Politics within Congregations”; Djupe and Gilbert “The Resourceful Believer”

Week Twelve, November 1 and 4: Data Collection Training

No class on Thursday, November 3. Class will meet Friday, November 4 at the Clinton School for final training session with all students and volunteers. There will be food!

Surveys administered in the Muslim mosque on Friday, November 4.

Survey administered in Christian churches on Sunday, November 6.

Week Thirteen, November 8 and 10: Data Collection Debrief and Data Management Training

Week Fourteen, November 15 and 17: Religion in the 2016 Election

Readings: to be determined

In Weeks 15-16 we will revisit previously discussed hypotheses and test them using the 2016 data. Students will test their own original hypotheses and write them up in the final paper.

Week Fifteen, November 22: Hypothesis Testing

No class on Thursday, November 24 for Thanksgiving

Hypothesis Testing Assignment, Part 1 is due via email by Sunday, November 26.

Week Sixteen: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis Testing Assignment, Part 2 is due via email by Sunday, December 3.

Final Paper Due online and in person (to Dr. Glazier’s office in Ross Hall 614) by 8:00 am on Tuesday, December 13