

Religion and the Spirit of Capitalism



UCCS—Fall 2014

Mondays 1:40PM - 4:20PM

Columbine Hall 324

Instructor: Jeff Scholes

Office: COB 4057

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:00-1:30 pm; Wednesdays, 1:30-3:00 pm

[email me to set up an appointment to guarantee a meeting](mailto:jscholes@uccs.edu)

Phone: x4090

E-mail: jscholes@uccs.edu

Course Description

The relationship between religion and economics is often overlooked or thought to not be a real relationship at all. Religion is private and sacred; economics is public and secular, so the argument goes. Yet when the two are put into relationship, questions often arise: Is religion nothing more than a prop for profit-making in a capitalist economy? Did religion actually sow the seeds of capitalism? Is it a problem when religion uses marketing tricks to sell its wares? Can religious morality be used to critique capitalism and the culture that it has created?

This course will attempt to answer these and other questions by acquainting students with the complex relationship between religion and the dominant economic system in the 21st century: capitalism. This relationship will be explored from several vantage points: religion as a cause of capitalism, capitalism as a fertile environment for religion, religion's use of capitalistic tactics for its own purposes, the ways that Eastern and non-Judeo/Christian traditions have dealt with capitalism, and the religiously grounded critique of capitalism. Through the reading several important and diverse thinkers from the fields of sociology, economics, political philosophy and theology, we will explore the theory behind the relationship.

Texts (required)

James Fulcher: *Capitalism: A Very Short Introduction* (London: Oxford University Press, 2004)

Michael Novak, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* (Madison Books, 1990)

**** Any readings not in this book will be in either:**

1. A weblink as posted in the course schedule
2. In a PDF file under Course Content → Course Packet on our Blackboard course page

Requirements:

1. Essays

- There will be *three* essays written (10%, 15%, 20% respectively)
- Each will be 4-5 pages (*4 pages minimum*—if it goes over 5 pages, I won't necessarily count off for this)
 - double-spaced, 12 point font, 1" margins
- The essay will be **printed out and turned in by hand** at the beginning of the class date on which it is due (see schedule below)
- You must cite at least TWO of the authors that we have read
 - No footnotes necessary for these--Use *parenthetical* citations, for ex.: "... belief in God" (Stark, 46).
 - If you cite from outside our required text, then you must footnote this source
 - Use Chicago Style for footnotes:
http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
 - Use an internet source ONLY if necessary.
- Each essay will be an answer to a question that I ask and the question will be posted under Course Content on Bb.

2. Reading Response Presentation (15%)

You and a partner will lead the discussion on a reading on selected class days. These will be on particular readings **marked in red** on the schedule below.

One of you will write:

1. a one-page, double-SPACED summary of the content of the reading answering:
 - a. what is the author's problem or issue at hand—if not clearly stated, what do you assume it is?
 - b. What is the author's purpose or how does author answer the problem you stated and hence what's at stake for the author in answering this problem in this way?

The other will write:

2. a one-page, double-SPACED critical response to the reading which will include:
 - a. your issues (both positive and negative) with the argument (or at times, the main point) of the reading
 - i. Response should be geared towards the importance of the reading for understanding consumer culture (and religion, if contained in the reading)

Both of you will come up with:

3. 3 discussion questions for the class

Please email me your presentation BEFORE class so I can print it out and distribute it.

3. Final Thesis paper (40%)

- 8-10 page paper
- You will come up with a topic involving the relationship between religion and capitalism to write on.
- You must run your paper idea by me in advance either by email or in person.

