

PM615-100 Christian Civic Engagement and Witness

Fall 2020 Syllabus

Monday Evenings, August 24 to October 30 – **6:00-9:00**

Professor

Michael McQueen
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Class Location and Time

Online

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Course Description

This class is intended to coincide with the 2020 Presidential Election. The course will enable the student to understand biblical foundations of government and better understand historic and cultural trends in 21st century American society upon government. The purpose is to help the individual to make informed decisions concerning election year issues and create an environment for positive Christian witness. Attention will be given to the social processes that have shaped our culture, the relationship between the Church (and individuals) and the State, and the Church's prophetic call to bring about reconciliation and transformation.

Course credits – Three semester hours

Course objectives

- To define and understand culture and politics, their dynamic and relation to the Kingdom of God; to understand Christian purpose and responsibility in this context.
- To understand the specific impact of the postmodern worldview on both society and church and to examine the various ways in which the church has and has not dealt with the mega-shift that has taken place.
- To become familiar with historic political trends and terminology.
- To know and understand the American political spectrum.
- To become familiar with major issues that impact both the Church and society.
- To become familiar with various media and how they create and perpetuate division.
- To discover more effective means of evangelism in a political environment.
- To recognize and deal appropriately with personal cultural/political blinders.
- To discover and use resources to keep abreast of cultural/political change.

Required Textbooks – none.

Grading

1. **Course reading** – the student is expected to read and listen to 4 different political news outlets weekly from the lists provided. In addition, each student must watch live/online the Democrat and Republican National Conventions and be able to evaluate the resultant platforms. The professor will also assign weekly articles relevant to the class.
2. **Weekly assignments** – each week students will be asked to survey at least two individuals about the ongoing political campaign, preferably one from each end of the political spectrum. The purpose of these surveys is to listen to the reasoning

processes through which people go in course of a major political election. These surveys will be developed the first class.

3. **Class participation.** This expectation is closely related to weekly assignments and course texts. Class participation is not however limited these assignments, and the student is therefore encouraged to participate by asking questions, as well as responding to the lecturer and other students.
4. **Journal** – students will be required to keep a journal over the course of the semester. To be included in this journal will be the following
 - + weekly class reflections including comments on discussions, readings, and assignments. Entries shall not be less than 500 words per week.
 - + daily/weekly reflections from media.
 - + weekly entries and reflections on interviews.
 - + reflections on how one might most effectively witness in engaging non-Christians in a politically charged environment.These notebooks will be presented for spot evaluations 3 times during the term.
5. **Presentations** – Assuming adequate enrolment, students will research an issue to be determined and present it to the class and field questions.
6. **Final** – students will be asked to present a 5000-word final write up on their interviews, presenting their overall observations and reflections on those findings. This should also should a 500-1000-word statement on their understanding on what Christian civic engagement and witness means to them and how this class influenced their current view.

It is the professor's preference that all written assignments be done electronically and emailed on the due date or when requested. If the student has strong feelings against this, please make arrangements with the professor.

The grading distribution for this course is as follows:

Class Participation	20%
Interviews	20%
Presentation	10%
Final	10%
Journal	40%

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Date	Topic
	Democrat National Convention 8.17-8.20
August 24	Culture and the Kingdom of God
	Republican National Convention 8.24-8.27
31	Historical Movements
September 7	Christian Witness and Civic Involvement
14	Political Spectra – philosophies and definitions
21	Issues 1 – First Amendment Rights
28	Issues 2 – Race, Immigration, Public Order
October 5	
12	Issues 3 – Identity Politics
16	Issues 4 – Life and Healthcare Issues
23	Issues 5 – Economics, Commerce
30	Issues 6 – National Security and Relationships
November 2	no class
	Election Day 11.3
November 9	Final Due and Election Postmortem – What Now Do We Do?

Lesson 1 – Culture and the Kingdom of God

1. Culture and Worldview
2. Kingdom of God – Mt19; Mt6.24; Lk 14.26 (Pseudo Phocides)
3. Power and Politics –
 - a. Creation and Fall – Gn 1.26; 3.1f;
 - i. You be like God
 - ii. Sinful default – Judges 17.6, 21.25
 - iii.
 - b. Satanic control – Luke 4;
 - c. Believers' involvement
 - i. Gideon
 - ii. David
 - iii. Daniel
 - iv. Paul
 - d.

Lesson 2 – Historical Movements

1. Biblical
2. Greek Democracies
3. Constitutional Monarchies
4. Republican
5. Socialism/Utopianism

Lesson 3 – Christian Witness and Civic Involvement

1. Privilege and Responsibility in a republican/democratic society
 - a. Rm 13
 - b. Ac 22.25
 - c.
2. Witness – listening and/versus speaking
 - a. Ac1.8/Mat 28.18 – Key Point for whole course to witness to the Kingdom, not establish the kingdom
 - b. Engel's Scale
 - c. 4 deadly questions
 - d. Ep 4.15 -speaking the truth in love
 - e. Discernment/Prayer
 - f. People can reject us for what we say, but not how we say it.
 - g. The goal of our instruction is love 1Tim 1.5
3. Witness over Citizenship
 - a. Ac 4.19; 5.29
 - b. 1Cor 6.7; 10.23ff
 - c. HS – can't force people to live Christian life without Spirit
 - d. Can we restrain evil though? Gov't is to restrain evil. What if it doesn't?
- 4.

Lesson 4 – Political Spectra – philosophies and definitions

1. Right, Left, Middle/Moderate
2. Big Government/Little Government
3. Niebuhr – Christ and Culture
4. Specifics
 - a. Antifa/Anarchist
 - b. White Supremecy/Nazi
 - c. Socialist/Communist
- 5.

Lesson 5 – First Amendment Rights

1. Freedom of Religion
2. Freedom of Speech
3. Freedom of Press
4. Right of Peaceful Assembly
5. Right of Petition of Grievances

Lesson 6 – Race, Immigration and Public Order

1. Racial Issues
 - a. Historical
 - i. Native Americans
 - ii. Slaves
 - b. Modern
 - i. Black Lives Matter
 - ii. Native Peoples Movement
 - c.
2. Immigration Issues
3. Public Order

Lesson 7 – Identity Politics

1. Identity in general and intersection with culture and worldview
2. Ethnic/National Identity
3. Sexual identity
 - a. Feminism
 - b. LGBT
 - c.
4. Religious
 - a. Secular
 - b. Islamic
 - c. Catholic
 - d. Christian – God's own party or the Kingdom?
5. Political
 - a. See lesson 4

Lesson 8 – Life and Healthcare Issues

1. Abortion/Adoption/Foster-Care
2. Euthanasia/Suicide
3. Substance abuse – recreation and opioids
4. Insurance – Private versus Government
5. Pandemics and Immunization

Lesson 9 – Economics and Commerce

1. Free Markets versus Planned Economies
2. America First versus Trade agreements
- 3.

Lesson 10 – National Security and International Relationships

1. Isolationism versus World Policeman
 - a. Interventionism
2. Morality versus practicality
 - a. China – religious freedom or cheap goods
 - b. Africa – Persecuted Church versus no goods
 - c. “Gay Pride” in embassies
- 3.