

15800 Calvary Road
Kansas City, MO 64147-1341

Course: HP 338N The Christian and Contemporary Politics
Credit: 3 Semester Hours
Semester: Session 2, Fall 2026 (October 16 to December 11, 2026)
Time: TBA
Instructor: Dr. Teddy D. Bitner
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I. DESCRIPTION

This course reviews Christian responsibilities and participation in American democracy. Emphasis is placed on historical and contemporary understandings of the relationship between the Church and American political processes. (Prerequisite: HP238).

II. OBJECTIVES

A. Basic understanding of the following elements will be achieved:

1. Understand the basic principles of the United States government. (PLO 1) (Assessment A, B, C)
2. Examine the Biblical worldview with regard to political activity. (PLO1, 4) (Assessment A, B)

B. Specific competencies to be achieved. The student will:

1. Understands the effects of political theories and philosophies. (PLO 1) (Assessment A)
2. Understands the role and impact of Christian participation in civil society and in the political arena. (PLO 1, 4) (Assessment A, B)
3. Understands how to frame arguments and solutions to political problems from the Biblical worldview. (PLO 1, 3, 4) (Assessment A, B)
4. Understands and is able to articulate the relationship between critical government functions and civil protections afforded U.S. citizens, and how to live out the Biblical worldview in the American political environment. (PLO 1, 3, 4) (Assessment A, B, C)
5. Understands application of the Biblical worldview in American contemporary politics. (PLO 1, 3, 4) (Assessment A, B, C)
6. For future educators – recognizes learners' developing sense of fairness and order, and uses this sense as an entry point to examining and analyzing rights

and responsibilities, rules, types of authority and governmental structures of their schools and community. (PLO 1, 4) (Assessment A, B, C)

III. REQUIREMENTS

- A. Reading and Questions. You will be expected to complete the assigned reading from the text. As you read the assignments, pay attention to the political activities and process, and how specific aspects of the American political process interact with the historical Church. Be prepared to critique processes and issues and to define your response from the Biblical worldview. Answers to questions are due the within one week of completion of that section during in-class lecture. Questions are loaded into the assignments in Canvas.
- B. Book Report. You are required to read Thomas Sowell's book *A Conflict of Visions* and prepare an eight-page book report due as indicated in Canvas. The book report will include the following elements (at a minimum):
- a. Introduction
 - b. Summary of the book (what did the authors cover in the book?).
 - c. Major themes (what point[s] is the author trying to make?) that you identified during your reading.
 - d. Your assessment of Sowell's themes (do you agree with them, why or why not).
 - e. Conclusion.
- C. Papers. You will be required to prepare two research papers. Appropriate topics include Biblical assessment of key elements of political debate presented by Gruden. Each paper should be no less than eight (8) pages and no more than twelve (12) pages of text (excluding the title page, etc.) and is due as part of the final class assessment. The grade for the paper will be calculated based on the Calvary evaluation sheet. The papers must include three scholarly references. Internet references may also be used (but not popular citations, blogs or Wikipedia). Students who use the Clark Academic Center (CAC) to review a draft of their papers and provide a copies of the draft signed by a CAC tutor will receive a 5% bonus on each paper. All class papers must follow the Turabian style according to *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th edition.

IV. METHODS

- A. Attendance. I will take attendance once a week on Monday. Attendance is based on academic activity, which includes responding to discussion questions, submitting research papers, book reports or similar assignments, or taking an examination. If you miss more than one week, your grade will be lowered by one letter grade. If you miss more than two weeks of class, your grade will be lowered by one additional letter grade (a total of two letter grades). If you do not demonstrate activity within the first week of class, you will automatically be withdrawn from the class.

- B. Grading. See the grading scale in the University catalog. The grading scale is given in the College Catalog (letter grades with numerical equivalents). Course work is weighted in the following proportions:

Discussion Questions	15%
Study Questions	40%
Research Papers	30%
Book Report	15%

V. TEXTBOOKS

Wayne Grudem, *Politics According to the Bible: A Comprehensive Resource for Understanding Modern Political Issues in Light of Scripture*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010. ISBN is 978-0310330295. Retail price is 44.99. Used copies may be available from booksellers for approximately \$12.00.

