

HIST 685: CHURCH AND STATE IN THE MODERN AND POST-MODERN WORLD

Sarah C. Williams

June 28 – July 2; 8:30 – 11:30 am

1 or 2 graduate credit hours; or 1 audit hour

Live online & Recorded

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course considers the relationship between Christianity and politics in the modern and post-modern period. Raising probing questions about Christian identity, political philosophy, and missional engagement in the public sphere, we will trace the relationship between the Christian church and the state from the late 18th century, through the 19th and 20th centuries, and into the 21st century. We explore the legacy of the Christian tradition on western ideas of government, whilst at the same time recognizing the complex enmeshment between the institutions of the church and the politics of empire, nationalism, and authoritarianism. We evaluate the impact of church/state relations during the era of total war on the missional environment of the post-modern period. We look closely at the dechristianization of modern nation states in the period since the Second World War in order to better understand the historical roots of new political theories and practices currently reshaping our contemporary political milieu. The aim of this course is to deepen our historical understanding of the major themes of our own age, to furnish our missional imaginations, and to inspire confidence and hope in the gospel as relevant and transformative to every area of life today.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon the successful completion of this course, students should have a clearer understanding of:

1. Engage critically with the major political themes of the modern and post-modern age.
2. Demonstrate an ability to situate political theory, church practice, and Christian theology within the history of western culture since c1800.
3. Show an understanding of the historic relationship between church and state and the impact of this relationship on our current missional context.
4. Articulate a deeper vision for political participation and Christian engagement with the public sphere.

COURSE OUTLINE

Day 1 June 28 Defining our missional moment

Day 2 June 29 The emergence of the modern state c1750-1900

Day 3 June 30 The Christian states at war 1900-1960

Day 4 July 1 The de-Christianization of the state: From the modern to the post-modern state

Day 5 July 2 Towards a post-COVID state: The new cultural and political matrix c2000-2021

REQUIRED TEXTS

Required Reading

*Ellul, Jacques, *The Presence of the Kingdom*, Colorado Springs: Helmers and Howard Publishing, second edition, 1989.

*Brueggemann, Walter, *The Prophetic Imagination*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, second edition, 2001.

Brown, Callum G., *Religion and the Demographic Revolution: Women and Secularization in Canada, Ireland, UK and USA since the 1960s*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Siedentop, Larry, *Inventing the Individual: The Origins of Western Liberalism*, London, Penguin Books, 2014.

*Purchase recommended

Looking for textbooks? Please [contact](#) the Regent Bookstore, or check out their [direct-fulfillment website, Aerio](#).

Note: Aerio prices are in USD.

Please Note: This Course Information Sheet is meant to assist in selecting courses.

The official syllabus should be consulted for more detailed information. A full syllabus with drop deadlines, policies, and course assignment details is available on Moodle for registered students: moodle.regent-college.edu/login

