

**Bethany Lutheran College  
Spring 2010 Syllabus for**

**HISTORY 460**

**Religion in American History**

**(3 credits; no pre-requisites)**

**Course Websites:**

*www.ryanmacpherson.com/courses*

*www.els-history.org*

**Instructor:** Dr. Ryan MacPherson  
309 Meyer Hall

**Schedule:**

Section A:  
*M W F 9:00–9:50 a.m.*  
*MH 202*

“It would be extremely advantageous for Bethany Lutheran College to offer a class exploring the history of Christianity in America.”

*Amanda (Willitz) Moldstad, as a BLC sophomore, in her book review essay of The Democratization of American Christianity, by Nathan Hatch, for History 207, Fall 2003*

**Description:**

This course explores the role of religion, with particular emphasis on Christian denominations, in major developments of American history, such the American Revolution, nineteenth-century evangelicalism, the evolution of higher education, the Civil Rights Movement, and the rise of the Religious Right. Students will grapple with enduring questions concerning the relationship between church and state, the role of personal faith in civic activism, and the viability of theological commitment amid religious pluralism.

**Relation to Students' Curricular Needs:**

- *elective* for the B.A. in History and the History Minor
- *elective* for the B.A. in Broad Field Social Science
- *elective* for the B.A. in Liberal Arts (History Concentration or Religious Studies Concentration)
- *elective* for the B.A. in Religious Studies and the Religious Studies Minor

**Texts:**

- Allitt, Patrick. *Religion in America since 1945: A History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005. ISBN 978-0-231-12155-2. \$28.00
- Gaustad, Edwin S., and Leigh E. Schmidt. *The Religious History of America: The Heart of the American Story from Colonial Times to Today*. Rev. ed. New York: Harper Collins, 2004. ISBN 978-0-06-063056-0. \$18.99.
- MacPherson, Ryan C., ed. *One Nation under God? Readings in American Religious History*. An anthology for students enrolled in “History 460: Religion in American History” at Bethany Lutheran College. Spring 2010. (Available in the college bookstore.)
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. ISBN 0-226-82337-7. \$17.00.

**Learning Objectives of the History Department:**

*A. Concepts, Principles, and Understandings*

- A1. To identify important leaders of the past, explain their values and goals, and evaluate their attempts to change their world.
- A2. To recognize the power of ideas (including political theories and theological convictions) and the role of institutions (government, military, church, corporations, etc.) in shaping historical developments and sustaining cultural identities.
- A3. To identify chief characteristics of the sciences, arts, reasoning, piety, and moral values of past world civilizations, objectively contrasting multiple cultural perspectives and historical interpretations, and recognizing how these still influence us today.
- A4. To describe the experiences and appreciate the contributions of less privileged members of society (ethnic and religious minorities, slaves, etc.), and to explain the social and economic relations between these groups and society's dominant individuals, institutions, and political ideals.
- A5. To summarize the human and physical geography of major world civilizations, from ancient times to the present.

*B. Attitudes, Interests, and Appreciations*

- B1. To formulate a broad, historical perspective on the unique development of American identity, in order to become a historically informed participant in present-day American and global civic life.
- B2. To distinguish political ideas whose significance is limited to particular historical conditions from those of more enduring, even eternal, significance (e.g., natural law principles).
- B3. To recognize the legitimate diversity found in American and world civilizations and explain the cultural contributions of various world cultures upon the development of the West.

*C. Habits, Conduct, and Skills*

- C1. To demonstrate an improvement in skills in analytical reading and writing, listening and public speaking, critical thinking, and moral reasoning concerning events of the past and their relation to present lives.
- C2. To apply critical thinking skills to the analysis of primary and secondary sources, including both written and visual media.
- C3. To polish with professional competence works of formal academic writing, including documentation in the accepted style of the discipline.

