Micah J. Watson

Associate Professor of Political Science Director, Politics, Philosophy, and Economics Program Calvin University 616-526-6230 — mwatson@calvin.edu

Employment

July 2018—	Associate Professor, Calvin University
August 2017—2018	Associate Professor, Calvin College
August 2015—2017	William Spoelhof Teacher-Scholar in Residence, Associate Professor, Calvin College
August 2013—2015	Associate Professor, Union University
2010-11	William E. Simon Visiting Fellow in Religion and Public Life, Princeton University
August 2007-2012	Assistant Professor, Union University
Education	
Dec. 2007	Ph.D. in Politics, Princeton University
May 2002	MA in Politics, Princeton University
May 2000	MA in Church-State Studies, Baylor University
Dec., 1995	BA in Political Science, University of California, Davis

Research and Teaching Interests

American political thought, ancient and modern political theory, constitutional law, liberalism and religion, politics and literature/pop culture, religious liberty, philosophy of law, justice.

Courses Taught

Introduction to Political Science; Western Political Thought I; Western Political Thought II; Early Christian Political Thought; Modern Christian Political Thought; Ethics and Public Policy;

Liberalism and Religion; Senior Seminar; Modernity and its Discontents: Morality and the Human Condition; Traditions in Conversation: Positive Law, Divine Law, and Morality; Political Philosophy and Film; International Security; Honors Justice; Christian Citizenship; Utopias, Dystopias, and Apocalypse; Freedom, Justice, and Authority; Persons in Political Community; Political Liberalism and its Critics; American Constitutional Foundations.

Publications

Co-authored or Edited Books:

- C.S. Lewis on Politics and the Natural Law, co-authored with Justin Dyer, Cambridge University Press, 2016.
- *Natural Law and Evangelical Political Thought*, eds. Jesse Covington, Bryan McGraw, and Micah Watson. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012.

Articles, Book Chapters, and other Media:

- "Evangelical Conscience in American Politics and History," in *Christianity and the Laws of Conscience: An Introduction*, eds. Helen Alvaré and Jeffrey B. Hammond, Cambridge University Press, forthcoming.
- "The Damned Neighbors Problem: Rousseau's Civil Religion Revisited," *Religions* 2019, 10(6), 349.
- "C.S. Lewis and Aristotle on Civic Friendship," published October 23, 2018 at *Public Discourse*, available at https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2018/10/45852/
- "Church and State" and "The Bible and Government Models," in David Dockery and Trevin Wax, *CSB Worldview Bible*, Holman Bible Publishers, 2018.
- "Faith, Ethics, and Culture," in *Christian Higher Education: Teaching and Learning in the Evangelical Tradition*, ed. David S. Dockery, Crossway Books, 2018.
- "Natural Law in the Abolition of Man" in *Contemporary Perspectives on the Abolition of Man*, eds. Timothy M. Mosteller and Gayne Anacker. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017.
- "Another Meditation on the Third Commandment," *Perspectives on Political Science*, Vol. 46, Iss. 1, 2017.
- "Religious Liberty for Christian Higher Education and the Common Good," Symposium on Religious Liberty and Christian Higher Education, February 13, 2017, https://twokingdoms.cune.edu/symposium-watson.

