

Ben Peterson

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Education

Ph.D. Political Science, Texas A&M University

Fields: Political Theory, Public Policy and Public Administration

Committee: Cary J. Nederman (Chair), James R. Rogers, Benjamin G. Ogden, Erin A. Snider, Hassan Bashir

Dissertation Title: “Islamic Reform and the Challenge of Nomocracy: The Constitutional Theories of Fazlur Rahman and Javed Ahmad Ghamidi”

Master of Public Policy, Pepperdine School of Public Policy, Malibu, CA, 2016

Fields: International Relations, Economics

B.S. History Pre-Law, *summa cum laude*, Oklahoma Christian University, Edmond, OK, 2011

Employment

August 2021 – Present. Assistant Professor, Abilene Christian University Department of Government and Criminal Justice.

August 2013 – May 2016. Graduate Research Assistant, Davenport Institute for Public Engagement and Civic Leadership.

August 2012 – August 2013. Behavioral Compliance Analyst, Cenpatico Managed Behavioral Healthcare.

August 2011 – May 2012. Program Assistant, Middle East Studies Program.

Fellowships

Spring 2024 – Present. Center for Christian Studies Fellow.

Summer 2022. Wilbur Fellow at the Russell Kirk Center for Cultural Renewal.

Peer Reviewed Publications

“Foundations of ‘Authentic Democracy’: Christian Political Thought in the Walgreen Foundation Lectures.” 2024. *Political Science Reviewer* 48(1), 293-330.

“Social Justice as a Standard for Institutions and Policy.” 2023. *Journal of Markets and Morality* 26(2), 231-255.

“Visions of the Islamic State: Fazlur Rahman and Islamic Nomocracy.” 2023. *Islamic Studies* 62(2), 161–188.

“Republican Institutionalism for a ‘Government of Laws’: John Adams’s Polybian Political Science.” 2019. *American Political Thought* 8(3), 323-346.

“Tocqueville and Qutb: Religion, Democracy, and the Needs of the Soul.” *The Review of Faith and International Affairs*, 14(1), 89-101.

Book Chapters

“Christianity.” *Resource Handbook on the History of Political Thought*. Cary J. Nederman and Guillaume Bogiaris, eds. 110-120. Cheltanham, United Kingdom: Elgar Publishing, 2024.

“Beyond Liberalisms and Illiberals of Fear: Ecclesiocentrism, Toleration, and Liberty.” In *Hell Shall Not Prevail: Essays in Ecclesiocentric Postliberalism*. James R. Rogers and Peter Leithart, eds. 115-128. West Monroe, Louisiana: Athanasius Press, 2024.

With Cary J. Nederman. “Natural Law and Human Rights: Continuities and Discontinuities.” *The Cambridge Handbook of Natural Law and Human Rights*. Tom Angier, Iain T. Benson, and Mark D. Retter, eds. 31-44. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

Additional Scholarship

Guest Editor, *Journal of Christian Studies* II(2). The Church and the Polis. May 2023.

With Zachary McCartney. “Embracing the Daniel Option: Forming Martyrs and Seeking Peace in the Post-Christian Babylon.” 2023. *Journal of Christian Studies* II(2), 19-31.

“Getting Over the ‘Blue Laws’ Blues.” 2024. Book Review: *Regime Change: Toward a Postliberal Future*, by Patrick J. Deneen. Sentinel, 2023. Pp. xvi/169. Hardcover, \$30.00. *Pietas* 3(2), 107-114.

Conference Participation

Panel Organizer

Fragile Neighborhoods: Renewing Our Social Infrastructure. Ciceronian Society, March 2025.

Ciceronian Political Thought. Ciceronian Society, March 2025.

Constructing Christian Identity: The Church as Family, Polis, and Nation. Baylor Symposium on Faith and Culture, October 2023.

We Built Reality: Social Science and Christian Thought. Ciceronian Society, March 2023.

Abolition or Reform? Christian Thinkers and Practitioners on Prisons, Policing, and Law. Christian Scholars’ Conference, June 2022.

Christian Social Thought and Criminal Justice Reform. Christian Scholars’ Conference, June 2021.