Due Dec. 15 (Our scheduled Final Exam day) at 11:59 pm—submit to Bb under "Final Paper" file

Schedule [blank cells denote lecture/discussion]

Date	Theme	Reading Assignment/Class Activity [note: I will lecture on the readings in BLACK. Readings in RED will be presented by students]
8/25	Syllabus review /Introductory	None

	Remarks on Religion and Capitalism	
9/1	No Class—Labor Day	
9/8	What is Capitalism? Origins Adam Smith	Fulcher, Chs. 1-2 Read ch. I only: http://www.econlib.org/library/Smith/smMS1.html (optional introductory reading): http://economistsview.typepad.com/economistsview/2009/11/the-very-best-short-summary-of-adam-smiths-life-and-work.html Guest lecture: Raphael Sassower
9/15	Crisis of Capitalism? Karl Marx	Fulcher, Ch. 6 https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch01.htm (read Preamble and Ch. I) http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/ch01.htm#219
9/22	Religion Caused Capitalism I Max Weber and The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism	Read: http://web.stanford.edu/class/sts175/NewFiles/Weber's%20Protestant%20Ethic.pdf http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/weber/protestant-ethic/ch04.htm#a
9/29	Religion Caused Capitalism II Rodney Stark	Course packet—Stark: Introduction Course packet—Stark: Ch. 1
10/6	Capitalism <i>is</i> Religious Michael Novak Essay #1 due at beginning of class	Novak, Introduction Novak, Ch. IV--Sin
10/13	Morality of Markets George Gilder	Novak, Ch. XX—A Theology of Democratic Capitalism Course packet—Gilder reading
10/20	God and the Market M. Douglas Meeks	Course packet—Meeks reading Guest lecture: Kelly Bubach of Urban Steam
10/27	Capitalism <i>is NOT</i> Religious Liberation theology/Pope Francis	Course packet—Gutierrez http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html#I.%E2%80%82Some_challenges_of_today%E2%80%99s_world
11/3	Capitalism uses Religion Carrette and King Essay #2 due at beginning of class	Read ch. 4: http://islamicblessings.com/upload/Selling-Spirituality-the-Silent-Takeover-of-Religion.pdf
11/10	Religion uses Capitalism Churches as Marketers	Course packet—Cimino/Lattin reading
11/17	Capitalism and Islam	Read: http://www.islambasics.com/view.php?bkID=157&chapter=4
11/24	No Class	
12/1	Trip to Focus on the Family	
12/8	Capitalism and Buddhism Essay #3 due at beginning of class	Read: http://www.stc.arts.chula.ac.th/cjbs/Buddhist%20Analysis%20of%20Capitalism.pdf
12/15	Final Paper due in Bb by 11:59 pm	

Evaluation guidelines for all written assignments

Grade	Description	Content	Style
A 95-100	Excellent work	Assignment goes above and beyond completion according to instructions; shows both sophisticated understanding of course materials and original critical thought; professor learns something from the student	Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and citations are perfect or nearly perfect
A- 90-94 B+ 87-89	Strong work	Assignment shows not only solid understanding of materials but also some original thought and critical engagement	Only minor mistakes present in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and citations
B 84-86 B- 80-83 C+ 77-79	Acceptable work	Assignment is completed according to instructions but not much more; shows some understanding of materials but little individual thought/engagement	Sloppy; grammar, spelling, punctuation, and citations may be faulty or poor
C 74-76 C- 70-73 D+ 67-69 D 64-66	Poor work	Assignment not completed according to instructions and/or shows lack of reading, thought, and/or understanding of materials	Grammar, spelling, punctuation and citations are poor
D- 60-63 F 59->	Unacceptable work	No evidence of reading/thinking at all; student shows blatant disregard for assignment apart from turning it in (or paper 4 days late or more)	Grammar, spelling, punctuation and citations are poor or non-existent
0	Ungraded	Student cheated/plagiarized or assignment was not turned in at all.	

Note: I round up to the nearest tenth of a percent on your FINAL GRADE. If you finish with an 89.5, that is rounded up to an A-. But if you finish with an 89.49999999999999, that is still a B+.

Statement of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity lies at the foundation of the academic process. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, acts of fraud and deception on an examination or class assignment, acts of forgery or unauthorized alteration of any official academic record or document, and attempts to gain credit for work which one has plagiarized from the work of another person.

