Leadership and Religious Values  
LDSP 387 / REL 370

Spring 2008  
Course Syllabus

Instructor:    Dr. Douglas A. Hicks  
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Office hours:   Monday, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
               Wednesday, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
               and by appointment

Class meeting time   Monday and Wednesday, 2:45 – 4:00 p.m.  
and location:   Jepson Hall 102

Learning Objectives

This course seeks to enable students:

- to think critically about how religious values, symbols, and ideas complicate and contribute to leadership in a variety of public spheres;
- to understand how leaders and followers have drawn, in direct and indirect ways, on their religiously based moral convictions;
- to understand the interrelationship of the moral and legal dimensions of religion in different aspects of public life; and
- to increase their own competency to lead and follow with persons from other religious perspectives.

Statement of Course and its Purposes

Religious expression is vital to quality of life for many citizens. Among an increasingly diverse U.S. population, over ninety-five percent of persons profess belief in God or in some deity figure(s). While many of these persons may consciously or unconsciously “compartmentalize” religion to a separate, private realm, a significant portion of citizens attempt to live out their religious convictions in their public activities: in the workplace, in political life, and in civil society.

Both leaders and followers face questions about the function of religion—for themselves, for other members of their groups and organizations, and for those bodies as a whole. How do persons appropriately integrate their religious worldviews and commitments into the various activities of their lives? How do public agencies, schools, and businesses “negotiate” religion? In a society marked more by scandal than by good leadership, what place should
Religiously based moral convictions play among leaders and followers? Does religious
diversity necessarily create a new Tower of Babel in which no one can understand each
other? Or does such diversity create a leadership opportunity in which moral consensus can
be reached, as engaged leaders and followers openly express their religiously based moral
convictions, along with various other perspectives? How have the events of September 11,
2001, and responses to them, altered the role of religion for leaders and public life in
general?

These are some of the central questions of this course. The focus here is not leadership
within religious organizations in which persons generally (but not wholly!) agree on essential
matters of faith. Rather, it considers how religious values do and should operate in
leadership situations in broader “public” life in which people from various religions and no
religions live together—in politics, the workplace, universities, public schools, media, and so
on.

Political, civil-society, social-movement, military, and even business leaders have often
invoked religious language and imagery to further their ends—whether personalized or
socialized. Leaders’ appeals to God and to Christian and Jewish scriptures gave the civil-
rights movement a significantly greater claim to authority and legitimacy than it otherwise
would have had. Many followers in the civil-rights movement, too, acted for justice out of
faith. In response to recent terrorism, religious faith was a resource for many persons
seeking consolation and a sense of community. At the same time, it is important to ask
whether and how some uses of religion that serve political, economic, or other ends become
abuses—either because the means or the ends do not reflect good leadership. Leaders and
followers have long had to think critically about appropriate uses of religion in public life.

The questions raised thus far involve largely moral responses to the sociological reality of
widespread religious conviction and diversity. There are also a host of legal questions that
must be considered—at least in overview—when discussions of “religion in public” are
tackled. The two “prongs” of the religion clause of the First Amendment, addressing
religious freedom and religious establishment, have produced perhaps the most tortured
legal reasoning by the Supreme Court throughout this century. The questions of
establishment, traditionally (and incorrectly) referred to as “church-state” issues, are now
more complex than ever. It is important to ask: Which religious institutions and which
bodies of government are involved in particular cases? Can these issues be cleanly separated
from the other “prong,” dealing with the religious freedom of persons? How are the moral
and legal dimensions intertwined? Even leaders wishing to create a culturally and religiously
expressive culture must attend to the legal issues—at least as constraints on what is possible
for their organization or group. How to negotiate religion in an increasingly diverse society
is a leadership challenge in all sectors and contexts of public life.

These and other issues have been taken up in a variety of fields. Thus, like many other
Jepson courses, the challenge for this course is not to create a literature ex nihilo (out of
nothing), but rather to draw together strands of scholarship to offer an interdisciplinary
approach to leadership and religious values. The course ties into central questions of leadership studies. Indeed religious values, seen in one light, create a case study writ large of the negotiation of values and worldviews that all groups and their leaders/followers must address. Or, seen alternatively, is there something about religious values that make them completely distinct from other kinds of values?

The material of the course ties into the literature in ethics and leadership that considers, as Dr. Joanne Ciulla has most succinctly stated, “good” leadership as both effective and moral. The struggle to determine what is good leadership—along the lines of both effectiveness and morality—must analyze religion explicitly and seriously.

Texts

Required texts of the course, available for purchase at the UR bookstore, include:


Hicks, Douglas A. *With God on All Sides: Leadership in a Diverse and Devout America* (New York: Oxford University Press, [2009])—available in manuscript form from the instructor.


Additional required readings will be on reserve at Boatwright Library and online.

Notes on Grading Procedures and the Honor System

The deadlines for assignments are designed to create a framework in which students are treated fairly and equally and in which they are able to complete all assignments during the course of the semester. Requests for extensions will be granted only under dire circumstances. Assignments are due at the beginning of class and will be penalized by one full letter grade for each day they are late. Unexcused absences from the final examination may not be made up. Please note that any difficulties or problems should be brought to the instructor’s attention as soon as possible—and before the deadline or exam.
The Jepson School supports and adheres to the provisions of the Honor System as sanctioned by the School of Arts and Sciences. Every piece of written work in this course must have the word, “Pledged,” along with the student’s signature, signifying the following: “I pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work.”

