

POLI 294-02/PSYC294-01: Political Psychology of Mass Behavior

Spring 2015
Olin Rice 270
Tuesday/Thursday – 9:40-11:10 AM

Professor Philip Chen
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Carnegie 205

Office Hours: Thursday 8:30-9:30 AM
Appointment Slots Tuesday/Thursday from 1:20-2:50 PM and
Tuesday from 8:30-9:30 AM: goo.gl/UQpeKI
Or By Appointment (just email me)

Course Description

This course will introduce you to the interdisciplinary field of political psychology. This field uses research and theory from social psychology and mass communication to understand various aspects of politics. Political psychology is a very broad field, so there are many types of research that we will not be able to cover. This class focuses specifically on the mass public (voters) and upon completing this course, you will better understand the ways ordinary people make political decisions and interact with the political world. Students do not need to have taken classes in psychology or political science to do well in this class. However, prior coursework (especially courses on social psychology, personality, public opinion, or political behavior) in *one* of these two fields is recommended.

This course is organized around four broad themes. After a basic introduction to political psychology, students will learn about voter's beliefs, specifically the content of these beliefs and where they come from. The course then turns to a study of personality and emotions, followed by a section on political communication and the media. We end with a discussion of the stereotypes and voting.

Course Requirements

There are no prerequisites for this course. As mentioned, some experience with classes in psychology or political science will go a long way to ensuring your success in this class. You should also be prepared to write a research paper on a topic of your choosing from this course.

Office Hours and Help

I strive to make this course understandable and accessible for all students. If you have any questions about the content or structure of the course or about specific assignments, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am always happy to help if you come to me before assignments or exams are due. Please do not wait to ask for help until after the due date, come talk to me before if you are struggling.

Required Texts

This class will feature mostly academic books with a few articles sprinkled in. The required books are listed below and are available at the college bookstore or from Amazon or other places online. I've deliberately not assigned book reading for the first few weeks in order to give you a chance to buy them. Readings are available on the class Moodle site at:

<https://moodle.macalester.edu/course/view.php?id=943>

Brader, Ted. 2006. *Campaigning for Hearts and Minds: How Emotional Appeals in Political Ads Work*. University of Chicago Press.

Haidt, Jonathan. 2013. *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion*. Random House.

Iyengar, Shanto & Donald Kinder. 2010. *News That Matters: Television and American Opinion, Updated Edition*. University of Chicago Press.

Mondak, Jeffery. 2010. *Personality and the Foundations of Political Behavior*. Cambridge University Press.

Ridout, Travis & Michael Franz. 2011. *The Persuasive Power of Campaign Advertising*. Temple University Press.

Tesler, Michael & David O. Sears. 2010. *Obama's Race*. University of Chicago Press.

In the reading list that follows, you will notice that some of the readings appear like this...

Name of the Reading

When you see this, I am letting you know about a particularly difficult reading. These readings tend to have advanced mathematics or statistics involved. You should read these articles for the substance, but you won't be responsible for knowing exactly what the author(s) are doing. Basically, you can skim or skip the sections on data and methods and only read the parts that don't involve lots of math. Read for the concepts, theory, and conclusion, and know what the author was arguing, but don't worry about understanding exactly what evidence they presented.

Course Structure

The class will be a mixture of lecture, small group work, and class discussion. I am not nearly interesting nor witty enough to lecture for an entire class, and I'm more interested in what you thought about the readings than in listening to myself talk. Some days will feature more lecture, others will have more discussion, but always be prepared to offer your thoughts on the readings for the day. Response essays and discussion questions will help guide the class onto topics students found interesting.

Reading Groups

A key component of this class will be reading groups, which we'll use for a few of the books. I'll explain more about this during class, but it's a way to reduce the reading load while still getting the content worked into class. We'll use a technique called "Jigsaw Teamwork" (yeah, it's a cheesy name, but it works), where you'll spend time reading and becoming experts on a specific part of the reading, and then you'll spend the class discussing your expertise with others in class. The readings groups will be announced in class and are on Moodle in case you forget.

Grading

Grades will be based on four different components, described in more detail below. 40% of your grade will come from a research proposal (1) described below. In addition, there will be two exams (2) worth 20% of your grade each, a midterm exam covering the first half of the class material and a second, non-cumulative exam covering the second half of the class. 10% of your grade will be from turning in a response essay and discussion questions (3) on your assigned day and the final 10% of your grade will come from participation (4).