Liberal Constitutionalism in Muslim-Majority Countries: Theory and Practice. American Political Science Association, September 2020. (Virtual)

Presenter

“Tough Love in Tough Neighborhoods: Renewing Social Order and Hope through Sacrificial Love.” Makarios Conference, May-June 2025.

“Beyond ‘Law and Order’ and ‘Root Causes’: Christian Social Thought, Criminal Justice, and Social Policy.” Midwest Political Science Association, April 2025. (Virtual)

“Republican Institutionalism and the Republic of Virtue.” Ciceronian Society Conference, March 2025.

Remarks on Patrick Deneen, *Regime Change*. Ciceronian Society Conference, March 2024.

“All Things in Common: The Political Theory of Acts.” Baylor Symposium on Faith and Culture, October 2023.

“‘Policing Was Never Meant to Solve All Those Problems’: Social Policy and Informal Social Control.” Markets and Society Conference, October 2023.

“New Norms He Gave Us: The Church as Ordering Social Convention.” Academy of Philosophy and Letters, June 2023.

“Governing the ‘Social Commons’.” Midwest Political Science Association, April 2023.

“Beyond Liberalisms and Illiberals of Fear: Ecclesiocentrism, Toleration, and Liberty.” Civitas, October 2022.

“The Walgreen Lectures in the History of Postwar Christian Political Thought.” Ciceronian Society, March 2022.

“Ecclesial Accountability Today: Membership and Two-Way Accountability in Congregational Polity.” Baylor Symposium on Faith and Culture, October 2021.

“Islamic Modernist Theory in Debates on Family Law Reform.” American Political Science Association, September 2020. (Virtual)

“A ‘Mirage’ or a Must-Have? ‘Social Justice’ as a Standard for Institutions and Policy.” Liberal Arts International Conference at Texas A&M University in Qatar, March 2019.

“‘The World is a Garden’: Legitimacy and Political Wisdom in *The Muqaddimah*.” American Political Science Association, August 2017.

“Divine Sovereignty and the Essence of Democracy: Maritain and Maududi.” Lone Star Conference for the Study of Political Thought, March 2018.

Invited Talks

“Pondering the Church Political: Power, Purpose, and Ecclesial Structure in Acts.” Center for Christian Studies, November 2023.

“What is Conservatism?” Russell Kirk Center for Cultural Renewal, July 2022.

“Just and Unjust Punishment: What Can the Christian Tradition Contribute to Justice Reform?” Christian Legal Society, Pepperdine Caruso School of Law, October 2020. (Virtual)

Selected Popular Writings (author pages)

Comment. <https://comment.org/contributors/ben-peterson/>.

Ethika Politika. <https://ethikapolitika.org/author/ben-peterson/>.

Law and Liberty. <https://lawliberty.org/author/ben-peterson/>.

Public Discourse. <https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/author/ben-peterson/>.

National Affairs. <https://www.nationalaffairs.com/authors/detail/ben-peterson>.

The Imaginative Conservative. <https://www.nationalaffairs.com/authors/detail/ben-peterson>.

Theopolis Institute. <https://theopolisinstitute.com/search/?author=bpeterson>.

The New Atlantis. <https://www.thenewatlantis.com/authors/ben-peterson>.

Courses Taught

American Political Thought, Fall 2021, Fall 2023.

Last updated 5 June 2025

American Presidency, Fall 2022, Spring 2024.

Congress and the Legislative Process, Spring 2023, Spring 2025.

Ancient Political Theory, Fall 2022, Fall 2023, Fall 2024.

Global Political Thought, Fall 2020, Spring 2021.

American National Government, Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Fall 2022, Spring 2023, Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025.

Political Science and Criminal Justice Research Methods, Fall 2021, Fall 2022, Fall 2023, Fall 2024.

Modern Political Theory, Spring 2023, Spring 2025.

States and Federal Systems, Spring 2022, Spring 2023, Spring 2025.

Current Associational Memberships

Academy of Philosophy and Letters

Christian Higher Education Foundation (board member)

Ciceronian Society (board member)

Midwest Political Science Association

Society of Christian Scholars