University of Texas at Austin

Spring 2012

GOV 312R:

Constitutional Principals – Equality:

The Catholic Church as a Political Institution

Unique #: 38585
Meeting Time: MWF, 2-3
Meeting Place: MEZ 1.306

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Batts 3.130 (232-7279)
OH: W (10-12, 1-2)

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Course Description

This course takes an in-depth look at the Catholic Church, not as a religious institution, but as a political one. Over the course of the semester, we'll read parts of the Bible, Enlightenment readings, founding documents, and literature from the Second Vatican Council.

This course has a supplemental discussion session offered at two different times between the Monday and Wednesday lectures (TBA). These discussion sessions will provide an opportunity to reinforce and clarify course material, to integrate learning skills with lecture and assigned readings content, and to practice higher-level synthesis and analysis.

Special Needs

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To determine if you qualify, please contact the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY. If they certify your needs, I will work with you to make appropriate arrangements.

Course Format

Although this class will have a lecture format, it will revert to seminar more than you would probably think possible. As such, students are expected to come to class ready to actively contribute to classroom discussions.

Grades

Grades will be determined according to the following formula:

- 20% Class Participation. Throughout the class, I reserve the right to take attendance, to give pop quizzes, and to assign homework projects.
- 20% Midterm Exam I (February 10)
- 20% Midterm Exam II (March 7)
- 20% Midterm Exam III (April 27)
- 20% Class Project

I will not give a Q-drop to a student unless he or she is passing the course. I frown on issues of academic dishonesty and will severely punish any student caught plagiarizing, cheating, or engaged in unethical classroom practices. I will not accept late assignments. I will not accept excuses for missing pop quizzes. I do not offer make-up exams. All grade disputes must be type written and turned in within 1 week of receiving the grade. I will use plusses and minuses in this class, with the 0.7 and 0.3 at cutoffs. So, an 82.9 is a B- and an 83.1 is B; an 86.9 is a B and an 87.1 is a B+.

Course Readings

The course readings consist of the following:

- ○ Mitch Finley. 2005. *Key Moments in Church History: A Concise Introduction to the Catholic Church*. Roman & Littlefield.
- ○ Clyde Crews. 2004. *American and Catholic: A Popular History of Catholicism in the United States*. Saint Anthony Messenger Press.
- ○ John L. Allen, Jr. 2006. *All the Pope's Men: The Inside Story of How the Vatican Really Thinks*. Image Publishing.
- • A course packet available at Speedway Copy and Printing (in Dobie Mall). All readings in the Course Packet are designated as a hollow circle.
- ❖ From time to time, I will post readings on Blackboard. Those will be designated with this symbol.

Course Outline and Reading List

Week 1 (January 18 and 20): Course Introduction – The Catholic Church as a Political Institution.

I. The Early Catholic Church

Week 2 (January 23, 25, and 27): In the Beginning (well, not that far back)

- "Birth and Childhood of Jesus"
- "The Resurrection"

o Finley, Chapter 1

Week 3 (January 30, February 1, and February 3): The Early Church

- Acts of the Apostles

o Finley, Chapters 2-3

Week 4 (February 6 and 8): The Middle Church

- "The 95 Theses"

o Finely, Chapters 4-9

February 10: Midterm Exam I

II. The American Church

Week 5 (February 13, 15, and 17): The American Founding

❖ John Witte, Jr., and Joel A. Nichols. 2011. "The Essential Rights and Liberties of Religion" in *Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment*. West Press.

❖ John Witte, Jr., and Joel A. Nichols. 2011. "Forging the First Amendment Religion Clause" in *Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment*. West Press.

Week 6 (February 20, 22, and 24): The History of the American Church

o Crews, All

Week 7 (February 27, 29, and March 2): The American and Texas Church Today

o Crews, All

- John L. Allen, Jr. February 14, 2008. "Sampling 'Catholicisms' in the Lone Star State." *National Catholic Reporter*.
- John L. Allen, Jr. April 18, 2008. "Texas: New Catholic Frontier." *National Catholic Reporter*.

Week 8 (March 5): Continuation from Week 7

March 7: Midterm Exam II

III. The Politics of the Catholic Church

Week 9 (March 19, 21, and 23): Vatican II and Its Aftermath

- Excerpts from Garry Wills' *Why I am Catholic*

o Finely, Chapters 10, 11, and Epilogue

Week 10 (March 26, 28, and 30): John Paul and Benedict

- John L. Allen's *The Rise of Benedict XVI,* Chapters 4-8

Week 11 (April 2, 4, and 6): Vatican Politics Today

o Allen, All

Week 12 (April 9, 11, and 13): The Catholic Voters

- Nancy Gibbs. July 2, 2007. "The Catholic Conundrum," *Time*, p.56, 59.
- William B. Pendergast's *The Catholic Voter in American Politics,* Chapter 1
- William V. D'Antonio, James D. Davidson, Dean R. Hoge, and Mary L. Gautier, *The Catholic Voter in American Politics,* Chapter 8

Week 13 (April 16, 18, and 20): The American Catholic Hierarchy

- United States Conferences of Catholic Bishops. 2011. "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship."

Week 14 (April 23 and 25): The Future of the Catholic Church

April 27: Midterm Exam III

Week 15 (April 30, May 2, and May 4): Presentations