- "To Defend or Defund? Evangelicals Go Wobbly on Planned Parenthood, Public Justice, and Moral Judgment," published June 8, 2016 at *Public Discourse*, available at <u>http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2016/06/17100/</u>.
- "Constitutional Framework for Dealing with Public Policy Issues," dialogue partner with Kathy Lee in Respectful Conversations series, <u>http://www.respectfulconversation.net/</u>, October 2015.
- "Why Christians should vote," at *The Gospel Coalition*, November 3, 2014, available at <u>http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/why-christians-should-vote.</u>
- "The 'late Rawls': What is Public Reason?," in *Justice as Unfairness: John Rawls and Christian Social Engagement*, eds. Greg Forster and Anthony Bradley. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015.
- "False Choices: America's Philosopher on Reason, Tradition, and Experience," at *Canon and Culture*, July 8, 2014, available at <u>http://www.canonandculture.com/false-choices-americas-philosopher-on-reason-tradition-and-experience/</u>.
- "The Political and Apolitical C.S. Lewis," at *Canon and Culture*, January 20th, 2014, available at <u>http://www.canonandculture.com/the-political-and-apolitical-c-s-lewis/.</u>
- "Sovereignty: A Review of Agamben and Elshtain," in the *Journal of the Faculty Forum* at Union University, Fall 2013.
- "Neo vs. the Karate Kid," published May 24th, 2012 at *Public Discourse*, available at <u>http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2012/05/3462/.</u>
- "C.S. Lewis as Natural Law Evangelist: Evangelical Political Thought and the People in the Pew," *Natural Law and Evangelical Political Thought*, eds. Jesse Covington, Bryan McGraw, and Micah Watson. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012.
- "Beholden to Revelation? Scripture's Role as Public Knowledge and Moral Authority" in *Reason, Revelation, and the Civic Order: Political Philosophy and the Claims of Faith,* ed. Paul DeHart and Carson Holloway. Northern Illinois Press, 2014.
- "Who Appeals to Heaven? King James I and John Locke on Scripture & Political Authority" in *KJV 400 Legacy and Impact*, ed. Ray Van Neste. Borderstone Press, 2012.
- "Statecraft as Soulcraft: The Case for Morals Legislation" in *A Second Look at First Things: A Case for Conservative Politics: The Hadley Arkes Festschrift* eds. Francis Beckwith, Susan McWilliams, and Robert P. George. St. Augustine Press, 2013.
- "Locke and the Evangelical Retreat from Marriage," published March 7th, 2011 at *Public Discourse*, available at <u>http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2011/03/2904/.</u>

- "Health, Safety, and Morals," published January 14th, 2011 at *Public Discourse*, available at <u>http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2011/01/1794/.</u>
- "Why we Can't Help but Legislate Morality," published November 4th, 2010 at *Public Discourse*, available at <u>http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2010/11/1792/.</u>
- "Secularism's Fragile Buffered Selves," in "Academic Roundtable: On Charles Taylor, A Secular Age. Expositions: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities Vol. 3, No. 2 (Sept. 2009).
- "Making Men Moral," published July 17, 2009 at *Public Discourse*, available at <u>http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2009/07/452.</u>
- "Is the Abortion Debate Over?" published June 23, 2009 at *Public Discourse* and June 24, 2009 at *RealClearPolitics*, available at <u>http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2009/06/24/is_the_abortion_debate_over_97137.html.</u>
- "Obama, Abortion, and the Promise of Racial Equality," published January 20, 2009 at *moralaccountability.com*. Available at <u>https://www.uu.edu/dept/politicalscience/blog.cfm?ID=77</u>
- "Law," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2nd Edition, William A Darity, ed., Gale Cengage Learning, 2007.
- "A Response to Mr. Owens's Paper," Koinonia XVI.1 (2002), 52-60

Book Reviews:

- Timothy P. Carney, *Alienated America: Why Some Places Thrive While Others Collapse*, "Fixing the Fellowship Deficit in America's Struggling Communities." *Christianity Today*, August 19, 2019.
- Matthew Bowman, *Christian: The Politics of a Word in America*, "You Keep Using that Word, 'Christian'." *Christianity Today*, May 22, 2018.
- Patrick Deneen, Why Liberalism Failed, Public Discourse, May 13, 2018.
- Michael Ward, The Abolition of Man: C.S. Lewis's Classic Essay on Objective Morality: A Critical Edition, Public Discourse, April 19, 2018.
- Finbarr Curtis, *The Production of American Religious Freedom*, *Perspectives on Politics*, American Political Science Association, Vol. 15, No. 3, September 2017.

