

POL 305 – Topics in American Politics (The Psychology of Politics)  
Fall 2018  
Monday-Wednesday-Friday, 1:00-1:50 PM  
Schroeder 206

**Instructor:** Dr. Carl L. Palmer  
**Office:** 433 Schroeder Hall  
**Office Hours:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 11-12, or by appointment  
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**Course Objectives:**

This course is designed to be an overview of the topics in the field of political psychology. We will focus on psychological factors that influence the ways which citizens approach the political world, receive and process information from peers and political elites, form and express attitudes and opinions, and evaluate political candidates. The goal of this course is to familiarize students with the theoretical approaches and methodologies used to apply psychological constructs to political life. By the end of the course, students should be able to critically evaluate theoretical arguments applying psychological principles to political behavior, articulate arguments about these issues both orally and in writing, identify normative concerns regarding citizen behavior based upon the arguments we have read, and be capable of synthesizing research literature on a given topic in order to identify lacunae in the literature and conduct a research study to bridge those gaps.

Due to the seminar nature of this course, it is essential that students take a consistently active role in class discussions. I expect students to come to class every day having completed assigned readings in advance, and prepared to contribute your opinions, observations, questions and efforts to relate readings to concepts and tools you are learning in your other classes, and/or current events. In general, we will approach assigned readings with the following questions in mind:

1. How does it contribute to our understanding of politics?
2. What are the main arguments of the piece? The substantive findings?
3. How does the author's argument speak to the other readings?
4. What are the limitations of the research? Are there current trends that might call for modifying the research and/or its findings?
5. What would be the next steps in building upon or improving this research?

**Required Readings:**

- All readings will be made available via ReggieNet (or can be downloaded from [www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org)).

**Course Policies:**

1. Exams must be taken at the times specified in the syllabus; makeup exams will be given only in the most extreme circumstances, with provided documentation of the absence. Makeup exams will consist of four essay questions. If you know you cannot make any one of the exam dates listed in the syllabus, you should not take this class.
2. Students will be expected to bring all readings to class to facilitate discussion. Coming to class unprepared will negatively affect a student's participation grade.
3. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please see the university's policies regarding plagiarism and cheating online at the Dean of Students Office website.
4. All assignments must be submitted *at the beginning of class* on the due date in the syllabus; late assignments will lose 10% credit per day late. All assignments *must* be typed unless otherwise instructed.
5. To be considered for a regrade assignments or exams must be accompanied by a no greater than 1-page (single spaced) memo detailing your claim. Memos must provide justification for a change of grade using examples from course material, and will only be accepted after a 24-hour *cooling-off* period. Memos must be submitted within one week of the initial return date for the assignment or exam.
6. Usage of cell phones in lecture will not be permitted. Please silence all cell phones before coming to class. If I see anyone using a cell phone in class I will administer a pop quiz which will affect your participation grade. Laptop computers and tablets are permissible so long as they are used for *academic* uses during lecture.
7. Students may not photograph or use audio or video devices to record classroom lectures or discussions or visual materials that accompany them (e.g., lecture slides, whiteboard notes/equations). Students with disabilities who need to record classroom lectures or discussions must contact Student Access and Accommodation Services to register, request and be approved for an accommodation. Students who violate this policy may be subject to both legal sanctions for violations of copyright law and disciplinary action under the University's Code of Student Conduct.
8. If you have special needs that require accommodation for exams, please let me know early on so that the appropriate measures can be taken. You will be required to provide documentation of your requirements.
9. If you have any questions at any point in the class, PLEASE ask. I will be happy to answer any questions about the course material. This includes if lecture is moving too quickly, or simply do not understand something. Keep in mind that this is YOUR responsibility.
10. Email: I strongly encourage email questions and comments. However, when you write you are expected to write as you would in any professional correspondence: Capital letters to start the first word of a sentence, "Dear Professor Palmer" (or "Hi Professor Palmer") to open the email, correct spelling, capital letters in the correct places, punctuation, etc. ("Hey" is not appropriate.) It is likely that I will not answer emails phrased inappropriately or that include misspellings, etc., or I may give you a two-word response, "Course Expectations," meaning that you should re-write your email in a more appropriate form and resend it. I will not answer questions that can be answered if you read the syllabus. I will either not answer or write back a one-word response: "syllabus". See <http://www.phdcomics.com/comics.php?f=1795>.

### **Course Requirements:**

There will be 100 total points available in this course. Final grade breakdowns are as follows:

- A: 90-100
- B: 89-80
- C: 79-70
- D: 69-60
- F: 59 and below.

Final grades will **not** be rounded

Points for the course will be allocated as follows:

Participation (25%): 25pts

You will be expected to attend all classes in their entirety, and participate actively, in a thoughtful manner, in the discussion of the readings for that day. Exceptions may be made for illness and other emergencies with proper documentation.

