

**Charles Phelps Taft Research Center
at the University of Cincinnati
Conference Proposal Application**

Each section (I-IV) should be placed at the start of a new page. All required materials must be included in a single document, uploaded to the electronic submissions system, no later than 5PM on the published day of the deadline.

I. General Information

- a. Name: **XXXXX**
- b. Department:
- c. Position:
- d. Conference Title: **Confession of Faiths: The Political Implications of Religious Communication in 2020 and Beyond**
- e. Beginning and Ending Dates: **March 3-4, 2020**
- f. Conference Chair/Director: **B**
- g. Location of Events (dates and times): **Taft Research Center (March 4th, 9am-5pm) & Local Restaurants (March 3rd, 7-9pm/March 4th, 6-8pm)**
- h. Taft Disciplines Impacted: **Political Science, Journalism, WGSS, Sociology, History, Judaic Studies**

II. Budget

a. Budgetary Summary:

Honoraria, itemized for each participant:

Paul Djupe: \$750

Michelle Margolis: \$750

Nazita Lajevardi: \$750

Kassra Oskooii: \$750

Estimated travel expenses, itemized for each participant:

Paul Djupe: \$100

Michelle Margolis: \$400

Nazita Lajevardi: \$400

Kassra Oskooii: \$400

Shayla Olson (grad student): \$500

Alexis Straka (UC grad student): \$50

Lodging expenses, itemized for each participant (Two nights, March 3rd and 4th)

Paul Djupe: \$275

Michelle Margolis: \$275

Nazita Lajevardi: \$275

Kassra Oskooii: \$275

Shayla Olson (grad student): \$275

Promotion costs (printing, brochure, ads, postage)

Social Media Ads: \$75

Printing: \$50

Other expenses

March 3rd Dinner: \$500

March 4th Lunch: \$250

March 4th Coffee/Water: \$100

March 4th Dinner: \$500

Total cost: **\$7,700.00**

Departmental resources for the conference: N/A

Other funding sources for the conference: Calfano research funds: **\$700.00**

b. Subtotal: \$7,000.00

- c. Cosponsors & Other Funding Sources: N/A
- d. Requested Taft Support: \$5,775.00

III. Narrative Description of Conference

The communication of religion—its values, theology, identity, and its intersection with other life spheres (including political and social institutions) is situated in the middle of a dynamic change. Scholars are only now beginning to reframe religion as a factor whose influence is conditional (and even dependent) on processes that faith was previously thought to influence. For scholars of religion and politics, the breakthrough insights of the last decade of social science research are that religion is a malleable factor in human behavior, and one whose influence varies contextually. The proposed conference for Taft Research Center funding advances understanding of these two insights by highlighting for UC and the wider public the recent work performed by a group of scholars with UC affiliations or other linkages.

The one day conference is expected to produce three main outcomes. First, celebrate and publicize the forthcoming (2020) edited volume from University of Michigan Press—*Exploring the Public Effects of Religious Communication on Politics*, which is edited by UC’s Brian Calfano, and features work by several UC faculty/graduate students who study religion and politics (e.g., Laura Jenkins, Kimberly Conger, Rina Williams, and Alexis Straka) as well as other well-known subfield scholars. As part of fulfilling this outcome, we look to feature the work of two graduate students working on projects related to religious community. Straka is completing her dissertation on the communication strategies of Muslim political candidates in the United States and Shayla Olson of Michigan State University is embarking on her dissertation data collection on white evangelicals and racial attitudes. Both will make presentations at the conference.

The conference’s second outcome is to enable discussion among the scholars and other interested observers in attendance about 1) the role of religion and religious communication in the 2020 general election, and 2) the development of research projects relating to religious communication in both domestic and international political

contexts. Concerning the 2020 election, we have enlisted the participation of University of Pennsylvania political scientist Michelle Margolis, Michigan State University political scientists Nazita Lajevardi and Shayla Olson, and University of Delaware political scientist Kassra Oskooii to provide their insights. Calfano will lead a group discussion about the development of research projects.

The conference's third outcome is to provide a platform to recognize the scholarly contributions of Professor Paul Djupe of Denison University. Dr. Djupe has served as a major collaborator and editor for several UC faculty studying religion and politics, and is a contributor to the University of Michigan volume on religious communication. We have enlisted Dr. Djupe to provide a Taft Talk in conjunction with the conference.

The proposed conference will appeal to a wide array of audiences, from the general public, to specialists in religion and politics, to generalists in political science, sociology, communication, journalism, WGSS, history, and Judaic Studies—in all, at least six Taft departments will find interest in the conference subject matter. We estimate the average number of audience members to be 35-50 throughout the conference. Conference publicity will be generated through on-campus posters, list serve emails, word of mouth invites, and social media ads.

Preliminary Conference Itinerary:

TUESDAY, MARCH 3RD: 7-9PM, Welcome dinner (conference speakers, and invited UC faculty).

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4TH: 9-9:45 AM: Brian Calfano (University of Cincinnati)
Conference opening remarks, overview, and discussion of the University of Michigan volume: *Exploring the Public Effects of Religious Communication on Politics*.

10-10:45 AM: Alexis Straka (Ph.D. candidate, University of Cincinnati Department of Political Science): "Candidate Communication from Double Outgroups: The Case of Muslim Women Running for Office in America."

11-11:45AM: Michelle Margolis (University of Pennsylvania Department of Political Science) "Politics in the Pews: 2020 Foresight."

Noon-1PM: Lunch at Taft

1:00-1:45PM: Brian Calfano (University of Cincinnati) and conference attendees "Pondering the Future of Religious Communication Research."

2:00-2:45PM: Nazita Lajevardi (Michigan State University Department of Political Science) and Kassra Oskooii (University of Delaware Department of Political Science) "Talking to the Other: Communication by Religious Outgroups in American Politics."

3:00-3:45PM: Shayla Olson (Ph.D. student, Michigan State University Department of Political Science) "Getting R&R: Disentangling the Communication of Racial and Religious Cue Effects on White Evangelical Political Behavior."

4-5:00PM: TAFT TALK: Paul Djupe (Denison University Department of Political Science) "New Confessions: Reconsidering the Study of Politics and Religion through Communication Contexts."

6-8:00PM: Conference departure dinner.

IV. Conference Details

- a. Location of Events (dates and times): Local Restaurant (TBA), March 3rd dinner; Taft Research Center, March 4th Conference; Local Restaurant (TBD) March 4th dinner.**

- b. Conference Participants (Name, Role, CVs):**

Paul Djupe, Denison University, Taft Talk Speaker

Michelle Margolis, University of Pennsylvania, Presenter

Nazita Lajevardi, Michigan State University, Presenter

Shayla Olson, Michigan State University, Presenter

Kassra Oskooii, University of Delaware, Presenter

Alexis Straka, University of Cincinnati, Presenter

Brian Calfano, University of Cincinnati, Convener & Chair

(CVs included as separate documents)

- c. Evaluation Committee:**

Andrew Lewis, Department of Political Science

Steven Mockabee, Department of Political Science