

**STML 564: RELIGION IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE**  
**SPRING 2013**  
**SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY**  
**(3 CREDIT HOURS)**  
**Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.**

**FACULTY**

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**BULLETIN COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

*The course explores the complex relationship of spiritual and religious values in the common life of the United States, and particularly sociological and historical patterns of so-called “civil religion.” This includes the symbols, meanings systems and cultural mythologies that have informed, and continue to inform, the nation’s life, rhetoric and political decision-making process. Employing tools and perspectives from a number of fields in the social sciences and humanities, this course will help students create their own template for understanding the complex impact spiritual and religious systems, ideas, feelings and individual and community forces have had in shaping America’s past and present. The course will also explore the social and cultural changes that are dramatically altering the relationship of religious and spiritual values in the public commons, particularly the introduction of new religious forces through the mainstreaming of emergent spiritualities and cultural transformations brought on by developments like immigration. Lastly, students will devise strategies for integrating their leadership goals with their own spiritual and religious values, and the values permeating American society.*

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**SYLLABUS COURSE DESCRIPTION:** *Religious and Spiritual Values in the Public Square* will explore the history, dynamics, and role of religious and spiritual values in the public domain. While the First Amendment’s doctrine of separation of church and state has kept the influence of religious institutions on American culture minimized in recent decades, religious and spiritual values have always permeated social movements and cultural trends, as well as political and cultural symbols, rituals, and communal conversations. In Western society, a so-called *secularization thesis* grew in dominance during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, trying to push religion into a “privatized” corner so it could have little to no influence on politics or culture. In reaction, the so-called Religious Right garnered a great deal of media attention and seemed to have a goal of dominating the culture in the 1980s and 1990s. But, in reality the U.S. has always had a tapestry of religious and spiritual influences and values, and trying to keep these in a private domain, as the secularists would desire, is probably functionally impossible. At the same time, Christianity’s unquestioned dominant role in the public square is either gone or rapidly disappearing in most areas of the United States. This course will look at the worldwide renewal of interest in religion, and the U.S. manifestation of this phenomenon despite the simultaneous decline in involvement in organized religion, along with the history of a “shadow culture” of religious and spiritual practices and beliefs in America and its growing influence on the nation since the 1970s.

One of the goals of the class is to increase students’ awareness of the “civil religious language” that has underpinned U.S. society and culture since its origin, and to provide students the opportunity to begin to develop, reflect upon, deepen and articulate their own personal “civil spiritual” or “civil religious” language. The development of this “public language” is intended to prepare students to share their deepest values, their keenest insights about life and its meaning, and their vision of a more humane and just world in environments that are unwelcoming to a “religious or spiritual orientation or framework” toward life. This will allow students to also engage more directly the strong forces in American society that seek to “privatize” religious and spiritual values and insight.

Students will read from a number of sources about the role of religion in American culture; but, they will also spend time working to “translate” the sources of their value and passions into a conceptual framework that makes these values intelligible to communities outside students’ particular religious or spiritual grounding context. Accomplishing such a translation was achieved by some of the people having the most profound impact on American life, individuals like Harriet Tubman, Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony, Walter Rauchenbush, Dorothy Day, and Martin Luther King, Jr. They discovered ways to challenge the nation with the values they had developed in their spiritual or religious context, by bringing those values carefully and persuasively into important conversations in the public square. In so doing, they touched the hearts and minds of people outside their worldviews, providing a message of hope and direction at some of the nation’s more difficult periods of history, and empowering a sufficient number of people to dare to believe in the possibility of a better world. These spiritual and ethical leaders created a language for sharing spiritually-informed values within the dynamics and limitations of a political culture shaped by the unique U.S. doctrine of the separation of church and state.

*Religious and Spiritual Values in the Public Square* challenges students to develop a personal language for bringing their spiritual and religious values into the public forum in an appropriate way, to find creative ways to engage others at the core of their value system, and to develop new insights and skills for engaging in public conversations against a horizon of ultimate concern and the ultimate meaning of life.

#### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

*The Case for Civility: And Why Our Future Depends On It*, Os Guinness, HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2008.

*American Gospel: God, The Founding Fathers, and the Making of a Nation*, Jon Meacham, Random House, 2006.

