

# POLS 353: Constitutional Rights and Liberties

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February 20, 2015

# What We're Doing Today

- Begin Establishment Clause.

# Establishment Clause

- Recall that the First Amendment states, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion...”
- There are three major interpretations of this clause:
  - ① “Wall of Separation” between church and state prohibiting public aid in support of religion.
  - ② Government only barred from favoring one religion over another; nondiscriminatory support or aid for all religions permissible.
  - ③ Clause simply prohibits establishment of an official national religion.
- Founders typically held views 2 and 3, but it was mixed.
- Establishment Clause cases criticism: Cases are an “impossible tangle of divergent doctrines and seemingly conflicting results.”