

Religious Outsiders and the American State

RELG/JWST 358
Oberlin College, Spring 2020
King 323
W 6:30-8:30

Professor Shari Rabin
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Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:30-5:30pm or by appointment (sign up at tinyurl.com/profrabin)

This course explores the relationship between select outsider religions – Native Americans, Jews, Catholics, Muslims, Mormons, and Buddhists – and the American state from the beginnings of the nation until the present day. In a country that is premised on the separation of church and state but that also includes diverse religious communities, the place of religion in public life and of the government’s role in regulating and defining religion have long been contested. What do church-state relations look like if we focus on groups outside of the Protestant mainstream? What are the scope and limits of “religious freedom”? In this course, students explore these questions in relationship to immigration, education, national security, first amendment jurisprudence, and more.

Learning Goals:

- to expand your capacity to reflect rigorously on the history and politics of “religious freedom” in the United States
- to learn how to analyze governmental documents as primary sources
- to gain familiarity with multiple American religious traditions
- to strengthen abilities in writing and communication

Required Text:

Sylvester Johnson and Steven Weitzman, *The FBI and Religion: Faith and National Security Before and After 9/11*

Assignments:

Participation (10%):

This grade is based on your level and quality of attendance, preparedness, and engagement. This class requires that you do the reading and actively join in discussions and activities with good faith and generosity. You will be granted 1 (ONE) “personal day” over the course of the semester. If you miss more than one class session, it will affect your grade. Perfect participation grades are reserved for those who miss one or no class sessions *and* who distinguish themselves in their preparedness and participation.

On Written Assignments:

- Papers must be written in Times New Roman, 12-point font, double-spaced with standard margins and using Chicago citation style (with notes). They should be submitted by email or via Blackboard, as Microsoft Word or PDF files.
- You can submit an optional draft 3 days before each deadline to receive feedback.
- You will be allotted one no-questions-asked 48-hour extension on an assignment.

Otherwise, 5 points will be deducted for each day that an assignment is late.
 -You must adhere to the honor code in all class assignments. This means submitting your own original work and including clear citations of all sources. If you have questions about this, please contact me!

Reading Responses (20%):

Over the course of the semester, you will write four short papers (3 pages each) reflecting on the readings for a given class session. At least one must be submitted by week 5 (March 4). You should identify and discuss one key theme among two or more assigned secondary sources for that day. These will be due by 5pm on the day of the relevant class discussion. One of these reading responses can be replaced by an alternative assignment, related to the themes of the class, as long as it is approved by me and submitted before the last day of class.

Primary Source Paper (25%):

You will write a five-page paper analyzing the following primary source and contextualizing it using materials from our course: Donald Trump, “Executive Order Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States,” January 27, 2017. Due March 12 by 5pm.

Final Assignment:

-You will write a research paper on a topic related to the themes of the course. It should incorporate one of the groups and/or one of the issues we are studying. Submit a two-page proposal with a draft bibliography. **(5%). Due April 1 by 5pm.**

Groups: Jews, Catholics, Muslims, Mormons, Native Americans, Buddhists, or another group approved by me.

Areas: Immigration, Education, National Security, Healthcare, Military, Prison, Free Exercise, Establishment, or another issue approved by me.

-Give an in-class presentation on your topic **(5%).**

-Write 10-15 pages offering a critical, historical perspective on your topic, using course readings and other relevant research. Due May 16 at 7pm. **(35%)**

• = Secondary Source

❖ = Primary Source

➔ = Assignment Due

<u>PART I – Orientations</u>	
Week 1 – Introduction	
W Feb 5	•“State,” <i>Keywords for American Cultural Studies</i> , https://keywords.nyupress.org/american-cultural-studies/essay/state/
Week 2 – Insiders and Outsiders	
W Feb 12	•Winnifred Sullivan, “Introduction,” <i>The Impossibility of</i>