**Assessment:**

*Texts, Lectures, and Discussions*

Class Participation	5	
Exams (3@15 pts.)	<u>45</u>	
	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>

*ELS Historical Society Service Learning*

Sentinel Source-Gathering	5	
Oak Leaves Indexing	5	
Congr. Profiles (2@5 pts.)	10	
Biographies (2@5 pts.)	10	
Artifact Article	10	
Oral History Project	<u>10</u>	
	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>

<b>Total</b>		<b><u>100</u></b>
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93.34 - 100.00	A
90.00 - 93.33	A-
86.67 - 89.99	B+
83.34 - 86.66	B
80.00 - 83.33	B-
76.68 - 79.99	C+
73.34 - 76.66	C
70.00 - 73.33	C-
66.67 - 69.99	D+
63.34 - 66.66	D
60.00 - 63.33	D-
00.00 - 59.99	F

### Attendance and Class Participation:

Students are required to earn a “class participation grade” by maintaining punctual attendance with assigned texts at hand, completing assigned study questions and worksheets prior to class, actively participating in class discussions, and being absent no more than twice during the semester. Absences may be excused if a valid reason is supplied (such as a sports event for student athletes, or a prolonged illness). **However, student athletes, speech team members, or others who miss a substantial number of classes should realize that their grade likely will suffer as a consequence of not being present to learn alongside their classmates. Thus, even “excused” absences can result in lower grades.** The professor reserves the right to drop students from the class for excessive absences or habitually tardy attendance.

### Importance of Turning in Assignments on Time:

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates indicated below. *If a student anticipates difficulty completing an assignment on time, he or she should request a deadline extension well in advance of the due date.* This policy is intended to encourage planning and communication skills that will be helpful later in life. Generally, the less often and the longer in advance that a student requests a deadline extension, the more willing the professor will be to grant the request.

Unless a student has received a deadline extension, then the following late penalties will apply:

- a 5% grade deduction for submitting an assignment after the start of class, but prior to 5 p.m. on the due date; and,
- an additional 10% grade deduction for *each* additional school day that the assignment is late. (“School day” means Monday through Friday, excluding school holidays.)

Written assignments must be submitted in hard copy, not electronic format. An unstapled multi-page assignment will not be accepted; the standard late penalty will apply once the paper is stapled.

### Exams:

This course is divided into three topical sections, each with an open-book, open-notes take-home exam consisting of few essay questions. The exams for Parts II and III of the course may include comprehensive questions that require students to draw from materials studied earlier in the semester. You will have one week to complete each exam. The best answers will draw not only from the assigned readings, class lectures, and class discussions, but also from your fellow students’ reports on supplementary readings. Additional research is permissible but unnecessary.

When citing sources, follow the Chicago style for footnotes. No bibliography is required. (Refer to Hacker’s style guide and the “Plagiarism” section, below.) The course packet may be referenced in a footnote as follows (here simulating a citation to page 4 of Doc. 13B in the Science 330 course packet *Distinguishing a Person from a Thing*, followed by a citation to pages 6 through 8 of the same document, followed by a citation to page 2 of Doc. 18A—note that the article title and the course packet information are each abbreviated after the first citation):

1. California State University, “Fair Use: Overview and Meaning for Higher Education,” in *Distinguishing a Person from a Thing*, ed. Ryan C. MacPherson (Mankato, MN: Bethany Bookstore, 2007), 13B.4.
2. California State University, “Fair Use,” 13B.6-8.
3. U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, “Tips on Informed Consent,” in *Distinguishing a Person from a Thing*, 18A.2.

Because this is an open-resource exam, special standards of honor apply. **Although you are free to use your book, your own notes, and any class handouts, and you also are encouraged to discuss the issues of this course with your classmates, it will be considered a plagiarism violation if you collaborate with anyone to formulate answers to exam questions.** The exam essays that you submit for a grade must be genuinely your own work.