Research Proposal (40%) – Each student must complete a research proposal that identifies an aspect of political psychology that you would like to study and describes how you would go about studying this subject. Your paper will propose an original research design that tests your research question. This assignment requires you to conduct research and reading outside of the assigned course readings. This additional research should allow you to narrow your desired topic down to a testable hypothesis or set of hypotheses. The assignment requires you to write a literature review for your question and develop an experiment to test your question. You **will not** be expected to actually conduct the research study for this class.

While the requirements of the assignment are fairly specific, you have great freedom to choose a topic that interests you. Throughout the semester, various portions of the proposal will be due. This allows me to follow your progress and help guide you as you develop your proposals. These due dates are listed in the course schedule. I'll hand out a detailed paper assignment and descriptions of each assignment. Finally, as part of this proposal, you will be responsible for a final oral presentation of your research design. This will be a short (5 minutes), relatively painless presentation during our finals period.

I understand that this may be the first time you are asked to complete an assignment exactly like this, and that may cause you a bit of worry. I suggest that you come to me early with any

questions that you have. I'm happy to help you refine a topic or suggest ways to locate additional sources, but I need to know that you'd like help, so please come talk to me early.

Exams (20% each) – The first exam, administered on 3/10, will cover material from the first half of the class, while the second exam, administered on 4/16, will cover second half material. Some theories from the first half may come up on the second exam, but the bulk of the material will be from the second part of the class. Each exam is worth 20% of your grade, for a total of 40% of your grade.

These exams will be a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions, with a heavier emphasis on essay questions. The purpose of these exams is not to ensure that you have memorized each theory from the class, but rather that you understand how the psychological theories help us understand politics. I'd much rather have you remember the findings and implications of what we read than remember the author's names and dates of publication without understanding what they are trying to say.

Response Essay and Discussion Questions (10%) – In order to help you understand the course materials and to provide me with feedback on what parts of the readings are unclear, each student will be required to turn in a response essay and discussion questions **one time**. You will have an opportunity to pick a class session to write about.

Response essays and discussion questions are due to me **24 hours before** the class we are to discuss the readings in. For example, if you signed up for the readings on February 17th, your questions and essay would be due to me by Monday, February 16th at 9:40 AM.

Each paper should include a brief summary of the arguments in the reading(s) and a critique of the argument, evidence, and conclusions. Papers should be 3-4 pages long, double spaced. I will distribute a separate handout with more information about this assignment.

Participation (10%) – The participation portion of your grade is based off of your regular attendance in class, completion of in-class activities, participation in class discussions, and asking questions during lectures.

Grade Scale:

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	<60

Course Schedule and Readings

- 1/22 Introduction
No Readings
- 1/27 What is “political psychology”?
Lavine 2010 (on Moodle)
- 1/29 Experimental Design I
Druckman et al. 2011 (on Moodle)
- 2/3 Experiment Design II
McDermott 2002 (on Moodle)
- 2/5 Attitudes and Beliefs I
Converse 2000 (on Moodle)
- 2/10 Attitudes and Beliefs II
****Goren 2005 (on Moodle)****
Lau and Redlawsk 2001 (on Moodle)
- 2/12 Attitudes and Beliefs III
****Dancey and Sheagley 2012 (on Moodle)****
Taber et al. 2009 (on Moodle)
Sides Blog Post (on Moodle)
Nyhan Blog Post (on Moodle)
- 2/17 Personality I
Mondak Chapters 1 & 2 (pg. 1-65)
- 2/19 Personality II
GROUP A: *Mondak Chapter 4 (pg. 92-121)*
GROUP B: *Mondak Chapter 5 (pg. 122-149)*
GROUP C: *Mondak Chapter 6 (pg. 150-181)*
- 2/24 Personality III
Mondak Chapter 7 (pg. 182-196)
- 2/26 Emotions I
Brader Chapters 1 & 2 (pg. 1-47)
- 3/3 Emotions II
GROUP A: *Brader Chapter 4 (pg. 73-108)*
GROUP B: *Brader Chapter 5 (pg. 109-146)*
GROUP C: *Brader Chapter 6 (pg. 147-177)*

