Validating our Measure of American Religious Exceptionalism

To establish the internal validity of the measure, we administered several surveys using University of Texas undergraduates in introductory political science courses. Using students from these courses was beneficial because state law requires students to take two government courses, which allowed us to get students from a broader spectrum of majors, not just political science. The Cronbach's alpha scores ranged between .82 and .90. We also conducted a test-retest with a six-week separation between the initial test and the follow up. The results find the respondent's scores in the test and retest correlated at .72, indicating the measure is stable (Fink 1995).

Additionally, we examined the relationship between our American religious exceptionalism measure and a measure civil religion taken from Chapp (2013). We find the measures are moderately correlated with each other with the correlation coefficient ranging from .57 to .66. In addition to the pair-wise correlations, we conducted a series of factor analyses to demonstrate they are distinct dimensions. As the results, in Table A, demonstrates of the items measuring American religious exceptionalism load on the civil religion factor. However, two of the civil religion items load on the exceptionalism factor. The first item refers to the covenant relationship the U.S. has with God and highlights a special connection with the divine. The second refers to the sanctity of the U.S. Constitution, which speaks to the role of the divine in its history. These results indicate the measures are positively related, but they are distinct.

Table A2: Principal Components Factor Analysis of the measures of American religious exceptionalism and civil religion

	Fall 2012		**Spring 2013**		**Fall 2017**		**Spring 2018**	
	A.R.E	***C.R.***	***A.R.E***	***C.R.***	***A.R.E***	***C.R.***	***A.R.E***	***C.R.***
American Religious Exceptionalism								
America holds a special place in God's plan	.710		.886		.825		.891	
The vast resources of the U.S. indicate that God has chosen it to lead other nations	.896		.910		.877		.942	
The United States is spiritually predestined to lead the world	.851		.834		.802		.914	
The success of the U.S. is not a reflection of divine will (reverse coded)	.742		.726		.714		.807	
Civil Religion								
America as a nation, holds a special higher power		.783		.552		.581		.772
The. U.S. Constitution is a holy document	.444	.447		.472		.458	.621	
Being an American citizen is a sacred responsibility		.709		.834		.801		.779
The United States has a special covenant with God	.681		.753		.782		.699	
The office of the president is a sacred position		.745		.954		.808		.835
As Americans, we are blessed with special opportunities		.882		.638		.854		.813
Eigenvalue	5.248	1.352	5.339	1.285	5.054	1.413	5.282	1.762

Note: Varimax rotation and only factor scores above .4 are reported