*Restless Souls: The Making of American Spirituality*, Leigh Eric Schmidt, HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2005.

*A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religious Diverse Nation*, Diana Eck, HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2001.

*God in the Details: American Religion in Popular Culture*, Eric Michael Mazur and Kate McCarthy, Routledge, 2011.

*The Essential Guide to Rhetoric*, William M. Keith and Christian O. Lundberg, Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2008.

#### **ARTICLES:**

Civil Religion in America, Robert N. Bellah, *Daedalus, Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, from the issue entitled, "Religion in America," Winter 1967, Vol. 96, No. 1, pp. 1-21. See: [http://www.robertbellah.com/articles\\_5.htm](http://www.robertbellah.com/articles_5.htm).

Twenty Years After Bellah: Whatever Happened to American Civil Religion, James A. Mathisen, *Sociological Analysis*, 1989, 50:2, 129-146. (Available on-line through Limeaux Library.)

#### **IMPORTANT DATES IN THE QUARTER:**

<b>April 1 (Monday):</b>	<b>First Day of Class for Spring 2013 Quarter</b>
<b>April 4 (Thursday):</b>	<b>First Day of <i>Religious and Spiritual Values in the Public Square</i></b>
<b>April 7 (Sunday):</b>	<b>Last Day to Add/Drop Classes</b>
<b>April 11 (Thursday):</b>	<b>Mission Day. Classes starting prior to 1:30 p.m. cancelled. No class.</b>
<b>April 29-May 16:</b>	<b>Advising period for summer and fall quarters 2013.</b>
<b>May 10 (Friday):</b>	<b>Last day to withdraw from classes.</b>
<b>May 16 (Thursday):</b>	<b>Registration begins for Summer 2013.</b>

**May 20 (Monday):** Registration begins for Fall 2013.  
**May 25-27 (Sat-Mon)** Memorial Day weekend.  
**June 6 (Thursday):** Last class of *Religious and Spiritual Values in the Public Square*  
**June 10 (Monday):** Last class day for Spring 2013 Quarter  
**June 11-15 (Tue-Sat):** Final Exam Week  
**June 19 (Wednesday):** Grades posted on SU Online by 6 p.m.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

<i>Dates/Time</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Assignments For Next Class</i>
April 4	<p align="center"><b><i>Culture Wars: The Battle Over Worldviews</i></b></p> <p>a. The Zero-Sum Game in Culture Warring (Samuel P. Huntington, <i>The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order</i>)</p> <p>b. The Collapse of Civility and Compromise in Politics (Ronald Brownstein, <i>The Second Civil War: How Extreme Partisanship Has Paralyzed Washington and Polarized America</i>)</p> <p>c. Finding a Way to Avoid Each Other (Bill Bishop, <i>The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America is Tearing Us Apart</i>).</p> <p align="center"><b>Dynamics of the Politico-Cultural Wars</b></p> <p>a. How Political Judgments Reinforce the Culture Wars (George E. Marcus, W. Russell Neuman, Michael Mackuen, <i>Affective Intelligence and Political Judgment</i>.)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reflective Paper: Write a 1-2 page essay describing the role of spiritual and religious values in your life. List the most significant 3-5 values that seem to come from a spiritual or religious source.</li> <li>2. Read two articles referenced in required texts above dealing with Robert Bellah concept of civil religion.</li> <li>3. Read Guinness, 1-198.</li> <li>4. Make at least one (thoughtful) post on Guinness readings on Angel.</li> </ol>
April 11	<p><b><i>Seattle University Mission Day</i></b>  <b>NO CLASS.</b>          On-line discussion conducted about Guinness book.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Post Reflective Paper on Angel.</li> <li>b. Make at least one (thoughtful) post on Angel about Guinness readings; and one on "Civil Religion Articles. (For a total of two.)</li> <li>c. Read Meacham, 1-152.</li> </ol>
April 18	<p align="center"><b><i>Civil Religion:</i></b>  <b><i>The Spiritual and Religious Bedrock in American Culture</i></b></p> <p>a. Bellah's perspective of religion as a cultural and social force in the U.S. – a tradition that continues in old and new keys. The academic debate on civil religion.</p> <p align="center"><b>A Closer Look at the Terrain in the Culture Wars</b></p> <p>b. Who Exactly is at War Here?:The Academic Debate on</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Meacham, 153-250.</li> <li>2. Make one (thoughtful) post on Angel on Meacham reading, 1-152.</li> <li>3. Propose topic of final project. Post initial project paper</li> </ol>