### **ELS Historical Society Service Learning Projects:**

Students in this course shall collaborate to produce an online reference work entitled *Historical Encyclopedia of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod* (to be published at [www.els-history.org](http://www.els-history.org)). Each student shall be responsible to complete the following projects: gather articles on persons, congregations, and schools from the *Lutheran Sentinel* (one decade of issues per student); index four issues of *Oak Leaves* (the Society's quarterly newsletter); research and write two congregational profiles; research and write two biographical articles; research and write one article concerning a museum artifact; and, conduct an oral interview of one person regarding an aspect of ELS history. In addition to receiving academic credit for their work (as graded by the course instructor), students also may earn the privilege of seeing their work published (upon approval of the Society). Students also may be invited to serve as oral interpreters at the Ottesen Museum during the June 2010 conference of the ELS Historical Society.

### **Plagiarism Policy:**

Plagiarism may be defined briefly as the presentation of another's original work as if it is one's own, whether by copying exact wording, using similar phrasing, or pursuing a similar course of argument. Avoiding plagiarism in essays generally requires nothing more than giving credit where credit is due, by referring the reader to the original source and placing quotation marks around any copied language. (See *The MLA Style Manual* for citation formats.) Students who commit an act of plagiarism risk a failing grade for the assignment or exam and for the entire course, and even expulsion from the college. The instructor will follow whatever due process policies are established by the college, both for the sake of the student and for the integrity of the college as an academic institution that respects the intellectual property rights of others.

This policy is not an idle statement. The professor has previously enforced it, with the result of one student failing an entire course and other students receiving zero credit for major writing assignments, which resulted in their final course grades dropping from the B and C range into the D range.

### **Patriotic Use of Cell Phones:**

America's founding fathers recognized that the republican form of government embodied in the U.S. Constitution would secure the blessings of liberty and security only so long as the people of America acted responsibly. The founders thus spoke often of "civic virtue"—moral character that empowers a people to act with the best interests of their neighbors in mind. In the spirit of civic virtue, it is expected that students enrolled in this class will turn off their cell phones before class begins. If a cell phone rings during class, then the student possessing that phone will be expected to serve his or her fellow classmates by reciting, from memory, one of the ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution at the beginning of the next class period. The professor will begin by assigning the First Amendment when the first cell phone rings. If, due to unfortunate negligence on the part of the students, the class is interrupted by a cell phone as many as ten times during the semester, at least everyone will receive the consolation of hearing all ten amendments recited from memory. Students who feel nervous about the prospect of reciting an amendment from memory in front of their peers should be especially cautious not to become responsible for the fifth cell phone disturbance of the semester, since the Fifth Amendment—the longest of them all—contains 104 words. Those who believe that this consequence is too severe should be careful not to leave their cell phone turned on until after the seventh infraction, since the Eighth Amendment, the shortest of them all, consists of a mere 16 words. It is, after all, the Eighth Amendment that protects citizens from "cruel and unusual punishments."

### **Writing Success Center:**

Talented juniors and seniors provide free consultations for students seeking to produce the best possible essays for any class assignment. The faculty has nominated these students based on their previously demonstrated skills in writing, revising, and polishing essays. They meet Mondays and Wednesdays from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Communication Center. Come at your convenience; no appointment is necessary.

**History Corner:**

Several professional periodicals and general textbooks that serve the history discipline are available for student browsing in the History Corner, a resource area located in the Math Resource Room of Meyer Hall (Room 311).

**SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS**

*The instructor reserves the right to modify this schedule during the course of the semester should unusual circumstances arise. Generally, students can be confident that this schedule will be followed closely.*

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>DUE DATE</b>
1. Reading: Discussion I: Religion in American History Discussion II: <i>Historical Encyclopedia of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod</i> Reading: Doc. 1A (Introduction) <b>Handout:</b> Syllabus	Mon. 11 Jan.

**PART I: FROM NATIVE SPIRITUALISM TO PROTESTANT MANIFEST DESTINY**

**From Native American Spiritualism to European-American Christianity**

2. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 3-23 Docs. 2A (Treaty of Tordesillas), 2B (Cortés), 2C (de las Casas); complete Doc. 1B study questions	Wed. 13 Jan
3. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 23-29 <i>www.els-history.org</i> (browse to become familiar with mission, projects, etc.)	Fri. 15 Jan.