Reaction Papers (25%): 25pts, 5pts per submission

Beginning with Week 3 of the course, you will each be expected to write a total of 5 reaction papers to the course readings. These reactions should address the readings, commenting on and/or juxtaposing the theoretical or methodological approaches in the readings for a given day, raising critiques of the theoretical framework or research design, or suggesting new questions or hypotheses for the topic being considered. These should **not** be summaries of the readings. You will be expected to complete no more than *one* response paper per week and must be on the topic of readings *for a given class*, not material we have already discussed. The essays should be one single-spaced page. must be submitted electronically to the instructor via email by 9AM prior to class, in Word or PDF format. Late papers **will not** be accepted without proper documentation.

Hypothesis Note (10%): 10 pts

You will be required to present a hypothesis note to the class. These notes will involve a brief presentation of a research question, hypotheses, and results to the class. You will be required to sign up a minimum of a week prior to present a note to class. Hypotheses notes may only be presented on Fridays.

Final Paper (30%):

There will be a required 8-10 page (double-spaced) research paper, due on the day of the final exam (December 10, 2018), by 12 PM. In preparation for the research paper, you are required to submit your paper topic for approval (1pt), an annotated bibliography (2pts), and a research design (2pts). The paper topic will be of your own choosing, but must somehow relate to public opinion. The final paper should consist of a literature review, testable hypotheses based upon your review of the literature, a research design, and data analysis based upon either existing opinion data, or data from a survey that you conduct, and will be worth 25pts. Final papers will not be accepted from students who do not complete all assignments related to the paper.

Class Presentation and Discussion (10%): 10pts

The final class meetings you will present your research paper and provide comments for one of your colleagues' work. Your grade will be determined by the quality of your presentation, and the thoughtful comments you provide for the paper you discuss.

### **Course Schedule:**

#### **Week 1: What is Political Psychology?**

Aug. 20 – Introductions and syllabus

Aug. 22 – You Got Your Psychology in My Politics!

- McGraw, Kathleen M. 2000. "Contributions of the Cognitive Approach to Political Psychology." *Political Psychology*. 21(4): 805-32.
- Sears, David O. 1989. "The Ecological Niche of Political Psychology." *Political Psychology* 10(3): 501-506.

Aug. 24 – Data analysis 101

#### **Week 2: Methods in Political Psychology**

Aug. 27 – The Experimental Method

- Druckman, James N., Donald P. Green, James H. Kuklinski, and Arthur Lupia. 2006. "The Growth and Development of Experimental Research in Political Science." *American Political Science Review*. 100(4): 627-35.
- Kinder, Donald R., and Thomas R. Palfrey. 1993. "On Behalf of an Experimental Political Science." In Kinder, Donald R., and Thomas R. Palfrey, eds. *Experimental Foundations of Political Science*. Ann Arbor MI: Michigan University Press.

Aug. 29 & 31 – APSA meeting, no class

#### **Week 3: Methods in Political Psychology Continued**

Sept. 3 – Labor Day, no class

Sept. 5 – A 'Narrow' Data Base?

- Druckman, James N., and Cindy D. Kam. 2011. "Students as Experimental Participants: A Defense of the 'Narrow Data Base'." In Druckman, James N., Donald P. Green, James H. Kuklinski, and Arthur Lupia, eds. *Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science*. Cambridge MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Sears, David O. 1986. "College Sophomores in the Laboratory: Influences of a Narrow Data Base on Social Psychology's View of Human Nature." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 51(3): 515-30.

Sept. 7 - Validity

- Barabas, Jason, and Jennifer Jerit. 2010. "Are Survey Experiments Externally Valid?" *American Political Science Review*. 104(2): 226-42
- Clifford, Scott, and Jennifer Jerit. 2014. "Is There a Cost to Convenience? An Experimental Comparison of Data Quality in Laboratory and Online Studies." *Journal of Experimental Political Science*. 1(1): 1-12.

#### **Week 4: Political Socialization and Genetics**

Sept. 10 – Nurture

- Jennings, M. Kent, Laura Stoker, and Jake Bowers. 2009. “Politics Across Generations: Family Transmission Reexamined.” *Journal of Politics*. 71(3): 782-99.
- Neundorf, Anja, Richard G. Niemi, Kaat Smets. 2016. “The Compensation Effect of Civic Education on Political Engagement: How Civics Classes Make Up for Missing Parental Socialization.” *Political Behavior*. 38(4): 921-49.

Sept. 12 – Nature

- Alford, John R., Carolyn L. Funk, and John R. Hibbing. 2005. “Are Political Orientations Genetically Transmitted?” *American Political Science Review*. 99(2): 153-67.
- Settle, Jaime E., Christopher T. Dawes, and James H. Fowler. 2009. “The Heritability of Partisan Attachment.” *Political Research Quarterly*. 62(3): 601-13.