- Mark J. Larson, *Abraham Kuyper, Conservatism, and Church and State*, Journal of Markets and Morality, Journal 19, Volume 1. (2016).
- Timothy P. Jackson, *Political Agape: Prophetic Christianity and Liberal Democracy, Christian Scholar's Review*, Volume XLV, Number 4 (Summer 2016).
- Ronald C. Den Otter, *In Defense of Plural Marriage, The Gospel Coalition*, January 27, 2016. https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/book-reviews-in-defense-of-polygamy.
- Benjamin T. Lynerd, *Republican Theology: The Civil Religion of American Evangelicals*, *American Political Thought* 5, no. 1 (Winter 2016): 157-59.
- Ryan T. Anderson, *Truth Overruled: The Future of Marriage and Religious Freedom, Canon and Culture*, August 12, 2015.
- William T. Cavanaugh, *Migrations of the Holy: God, State, and the Political Meaning of the Church, Journal of Church and State*, 56:4 (Fall 2014).
- Jordan Ballor, Get Your Hands Dirty: Essays on Christian Social Thought (and Action), The Gospel Coalition, April 2014.
- Scott Yenor, Family Politics, American Review of Politics, Winter, 2012-13.
- Marc Hanvelt, The Politics of Eloquence: David Hume's Polite Rhetoric. Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries, October 2012.
- William Ophuls, *Plato's Revenge: Politics in the Age of Ecology, Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries (June 2012).*
- Robert Benne, *Good and Bad Ways to Think about Religion and Politics*, Journal of Church and State 53:3 (Summer 2011).
- Steve Vanderheiden, ed. Political Theory and Global Climate Change. Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries (July 2009).
- J. Thomas Wren. Inventing Leadership: The Challenge of Democracy. Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries (June 2008).
- Mark Lilla. *The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics, and the Modern West. Journal of Church and State* 50:1 (Winter 2008).
- James A. Reichley. Faith in Politics. Theology Today 60:3 (October 2003).
- Stephen L. Carter. *The Dissent of the Governed: A Meditation on Law, Religion, and Loyalty. Journal of Church and State* 42:4 (Autumn 2000).

Gabriel Fackre, ed. Judgment Day at the White House: A Critical Declaration Exploring Moral Issues and the Political Use and Abuse of Religion. Journal of Church and State 41:4 (Autumn 1999).

Fellowships and Awards

2015-17	William Spoelhof Teacher-Scholar-in-Residence Chair, Calvin College
2010-11	William E. Simon Visiting Fellow in Religion and Public Life, James Madison Program, Princeton University
Summer 2009	Pew Summer Research Grant, Union University
January 2008	Dissertation nominated by Princeton University Department of Politics for APSA Aaron Wildavsky Dissertation Award.
Sept 2004—June 2006	Harvey Fellow, Mustard Seed Foundation
Sept 2002—June 2006	Earhart Graduate Fellow
Sept 2001—June 2002	Alpheus T. Mason Fellow, Princeton University
Sept. 2000—August 2005	Princeton University Graduate Fellowship
Sept. 2000—June 2004	Pew Younger Scholars Fellow
Memberships and Affiliations ¹	
Spring 2014—Present	Southwestern Political Science Association
May 2009—Present	James Madison Society
2009—Present	Christians in Political Science
Fall 2008—Present	Politics and Literature Section, American Political Science Association
Fall 2008_Present	Western Political Science Association

¹ My paid membership in these associations has not been without interruption.

Jan. 2001—Present

American Political Science Association

Selected Conference Presentations

Sept. 1, 2017	"Liberalism in Crisis: Patrick Deneen's Diagnosis and Solution," annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco.
May 11, 2017	"John Calvin, John Locke, and the Cambridge School," Seventh Annual Reformation Research Consortium conference, Leucorea, Wittenberg, Germany.
April 28, 2017	"Natural Law, Sex, and Marriage," Henry Symposium, Calvin College.
April 30 th , 2015	"Toward a Biblical Theology of the (Political) Community," at the Eighth Biannual Symposium on Religion and Public Life, Henry Institute, Calvin College.
August 29 th , 2014	"The Gospel of John (Locke) According to Strauss," at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in Washington D.C.
May 30 th , 2014	"Doing Things by Nature: Evangelicals and the Biblical Case for Natural Law," at the Christians in Political Science conference at Azusa Pacific University.
April 18 th , 2014	"C.S. Lewis's Lockean Liberalism and the Challenges of Pluralism," Southwestern Political Science Association meeting, San Antonio, Texas.
April 27 th , 2013	Book roundtable, <i>Natural Law and Evangelical Political Thought</i> , Seventh Biannual Symposium on Religion and Public Life, Henry Institute, Calvin College.
June 2 nd , 2012	"The Incarnational Virtues of the Socratic Method," at the Christians in Political Science meeting, June 2 nd , at Gordon College, MA.
June 1, 2012	Augustine Contra Lying," at the Christians in Political Science meeting, "Augustine Contra Lying", at Gordon College, MA.
May 16, 2011	"Locke's Liberty and Virtue and the Meaning of Modern Individualism," at the Law, Liberty, and Virtue conference of the James Madison Program, Princeton University.

