

# RACE, RELIGION AND POLITICS

Pacific School of Religion

Summer 2012

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will address how race and religion have served as a force for unity, division, and change in the United States. We specifically highlight the ways in which religious communities and communities of color have impacted the nation through their participation in electoral, ethical, and civic practices. To this end the class explores how race and religion inform Church-State relations, the American presidency, notions of civil religion, and American political life. We also address how religious ideologies, symbols, texts, and narratives are incorporated and employed as strategies and mechanisms for social change among African American, Asian American, Latino/a, American Indian and Jewish American communities. Key social movements, debates around social and ethical policies, and evaluative differences between social service and social justice models are also discussed.

## REQUIRED READING

Kenneth Wald and Allison Calhoun-Brown, *Religion and Politics in the United States* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2010) **(WCB)**

Martin Luther King, Jr, *Strength to Love* (Fortress Press, 2010) **(K)**

Randall Bailey, Tat-siong Benny Liew, and Fernando Segovia, *They Were All Together in One Place? Toward Minority Biblical Criticism* (Society of Biblical Literature, 2009) **(BLS)**

Henri Nouwen, *The Road to Peace* (Orbis Press, 2008) **(N)**

Course Reader **(CR)**

## COURSE WORK & EVALUATION

### Attendance and Participation (20%)

Please come to class ready and prepared to participate in classroom discussions. A valuable part of the learning experience is having the opportunity to engage with and learn from one another through large group discussions. A Field Excursion and small group assignments will also be facilitated during selected class hours.

**Book Reviews (20%)**

Students will a book review for a) Wald and Caluhoun-Brown an b) Bailey, Liew and Segovia. For the latter publication, it would be helpful to read at least two additional chapters of your choice in addition to the assigned course readings. Each review should be approximately 1000 words in length. Sample book reviews will be distributed and discussed in class.

**Reaction Papers (20%)**

Students will submit five (5) additional Reaction Papers engaging with 3-5 the assigned articles/chapters assigned for a given course day. For example, if you were to choose Day 4, you might focus your discussion on King, Gandhi, and Cone; or you might choose to interact with these articles in addition to Wald and Calhoun-Brown and/or Nouwen. Each Reaction Paper should be 1000 words in length and articulate your reactions, critiques, analysis and insights of the day's readings; your papers should seek to make connections between the readings rather than treating each piece individually. This assignment is best done in preparation for the class lecture/discussion as it will help you digest the material prior to class.

**Class Forum (5%)**

As a part of the class, we will hold an in-class forum requiring students to do independent library and on-line research on a particular social, economic, or environmental issue they are interested in. Students will investigate the issues relationship to religion and the politics in the U.S. and present a five to ten minute brief on their selected issue alongside other students in their given panel. A multimedia component is encouraged but not required.

**Case Study Project (5%)**

During the class hour, students will work in small groups to analyze various models of religiously based, and non-religiously based, social service and social justice agencies. A short presentation of the groups' findings, analysis and recommendations will be shared with the class at the end of the day.

**Final Paper (30%)**

Students will select a research topic of interest and submit a 3,000-4,000 word research paper. The topic should investigate the intersection of race, religion and politics in the U.S. and may focus on one or more of the issues raised in class. Specific paper requirements will be distributed in class.

## LECTURES, DISCUSSION &amp; READING ASSIGNMENTS

**Day 1 | RELIGION, RACE & ETHNICITY, POLITICS IN THE U.S.****July 16**

Kenneth Wald, Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Religion in the American Context" | (WCB) Chapter 2  
 Michael Omi, Howard Winant, "Racial Formation" | (CR)  
 Cheryl Anderson, "Reflections in an Interethnic/racial Era on Interethnic/racial Marriage in Ezra" | (BLS)  
 Daniel Driesbach and Jeffery Morrison, "Religious Writings of George Washington" | (CR)

**Day 2 | CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS, CIVIL RELIGION & AMERICAN POLITICAL CULTURE****July 17**

Kenneth Wald, Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Religion and the State" | (WCB) Chapters 3, 4  
 Robert Bellah, *Habits of the Heart* | (R)  
 Jane Iwamura, "Critical Faith: Japanese Americans and the Birth of a New Civil Religion"  
 Jae Won Lee, "Paul and Ethnic Difference in Romans" | (BLS)  
 Henri Nouwen, "Peace, A Gift We Receive in Prayer" | (N) Chapter 1

**Day 3 | RACE, RELIGION & THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY****July 18**

Kenneth Wald, Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Religion and the State" | (WCB) Chapters 3, 4  
 Melissa Harris-Lacewell, "African Americans, Religion and the American Presidency" | (CR)  
 Gaston Espinosa, "Latinos, Religion and the American Presidency" | (CR)  
 Thomas Buckley, S.J., "Religion and the Presidency of Thomas Jefferson" | (CR)  
 Henri Nouwen, "'No' to the Vietnam War" and "A Cry for Peace" | (N) Chapter 5, 6

**Day 4 | CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, RACIAL SOLIDARITY, & POLITICAL ACTION****July 19**

FILM | Selections from "Eyes on the Prize" and "Malcolm X"