Sept. 14 – Lab Day

#### **Week 5: Personality – Paper Topics due 9/21**

Sept. 17 – Personality and Political Elites

- Dietrich, Bryce J., Scott Lasley, Jeffery J. Mondak, Megan L. Remmel, and Joel Turner. 2012. “Personality and Legislative Politics: The Big Five Trait Dimensions among U.S. State Legislators.” *Political Psychology* 33 (2):192-210.
- Watts, Ashley L., Scott O. Lilienfed, Sarah Francis Smith, Joshua D. Miller, W. Keith Campbell, Irwin D. Waldman, Steven J. Rubenzer, and Thomas J. Faschinbauer. 2013. “The Double-Edged Sword of Grandiose Narcissism: Implications for Successful and Unsuccessful Leadership Among U.S. Presidents.” *Psychological Science*. 24(12): 2379-2389.

Sept. 19 – Personality and Citizens

- Mondak, Jeffery J., et al. 2010. “Personality and Civic Engagement: An Integrative Framework for the Study of Trait Effects on Political Behavior.” *American Political Science Review* 104(1): 85-110.
- Wang, Ching-Hsing. 2016. “Personality Traits, Political Attitudes and Vote Choice: Evidence from the United States.” *Electoral Studies*. 44(1): 26-34.

Sept. 21 – Does Personality Matter?

- Verhulst, Brad, Lindon J. Eaves, and Peter K. Hatemi. 2012. “Correlation not Causation: The Relationship Between Personality Traits and Political Ideologies.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 56(1): 34-51.

#### **Week 6: Belief Systems**

Sept. 24 – Belief Systems and Public Opinion

- Converse, Philip E. 1964. “The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics.” In David E. Apter, ed. *Ideology and Discontent*. New York NY: The Free Press.
- Kinder, Donald R. 2006. “Belief Systems Today.” *Critical Review*. 18(1-3): 197-216.

Sept. 26 – Ideology

- Jost, John T., Christopher M. Federico, and Jaime L. Napier. 2009. "Political Ideology: Its Structure, Function, and Elective Affinities." *Annual Review of Psychology*. 60: 307-37.
- Sullivan, John L., James E. Piereson, and George Marcus. 1978. "Ideological Constraint in the Mass Public: A Methodological Critique and Some New Findings." *American Journal of Political Science*. 22(2): 223-49.

Sept. 28 – Values

- Feldman, Stanley. 1988. "Structure and Consistency in Public Opinion: The Role of Core Beliefs and Values." *American Journal of Political Science*. 32(2): 416-40.
- Graham, Jesse, Jonathan Haidt, and Brian A. Nosek. 2009. "Liberals and Conservatives Rely on Different Sets of Moral Foundations." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 96(5): 1029-46.

### **Week 7: Political Cognition and Decision-Making**

Oct. 1 – Heuristics

- Lau, Richard R., and David P. Redlawsk. 2001. "Advantages and Disadvantages of Cognitive Heuristics in Political Decision Making." *American Journal of Political Science*. 45(4): 951-71.
- Lupia, Arthur. 1994. "Shortcuts versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California Insurance Reform Elections." *American Political Science Review*. 88(1): 63-76.

Oct. 3 – Cue Taking

- Boudreau, Cheryl. 2013. "Gresham's Law of Political Communication: How Citizens Respond to Conflicting Information." *Political Communication*. 30(2): 193-212.
- Kuklinski, James H., and Norman L. Hurley. 1994. "On Hearing and Interpreting Political Messages: A Cautionary Tale of Citizen Cue-Taking." *Journal of Politics*. 56(3): 729-51.

Oct. 5 – Lab Day

### **Week 8: Information Processing**

Oct. 8 – On-line versus Memory-based Models

- Lodge, Milton, Marco R. Steenbergen, and Shawn Brau. 1995. "The Responsive Voter: Campaign Information and the Dynamics of Candidate Evaluation." *American Political Science Review*. 89(2): 309-26.
- Zaller, John R., and Stanley Feldman. 1992. "A Simple Theory of the Survey Response: Answering Questions versus Revealing Preferences." *American Journal of Political Science*. 36(3): 579-616.

Oct. 10 – Motivated Reasoning

- Kunda, Ziva. 1990. "The Case for Motivated Reasoning." *Psychological Bulletin*. 108(3): 480-98.
- Taber, Charles S., Damon Cann, and Simona Kucsova. 2009. "The Motivated Processing of Political Arguments." *Political Behavior*. 31(2): 137-55.

