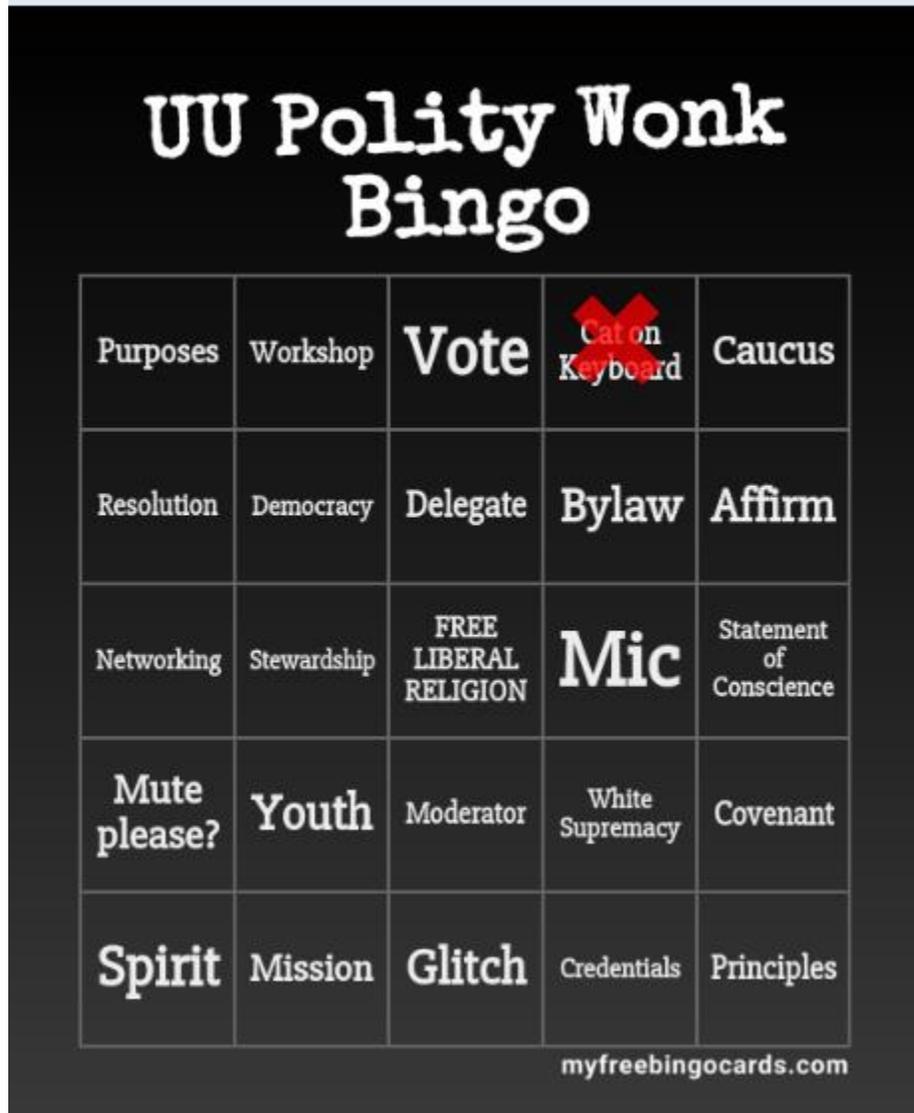




Polity Intensive Class at Unitarian Universalist General Assembly

Polity FTTHS-4077-01
 June 24-28, 2020
 Cyberspace
 The Rev. Dr. Meg Richardson
 Starr King School for the Ministry
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Unitarian Universalist Polity Immersion Class will be an online immersion experience, June 24-28 at the Unitarian Universalist Association’s General Assembly. Students will discover the mechanics of



governance by observing Unitarian Universalist polity in action. We will attend plenary sessions, business mini-assemblies and worship services, and meet together as a class to process our observations, learn the history of congregational polity in contrast to other polity paradigms, and discern the theological and cultural contexts for our polity. We may also use case study methods to dissect recent actions of the General Assembly, using video from earlier General Assemblies. We will evaluate how polity acts as it is translated from the church to a national setting: informed by social justice, our polity can have global impact. The General Assembly theme this year "Rooted, Inspired, & Ready!" will allow a new interpretation of Unitarian Universalist polity rooted in its legacy, inspired by resistance to White Supremacy Culture, and ready for a vision of radical inclusion. The convention center will be a laboratory for our lived faith as it becomes bylaws: through these reflections we will develop strategies to translate our Principles and Purposes into action, to become more effective religious leaders, as well as resources for our congregations and communities. For Unitarian Universalists, democracy is in the details. Students will be responsible for their own General Assembly Registration.