Sept. 2009	"Evangelical Political Thought, Scripture, and Natural Law," Presented at the American Political Science Association annual meeting in Toronto, Ontario.
March 2009	"Evangelical Political Thought and the New Natural Law Theory," Presented at the Western Political Science Association annual meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia.
April 2008	"Introductory Musings on Evangelical Political Thought," Presented at the Religion and Politics Symposium at the Henry Institute, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
Jan 2008	"Spinoza, Strauss, and Fortin and the Theologico-Political Problem," Presented at the Southern Political Science Association annual meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana.
May 2003	"Rawlsian Civil Religion," Presented at the New England Political Science Association meeting in Providence, Rhode Island.
August 2001	"Nietzsche and the Polemical Instinct," Presented at Pew Younger Scholars Conference, Colorado Spring, Colorado.

Speaking Engagements and other activities

March 18, 2019	"C.S. Lewis vs. Democracy." Invited lecture at Westmont College, Westmont, CA.
March 19, 2019	"C.S. Lewis, Politics, and Natural Law." Invited lecture at Biola University, La Mirada, CA.
March, 2018	"C.S. Lewis and the Politics of Natural Law." Invited plenary at the Ciceronian Society meeting, Hope College, Holland, Michigan.
February 27, 2018	"C.S Lewis's <i>The Weight of Glory</i> ." Invited lecture at the Institute for Ethics and Culture and the University of Notre Dame.
February 9, 2018	"What would Screwtape do? Locke, Lewis, and the Future

	of Christian Higher Education." Institute of Faith and the Academy conference, Faulkner University, Montgomery, Alabama.
January 25, 2018	"The Politics of Narnia." Invited lecture, George Fox University, Newberg, Oregon.
Nov. 7, 2017	"The Constitution and Free Speech: Is it worth the cost?" Constitution Series, Calvin College
Oct. 9, 2017	Embattled Civil Liberties: Speech, Religion, and the First Amendment, Panel, Northwood University, Midland, Michigan.
Sept. 1, 2017	"C.S. Lewis and Christian Politics," address given to the annual meeting of Christians in Political Science at APSA 2017, San Francisco.
April 28, 2017	"Natural Law, Sex, and Marriage," Henry Symposium, Calvin College.
March 12, 2017	"Does America Need a Christian Democratic Party?" Research on Religion podcast with Anthony Gill.
February 9, 2017	"C.S. Lewis vs. Democracy," Acton Institute Lunchtime Series.
January 24, 2017	"Between the Study and the Smoke-filled Room: C.S. Lewis as Political Thinker," C.S. Lewis Society, Oxford University.
October 24, 2016	"C.S. Lewis on Politics and Natural Law," Wade Center, Wheaton College.
December 3, 2015	Delivered "Natural Law and Freedom in the Thought of C.S. Lewis," at C.S. Lewis and Liberty conference, Acton Institute and Liberty Fund, Grand Rapids, MI.
November 19, 2015	Delivered "Locke's Letter and Scalia's Inglorious Revolution: The Demise of Religion as a Constitutional Category," at Rothermere American Institute, Oxford University, Seminar in Constitutional Thought and History.
Summers, 2012-17	Lecturer, The Moral Life and the Classical Tradition Seminar, Witherspoon Institute, Princeton University.

