

# *Rel. 348 (E,O): Religion, Politics, and Society*

## *Spring 2010*

(NOTE: Check this page regularly for assignment updates. Be sure to "Refresh" or "Reload" page each time it is visited so that you get current view. ALL students must read ALL assignments and be prepared to lead the class discussion on them if called upon to do so.)

1. [Syllabus](#) (BE SURE AND READ THIS FIRST!!!)
2. Readings for 1/12/10 (Ethics). Students must come to class prepared to discuss the readings linked below in detail:
  - a. [What is Ethics?](#)
  - b. [The Ethics of American Youth](#)
  - c. [A Framework for Thinking Ethically](#)
  - d. [A Difficult Birth: Navigating Language and Cultural Differences](#)
  - e. Two reflections on the situation: [1](#), [2](#)
  - f. [Applied Ethics Resources on WWW](#) (This link is provided simply as a sight for further readings on ethics. During the semester, other site links will be provided as well.)
3. Readings for 1/19/10 (health care debate) - The following readings deal with the current health care debate. HR3200 is the House proposal. The Senate proposal is known as the "Affordable Health Choices Act." Reading the entire bills is optional, since most legislators DO NOT actually read the bills on which they vote. You should try to find at least one thing that each bill will do and how it will be accomplished.....good luck. The other articles should all be read and understood.
  - a. [HR3200](#) , [Affordable Health Choices Act](#) (pdf versions)
  - b. [Rep. John Conyers \(D-MI\) on actually reading the health care bill](#)
  - c. [America's health wars](#)
  - d. [Obama's deal with the pharmaceutical industry](#)
  - e. Tort reform [1](#), [2](#)
  - f. [Buying Senate votes](#)
4. Readings for 1/26/10 (drug legalization)
  - a. [Between Politics and Reason](#)
  - b. [The Pros and Cons of Drug Legalization](#)
  - c. [The drug policy debate: prohibition versus legalization](#)
  - d. [The War Next Door](#)
5. Readings for 2/02/10: Students must come to class prepared to discuss the readings linked below. The class will be led by my Class Assistant, Colonel Earl Renfroe, Jr. USAF, Ret., who was a participant in

the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the subsequent movement that arose. His presentation will provide a personal perspective and also reveal historical aspects of the Civil Rights movement that are little known or discussed today.

a. [Alabama Clergy letter to Dr. Martin Luther King](#)

b. [Letter from Birmingham Jail](#)

c. Questions to ponder after doing the reading above:

1. Why is Dr. King disappointed with the white moderate and the white church?

2. How are moral means used to preserve immoral ends?

3. How does Dr. King define an "unjust law?"

4. Does "order" compliment or impede justice?

6. Readings for 2/09/10: (free speech in religion and politics):

a. [Religion and Free Speech](#)

b. [Campus speech codes](#)

c. [The Price of Free Speech](#)

d. [Obama vs. Free Speech](#)

e. [Customers call for Whole Foods boycott](#)

f. [Religious Expression at Work](#)

g. [What are your religious rights in the workplace?](#)

7. Readings for 2/16/10 (capital punishment):

a. ["Americans Hold Firm to Support for Death Penalty"](#)

b. Death penalty: [for](#), [against](#)

c. [Against the American System of Capital Punishment](#)

d. [Religious and moral views on the death penalty](#) - read the two links under "Moral & Ethical Issues" and the five links under "Religious Views."

8. Readings for 2/23/10 (euthanasia and eugenics):

a. [History of Euthanasia](#)

b. [Euthanasia: Pro and Con](#)

c. [Euthanasia in the U.S.](#)

d. [Legalization or tolerance?](#)

e. Various religions views: [Buddhist and Christianity](#), [Hinduism](#), [Judaism](#), [Islam](#)

f. Eugenics: [1](#), [2](#)

g. Eugenics and Euthanasia: [1](#), [2](#) The second link is to a syllabus from a university course. It is listed here solely as a resource since it has some useful information and links

9. Readings for 3/2/10 (abortion):

- a. [Abortion](#) (pro-choice site)
- b. Views on abortion: [1](#), [2](#)
- c. "[A Defense of Abortion](#)"
- d. "[No Middle Ground](#)"
- e. [A Summary of Pro-Choice Arguments](#)
- f. [Infanticide/Abortion Link](#)
- g. "[An Abortion Rights Advocate Says He Lied About Procedure](#)"
- h. [Abortion Reporting Requirements](#)
- i. [Pregnancy timeline](#)

10. [First writing assignment](#) (due date 3/26)