

Political Psychology: 2016 Primary Edition!

POLI 294-04 // Spring 2016 // Carnegie 206 // TTh 3:00-4:30 PM

Professor Philip Chen // pchen@macalester.edu // Carnegie 205

Office Hours: Mondays, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Course Description

This course introduces you to the interdisciplinary field of political psychology with a specific focus on the 2016 Presidential Primary. This field uses research and theory from social psychology and mass communication to understand various aspects of politics. This class seeks answers to questions about the 2016 primary. Do female candidates like Hillary Clinton and Carly Fiorina face an uphill battle against gender stereotypes? Why are voters so divided between the parties? Are negative political campaigns bad for democracy? Can we blame the media for the anger and division in the primaries? We'll answer these questions and many more, all in the context of the spring campaign season! 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). Students do not need to have taken classes in psychology or political science to do well in this class. However, prior coursework (especially classes on social psychology, personality, public opinion, or political behavior) in one of these two fields is recommended.

Course Objectives

By the end of this semester, you should be able to:

- Identify and apply relevant psychological theories to questions about politics and elections
- Evaluate and critique different perspectives on the psychological underpinnings of the 2016 primary election
- Understand and explain why psychology is fundamental to understanding the 2016 primary

In addition to these specific learning goals, there are several skills that I believe are especially important for this course. By the end of the semester, you should have:

- Learned the fundamental principles and theories in political psychology
- Developed writing and oral presentation skills
- Learned to analyze and critically evaluate different arguments and theories

Structure of the Class

I will occasionally lecture on new topics or extensions of the readings. However, I do not plan on lecturing on the readings because a) you are expected to have read them already and b) I'm not witty or interesting enough to lecture all the time.

The majority of the class will be spent on discussion and activities that are designed to help you integrate the readings and materials. Please come to class prepared to discuss the day's readings, as this is a key component of 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 and articles. The required books are listed below and are available at the college bookstore or from Amazon or other places online. Readings are available on the class Moodle site at:

<https://moodle.macalester.edu/course/view.php?id=899>

Brooks, Deborah. 2013. *He Runs, She Runs*.

Haidt, Jonathan. 2012. *The Righteous Mind*.

Mutz, Diana. 2015. *In-Your-Face Politics*.

Peffley, Mark and Jon Hurwitz. 2010. *Justice in America*.

Course Structure

The class will be a mixture of class discussion, small group work, and lecture. I am neither 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 because discussion is the primary form this class will take. Response essays and discussion questions will help guide the class onto topics students found interesting.

Grading

Grades are based on four different components, described in more detail below. 45% of your grade will come from a final research design (1) on a topic of your choosing. An additional 20% of your grade will come from two response papers (2) written on a specific day's readings. 5% of your grade consists of participation in class (3), both in the structured jigsaws and activities as well as in daily discussion. Finally, 30% of your grade consists of weekly reading quizzes (4).

Response Paper #1	10%
Response Paper #2	10%
Reading Quizzes (Top 10)	30%
Research Design	
Research Questions	Required (No Grade)
Annotated Bibliography	Required (No Grade)
First Draft	Required (No Grade)
Paper Conference	Required (No Grade)
Final Paper	45%
Class Participation	5%

Research Design (45%) – 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.

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.

You'll notice a number of components marked "Required (No Grade)." These pieces of the research design can be thought of as low stakes requirements. In order to receive a final grade on your literature review, you must turn in all of these components, even though your performance on these assignments does not factor into your grade. Failing to turn in these assignments will lower your final project grade by 1/3 of a letter grade for each missing piece. For instance, if your grade for the entire literature review project was a B+, but you failed to turn in your

research questions, your final grade for the project would be a B. If you were missing both the research questions and proposal, your B+ would become a B-.

Response Essays (20%) – Each student will complete two response essays on the readings for a specific day. You will have an opportunity to pick the class sessions that you would like to write about. Along with the response essay, each student should turn in three discussion questions about the readings for us to talk about.

Response essays and discussion questions are due to me **by noon on the day of class**.

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.

Weekly Reading Quizzes (30%) – Over the past couple years, I've come to dislike the concept of midterm and final exams because they place a premium on memorization and intense study rather than a cohesive synthesis of the material we read. In essence, finals and midterms seem to encourage students to memorize minutiae instead of substance.

However, the readings for this class were chosen with intention and I believe they are important for students to get the most out of the class. I will not lecture much on the readings, as I believe classroom discussions are both more enjoyable and a better way for students to learn the ability to critique and challenge the works we read. In order for you to be prepared for these discussions, you will need to do the readings.