	<p>the Culture Wars. (James Davison Hunter, Alan Wolfe, <i>Is There a Culture War?: A Dialogue on Values and American Public Life</i>. Brookings Institution, Pew Research Center, 2006).</p> <p>c. American Values in Competition. (Wayne Baker, <i>America's Crisis of Values</i>, Princeton University Press, 2005).</p> <p><b><i>The Meaning Structures of Culture and Society: America's Sub-Soil of Religious and Spiritual Values</i></b></p> <p>d. The problem of religion in the modern world.</p> <p>e. The traditional/conservative approach to social change vs. the chronic change since the Industrial Revolution.</p> <p>f. The role of the Enlightenment in narrowing our view of the human soul through a homogenized and idealized view of reason.</p> <p>g. Religious reactions to modern and postmodern culture: the rise of fundamentalism, apologetics and the struggles of missionaries.</p> <p><b><i>Religion as a Sign of Contradiction</i></b></p> <p>h. Religion in the U.S. since 1948: An increasingly neuralgic topic.</p> <p>i. The narrowing tunnel vision of the post-Enlightenment's view of reality. (Huston Smith, <i>Why Religion Matters</i>)</p> <p>j. Saturation of the culture with religion, the sanitizing of religion in the public realm, the culture of contradiction -- opening prayer in Congress, presidential elections, no prayer in schools. (Warren Nord's, <i>Religion and American Education: Re-thinking a National Dilemma; Taking Religion Seriously Across the Curriculum</i>)</p> <p>k. Re-discovering the Nature and Purpose of Religion. (Religion vs. <i>Religio</i> – Diana Butler Bass, <i>Christianity After Religion</i>, Harper One, 2012.)</p>	<p>proposal on Angel for feedback. (Maximum one page in length)</p>
<p>April 25</p>	<p><b><i>Models of Religion and Spirituality's Relationship to Culture</i></b></p> <p>a. Historical models of one religion's relationship with culture. (H.R. Niebuhr's, <i>Christ and Culture</i>)</p> <p>b. Models of separation of church and state: the French and U.S. experiments, and permutations around the world – an introduction</p> <p>c. Distinguishing between different kinds of religious/faith conversation. The distinctions in discussions between faith and morals; between catechesis, theology and religious studies. MATL is a combination of all three – seeking the formational element of catechesis, the “spirituality seeking understanding” of theology, and the social science analysis of religion found in religious studies. A new way to think about issues of spirituality and their role in individual and corporate life.</p> <p><b><i>The Clashing of Conflicting Minds</i></b></p> <p>d. The traditional, modern and postmodern mind.</p> <p>e. The Secular Worldview and its Assumptions (Harvey Cox's, <i>The Secular Mind</i>; Charles Taylor, <i>The Secular Age</i>)</p>	<p>1. Mazur and McCarthy, p. 1-14; 41-101;103-153.</p>
<p>May 2</p>	<p><b><i>The Decline of Faith in the 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the Rise of “Theologians of the Profane:” Art, Socialism and</i></b></p>	<p>1. Mazur and McCarthy, 175-178,</p>