Thomas Sowell, *A Conflict of Visions: Ideological Origins of Political Struggles* (Revised Edition). New York, NY: Basic Books, 2007. ISBN is 978-0465002054. Retail price is \$18.96. Used copies may be available from booksellers for approximately \$16.75. Kindle is \$16.99.

The Bible is a required textbook in every course at Calvary University. To facilitate academic level study, students are required to use for assignments and research an English translation or version of the Bible based on formal equivalence (*meaning that the translation is generally word-for-word from the original languages*), including any of the following: New American Standard (NASB, English Standard Version (ESV), New King James (NKJV), or King James (KJV). Other translations and versions based on dynamic equivalence (*paraphrases, and thought-for-thought translations like NLT and NIV*) may be used as supplemental sources. Please ask the professor if you have questions about a particular translation or version.

VI. TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

Section	Dates
Module One – Chapters 1-3	Dates for each section will be set within the online course system.
Module Two – Chapters 4-5	
Module Three – Chapters 6-7	
Module Four – Chapters 8-9	
Module Five – Chapters 10-11	
Module Six – Chapters 12-13	
Module Seven – Chapters 14-15	
Module Eight – Chapters 16-18	

SPECIAL NOTES:

Grades on late assignments will be reduced by 4% for each day the assignment is late.

I will accept late assignments until midnight on the last day of the cycle. I will not accept assignments beyond that point. Students may contact the registrar to apply for additional time to complete the class.

Students with disabilities have the responsibility of informing the Accommodations Support Coordinator (aso@calvary.edu) of any disabling condition that may require support.

Plagiarism is defined as copying any content without identifying the source. This also includes taking another person's or AI entity's ideas or constructs and presenting them as your own. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Most assignments at Calvary require the student to produce original work. Therefore, unless specifically permitted by the instructor, the use of AI-generated content is prohibited (even if cited) as it does not represent original work created by the student and is an unreliable aggregate of ideas from other sources. AI, however, may be utilized in cases where the instructor has explicitly permitted its use to accomplish specific tasks. It is only in these cases that AI-generated (or modified) content may be submitted by the student. If there are any questions as to the permissibility of AI use for an assignment, please ask your instructor for clarification.

The Clark Academic Center (learning@calvary.edu) is dedicated to providing free academic assistance for Calvary University students. Student tutors aid with all facets of the writing process, tutor in various subject areas, prepare students for exams and facilitate tests. Please take advantage of this service.

Rubric for History Assignments

	Above Standards = 3	Meets Standards = 2	Approaches Standards = 1	Fails to Meet Standards = 0
Knowledge	Recalls details of previously learned material, including relevant facts and theories. Student is able to articulate and reflect on the details in written form effectively.	Recalls details of previously learned material, including relevant facts and theories. Student is able to describe the details in written form.	Recalls the general outline of previously learned material, including relevant facts and theories. Student is able to describe the general outline in written form.	Fails to recall the general outline of previously learned material, including relevant facts and theories. Student is unable to describe the general outline in written form.
Comprehension	Answers are relevant to questions. Grasps the meaning of previously learned material. Correctly explains, interprets, and summarizes as appropriate.	Answers are mostly relevant to questions. Exhibits the ability to grasp the meaning of previously learned material. Displays the ability to explain, interpret, and summarize as appropriate.	Answers generally relate to questions. Exhibits marginal grasp of the meaning of previously learned material. Struggles with the ability to explain, interpret, and summarize as appropriate.	Answers do not correlate with questions. Exhibits no grasp of the meaning of previously learned material. Fails to display the ability to explain, interpret, and summarize as appropriate.
Application	Applies rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws as required by questions.	Generally, applies rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws as required by questions.	Demonstrates comprehension of rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws present in the material, struggles with finding and articulating appropriate applications.	Demonstrates a failure to comprehend rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws present in the material. Fails to articulate applications with finding and articulating appropriate applications. Fails to understand the idea of application.
Analysis	Dissects and differentiates constituent parts of a concept, theory, or idea and relate those parts to the whole. Evidences strong critical thinking skills with logical and thoughtful development of analytical conclusions.	Identifies and describes parts of a concept, theory, or idea and relate those parts to the whole. Evidences good critical thinking skills with reasonably developed analytical conclusions.	Identifies most parts of a concept, theory, or idea and relate those parts to the whole. Evidences basic critical thinking skills with marginally developed analytical conclusions.	Fails to identify parts of a concept, theory, or idea and relate those parts to the whole. Demonstrates the lack of basic critical thinking skills with poorly developed analytical conclusions.
Synthesis	Masters the whole of a concept, theory, or idea by means of its constituent parts. Artifacts are sophisticatedly and cohesively synthesized to undergird the central argument. Able to articulate the results of synthesis effectively.	Sees the whole of a concept, theory, or idea by means of its constituent parts. Artifacts are cohesively synthesized to undergird the central argument. Able to articulate the results of synthesis effectively.	Approaches the whole of a concept, theory, or idea by means of its constituent parts. Artifacts are marginally synthesized to undergird the central argument. Able to articulate the results of synthesis.	Fails to comprehend the whole of a concept, theory, or idea by means of its constituent parts. Fails to synthesize artifacts to undergird the central argument. Unable to articulate the results of synthesis.
Evaluation	Assesses and critiques theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, literary works, or other forms of creative expression. Masters the data, synthesizes theory and	Describes and articulates theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, literary works, or other forms of creative expression. Comprehends the data, synthesizes theory and	Approaches and recites theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, literary works, or other forms of creative expression. Recognizes the data, considers the theory and	Fails to comprehend theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, literary works, or other forms of creative expression. Fails to consider the data, unable to apply or