While I would love to be able to simply ask “did you do the reading?” and grade you on this, it seems unrealistic. On Tuesday of each week we will have a short, graded reading quiz. These quizzes will consist of a few multiple choice or short answer questions, as well as one or two longer (2-3 paragraph) questions that ask you to synthesize the readings in some way. I understand that sometimes things come up and readings don't get done. Over the course of the semester, there are 11 Tuesdays when I will administer quizzes. This makes for an odd division of 30% of your grade. Out of these 11 quizzes, I will drop your two lowest scores. Of the remaining 9 quizzes, each will be worth 3% of your grade except for your highest quiz score, which will be worth 6% (for a total of 30%). While no one quiz will make or break your final grade, failing to do any of the readings will severely limit your potential in this class.

At the end of the semester, I will simply take your highest 9 quiz grades, dropping the 2 lowest grades, and double counting the highest quiz. Because you have 2 quizzes that are not counted, you cannot make up quizzes for unexcused absences. However, if you are going to miss a Tuesday class and let me know ahead of time, we can make arrangements for you to take the quiz at a different time.

Participation (5%) – The participation portion of your grade includes regular attendance in class, completion of in-class activities, participation in class discussions, and asking questions during lectures, as well as being an active participant in the reading jigsaw exercises.

I'll advise you that I take the participation portion of the class seriously. I give very few A grades for participation. Thus, you shouldn't assume that simply attending class regularly is enough to get full participation. I grade participation holistically. If you are attentive in class, offer opinions and reactions to readings, and are engaged in discussion, you will do fine. But these are not simply "free" points for the class.

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

Grading – On some assignments, you may receive a grade of B+/A- or something like that. This is just my shorthand way of assigning a number grade between two letter grades. Thus, an A grade is recorded in the grade book as 100 points while an A- grade is recorded as 92 points. If I think your work fell between these points, you may get an A-/A, which would be recorded as 96 points. So a A-/A is technically an A grade, but in the middle of the A range instead of the high end.

When calculating final grades, I always round up. So an 88.7% in the class becomes an 89% (B+), but an 89.1% would be rounded up to a 90% (A-).

Week Six

- February 23 Gender Stereotypes (RQ)
 Brooks Ch 3 & 4
- February 25 Gender Stereotypes
 Group A: Brooks Ch 5
 Group B: Brooks Ch 6
 Group C: Brooks Ch 7

Week Seven

- February 29 Mitau Lecture (Optional)
 “Trumpeting Racism: Race, Politics, and Economic Jeopardy for
 All”
 Ian Haney Lopez
 4:45 – 6:15 PM, John B. Davis Lecture Hall
- March 1 Gender Stereotypes (RQ)
 Brooks Ch 8 & 9
- March 3 Gender Stereotypes
 Huddy & Terkildsen 1993*
 Carlin & Winfrey 2009*

Week Eight

- March 8 Media Incivility (RQ)
 Brooks & Geer 2007*
 Mutz Ch 1
- March 10 Media Incivility
 Mutz Part I Intro (Everybody)
 Group A: Mutz Ch 2
 Group B: Mutz Ch 3
 Group C: Mutz Ch 4

SPRING BREAK

March 15 and March 17 – NO CLASS

Week Nine

- March 22 Media Incivility (RQ)
 Mutz Part II
- March 24 Media Incivility
 Mutz Part III Intro
 Mutz Ch 7 & 8

Week Ten

- March 29 Incivility and Conflict (RQ)
 Mutz Ch 9
 Sobeiraj & Berry 2011*
- March 31 Morality
 Haidt Ch 1 & 2
 Annotated Bibliography Due

Week Eleven

- April 5 Morality (RQ)
 Haidt Ch 3 & 4
- April 7 NO CLASS (PROFESSOR AT CONFERENCE)

Week Twelve

- April 12 Morality (RQ)
 Haidt Ch 5 & 6
- April 14 Morality
 Haidt Ch 7 & 8
 First Draft Due

Week Thirteen

- April 19 NO CLASS (PAPER CONFERENCES)
- April 21 NO CLASS (PAPER CONFERENCES)

Week Fourteen

April 26 Morality (RQ)
 Haidt Ch 9 & 10

April 28 Morality/Peer Review
 Haidt Ch 12 & Conclusion

Friday, May 6, 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Final Draft Due (Free donuts in my office)

Course Policies

Attendance: Regular attendance is vital for your success in this course. 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: For each day late, I will deduct a third of a letter grade. So if an assignment is due Friday and you turn it in after class on Friday, a B+ paper would receive a B. If you turn it in Saturday, it would be a B-, Monday would be a C.

Assignments should be turned in using the Moodle system unless otherwise noted.

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 points 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 quizzes. There may be opportunities for extra credit, however.