



**HISTORY 404.01E: RELIGION IN EARLY AMERICA  
COURSE SYLLABUS: SUMMER II 2015**



Pulpit of St. James's Anglican Church, Goose Creek, S.C. (1711)

**Instructor:** Associate Professor John Howard Smith

**Class Time / Location:** Monday-Thursday, 10:00-11:50 a.m. / Ferguson Social Sciences 143

**Office Location:** Ferguson Social Sciences 117

**Office Hours:** Monday-Wednesday, 1:00-4:00, or by appointment

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<b>COURSE INFORMATION</b>
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**Course Prerequisite/Co-requisite: HIST. 253: Reading and Writing History**

**Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:**

*Textbooks Required:*

Patricia U. Bonomi, *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America*, rev. ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. ISBN10 0-19-516218-8  
 John Howard Smith, *The First Great Awakening: Redefining Religion in British America, 1725-1775*. Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2015. ISBN13 978-1-61147-714-6

Items distributed as photocopied handouts, or available on eCollege Doc Sharing

**Course Description:**

This course surveys the development of religion in North America from the Precontact Period to the end of the American Revolution, with an emphasis on the transplanted and evolution of European Christianity. Topics covered include American Indian and African religions as they developed in contact with missionizing Christianity in the colonial and early national contexts, the influence of Protestantism on American identity, the religious justifications for slavery, the First Great Awakening, issues pertaining to religious tolerance and the separation of church and state under the Constitution. Emphasis will be placed on the tension between established churches and “dissident” denominations and sects, the religious experience of African Americans, and how American Indian religions changed as a result of Christian missionary efforts and the impact of colonialism.

**Student Learning Outcome:**

Students will understand how Christianity shaped the foundations of American culture and society from the colonial through the revolutionary periods.

<b>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</b>
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**Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments**

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist students in achieving the outcomes/objectives for the course and instructional units/modules. Each week students will work on various combinations of readings, discussions, and research.

Participation: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)

Student Learning Outcome: Students will understand how Christianity shaped the foundations of American culture and society from the colonial through the revolutionary periods.

Participation in class discussions is intended to allow students to talk about issues pertaining to the topics at hand concerning various aspects of early American religious history, and will serve to inform the Instructor about how well students are absorbing course content. They will also allow students to learn and refine skills in scholarly debating, as they will be required to answer questions posed by the Instructor and by their classmates in coherent and insightful ways.

Readings Quizzes: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)

Student Learning Outcomes: Students will understand how Christianity shaped the foundations of American culture and society from the colonial through the revolutionary periods.

The readings quizzes are designed to test students' comprehension of the readings for each particular day a quiz is administered, testing the depth of their knowledge of the topic(s) at hand and their analytical skills. Administration will be random, and each quiz will take up no more than 10 minutes of class time at the beginning of each class period. Grading will be on a 0-10 point scale for each quiz, with a running average maintained through the semester.

Book Review: (100 pts., 50% of course grade)

Student Learning Outcome: Students will understand how Christianity shaped the foundations of American culture and society from the colonial through the revolutionary periods.

Students will undertake the extracurricular reading of Patricia U. Bonomi's *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America*, and write an extended review of it, employing their understanding of the assigned course readings to evaluate the book.

**Grading**

Grading will be calculated using a standard 10-point scale, with course elements weighted accordingly:

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
0-59	F

Attendance and Participation (100 pts.)	25%
Readings Quizzes (100 pts.)	25%
Research Paper (100 pts.)	50%

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

As this course is web-enhanced through eCollege, students will require the following hardware and software:

*Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. Windows XP or newer, and Internet Explorer 6.0 or newer is best.*

*Internet access/connection—high speed preferred (not dial-up).*

*Word Processor (preferably Microsoft Word 1997-2003 or newer).*

**ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu).

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

### Interaction with Instructor Statement:

Office hours are given at the top of this syllabus, and are posted outside of my door. Arrangements can be made if a student cannot meet with me during regular office hours for consultations. Email is the most reliable method of reaching me outside of my office. Expect a reply within 24 to 48 hours, and replies will only be sent to students' LeoMail accounts. **Do not email me from your personal email account.** Students may also be able to reach me by phone during office hours, and at other times do not leave a callback number as I do not return students' phone calls.