This course addresses Starr King School for the Ministry Thresholds 1,4 and the UUA's Ministerial Fellowship Committee's Competency 6.

This year, the course will be offered with variable credit: 1.5 credits is the default amount, and students may arrange to register for 3.0 credits by emailing the Registrar at SKSMRegistrar@sksm.edu and copying mrichardson@sksm.edu. Projects and research paper topics should be arranged before the completion of General Assembly on June 28.

Students will be responsible for their own General Assembly Registration.

Starr King students are eligible to apply for a Davidoff Fund Scholarship grant of \$700. The deadline for the application is mid March, and the form is available online through <https://www.sksm.edu/admissions/financial-aid/> on the Starr King website.

Starr King Students may also wish to apply for Personal Growth and Learning Grants through the Dean of Students Office. <https://www.sksm.edu/resources/student-handbook/financial-aid/personal-growth-learning-expenses/>

In addition, students who meet certain criteria are eligible for scholarship money from the UUA. Information is available at <http://www.uua.org/ga/registration/financialaid/scholarships> and applications are available March 1 and due March 31. In addition, some congregations have applied to the UUA for grant money to support their delegates.

The scholarship money available through Starr King School for Ministry and through the UUA is completely independent of registration for this class.

LOGISTICS

Attendance at General Assembly business sessions and worship sessions, major events such as the Ware Lecture, and classroom discussions are mandatory. Classroom discussions will be held during the mid-day "breaks" and there will be at least one additional lecture, most likely scheduled during workshop



time. You will have the option of attending the General Assembly events either on your own, or with the class in our Zoom Room. You must register for General Assembly, in addition to the class, in order to be able to attend General Assembly events, through the UUA website at www.uua.org. The preliminary grid schedule is now available at <https://www.uua.org/ga/program/schedule>.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to

- Participate in Unitarian Universalist governance.
- Study how Unitarian Universalists have organized and expressed themselves through Polity to address injustice.
- Develop and apply leadership skills, including pastoral, organizational and social change, in a Unitarian Universalist faith community.
- Examine Unitarian Universalist engagement from multicultural, counter-oppressive perspectives.
- Examine the history and nature of Polity in Unitarian Universalism.
- Develop familiarity with various religious models of Polity, especially Congregational Polity.
- Use Polity to address injustice and promote social change within Unitarian Universalism.

READINGS

Students must complete the following readings **IN ADVANCE**. These are all readings required by the UUA's Ministerial Fellowship Committee. They may be found, in PDF form:

http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/requirements_mfc_appendix.pdf

[*UUA Bylaws and Rules*](#)

[*Ministerial Fellowship Committee Policies and Rules*](#)

[*UUMA Guidelines and Code of Professional Practice*](#)

[*Conrad Wright, Congregational Polity \(1997\)*](#)

[*UUA Commission on Appraisal Preliminary Report on Class*](#)

There will be additional readings and resources on the class Moodle.

SCHEDULE

Times and events are subject to change as the General Assembly schedule is announced. Class will gather for the first time on Wednesday, June 24.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Conduct and Plagiarism: Please visit <https://www.sksm.edu/current-students/statement-academic-integrity-misconduct/> for Starr King's Statement on Academic Integrity and Misconduct.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act: Please visit <https://www.sksm.edu/academics/policy-statements/ferpa-family-educational-rights-and-privacy-act/> for information about students' right to privacy (FERPA).



Disability Policy: If you require accommodations for a disability or special needs, please email the instructor directly at mrichardson@sksm.edu to arrange this.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

*Readings

*Attendance at General Assembly events

*Class participation

*For **1.5 credits**: Reflection paper of approximately 750 words, or an equivalent project, to be submitted by July 24, 2020.

For **3.0 credits**: Research paper of approximately 15 pages or an equivalent project, to be submitted by July 24, 2020.