Course Description
This course will explore historical and contemporary debates in the United States over the place of religion in public life. We will examine the Constitutional clauses on religious liberty and establishment, discuss the role of legislatures and courts with respect to these clauses, and explore contemporary social, ethical and political issues where questions about the links between religion and politics are particularly pressing.

Course Requirements and Grading
1) **Class Participation** (25% of final grade):
Your attendance and your active participation in class discussion are essential. You are expected to have done all the assigned reading for each class session and to come to class (with the readings in hand) having formulated and ready to discuss specific questions and/or observations about the reading. You also are expected to contribute to the Blackboard discussion forum once per week.

2) **Group Work** (25%)
You will be responsible for two group projects. First, groups of 2-3 students will lead eight designated “Friday discussions.” The groups will be responsible for preparing and posting a reading guide for the day’s assignment, discussing with me an agenda for the class discussion, and delivering a short presentation at the beginning of the class. Second, groups of 3-4 students will identify and research a contemporary issue in which significant questions of the role of religion with respect to social, political and/or ethical discourse are being raised in the U.S. today. Groups will present on this work during the last two weeks of the semester. The presentations will involve assigning readings on the issue and leading a class discussion.

3) **Papers** (25%)
Two papers will be assigned during the course of the semester. A 5-page paper on Stephen Carter’s *The Culture of Disbelief* will be due on March 7. A 15-page paper will be due on May 12 and will ask you to examine and evaluate in some depth one of the central arguments from the Feldman, Fraser, or Wallis books.

4) **Final Exam** (25%): The exam is scheduled for 9:00 am, Wednesday, May 14.
# Reading and Assignment Schedule

## Week 1:
- **Jan 21:** Introduction
- **Jan 23:** Stephen Carter, *The Culture of Disbelief*, xiii-66
- **Jan 25:** Carter, 67-101

## Week 2:
- **Jan 28:** Adams and Emmerich, *A Nation Dedicated to Religious Liberty*: Forward, Introduction and pp. 3-20, 97-102
  
  Library of Congress, “Religion and the Founding of the American Republic”: I-III
  
  (http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/)
- **Jan 30:** Adams and Emmerich, 21-42, 102-121
  
  Library of Congress, IV
- **Feb 1:** Adams and Emmerich, 32-72
  
  Library of Congress, V-VII

## Week 3:
- **Feb 4:** Noah Feldman, *Divided by God*, Intro-56
- **Feb 6:** Carter, 105-123
  
  Thomas Curry, “Religion and the Constitution Confounded” (hand out)
- **Feb 8:** Friday Discussion: Lemon vs. Kurtzman
  

## Week 4:
- **Feb 11:** Adams and Emmerich, 74-96
- **Feb 13:** Carter, 124-155
- **Feb 15:** Friday Discussion: Employment Division vs. Smith
  

## Week 5:
- **Feb 18:** Carter, 156-210
- **Feb 20:** Carter, 213-262
- **Feb 22:** Friday Discussion: Carter, 263-277

## Week 6:
- **Feb 25:** James W. Fraser, *Between Church and State*, 1-65
- **Feb 27:** Fraser, 67-126
- **Feb 29:** Friday Discussion: Feldman, skim 57-110, read 111-134

## Week 7:
- **Mar 3:** Feldman 134-149
- **Mar 5:** Wed Discussion: Re-read Carter on Scopes
- **Mar 7:** **Paper #1 Due**

## Week 8:
- **Mar 10, 12, 14:** No reading assignment. We will be viewing the PBS documentary “With God on Our Side.” We will view two of the episodes in class on Monday and Wednesday and on Friday will discuss the series. Screenings of the other episodes will be arranged for earlier in the week.
**Week 9:**
March 31: Fraser, 127-216
Apr 2: Feldman, 150-185
Apr 4: Feldman, 186-219

**Week 10:**
Apr 7: Feldman, 220-234
    Michael McConnell, “Believers as Equal Citizens” *
Apr 11: Friday Discussion: Graham Walker, “Illusory Pluralism”*

**Week 11:**
Apr 14: Jim Wallis, God’s Politics, 3-42
    Mark Noll, “Evangelicals in the American Founding”*
Apr 16: Jim Wallis, 43-87
Apr 18: Jim Wallis, 87-208

**Week 12:**
Apr 21: Wallis, 297-375
Apr 23: Fraser, finish
Apr 25: Feldman, finish

**Week 13: Group Presentations**
April 28:
April 30:
May 2:

**Week 14: Group Presentations and Conclusion**
May 5:
May 7:
May 9: Conclusions

*reserve readings

**Texts for purchase at the Bookstore.**
Adams and Emmerich, A Nation Dedicated to Liberty
Stephen Carter, The Culture of Disbelief
Noah Feldman, Divided by God
James W. Fraser, Between Church and State
Jim Wallis, God’s Politics