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### Academic Honesty

It is the policy of the University, the History Department, and the instructor that no form of plagiarism or cheating will be tolerated. Plagiarism is defined as the deliberate use of another's work and claiming it as one's own. This means ideas as well as text, whether paraphrased or presented verbatim (word-for-word). You are neither required nor expected to come up with original ideas about, or new interpretations of, early America. It is more important for students to understand why events unfolded in the ways they did, as well as what other scholars have said and written about them, so use proper citation in papers where appropriate. **However, anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will automatically fail the assignment in question, may summarily fail the course, and could be subject to disciplinary action by the University.** There is an easy way to avoid such a dire fate: take pride in your work, and please take full advantage of the instructor's abundant willingness to help you at every opportunity.

Likewise, no element of the course grade is negotiable or optional, meaning that failure to take the final exam or to submit the research paper in the absence of compelling, documented circumstances **will result in automatic failure of the course.** *The instructor's evaluative judgment of student work is final, and will not be subject to revision except in cases of mathematical error.* **Grades are non-negotiable.**

### Class Decorum

All students must show respect toward the Instructor and the Instructor's syllabus, presentations, assignments, and point of view. Students should also respect each others' differences. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. If the Instructor determines that a student is not being respectful toward other students or the Instructor, or is otherwise behaving in a disruptive manner, it is the Instructor's prerogative to remove the student from the class either temporarily or permanently, as the case requires.

***Chronic tardiness to class will not be tolerated, and neither will be a casual coming and going from the classroom. Please turn off all electronic devices such as laptop or notebook computers, cell phones, iPods, etc., etc. Food is not permitted in the classroom, though beverages are permitted. Eat breakfast on your own time! Noncompliance will result in deductions from the final grade to be determined at the Instructor's discretion. Failure to comply with any of the Instructor's policies will result in immediate deregistration from the course.***

**A Note on Religious History**

Please keep in mind that as a course on the history of religion, controversial subjects will undoubtedly arise. There are two important features about striking the right tone and attitude in discussing religious history: 1) other students around you may hold a belief system directly related to or descended from the groups and systems under discussion at any given juncture (not to mention different from yours), so please be respectful, and 2) historical analysis or interpretations of religion in the past do not necessarily reflect upon their present-day status or ultimate meaning. ***This course is taught from a secularist, external viewpoint and will not advance any doctrine or theology at the expense of others.*** I will work hard to keep lectures and discussions open and collegial, and if you have any questions or concerns, please see me.

**University Specific Procedures:***ADA Statement*

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**  
**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Gee Library 132**  
**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**  
**Fax (903) 468-8148**  
[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)  
[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

*Student Conduct*

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

<b>COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR</b>
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**July 13-16 Introductions; The American and European Religious Background**

July 13: Introductions

July 14: "The Land Looks after Us"

Gaustad/Noll, chap. 1 (pp. 1-3 ["Natural Religion"], 9-23)—Handout

July 15: The European Religious Background; The Protestant Reformation

Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, chap. 1—Handout

July 16: Christianity as a Tool of Conquest and Colonization

Gaustad/Noll, chap. 1 (pp. 3-5, 24-40); "The Jesuits"—Handout

**July 20-23 The Early Anglo-American Religious Landscapes**

July 20: Anglo-Dutch Colonization, 1607-1640

Gaustad/Noll, chap. 1 (pp. 6-8 ["England Anew"], 43-62, 72-76)—Handout

July 21: Puritanism, Separatism, and a "New" England, 1600s-1660

Gaustad/Noll, chap. 1 (pp. 63-69, 83-84, 96-99)—Handout

July 22: "God's Controversy with New England, 1660-1689

Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, chaps. 2-3; Gaustad/Noll, chap. 2 (pp. 85, 155-158)—Handout

