

# HISTORY 4261-SEC. 002 (SPRING 2020) RELIGION IN AMERICAN LIFE, 1650-2000: From the Millennialists to the Millennium

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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	Friday
(Wooten Hall, 115) 1:00-1:50, p.m.	<b>Dr. Tomlin Office Hours 8-11 a.m.</b>	(Wooten Hall, 115) 1:00-1:50, p.m.	<b>Dr. Tomlin Office Hours 8-11 a.m.</b>	(Wooten Hall, 115) 1:00-1:50, p.m.

## Course Description:

Since the arrival of European and African immigrants in the Americas, religious belief has been one of the most powerful forces in the perpetual making and remaking of American life. The search for religious freedom has brought waves of new groups to the shores of North America. Yet, the diversity that same religious freedom created has often led to violence, hate, and suspicion between these groups and the peoples they found on their arrival. In this course, we will investigate the incredible diversity and complexity of religion in America's past, but also the profound influence religious beliefs have had in shaping American notions of democracy, identity, equality, and, ultimately, power.

## Required Reading Materials:

John Butler, Grant Wacker, and Randall Balmer, eds. *Religion in American Life: A Short History*. (2nd ed.) Oxford University Press, 2011. (ISBN: 978-0-19-983269-9). (BWB)

## Learning Objectives:

- 1: Use “religion” as a category of historical analysis.
2. Examine and understand the diversity of religious belief, practice, and experience in the American past and present.
3. Analyze how religion and American culture have shaped and reshaped each other over time.
4. Explore the ways in which religious affiliation and belief have shaped social, economic, and political power in America.
5. Create and complete an original, digital research project in American religious history supported by primary and secondary source materials.

## Requirements/Assessments:

- 1) Participation(20%):** This means more than simply “showing up to class,” although attendance is a huge part of it. It also means coming to class prepared to participate by:
  - Have the readings/assignments completed before class.
  - Ask questions. Challenge me and/or each other if you disagree or interpret a given set of evidence differently. Engage with the material and its usage. The result is almost always a more vigorous learning environment. But most importantly, pay attention and take it seriously. The Lectures and discussions will consider the evidence all of us need to make a historical interpretation/argument.
  - Approach the readings and videos in an active manner. Be curious and ask questions of your sources. You are reading not only for the information or content, but also for the analysis, research methods, argument and perspective. Keeping in mind that different opinions and interpretations are at the heart of doing history. The goal of our discussions is not to create some artificial consensus (the “right” answer), but rather to share our multiple perspectives in an informed, productive, and supportive manner.
  - Since we are moving online effective March 23-regular posting on the group discussion boards on canvas will constitute 1/2 of participation component. Participation in Zoom lectures/discussions will constitute the other 1/2 of participation
- 2) Final Project(40%):** This will consist of the construction and completion of a digital, interactive timeline that examines a given group, theme, or concept in American religious history. It will have three (3) components:
  - a)(5%) Construction of an interactive **prezi** master-page to display final project.
  - b)(10%) Timely submission and approval of a topic/theme outline for project.
  - c)(25%) Timely submission and presentation of final **prezi** interactive timeline.
- 3) Exams(40%, 20% x2):** These will consist of 2(two) non-comprehensive exams covering the readings and lectures from units 1 and two, respectively. Each exam will consist of essay

questions that ask students to demonstrate clear understanding of the material covered and allow them to articulate their thoughts on the larger issues/ideas of the course. Each exam will be preceded by in-class discussions/reviews. There is no **final exam**.

### **Course Schedule:**

#### **Unit 1**

**Week 1:**(1.13-1.17)-Old and New World Religions Meet (BWB pp. 1-46)

**Week 2:**(1.20-1.24)-Religion in England's Original Colonies (BWB pp. 47-71)

**Week 3:**(1.27-1.31)-Growing American Religious Diversity (BWB pp. 72-110)

**Week 4:**(2.3-2.7)-Revival and The Great Awakening (BWB pp. 111-132)

**Week 5:**(2.10-2.14)-Religion and Revolution (BWB pp. 133-154)

**(Exam 1 2.14/Deadline to submit Prezi master page)**

#### **Unit 2**

**Week 6:**(2.17-2.21)-A New Nation Searches for God (BWB pp. 155-185)

**Week 7:**(2.24-2.28)-Reforming and Restoring Religion (BWB pp. 186-212)

**Week 8:**(3.2-3.6)-Religion and the Coming of Civil War (BWB pp. 213-246)

**Week 9:**(3.23-3.27)-Immigration, Nativism, and Religion (BWB pp. 247-273)

**Week 10:**(3.30-4.3)-Challenges to an "American" Faith (BWB pp. 274-310)

**(Exam 2 4.3/Deadline to submit approved project outline)**

#### **Unit 3**

**Week 11:**(4.6-4.10)-A New Century and New Beliefs (BWB pp. 311-342)

**Week 12:**(4.13-4.17)-Godly Reforms for a Rising Nation (BWB pp. 343-381)

**Week 13:**(4.20-4.24)-God Forms a New Superpower on Earth (BWB pp. 382-413)

**Week 14:**(4.27-4.29)-A New Era of Religious Diversity (BWB pp. 414-442)

**4.30-5.7-Zoom Consultations with Dr. Tomlin on project**

**(Final Project due by Midnight May 8)**

**Unit 1 (January 13-February 14)**

**Unit 2 (February 17-March 27)**

**Unit 3 (March 30-April 29)**

## **\*\*Important Dates**

**January 20-No Class/Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

**March 9-13-No Class/Spring Break**

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES: When you are not sure about an assignment, ask. If you have problems finding a book, or a video, or accessing Canvas, let me know. If something we say in class is not clear, tell me. If you would like to discuss more some of the issues I cover in class, I will be happy to meet. If you have any concern about your performance and grades, be pro-active and come see me ASAP – assignments and exams cannot be undone after they have been graded; you cannot make-up for a poor participation throughout the semester in the last two weeks of class, nor we can make numbers appear out of thin air when you realize (usually around Thanksgiving!) that you “really, really need a (A/B/C) in this class” because of your scholarship, GPA, etc. And don’t forget: If you enjoy the class, let me know that too! You should always come to me first if you have questions and concerns.

## COURSE POLICIES:

Syllabus: Read this syllabus thoroughly before the first day of class and keep it with you throughout the semester. Always check the syllabus (and canvas) first for information about assignments – emails asking for information that is on the syllabus (or on canvas) will receive low priority status in our answering schedule. Do come and see me *immediately* if something on the syllabus is not clear to you. If I do not hear from you, I will assume that you have read and understood everything.

Respect: Treat each person in the class with dignity, respect, and courtesy. Especially in discussion, remember that every class has a culture influenced by the fact that students come from widely diverse backgrounds and hold different viewpoints, values, and interpretations of the world. This classroom encourages diverse viewpoints. It is especially important that you listen to others whose opinions differ from your own; **debating opinions while remaining respectful of the individuals who hold them**. Neither I nor the University of North Texas will tolerate any comments or actions that create a hostile or uncomfortable learning environment for any member of the class. If using the email function or discussion boards on canvas to contact your classmates, make sure that your language is appropriate for a classroom setting.

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. I can and will punish all instances accordingly.

ADA Accommodation Statement. UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA

will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at [disability.unt.edu](http://disability.unt.edu).

Emergency Notification & Procedures. UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.