	<p><b><i>Communism and Asian Fascination</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Rise of Atheism</li> <li>The Rise of Fundamentalism and the Religious Right</li> <li>The Religion of Art</li> <li>The Asian Invasion</li> <li>The Religion of Socialism/Communism The Decline of Community, (Robert Putnam, <i>Bowling Alone</i>.)</li> </ol>	<p>197-254; 255-257; 271-321.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make one (thoughtful) post on Angel on Meacham reading, 152-250.</li> <li><b>3. Initial Concept of Final Paper and Presentation Due. (One page maximum.)</b></li> </ol>
May 9	<p><b><i>Further “Theologians of the Profane:” Myth, Utopia and Music</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Spirituality of Myth (Joseph Campbell’s, <i>Hero with a 1,000 Faces</i>; Jordon Peterson’s <i>Maps of Meaning: The Architecture of Belief</i>).</li> <li>The Spirituality of Economics: Economists: The 20<sup>th</sup> Century’s New High Priests, (Robert Nelson, <i>Economics as Religion</i>.)</li> <li>Music as the Vehicle of Spirituality: (Blues as an Alternative Religion; Steve Turner, <i>The Gospel According to the Beatles</i>; Jeffrey Symynkywicz, <i>The Gospel According to Bruce Springstein</i>; John Bird, <i>The Spirituality of Music</i>; Jazz as a Spiritual Journey.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Schmidt, 1-179.</li> <li>Read <i>Keith and Lundberg</i>, 1-31.</li> <li>Make one (thoughtful) post on Angel on Mazur and McCarthy readings, 175-178, 197-254; 255-257; 271-321.</li> </ol>
May 16	<p><b><i>The Cultural Roots of America’s Alternative, Emergent, and “New Age” Spiritualities</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>America’s Spiritual “Shadow Culture. (Eugene Taylor, <i>Shadow Culture</i>)</li> <li>The Foundation of America’s Seeker Culture. (Robert Bellah, <i>Habits of the Heart</i>; Wade Roof, <i>Spiritual Marketplace</i>)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Schmidt, 227-290</li> <li>Read <i>Keith and Lundberg</i>, 35-54.</li> <li>Make one (thoughtful) post on Angel on this week’s readings, Schmidt, 1-179.</li> </ol>
May 23	<p><b><i>Native American Spirituality: From Anathema to Envy</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philip Jenkins, <i>The Dreamcatchers</i></li> </ol> <p><b><i>Mixing Religious Fact and Fiction: A National Past Time</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Morris West, <i>Shoes of the Fisherman</i> (1963), <i>The Fools of God</i> (1981).</li> <li>Dan Brown, <i>Da Vinci Code</i> (2003); <i>Lost Symbol</i> (2009)</li> <li>Brian Moore, <i>Blackrobe</i>, 1991.</li> <li>James Redfield, <i>The Celestine Prophecy</i>, 1993.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Eck, 1-293.</li> <li>Read <i>Keith and Lundberg</i>, 55-74..</li> <li>Make one (thoughtful) post on Angel on this week’s readings, Schmidt, 227-290.</li> </ol>
May 30	<p><b><i>Living in a “Post-Christian” American Culture: Changing the Foundation</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Four Chaplains: Will Herberg, <i>Catholic, Protestant, Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology</i></li> <li>American Hindus</li> <li>American Buddhists</li> <li>American Muslims</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Final Presentations</u></b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eck, 294-386.</li> </ol>
June 6	<p><b><i>Signs of Hope for Getting Beyond the Culture Wars</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reaching Beyond Just Getting Along (Gustav Niebuhr,</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eck, 294-385.</li> </ol>

	<p><i>Beyond Tolerance</i>; Maria Rosa Menocal, <i>The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain</i>).</p> <p>b. Creating a New Kind of Culture that Minimizes Warring. (Eric Liu and Nick Hanauer, <i>The Gardens of Democracy: A New American Story of Citizenship, the Economy, and the Role of Government</i>).</p> <p><b><u>Final Presentations</u></b></p>	
June 10	Final Paper Due	