Course Components and Requirements

Class Contribution (20% of course grade)

The first mark of a successful course is the active participation of each member of the class. Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to engage fully in them. The emphasis is on quality, not quantity, of participation. The classroom discussions and activities depend upon the timely completion of the assigned readings. Coming to each session prepared for discussion of the “texts of the day” is a necessary condition for individual and group learning; thorough preparation will also result in a strong evaluation of class participation. Further, reading with care will enable successful examinations and essays. Class contribution will be evaluated on engaged participation based on careful reading of texts. Students are allowed one unexcused absence and then will be penalized by three percentage points from their final grade for each additional absence.

Critical Essay (20% of course grade)

This essay (of approximately 5 pages) will be due on Friday, February 22. Guidelines will be provided at least two weeks prior to the due date.

Research Project and Paper (30% of course grade)

A major component of the course is a semester-long research project that explores some dimension of religion in contemporary public life. Students will have a limited choice of topics; a research proposal, which must be approved by the instructor, is due on Wednesday, March 5. Students have a choice of working either individually or as a group of two students on a particular project. Every student is encouraged to meet with the professor prior to submitting a research proposal topic. All students (whether working individually or as a group) will make a required in-class presentation of their findings on one of three dates (to be assigned by instructor): April 16, 21, or 23. The material presented by students during these three days may appear on the final examination. The research paper is due at the beginning of class on the day of the presentation.

Final Examination (30% of course grade)

A final exam will be administered from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Tuesday, April 29.
Topics and Assignments (Subject to change as the course progresses)

**Monday, January 14**  Introduction to the Course
No reading assignment

**Wednesday, January 16**  Religious Diversity and a Changing America
Read course syllabus in its entirety.
Diana L. Eck, *A New Religions America*, preface and chapter 1 (on reserve)
Read stories at www.pluralism.org: click on “religious diversity news” and at www.firstfreedom.org: click on “newsclops”

**Monday, January 21  3:45 – 4:25 p.m.**  Martin Luther King, Jr., as Public Theologian
Martin Luther King, Jr., “I See the Promised Land” (on reserve)
**NOTE:** Due to an altered schedule, class meets 3:45 – 4:25 p.m.

**Wednesday, January 23**  Religion and Social Movements
Walzer, *Exodus and Revolution*, introduction and chapter 1

**Monday, January 28**  Struggles and Covenants
Walzer, *Exodus and Revolution*, chapters 2 and 3

**Wednesday, January 30**  Promised Lands and Leaders’ Visions
Walzer, *Exodus and Revolution*, chapter 4 and Conclusion

**Monday, February 4**  Civil Religion, Pre- and Post-September 11, 2001
Robert N. Bellah, “America’s Civil Religion” (on reserve)
George W. Bush, remarks at National Cathedral, 9/14/01 (on reserve)

**Wednesday, February 6**  Virginia’s Legacy of Religious Freedom
Visit to Council for America’s First Freedom, 1321 E. Main Street, Richmond
Presentation by Robert Seiple, President & CEO, Council for America’s First Freedom,
and former U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom
James Madison, “Memorial and Remonstrance” (on reserve)

**Monday, February 11**  One Classic Argument for Toleration I
Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, pp. 7-8 and 11-41

**Wednesday, February 13**  One Classic Argument for Toleration II
Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, pp. 41-78

**Monday, February 18**
Hicks, *With God on All Sides*, preface and chapters 1-2
Wednesday, February 20  
Hicks, *With God on All Sides*, chapters 3-4

Friday, February 22  
CRITICAL ESSAY DUE at 5:00 p.m.

Monday, February 25  
Hicks, *With God on All Sides*, chapters 5-6

Wednesday, February 27  
Hicks, *With God on All Sides*, chapters 7-9

Monday, March 3  
Islam and Public Space: The French Case  
Presentation by Dr. Melanie Adrian, Lecturer in Social Studies, Harvard University  
Bowen, *Why the French Don’t Like Headscarves*, introduction, chapters 1-4

Wednesday, March 5  
Headscarves and Schools in France  
BRIEF RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE at the beginning of class  
Bowen, *Why the French Don’t Like Headscarves*, chapters 5-6 and 10

Spring Break

Monday, March 17  
Religion in the Workplace I  
Lindsay, *Faith in the Halls of Power*, introduction and chapters 7-8

Wednesday, March 19  
Religion in the Workplace II  
Douglas A. Hicks, “Spiritual and Religious Diversity in the Workplace” (on reserve)

Monday, March 24  
Evangelicals in Politics  
Lindsay, *Faith in the Halls of Power*, chapters 1-2

Wednesday, March 26  
Evangelicals in Higher Education and Hollywood  
Lindsay, *Faith in the Halls of Power*, chapters 3-6 (selections), conclusion

Monday, March 31  
Republicans, Democrats, and Faith  
Sullivan, *The Party Faithful*, TBA

Wednesday, April 2  
Democrats and Politics I  
Sullivan, *The Party Faithful*, TBA
Monday, April 7  Democrats and Politics II
Presentation by Amy Sullivan, Nation Editor, Time Magazine
Sullivan, The Party Faithful, TBA

REQUIRED EVENT: Monday, April 7, 4:30 p.m., location TBA, Amy Sullivan, “The Party Faithful: On Republicans, Democrats, and Closing the God Gap”

Wednesday, April 9  Catch-up Day
Reading TBA

Monday, April 14  Student Research Presentations I

Wednesday, April 16  Student Research Presentations II

Monday, April 21  Student Research Presentations III

Wednesday, April 23  Wrap up and Conclusions
Readings TBA

EXAM DATE and TIME:
Tuesday, April 29, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon