

What role does religion play in politics and the 2012 election?

Lisle, Illinois ~ Research indicates that most voters like their elected officials to have some religious background.

But how much religion is too much?

David Campbell, Ph.D., a leading American scholar in the field of religion and politics, will discuss his new book, “American Grace: How Religion Unites and Divides Us,” co-authored with Robert Putnam, at Benedictine University at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 5 on the second floor of the Krasa Student Center.

Campbell’s appearance is sponsored by the Center for Civic Leadership at Benedictine University.

In his presentation, Campbell will review his survey findings on the influence of religion in 21st century American politics and discuss the potential role of religion in the 2012 presidential campaign. He will also detail what his survey data reveal about the Tea Party movement and how the Tea Party may affect the 2012 GOP presidential primaries.

Campbell is the John Cardinal O’Hara, C.S.C. Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame and the founding director of the Rooney Center for the Study of American Democracy. “*American Grace*” received the 2011 Woodrow Wilson Award from the American Political Science Association for the best book on government politics or international affairs.

Campbell is also the author of “*Why We Vote: How Schools and Communities Shape Our Civic Life*” and the editor of “*A Matter of Faith: Religion in the 2004 Presidential Election.*” He has often been featured in the national media, including the *New York Times*, *Economist*, *USA Today*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, NBC News, CNN, NPR, Fox News and C-SPAN.

Established in 2005 under the direction of former Illinois Attorney General and Republican gubernatorial candidate Jim Ryan, the Center for Civic Leadership (CCL) seeks to shape a new generation of public leaders and responsible citizens. Each year, the Center invites prominent public figures to speak about the importance of active citizenship and public service.

In recent years, the CCL has hosted President Barack Obama, U.S. Senator Mark Kirk, Washington Post columnists Bob Woodward and David Broder, CNN's Peter Bergen, Children's Defense Fund Director Marian Wright Edelman, University of Chicago legal scholar Cass Sustein and human rights advocate Paul Rusesabagina.

As a vehicle for civic education and engagement, the CCL has also placed many undergraduate students into public service and government internships, where they gain valuable firsthand experience working closely with some of Illinois' finest public servants and elected officials.

Through CCL, Benedictine students have interned in the state's attorney's offices, with members of the General Assembly in Springfield, and with the Citizens Advocacy Group in Elmhurst. Other students have been placed as volunteers with political campaigns.

This event is free and open to the public. Seating is limited.