July 23: The Salem Witch Trials

Gaustad/Noll, chap. 2 (p. 99-104)—Handout

Recommendation: Bonomi, *Under the Cope of Heaven*, chaps. 1-3

**July 27-30 Religion in Eighteenth-Century British America**

July 27: The Anglo-American Religious Landscape

Smith, *The First Great Awakening*, "Introduction" and chap. 1; Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, chap. 4; Gaustad/Noll, chap. 2 (pp. 80-83, 86-88 106-136, 158-159)—Handout

July 28: "Looseness, Irreligion, and Atheism"

Smith, *The First Great Awakening*, chap. 2; Gaustad/Noll, chap. 2 (pp. 149-154)—Handout

July 29: "Slave Religions" in the Colonial Period

Raboteau, *Slave Religion*, chaps. 1-2—Handout

July 30: "Communion Times": First Stirrings of the First Great Awakening

Smith, *The First Great Awakening*, chap. 3

**August 3-6 The First Great Awakening**

Aug. 3: "A Glorious Work of God's Infinite Power"

Smith, *The First Great Awakening*, chaps. 4-6

Aug. 4: "Glorious Distraction"

Smith, *The First Great Awakening*, chap. 7

Aug. 5: "Unhappy Contention"

Smith, *The First Great Awakening*, chap. 8

Aug. 6: "I Claim Jesus to Be My Right Master"  
 Smith, *The First Great Awakening*, chap. 9  
Recommendation: Bonomi, *Under the Cope of Heaven*, chaps. 4-5

### **August 10-13 Religion, War with France, and the American Revolution**

Aug. 10: The Seven Years' War as a War of Religion  
 Smith, *The First Great Awakening*, chap. 10; Gaustad/Noll, chap. 2 (pp. 143-144)—  
 Handout

Aug. 11: The Great Indian Awakening, 1750s-1760s  
 Smith, *The First Great Awakening*, chap. 11

Aug. 12: The Awakening Goes South, 1750s-1760s  
 Smith, *The First Great Awakening*, chap. 12 and "Conclusion"

Aug. 13: A Revolutionary Millennium  
 Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, chap. 7; Gaustad/Noll, chap. 3 (pp. 200-228); Smith,  
 "The Promised Day of the Lord", pp. 128-157)—Handout  
Recommendation: Bonomi, *Under the Cope of Heaven*, chaps. 6-8  
**Book Review Due by 5:00 p.m.**

<b>BOOK REVIEW PARAMETERS AND POLICIES</b>
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Length: 12-15 pp. (*excluding* the bibliography). *Stiff penalties will be enforced for papers that are 11 or fewer pages in length.*

Format for Components: 1" margins all around, full justification of text, 12 pt. Times New Roman font for main text, 10 pt. Times New Roman for footnotes. See the [Style Guide](#) for greater details concerning mechanics.

Citation of Sources: Footnotes—no MLA or APA styles allowed!

Bibliography: Use what primary and secondary source materials assigned for the class as you deem necessary to support your analysis of the book, but bear in mind that the more you can use, the better.

### **Concerning Turnitin**

All students will be required to submit the rough and final drafts of their paper to an eCollege dropbox, which will automatically run the drafts through Turnitin ([www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)), a web-based plagiarism detection program. It scours the Worldwide Web and its database of all submissions (over 135 million so far) for evidence of "lifted" material indicative of plagiarism. It generates a report that notes the percentage of material that appears in other places, and highlights all examples along with the sources from which they came.

I do not employ this service based on a prior assumption of guilt or nefariousness on the student's part, but rather as an aid to students learning how to avoid committing overt and incidental plagiarism.