

SOP 4704/POS 4931: POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY
Computer Science & Engineering Building E222
Tuesdays: 10.40 – 11.30; Thursdays: 10.40 – 12.35

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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OVERVIEW

Political psychology is a relatively new subfield of study that lies on a continuum between Political Science and Psychology. This course is primarily informed by the theories and methodologies of Psychology, and specifically of Social Psychology. This means that we will spend our time trying to understand the mental mechanisms underlying political behavior and that we will do so from the perspective that behavior is best understood as the interaction between people and situations. Over the course of the semester, we will cover a number of aspects of politics including voting, ideology, and political orientation.

COURSE MATERIALS

Most weeks, we will read one or more research articles; the articles will be posted on the eLearning website. I will also post the slides from each lecture on the eLearning site after we have finished that topic. Exams will be composed of information from these slides, from the research articles we read, and from classroom discussions.

YOUR ROLE AS A STUDENT

It is in your best interests to attend class regularly and to engage with assigned materials before and after coming to class. My job is to prepare a course that can be successful and to work throughout the semester to help make that happen. However, a course like this is often only as good as the students who take it. If I think back to some of my favorite courses as an undergraduate student, they involved great teachers, but they also happened to include a group of students who came to class prepared and were excited to be there. I can guarantee you that the more you put into this course, the more you (and your classmates) will get out of it! Finally, a significant proportion of the exam questions will be from material we cover in class so exams will be much more difficult if you have not been to class.

CIVIL DISCUSSIONS

As a society, we seem to be doing badly at having real discussions about politics when we don't agree with each other. Throughout this course, we will also disagree. However, we will disagree carefully, politely, and respectfully. Having strong opinions is fine. Being intolerant of other people and/or other people's opinions is not. One of the goals of this course is for all of us to become better at having calm, rational discussions about politics with people with whom we do not agree. This is difficult work. Let's use our classroom discussions as a place to practice those skills!

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

Exams

You will take three (non-cumulative) exams, consisting of multiple-choice type questions. Each exam is worth 80 points.

Political Issue

Each of you will present us with information about a current political issue and lead the class in a discussion of the topic. For this project, you will work in groups of around 7. I will give you more information about this assignment, but the basic idea is to take a current political issue and present a brief history of it. This will be worth 30 points.

Thought Papers

You will write three 2-page papers during the semester. Each paper should be no longer than two pages (double-spaced with 1-inch margins and 12-pt Times New Roman font). Papers longer than 2 pages will be marked down a full point. Writing for this length forces you to be brief and to-the-point. Writing quality is important (these should not read like first-draft-stream-of-consciousness pieces!) and I am interested in the depth of your thinking. I will give you details about each paper as they come up throughout the semester. The first one is worth 30 points and the second two are worth 40 points. This allows you to learn from feedback. Papers can be turned in to Canvas and are due **at the beginning of class**. At 5 minutes after the start of class, they are considered late. Late papers will be marked down 10% until midnight of the day they are due. They will be marked down an additional 10% for each day they are late. Papers will not be accepted after 3 days.

Book Report

You will each write a 4-page book report on a book of your choosing. These will be due (to Canvas) by the start of class on November 21st and are worth 100 points. The book must relate significantly to the topic of the course; you must have your book okayed by me by October 15th. I will give you more details about this assignment in a separate document.

COURSE GRADES

Your final grade will be calculated based on your three exam grades (80, 80, and 80), 3 thought papers (30, 40, and 40), book report (100 points) and your group presentation of a political issue (30 points). Your final course grade will reflect how many total points (out of 480) you accumulate:

A	447 or above	C	351-369
A-	432-446	C-	336-350
B+	418-431	D+	322-335
B	399-417	D	303-321
B-	384-398	D-	288-302
C+	370-383	F	287 or below

Note that these cutoffs are real and non-negotiable.