	<p><i>Religious Freedom</i>, 1-13.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •R. Lawrence Moore, “Postscript,” <i>Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans</i>, 201-210.
<p><u>PART II – Identifying Religion</u></p>	
<p>Week 3 – Law, Land, and Mobility</p>	
W Feb 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •David Sehat, “Introduction: The Myth of American Religious Freedom,” <i>The Myth of American Religious Freedom</i>, 1-10. •Shari Rabin, “Wandering Sons of Israel: Europe, America, and the Politics of Jewish Mobility,” <i>Jews on the Frontier: Religion and Mobility in Nineteenth-Century America</i>, 21-43. •Jennifer Graber, “1868-1872,” <i>The Gods of Indian Country: Religion and the Struggle for the American West</i>, 77-97.
<p>Week 4 – Immigrants</p>	
W Feb 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖Congressional Committee on Immigration (1920) •Libby Garland, “Not-quite-closed Gates: Jewish Alien Smuggling in the Post-Quota Years,” <i>American Jewish History</i> (September 2008), 197-224. •Duncan Williams, “America: A Nation of Religious Freedom?,” <i>American Sutra: A Story of Faith and Freedom in the Second World War</i>, 15-38.
<p>Week 5 – Soldiers and Citizens</p>	
W Mar 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Judith Weisenfeld, “Introduction,” and Images, <i>New-World A-Coming: Black Religion and Racial Identity During the Great Migration</i>, 1-21. •Ronit Stahl, “Dog Tags: Religious Toleration and the Politics of American Military Identification,” in <i>The Lively Experiment</i>, 209-221. •Annalise E. Glauz-Todrank, “Judging and Protecting Jewish Identity in Shaare Tefila Congregation v. Cobb,” in <i>Who is a Jew?</i>, 43-60.
<p><u>PART III – Defining/Defending America</u></p>	
<p>Week 6 – Elected Office</p>	
W Mar 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Morton Bordon, “There is No God but Liberty, No Gospel but the Constitution,” <i>Turks, Jews, and Infidels</i>, 23-

	<p>52.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Kathleen Flake, "Introduction," <i>The Politics of American Religious Identity</i>, 1-11 •Finbarr Curtis, "The Fundamental Faith of Every True American: Al Smith and Loyalty," <i>The Production of Religious Freedom</i>, 87-112. <p>➔Primary Source Paper Due</p>
Week 7 – Education	
W Mar 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tracy Fessenden, "From Disestablishment to 'Consensus': The Nineteenth Century Bible Wars and the Limits of Dissent," <i>Culture and Redemption: Religion, the Secular, and American Literature</i>, 60-83. ❖"Instruction of the Propaganda Fide Concerning Catholic Children in American Public Schools" (1875) •Jennifer Graber, "1893-1903," <i>The Gods of Indian Country: Religion and the Struggle for the American West</i>, 175-200.
<i>Spring Recess</i>	
Week 8 – The FBI	
W Apr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Sylvester Johnson and Steven Weitzman, "Introduction," in <i>The FBI and Religion</i>, 1-16. •One of the following essays in <i>The FBI and Religion</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Sylvester Johnson on the Moorish Science Temple of America, 32-54. •Regin Schmidt on the Catholic Church, 108-120. •Sarah Imhoff on Jews, 121-133. •Karl Evanzz on the Nation of Islam, 148-167. •Matthew Bowman on Mormonism, 191-202. •Michael Barkun on American Muslims, 244-255. •Junaida Rana on Kashmiri Americans, 256-268. •Moorish Science Temple FBI Files <p>➔Final Paper Proposal Due</p>
<u>PART IV – Contesting Religious Freedom</u>	
Week 9 – Research Week	
W Apr 8	In lieu of class this week, every student will meet with me

	at some point to discuss their final paper.
Week 10 – Mormons and Native Americans	
W Apr 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Isaac Weiner and Joshua Dubler, “Introduction,” <i>Religion, Law, U.S.A.</i>, 1-18. •Sarah Barringer Gordon, “The Mormon Question: Polygamy and Constitutional Conflict in Nineteenth-Century America,” <i>Journal of Supreme Court History</i> (2003), 14-29. •Tisa Wenger, “Indian Dances and the Politics of Religious Freedom, 1870-1930,” <i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i> (2011), 850-78.
Week 11 – Muslims and Jews	
W Apr 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Isaac Weiner, “Calling Muslims – and Christian – to Pray,” <i>Religion Out Loud</i>, 158-194. •Jonathan Sarna and David Dalin, “Old Principles and New Rights: The Free Exercise Debate,” <i>Religion and State in the American Jewish Experience</i>, 271-300.
Week 12 – Presentations	
W Apr 29	
Week 13 – Presentations and Conclusions	
W May 6	