### COURSE LEARNING GOALS AND HOW THEY ARE MEASURE

<b>MATL Learning Outcome</b>	<b>How Learning is Evaluated</b>
Demonstrate an ability to think critically about the impact and role of religious organizations, spiritual movements, and spiritually-inspired insights and worldviews in public discourse, particularly in the articulation of public values in the United States, as well as its impact and role in the development of leadership theory and practice.	Class participation based on reading. Growth in depth of personal understanding of religion and spirituality as concepts and realities, and their influence on values experienced in the public square, as expressed in discussion and the final writing assignment.
Demonstrate an understanding of the role and dynamics of human “meaning-making” in framing worldviews, and in impacting individual and collective human values formation, ethical and other forms of decision-making, and leadership ideals, goals and methodologies.	Class participation on readings and final written assignment.
Demonstrate a <i>reflective</i> capacity for analyzing and articulating the student’s personal spirituality and “mean-making” influences and structure, and its impact on the student’s leadership ideals, goals, and methodologies.	Final integrative paper, outlining the student’s “personal language” for understanding religious and social values in the public sphere.
Demonstrate an ability to <i>integrate</i> course material with your personal meaning structure and spirituality, and your ideals and goals for leadership.	Final integrative paper, which sharpens your “personal language” for understanding religious and social values in the public sphere and how it impacts or will impact your ideals and goals for leadership, also class participation.
Demonstrate a capacity to speak publically with ease and clarity.	Final presentation of paper and class participation.
Demonstrate a capacity to write appropriately to serve the people to whom they are accountable.	Final written assignment.

### STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND EVALUATION

In this course evaluation will be based on the following dimensions:

- Demonstration of reading the course material and wrestling with both the articulation of a personal spirituality and spiritual values and the role of religion and spirituality in American culture.
- Referencing accurately historical patterns, concepts, and theory as surfaced in the readings and class mini-lectures, both in classroom conversation and the final paper and presentation.
- Timely presence and active participation in all sessions and presentations;
- Papers and presentations turned in on time. Late papers will reduce the grade by one level.

*Grading Criteria:*

50%	Presence in class and active participation in discussions
15%	On-line reflective postings and discussion
35%	Final written assignment

### *Academic Honesty*

The School of Theology and Ministry strictly adheres to the Academic Policy concerning Academic Honesty as published in the Seattle University Student Handbook. (see the Seattle University website).

### *Students with disabilities*

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an “invisible disability” such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs and arrange support services and/ or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740.

### *Final Paper Creating Your Own Civil Spiritual and Civil Religious Language*

Students will write a 15-20 page final paper attempting to begin a process of translating a personal spirituality into a civil religious or spiritual language. The paper will consist of four parts:

- I. Brief Analysis of Your Religious Tradition and/or Personal Spirituality (no more than one and a half pages in length)
  1. Who are your heroes, the people modeling the kinds of action you would like to do?
  2. What are the rituals, intellectual resources, sources of art, mythologies, songs, communities that sustain your personal spirituality and values?
  3. What are the “doctrines” or “dogmas” that have given your life meaning and focus.
  
- II. Brief Identification of the Values “Formed” by this these religious and spiritual influences (no more than one and a half pages in length):
  1. How has this spiritual or religious tradition(s) influenced what you value most?
  2. What are the values most informed (or influenced) by your spiritual or religious tradition?
  
- III. Analysis of Readings and Research (no more than 7 pages):
  1. Having looked at your own inner world briefly, what aspects of the readings and research through the quarter have most assisted you in understanding the role of religious and spiritual values in forming a worldview?
  2. Which aspects of the readings challenged your worldview? Why?
  
- IV. Integration (5 - 10 pages):

Choose a public “values” conversation in which you feel drawn to participate. (This could deal with family homelessness, juvenile detention, poverty, civil rights ...) The important thing is to choose an issue that is important to YOU.

Now, imagine you have been invited to participate in a public discourse on this issue.

1. Describe the context of your discourse, i.e., city council meeting, planning and zoning commission, congregational committee, congressional gathering, Seattle Public Library ....

Prepare a 10-15 minute presentation you will give to this imaginary organization about this issue. (You will use this presentation in class in one of the last two sessions. However, rather than give the presentation, you will walk the class through your thought process in putting together the presentation. So, you will want to explain to the class:

2. Why this issue is so important to you.
3. The logic of your position and how you will try to move your audience through a logical process to share in your conclusion or call to action.
4. The spiritual insights and values you have discerned (in this class or elsewhere) that inform your perspective and motivate you to action.
5. The ways in which you will or will not reference the source of these spiritually or religiously-informed insights and values in your presentation. Why are you referencing them or choosing not to reference them?
6. The values or issues involved in this presentation that you might try to avoid because people might misunderstand or react so strongly they would not listen carefully to you. Why do you think these values or issues will be misunderstood?
7. The arguments you think you will hear back from the imaginary audience, and how you would respond to their critique.