Kenneth Wald, Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Religion and Political Action" | (WCB) Chapter 6  
 Martin Luther King Jr, *Strength To Love* | (K)  
 Mahatma Gandhi, *The Essential Gandhi* | (CR)  
 James Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power* | (CR) Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5  
 Henri Nouwen, "We Shall Overcome: A Pilgrimage to Selma, 1965" | (N) Chapter 7  
 "Were You There? The Death of Martin Luther King, Jr." | (N) Chapter 8

**Optional:**

James Cone, *Martin & Malcolm & America* | Chapters 2, 4, 6 (Malcolm X)  
 Demetrius Williams, "Upon Flesh: Acts 2, African Americans and Intersectionalities" | (BLS)

**DAY 5 | SPIRITUALITY, ART & ACTIVISM****July 20**

## FIELD EXCURSION

Kenneth Wald, Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Mobilizing Religious Interests" | (WCB) Chapter 5  
 Mayumi Oda, *Goddesses, Random Kindness + Paintings* | (CR)  
 Thich Nhat Hanh, *Essential Writings and Touching Peace* | (CR)  
 Dalai Lama, *In My Own Words* | (CR)  
 Jonathan Watts, *Rethinking Karma: The Dharma of Social Justice* | (CR)

**DAY 6 | WOMEN, RELIGION & SOCIAL MOVEMENTS****July 21**

## FILM | Selections from "Chicano! The History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement"

Kenneth Wald, Allison Calhoun-Brown, Religion, Gender and Sexuality | (WCB) Chapter 11  
 Mario Garcia, *A Dolores Huerta Reader* | (CR) Chapters 13, 15  
 Sheila Webb, "Dorothy Day and the Early Years of the Catholic Social Worker" | (CR)  
 Brian Massingale, "An Analysis of Catholic Social Teaching on Racism" | (CR)  
 Fernando Segovia, "Toward Latino/a American Biblical Criticism: Latin(o/a)ness as Problematic" | (BLS)

*Optional:*

Fredrick Dalton, *Moral Vision of César Chávez* | (D) Chapters 1, 4, 6  
 Rudy Busto, "'In the Outer Boundaries': Pentecostalism, Politics and Reies López Tijerina's Civic Activism" | (CR)

**DAY 7 | YOUTH, GENERATION, STUDENT MOVEMENTS & RESISTANCE****July 22**

Kenneth Wald and Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Religion and Politics of Ethnic and Religious Minorities" | (WCB) Chapter 10  
 Diane Fujino, *Heartbeat of Struggle: Yuri Kochiyama* | (F) Chapters 2, 5  
 Frank Yamada, "What Does Manzanar Have to do with Eden?: A Japanese American Interpretation of Genesis 2-3" | (BLS)  
 Karen Umemoto, "On Strike! San Francisco State College Strike, 1968-69" | (CR)  
 Gale Yee, "'She Stood in Tears Amid the Alien Corns': Ruth, the Perpetual Foreigner and Model Minority" | (BLS)

*Optional:*

Asian Community Center History Group, "Asian American Movement, 1968" | <http://aam1968.blogspot.com/>  
 Linda Vo, "The Politics of Social Services for a 'Model Minority'" | (CR)

**DAY 8 | RELIGION, ETHICS & SOCIAL ISSUES****July 23**

## IN-CLASS FORUM

Kenneth Wald, Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Religion and Public Opinion" | (WCB) Chapter 7

Tat-siong Benny Liew, *Queering Closets and Perverting Desires: Cross-Examining John's Engendering and Transgendering Word across Different Worlds* | (BLS)  
 Randall Bailey, "That's Why They didn't call the Book 'Hadassah!': The Interse(ct)(x)ionality of Race/Ethnicity, Gender and Sexuality in the Book of Esther" | (BLS)  
 Henri Nouwen, "Our Story, Our Wisdom" | (N) Chapters 14, 10

*(Additional research for your independent debate topic)*

**DAY 9 | HOME & HUMAN RIGHTS + FROM SOCIAL SERVICE TO SOCIAL JUSTICE**

**July 24**

CASE STUDY (Group Work)

Kenneth Wald, Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Mobilizing Religious Interests" | (WCB) Chapter 5  
 Dennis Banks, *Ojibwa Warrior* | (CR) Chapters 1, 2, 6, 13  
 Phil Reed, "Toward a Theology of Christian Community Development" | (CR)  
 Henri Nouwen, "Social Compassion" | (N) Chapter 15  
 Walter Burghardt, "Globalization and Justice" | (CR)

**DAY 10 | INTERFAITH + INTER-RACIAL PARTNERSHIPS & JUSTICE**

**July 25**

Kenneth Wald, Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Catholics, Mainline Protestants and Jews" | (WCB) Chapter 9  
 Edward Kaplan, *Spiritual Radical: Abraham Joshua Heschel, 1940-1972* | (CR) Chapter 12, 15  
 Steven McKenzie, "The Mandate to Integrate" | (M) Chapters 12, 13  
 Eric K. Yamamoto, *Interracial Justice: Conflict and Reconciliation in Post-Civil Rights America* | (CR) Chapters 5, 6, 7  
 Henri Nouwen, "Solidarity with the Human Family" | (N) Chapters 16, 18, 19

**FINAL COURSE PAPER DUE**

**Aug 15**