

**PS 1275 – Religion and American Politics**  
**Survey Research Assignment**  
**DUE April 6<sup>th</sup>**

For this assignment, you must develop and test 5 hypotheses. These hypotheses can look at relationships across time, religious tradition or denomination, issues, geography, or any other relevant cleavage. Try to generate hypotheses that are interesting, but make sure you can support theoretically why you think the relationship exists. For each hypothesis, you must:

1. Clearly identify your hypothesis and comparison groups
2. Provide a rationale for your hypothesis. You should think about what we have read and learned so far this semester as a way to ground your theory.
3. Operationalize your hypothesis – tell me how you will measure the concepts in your theory
4. Identify data that can be used to test your theory. This data should align with your operationalization of your concepts. You should include a link to any data sources you use.
5. You should interpret the data and report whether your hypothesis was accurate or not. If not, explain why you think it was not correct. This can point to theory or operationalization as possible areas for revision.

You should use at least 3 of the religious traditions we have discussed in class in your assignment (Evangelical Protestants, Mainline Protestants, Black Protestants, Catholics, Mormons, Jews, Muslims, or the religiously unaffiliated). You may also wish to use this assignment to look at some of the relevant relationships for your strategy memo. You should also use at least 2 different data sources – you may wish to consult the library guide on Canvas or contact our department’s liaison librarian, Chris Lemery ([clemery@pitt.edu](mailto:clemery@pitt.edu)), to help find sources.

**Sample:**

1. Theory 1 – Evangelical Theology by Region
  - a. Hypothesis: Evangelicals in the north will be more theologically liberal than evangelicals in the south
  - b. Rationale: State-based political cultures differ between the north and south along a liberal-conservative divide. I argue that political culture has a feedback effect on theology such that theology within a religious tradition will shift in accordance with the overall political culture.
  - c. Operationalization:
    - i. I will measure theological liberalness using the percent of believers who believe scripture is the literal word of God (biblical literacy)
    - ii. I will measure evangelicals in the north using New York evangelicals
    - iii. I will measure evangelicals in the south using Alabama evangelicals
  - d. Data

- i. 52% of Evangelicals in New York believe the bible is the literal word of God
    - 1. Source: <https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/religious-tradition/evangelical-protestant/state/new-york/#interpreting-scripture>
  - ii. 60% of Evangelicals in Alabama believe the bible is the literal word of God
    - 1. Source: <https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/religious-tradition/evangelical-protestant/state/alabama/#interpreting-scripture>
- e. Result
  - i. Theological liberalism is greater among evangelicals in the north than in the south as evidenced by higher biblical literalism in Alabama compared to New York