Course Policies

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. This class supports the needs of different learners; it is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester. More information can be found at: <https://accessibility.ufl.edu/>, including the Electronic Information Technology Accessibility Policy and ADA Compliance. The Disability Resource Center (DRCaccessUF@ufsa.ufl.edu | 352-392-8565) helps to provide an accessible learning environment for all by providing support services and facilitating accommodations, which may vary from course to course. Once registered with DRC, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodations. Students should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor for this class.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see: <http://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html>

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is not tolerated in this class, in the Department of Psychology, or at the University of Florida. Sexual harassment includes: the inappropriate introduction of sexual activities or comments in a situation where sex would otherwise be irrelevant. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and a violation of state and federal laws as well as of the policies and regulations of the

university. All UF employees and students must adhere to UF's sexual harassment policy which can be found here: <https://hr.ufl.edu/forms-policies/policies-managers/sexual-harassment/>. Please review this policy and contact a university official if you have any questions about the policy. As mandatory reporters, university employees (e.g., administrators, managers, supervisors, faculty, teaching assistants, staff) are required to report knowledge of sexual harassment to UF's Title IX coordinator. If you disclose this information please keep this in mind and seek advice prior to disclosing to a mandatory reporter. For more information about UF's Title IX office see: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/>. You can also complete a Sexual Harassment Report online (Title IX) at: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/title-ix-reporting-form/>

In Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

Meeting Dates	Topic	Assignments
August 22 (Th)	Course Introduction	
August 27 (T)	What is Political Psychology?	3
August 29 (Th)	What is Political Psychology?	
September 3 (T)	Attitudes and Persuasion	
September 5 (Th)	Political Campaigns	
September 10 (T)	Political Issue 1	
September 12 (Th)	Voting	1, 2, 4
September 17 (T)	Review / Book Choices / Misc.	
September 19 (Th)	Exam 1	
September 24 (T)	Political Issue 2	
September 26 (Th)	Ideology	Thought Paper 1 Due
October 1 (T)	Ideology	7, 8
October 3 (Th)	Political Orientation	5, 6
October 8 (T)	Political Orientation	Thought Paper 2 Due
October 10 (Th)	Partisanship / Polarization	11, 12
October 15 (T)	Political Issue 3	Book Report Topic Due
October 17 (Th)	Exam 2	
October 22 (T)	NO CLASS	
October 24 (Th)	NO CLASS	
October 29 (T)	Political Issue 4	
October 31 (Th)	Gender	9
November 5 (T)	Societal Change	
November 7 (Th)	Race / Ethnicity	10
November 12 (T)	Political Issue 6	
November 14 (Th)	Justice	
November 19 (T)	Political Issue 7	
November 21 (Th)	Fascism/Nationalism/Populism	Book Report Due
November 25 (T)	NO CLASS	
November 28 (Th)	NO CLASS	
December 3 (T)	Exam 3	Thought Paper 3 Due

Reading List

Exam 1

- 1) Banai, Banai, & Bovan (2017). Vocal characteristics of presidential candidates can predict the outcome of actual elections
- 2) Friese, Smith, Koeber, & Bluemke (2016). Implicit measures of attitudes and political voting behavior
- 3) Stone, Johnson, Beall, Meindl, Smith, & Graham (2014). Political psychology
- 4) Van Prooijen & Krouwel (2020). Overclaiming knowledge predicts anti-establishment voting

Exam 2

- 5) Napier, Huang, Vonasch, & Bargh (2018). Superheroes for change: Physical safety promotes socially (but not economically) progressive attitudes among conservatives
- 6) Ksiazkiewicz & Friesen (2021). The higher power of religiosity over personality on political ideology
- 7) Smith, Ratliff, Redford, & Graham (2019). Political ideology predicts attitudes toward moral transgressors
- 8) Waytz, Iyer, Young, Haidt, & Graham (2019). Ideological differences in the expanse of the moral circle

Exam 3

- 9) Ratliff, Redford, Conway, & Smith (2019). Engendering support: Hostile sexism predicts voting for Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton in the 2016 U.S. Presidential election
- 10) Salter, Adams, & Perez (2018). Racism in the structure of everyday worlds: A cultural-psychological perspective
- 11) Van Bavel, Rathje, Harris, Robertson, & Sternisko (in press). How social media shapes polarization
- 12) Zmigrod, Rentfrow, & Robbins (2020). The partisan mind: Is extreme political partisanship related to cognitive inflexibility?