- 3/5 Campaigns I
Ridout and Franz Chapters 1, 2, & 3 (pg. 1-50)
Paper Assignment #1 Due
- 3/10 **Midterm Exam**
- 3/12 Campaigns II
GROUP A: *Ridout and Franz Chapter 4 (pg. 51-78)*
GROUP B: *Ridout and Franz Chapter 6 (pg. 103-122)*
GROUP C: *Ridout and Franz Chapter 7 (pg. 123-144)*
- 3/24 Campaigns III
Ridout and Franz Chapter 8 (pg. 145-152)
- 3/26 Media I
Iyengar and Kinder Chapters 1,3 & 7 (pg. 1-5, 16-33, 63-72)
- 3/31 Media II
GROUP A: *Iyengar and Kinder Chapter 6 (pg. 54-62)*
GROUP B: *Iyengar and Kinder Chapter 10 (pg. 90-97)*
GROUP C: *Iyengar and Kinder Chapter 11 (pg. 98-111)*
- 4/2 Media III
Iyengar and Kinder Chapter 12 and Epilogue, 2010 (pg. 112-147)
Paper Assignment #2 Due
- 4/7 Race I
Tesler and Sears Introduction and Chapter 1 (pg. 1-28)
- 4/9 Race II
GROUP A: *Tesler and Sears Chapter 2 (pg. 29-51)*
GROUP B: *Tesler and Sears Chapter 3 (pg. 52-74)*
GROUP C: *Tesler and Sears Chapter 4 (pg. 75-93)*
- 4/14 Gender
Schneider and Bos 2013 (on Moodle)
Carlin and Winfrey 2009 (on Moodle)
- 4/16 **Final Exam**
Haidt Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, & 3 (pg. xi-xvii, pg. 1-71)
- 4/21 Moral Psychology I
Haidt Chapters 4, 5, & 6 (pg. 72-127)
Paper Assignment #3 Due

4/23 Moral Psychology II
Haidt Chapters 7, 8, & 9 (pg. 128-220)

4/28 Moral Psychology III
Haidt Chapters 10, 11, & 12 and Conclusion (pg. 221-318)
Paper Assignment #4 Due

4/30 Flex Class

Class Presentations during Final Exam Period (Friday, May 8th 8:00-10:00 AM)
Final Research Design Due by Start of Final Exam Period (Friday, May 8th 8:00 AM)

Course Policies

Attendance: Regular attendance is vital for your success in this course. I will take attendance during class and this will be factored into the participation portion of your grade. However, I understand that sometimes circumstances prevent you from coming to class. Missing one class will not destroy your participation grade; missing several will.

Late Work: Assignments are due at the **beginning of class** on the day they are listed as due. Any assignments turned in after this time will be subject to the following late penalty: If you turn an assignment in on the due date but after the beginning of class, you will lose 10% of the grade on that assignment. After this, for each day late, you will lose another 10%. Thus, if you turn an assignment in a day late, your grade will be deducted 20%, and two days late will result in a 30% deduction.

Assignments should be turned in using the Moodle system.

Grade Changes: Any appeals of a grade must be made at least **24 hours after** I hand back an assignment or exam. If you would like to appeal the grade you got on an assignment, prior to meeting with me you must submit a written statement detailing why you think your grade should be changed. I will then meet with you to discuss your statement and why you think your grade should be changed.

If I make a mistake in totaling your grade for an exam or assignment (e.g. I added the point up incorrectly) then you do not need to write a statement or wait 24 hours. Just talk to me after class or during office hours and I'll double check and fix the mistake.

Contacting the Professor: I encourage you to contact me with questions and concerns about the course, readings, and assignments. In general, quick clarification questions can be handled over email. More in-depth questions are best discussed in person during my office hours, where we can have an actual conversation. If my office hours conflict with your class or work schedule, I am available by appointment as well.

Please allow a full 24 hours for an email response. Often, my responses will be quicker than this, but do not send multiple emails about the same request until 24 hours have passed. I cannot guarantee that if you email me right before an assignment or exam that I will be able to answer your question in time, so please make sure and email me early if you have a time-specific question.

Extra Credit and Retakes: There is no scheduled extra credit in this course. You may not retake exams. There may be opportunities for extra credit, however.