April 30 th , 2015	Discussant, Church and State panel, Eight Biannual Symposium on Religion and Public Life, Henry Institute, Calvin College.
April 23 rd , 2015	"A Decent Proposal: Marriage, Pluralism, and the Whole Counsel of God," Spring 2015 One Flesh: Sex, Marriage, and Society Town and Gown, Union University
April 2 nd , 2015	"Pillars of Democracy: C.S. Lewis' Elitism for the Common Good," Kinder Forum, University of Missouri.
March 25, 2015	Respondent on panel for James K.A. Smith's Scholar-in- Residence lectures, "Embodying the Kingdom: Reforming Public Theology," Union University.
Nov. 20 th , 2014	"Incarnational Apologetics: Dostoevsky's Underground Man," Calvin College.
Oct. 27 th , 2014	"Sanctified Idolatry? The Vices and Virtues of Sport," Fall 2014 Sports and Culture Town and Gown, Union University.
Sept. 18 th , 2014	"The Imperial Presidency?" Constitution Day panel, Union University.
July 14-16, 2014	Participant, Summer Religious Freedom Workshop sponsored by the Libertas Project of the Villanova School of Law.
June 23-27, 2014	Lecturer, The Moral Life and the Classical Tradition Seminar, Witherspoon Institute, Princeton University. Five Platonic dialogues.
June 12-15, 2014	"The Sacred Rights of Conscience: The Development of Religious Liberty in America, 1610–1835," Liberty Fund conference, Indianapolis, Indiana.
April 25 th , 2014	"C.S. Lewis, Watchful Dragons, and the Baptized Imagination," address for the The Humanitas Forum on Christianity and Culture, Cookeville, TN.
March 29-April 4, 2014	Course on marriage, religious liberty, and the public square at Grimerud, Family Ministries, in Ottestad, Norway.

Nov. 17, 2013	"Micah Watson on C.S. Lewis," appearance on the Research on Religion podcast, hosted by Tony Gill and sponsored by the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion.
Nov. 15, 2013	"Dostoevksy's Narrative Apologetics." Invited Lecture at the Ryan Center at Villanova University.
Nov. 14, 2013	"Neo and the Karate Kid: Two Visions of Human Nature and Learning." Invited Lecture at the Ryan Center at Villanova University.
Nov. 4, 2013	"Watchful Dragons and the Baptized Imagination." Invited lecture for Union University series, "Aslan's Apologist: Celebrating the Intellectual Legacy of C.S. Lewis.
April 26, 2013	Chair and Discussant, Perspectives on Natural Law and Religion, Seventh Biannual Symposium on Religion and Public Life, Henry Institute, Calvin College.
October 30, 2013	Panelist, Religious Liberty Panel, Union University Chapel.
June 24-28, 2013	Lecturer, The Moral Life and the Classical Tradition Seminar, Witherspoon Institute, Princeton University. Five Platonic dialogues.
Fall 2012	Christian Citizenship and the Red, White, and Blue. Adult Education seminar course at Union University.
Fall 2012	Curriculum development for Medes American University, syllabus for Politics 211, Politics and Government.
November 30, 2012	Invited Speaker at Berry Conference's "Pop Culture, Real Culture, and Politics," address given, "Incarnational Apologetics: <i>The Underground Man, Young Adult</i> , and <i>Up in the Air</i> ."
September 11, 2012	"Politics & All That", Gateway plenary address, Union University.
Feb. 6, 2012	Guest speaker in The Center for Media, Faith and Culture's "Media, Politics & Democracy: A Look at 21st Century Civic Engagement," ""Ezekiel Bulver and Modern Media & Politics."