Plagiarism means taking ideas and writings from another person—known or unknown, published or unpublished—and representing them as one's own work. The word-for-word use of another person's work must in every instance be acknowledged by the use of quotation marks or by indentation and single-spacing of the material if at least three lines long, and the citation of author and precise source. Dependence upon another person's work, whether through paraphrase or the utilization of that person's statements as a basis for one's own, must be acknowledged by author and source citation.

Academic dishonesty also includes the submission, as one's own work, of another person's work, such as another student's term paper or a paper from a term paper preparation service. The submission of one's own paper, or a substantial portion thereof, for academic credit in two or more courses also is considered to be academic dishonesty, except in those rare instances in which the instructors involved are so informed and give prior approval. In some cases when a faculty member believes that a student has not followed the rules for appropriate citation of materials he or she may wish to have the student redo the work or address the problem in another way.

*Collaborative studying is allowed for this course, but no amount of collaboration may take place in the writing phase of any assignment. Doing such will be considered a form of cheating. Any submitted work that resembles too closely the submitted work of another

student will result in serious consequences. Students must complete their own written work in its entirety. Also, no amount of copying (cutting and pasting) from other documents is allowed. All use of academic resources (lectures, essays, articles, books, online material, etc.) must properly cite/credit these sources for the ideas and language contained therein. Failure to do so is plagiarism, and will result in expulsion from the class, a grade of "F," and perhaps further academic penalties.

Resources for Avoiding Plagiarism

<http://web.uccs.edu/history/toolbox/plagiarism.htm>

<http://tlt.its.psu.edu/suggestions/cyberplag/cyberplagexamples.html>

<http://www.chem.uky.edu/Courses/common/plagiarism.html>

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>

<http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/examples.html>

Student Conduct Standards and Procedures

<http://web.uccs.edu/studentconduct/>

Additional Course Information

No incompletes will be given unless the student contacts me well in advance of the end of the quarter. The circumstances must include serious medical problems or other extreme difficulties.

All requests for special accommodations, e.g., medical, athletic, or learning-related, must be presented to me the first day of class. All such requests must be accompanied by the appropriate paperwork to be considered.

No absences will be excused except in the cases of (a) an emergent medical situation or severe illness; or (b) a death in the student's immediate family.

"Disabilities Services: Students with disabilities should turn in their disability verification letters within the first two weeks of class. For further information, contact Disability Services, Main Hall 105, 255-3354. For more information, see the [Disability Services page: http://www.uccs.edu/~dservice/](http://www.uccs.edu/~dservice/)

Military students: If you are a military student with the potential of being called to military service and/or training during the course of the semester, you are encouraged to contact your UCCS course instructor no later than the first week of class to discuss the class attendance policy. Please see the Military Students website for more information: <http://www.uccs.edu/~military/>."

Upon matriculation, all students implicitly agree to abide by the University's Academic Honor Code. Any violations of that code in our class will be taken very seriously. If we find evidence that you've violated the Honor Code, either intentionally or unintentionally, you will either (a) receive no credit for the assignment in question; or (b) be expelled from the class and assigned a failing grade for the course. In extreme cases, you may also be reported to the appropriate authorities on campus for further review.

A great online resource for learning proper citation and bibliographic method is the following: <http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

Accommodations

Any student wishing an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructors privately as soon as possible to discuss your specific needs. We rely on the Office of Academic Support to verify the need for accommodation based on their office files.

FERPA Information

According to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), also known as the Buckley Amendment, information concerning grades and other student information may only be disseminated to a student in a secure and confidential fashion.

OTHER INFO:

Philosophy Department Homepage: <http://web.uccs.edu/philosophy/>

E-Companion Log-in: <http://www.uccs.edu/~online/login2.htm>

Campus E-mail Log-in: <http://webmail.uccs.edu/>

Information Technology Site (for downloading VPN, helpdesk, etc.):

<http://www.uccs.edu/~helpdesk/index.html>

IT Services Helpdesk Phone: (719) 262-3536