**Anglo-American Protestantism: Anglicans, Puritans, and Dissenters**

4. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 30-48 Doc. 4A (Reformation Impact)	Mon. 18 Jan.
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<b>Special Event:</b> Christian Perspectives: Race, Ethnicity, and Cultural Traditions (Panel Discussion)	Mon. 18 Jan. 7:30-9:00 p.m., MH 101
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5. Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, 49-65 Docs. 5A (Bradford), 5B (Winthrop), 5C (MA Laws), and 5D (Bradstreet)	Wed. 20 Jan.
6. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 65-73 Doc. 6A (Williams) <b>Due:</b> <i>Lutheran Sentinel</i> Source-Gathering	Fri. 22 Jan.

**Research Excursion**

7. Meet at the Ottesen Museum for a Tour of the Museum and Synod Archives	Mon. 25 Jan.
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**Toleration in the Middle Colonies**

8. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 74-103	Wed. 27 Jan.
9. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 103-14	Fri. 29 Jan.

**The Great Awakening and the Enlightenment**

10. Readings: Docs. 10A (Whitefield) and 10B (Edwards) Mon. 1 Feb.  
11. Readings: Docs. 11A (Franklin) and 11B (Blackstone) Wed. 3 Feb.  
**Due:** *Oak Leaves* Indexing

**The American Revolution**

12. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 121-38 Fri. 5 Feb.  
Docs. 12A (Declaration), 12B (Treaty) 12C (Definitions)  
**Handout:** Take-Home Exam on Part I  
13. Readings: Docs. 13A (Thanksgiving), 13B (VA Notes), 13C (VA Bill), Mon. 8 Feb.  
13D (Madison), 13E (Constitution), 13F (Danbury Letter)

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**PART II: RELIGIOUS DIVERSIFICATION AND THE CHALLENGES OF AMERICAN UNITY**

**Jacksonian Religion: Popular Revival and Public Reform**

14. Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, 139-49 Wed. 10 Feb.  
Doc. 14A (de Tocqueville)  
15. Readings: Docs. 15A (Trollope), 15B (Martineau), 15C (Seneca Falls) Fri. 12 Feb.  
**Due:** Exam on Part I

President's Day	No Class	Mon. 15 Feb.
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**Utopianism and Millennialism**

16. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 149-57 Wed. 17 Feb.  
Doc. 16A (Miller)

**New Haven Theology and Transcendentalism**

17. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 157-61 Fri. 19 Feb.  
Doc. 17A (MacPherson)  
**Due:** Congregational Profile #1

**Protestants, Catholics, and Mormons**

18. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 162-75 Mon. 22 Feb.  
Docs. 18A (*NE Primer*), 18B (McGuffey),  
18C (Baltimore Catechism), 18D (American Protective Association)  
19. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 175-83 Wed. 24 Feb.  
Doc. 19A (Smith)

**Abolitionism and Civil War**

20. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 184-96 Fri. 26 Feb.  
Docs. 20A (Slavery Debate), 20B (Lutheran Statements),  
20C (OT and NT Regulations)  
21. Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, 196-202 Mon. 1 Mar.  
21A (Howe), 21B (Lincoln)

**Ethnic Religious Heritage in an American Melting Pot**

22. Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, 209-22 Wed. 3 Mar.  
Docs. 22A (Krauth), 22B (Willard), 22C (Kuyper)  
**Due:** Congregational Profile #2

Spring Break	No Classes	Fri. 5 through Sun. 14 Mar.
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**Religion for a Nation of Cities**

23. Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, 222-30 Mon. 15 Mar.

Advising Day	No class	Wed. 17 Mar.
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24. Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, 231-45 Fri. 19 Mar.  
Docs. 24A (Sunday), 24B (Addams)

**Secularism and Feminism**

25. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 245-54 Mon. 22 Mar.  
Docs. 25A (James), 25B (Sanger)  
**Due:** Biography #1

**American Imperialism and World Missions**

26. Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, 255-76 Wed. 24 Mar.