Feb. 22, 2012	Invited lecture given for the Center for Political and Economic Thought at Saint Vincent College, in cooperation with the Alex G. McKenna School of Business, Economics, and Government, "Locke's Legacy or Rousseau's Temptation: American Government as Creature or Creator."
July 18-19, 2011	"John Locke's Individualism," Lecturer for Teaching American History seminar for New Jersey government and history public school teachers.
December 2010	"The Gospel of John (Locke) According to Strauss", seminar presentation, James Madison Program, Princeton University.
April 30, 2009	"Nietzsche, the Christian, and the Open-Minded Life." Address given to The Society for Critical Imagination, Jackson, Tennessee.
April 17, 2009	"Keeping Politics Safe from Religion: Strauss, Fortin, and Manent on the Theologico-Political Problem," address given at Ave Maria University, Naples, Florida.
Sept. 17, 2008	Constitution Day Speaker, Union University.
April 9, 2008	"What We Don't Talk about in Polite Company: The Special Challenge of Politics and Religion." Address given at Lambuth University, Jackson, Tennessee.
Sept. 17, 2007	Constitution Day Speaker, Union University.
Sept. 2006	Discussant, "Covenant and Civil Religion," at the American Political Science Association meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
August 2006	Participant in Liberty Fund conference, "Exercising Power and Preserving Liberty: Bertrand de Jouvenal on the Rule of Law and Limited Government," Grand Rapids, Michigan.
April 2006	Planned and facilitated a program development workshop at the Salvatori Center at Claremont McKenna on behalf of the National Association of Scholars and ASFI.

August 2005	Participant in Liberty Fund conference, "Culture, Freedom, and the Market in the Thought of Wilhelm Ropke," Grand Rapids, Michigan.
July 2005	Instructor, Witherspoon Institute's Forum for Ethical Questions, "Separation of Church and State." Princeton, New Jersey.
June 2005	Participant in the Lehrman Summer Institute in partnership with Princeton University's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions.
June 2004	Lecture, "Religion in the Colonies," at a Teaching American History seminar, Princeton University.
Spring 2001	Curriculum development for Long Island University, C.W. Post, Au Pair Program.
Selected Record of Service at Calvir	College and Grand Rapids community
April 27, 2019	Chaired session "Applications of Political Theology" at the Henry Institute's Symposium on Religion and Public Life.
April 24, 2019	Chaired session "Personality, Diversity, and Order" at the Kuyper Conference, Calvin College and Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI.
April 23, 2019	Hosted Larry Borst's C.S. Lewis class from Grand Rapids Christian High School for a class session on C.S. Lewis.
April 2019-present	Member, Sexuality Series Committee
August 2018-present	Chair, Academic Standards Committee
August 2018-present	Political Science Honors advisor
August 2016-present	Pi Sigma Alpha advisor
December 6-7, 2018	Organized "Faith and Democracy in America" conference at Calvin College.
Fall 2016—Spring 2019	Advisor, College Republicans
September 15, 2017	"The Protestant Reformation," class session taught to inclusive education students at South Christian High School.

July 7, 2017	Back to Class, Passport, Lecture to Calvin parents, "C.S. Lewis and Politics"
Spring 2017	Ad hoc committee recommending revision of Calvin's Honors Program
April 30, 2017	Adult Sunday School, Caledonia CRC, Election Aftermath
April 20, 2017	"Is there Life after Trump?" Address given to the Calvin Academy for Lifelong Learning.
March, 2017	Calvin Political Science and Election 2016 Aftermath with the Calvin Alumni Association's Heritage Leadership Team.
February 20, 2017	Panel Participant, Just Citizenship series, "Nationalism, Democracy, and Religion: Checking the Blind Spots"
January 2017	Judge for We the People Michigan state finals, Lansing.
Spring 2016—Fall 2016	Challenges for the Next President: Eight panel events addressing various topics such foreign policy, the economy, religious liberty, the environment, and criminal justice.
November 17, 2016	Post-election event in Holland for the Calvin Network.
October 11, 2016	Faculty panelist, "Engaging in Political Process While Being Respectful of Different Views," Unlearn Week.
October 2, 2016	Adult Sunday School, Caledonia CRC, The State of the Election
August 29, 2016	Back to Class, Passport, Lecture to Calvin parents, "C.S. Lewis and Politics"
July 20, 2016	Lecturer, James Madison Legacy Project, Michigan Center for Civic Education (MCEE) Professional Learning Conference.