	Above Standards = 3	Meets Standards = 2	Approaches Standards = 1	Fails to Meet Standards = 0
	outcomes, and draws insightful conclusions based on the evidence.	outcomes, and draws appropriate conclusions based on the evidence.	outcomes, and draws some conclusions based on the evidence.	synthesize the theory and outcomes, and fails to draw conclusions based on the evidence.
Citations and Plagiarism	Refers to right sort and numbers of Scriptures and/or outside references with proper form, careful and full presentation and adequate, informative content. All direct quotes are cited, all paraphrased material is cited, evidence of frequent and accurate citations throughout the paper. All source material appears in the Bibliography / References.	Refers to right sort and numbers of Scriptures and/or outside references with proper form, careful and full presentation and adequate, informative content. All direct quotes are cited, paraphrased material generally is cited, with adequate frequency. All source material appears in the Bibliography / References	Refers to right sort and numbers of Scriptures and/or outside references with proper form, careful and full presentation and adequate, informative content. All direct quotes are cited, paraphrased material generally is marginally cited, student shows evidence of struggling with paraphrasing. Most source material appears in the Bibliography / References	The student fails to cite direct sources (cut and paste from Wikipedia or other sources). Student fails to properly paraphrase and cite material. Student does not list source material in the Bibliography / References, or the paper completely lacks a Bibliography / References.
Spelling / Grammar / Syntax	Writes clearly, follows the accepted norms of spelling, grammar, and syntax with no errors	Generally writes clearly and follows the accepted norms of spelling, grammar, and syntax with minor errors.	Does not write clearly, exhibits several spelling, syntax, and grammar errors	Does not write clearly, fails to follow spelling, grammar, and syntax guidelines and acceptable use.
Format Style (Turabian, APA, MLA)	The assignment has been submitted neatly and according to relevant submission guidelines per Turabian, APA, or MLA.	The assignment follows nearly all of the relevant submission guidelines per Turabian, APA, or MLA.	The assignment displays evidence of formatting challenges, but generally follows the relevant submission guidelines per Turabian, APA, or MLA.	The assignment displays evidence of formatting challenges and fails to follow the relevant submission guidelines per Turabian, APA, or MLA.
Academic Level Satisfied	Content / answers are insightful, original, scholarly, developed with exceptional detail, and appropriate to degree level.	Content / answers are appropriate, original, scholarly, developed with adequate detail, and appropriate to degree level.	Content / answers approach original scholarship, developed with some detail, and appropriate to degree level.	Content / answers do not display original scholarship, adequate detail, or appropriate to degree level.