**The Holiness Movement and Eastern Orthodoxy**

27. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 277-91 Fri. 26 Mar.  
Doc. 27A (McPherson)

**Modernism and Fundamentalism**

28. Readings: Gaustad and Schmidt, 291-321 Mon. 29 Mar.  
Docs. 28A (Summary Chart), 28B (Johnson), 28C (Fosdick)  
**Due:** Oral History (Questions)  
**Handout:** Exam on Part II

**PART III: RELIGIOUS CONSENSUS AND CONTROVERSY IN 20TH-CENTURY AMERICA**

**Wartime Consensus: Protestant, Catholic, and Jew**

29. Readings: Allitt, 21-30; Gaustad and Schmidt, 329-35 Wed. 31 Mar.  
Docs. 29A (Marshall), 29B (FDR), 29C (NSC-68)

Easter Break	No Classes	Thu. 1 through Tue. 6 Apr.
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**Postwar Religiosity and Civil Rights Fervor**

30. Readings: Allitt, 31-42; Gaustad and Schmidt, 335-40 Wed. 7 Apr.  
Doc. 30A (Graham)

**Due:** Exam on Part II  
31. Readings: Allitt, 43-64, 111-15; Gaustad and Schmidt, 374-82 Fri. 9 Apr.  
Docs. 31A (MLK), 31B (Malcolm X)

**The Catholic Answer: John F. Kennedy and Vatican II**

32. Readings: Allitt, 65-67, 80-86, 107-11; Gaustad and Schmidt, 341-48 Mon. 12 Apr.  
Docs. 32A (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*), 32B (*Lumen Gentium*),  
32C (*Humanae Vitae*)

**Vietnam and Radical Theology**

33. Discussion: Allitt, 70-79, 87-107; Gaustad and Schmidt, 349-55 Wed. 14 Apr.  
Doc. 33A (Lennon)

**Agnosticism: America's New Public Religion**

34. Readings: Allitt, 68-69; Gaustad and Schmidt, 355-66, 370-73 Fri. 16 Apr.  
Docs. 34A (*Humanist Manifestos*), 34B (*Engel v. Vitale*)

**The Culture of Death**

35. Reading: Allitt, 159-64; Gaustad and Schmidt, 366-70 Mon. 19 Apr.  
**Due:** Biography #2

**Radical Egalitarianism**

36. Readings: Allitt, 122-33; 164-69; Gaustad and Schmidt, 382-93 Wed. 21 Apr.

**Extreme Encounters and Mainline Mergers**

37. Readings: Allitt, 116-22, 133-47; Gaustad and Schmidt, 393-97 Fri. 23 Apr.

**The Religious Right and Left: Challenges, Cults, and Centrists**

38. Reading: Allitt, 148-59; Gaustad and Schmidt, 398-412 Mon. 26 Apr.  
Docs. 38A (Reagan)

39. Reading: Allitt, 170-98; Docs. 39A (Robertson), 39B (Smith) Wed. 28 Apr.

40. Reading: Allitt, 199-227 Fri. 30 Apr.

**Due:** Artifact Article

**Globalization, Pluralism, and the Politics of Homosexuality**

41. Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, 412-27; Doc. 41A (*Chr. Today*) Mon. 3 May

42. Reading: Allitt, 227-52; Docs. 42A (PC-USA), 42B (Carlson/Mero) Wed. 5 May

**Due:** Oral History (Report)

**Handout:** Exam on Part III

**Ground Zero: The New Foundation for American Polytheism**

43. Reading: Allitt, 1-20, 252-65; Docs. 43A (Hendrickson) Fri. 7 May  
43B (Lutheran Confessions), 43C (MacPherson)

**Interpretations and Conclusions**

44. **Final Exam Period:** Oral Reports concerning Service-Learning Projects T.B.A., 11-14 May  
**Due:** Exam on Part III