Oct. 12 – Biased Information Processing

- Suhay, Elizabeth, and Cengiz Erisen. 2018. "The Role of Anger in the Biased Assimilation of Political Information." *Political Psychology*. 39(4): 793-810.

### **Week 9: Communication Effects – Annotated Bibliographies due 10/19**

Oct. 15 –Framing Effects

- Chong, Dennis, and James N. Druckman. 2007. "A Theory of Framing and Opinion Formation in Competitive Elite Environments." *Journal of Communication*. 57(1): 99-118.
- Nelson, Thomas E., Rosalee A. Clawson, and Zoe M. Oxley. 1997. "Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Controversy and its Effect on Tolerance." *American Political Science Review*. 91(3): 567-84.

Oct. 17 –Priming Effects

- Kam, Cindy D. 2007. "Implicit Attitudes, Explicit Choices: When Subliminal Priming Predicts Candidate Preference." *Political Behavior*. 29(3): 343-67.
- Valentino, Nicholas A., Vincent L. Hutchings, and Ismail K. White. 2002. "Cues That Matter: How Political Ads Prime Racial Attitudes During Campaigns." *American Political Science Review*. 96(1): 75-90.

Oct. 19 – Lab Day

### **Week 10: Paper Workshop**

Oct. 22, 24, & 26 – Paper workshop

### **Week 11: Affect and Emotion**

Oct. 29 – Affect and Hot Cognition

- Lodge, Milton, and Charles S. Taber. 2005. "The Automaticity of Affect for Political Leaders, Groups, and Issues: An Experimental Test of the Hot Cognition Hypothesis." *Political Psychology*. 26(3): 455-82.
- Redlawsk, David P. 2002. "Hot Cognition or Cool Consideration? Testing the Effects of Motivated Reasoning on Political Decision Making." *Journal of Politics*. 64(4): 1021-44.

Oct. 31 – Political Emotions

- Gadarian, Shana Kushner and Bethany Albertson. 2014. "Anxiety, Immigration and the Search for Information." *Political Psychology*. 35(2)" 133-64.
- Valentino, Nicholas A., Ted Brader, Eric W. Groendyk, Krysha Gregorowicz, and Vincent L. Hutchings. 2011. "Election Night's Alright for Fighting: The Role of Emotions in Political Participation." *Journal of Politics*. 73(1): 156-70.

Nov. 2 – Lab Day

### **Week 12: Group Identification and Ethnocentrism – Research Design due 11/9**

Nov. 5 – Group Identification

- Barreto, Matt A., and Francisco I. Pedraza. 2009. "The Renewal and Persistence of Group Identification in American Politics." *Electoral Studies*. 28(4): 595-605.

- Nelson, Thomas E., and Donald R. Kinder. 1996. "Issue Frames and Group-Centrism in American Public Opinion." *Journal of Politics*. 58(4): 1055-78.

Nov. 7 – Ethnocentrism

- Kam, Cindy D., and Donald R. Kinder. 2012. "Ethnocentrism as a Short-Term Force in the 2008 American Presidential Election." *American Journal of Political Science*. 56(2): 326-40.
- Valentino, Nicholas A., Ted Brader, and Ashley E. Jardina. 2013. "Immigration Opposition Among U.S. Whites: General Ethnocentrism or Media Priming of Attitudes About Latinos?" *Political Psychology*. 34(2): 149-66.

Nov. 9 – Group Cues

- Brader, Ted, Nicholas Valentino, and Elizabeth Suhay. 2008. "What Triggers Public Opposition to Immigration? Anxiety, Group Cues, and Immigration Threat." *American Journal of Political Science*. 52(4): 959-78.

### **Week 13: Stereotyping and Prejudice**

Nov. 12 – Is Stereotyping Inevitable?

- Bargh, John A. 1999. "The Cognitive Monster: The Case Against the Controllability of Automatic Stereotyping Effects." In Chaiken, Shelly, and Yaacov Trope, eds. *Dual Process Theories in Social Psychology*. New York: Guilford.
- Devine, Patricia G. 1989. "Stereotypes and Prejudice: Their Automatic and Controlled Components." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 56(1): 5-18.

Nov. 14 – Prejudice

- Feldman, Stanley, and Leonie Huddy. 2005. "Racial Resentment and White Opposition to Race-Conscious Programs: Principles or Prejudice." *American Journal of Political Science*. 49(1): 168-83.
- Gilens, Martin. 1996. "'Race Coding' and White Opposition to Welfare." *American Political Science Review*. 90(3): 593-604.

Nov. 16 – Lab Day

### **Week 14: Thanksgiving Break**

Nov. 19, 21, & 23, no class

### **Week 15: Person Perception and Candidate Evaluations**

Nov. 26 – Comprehending Candidates

- Lenz, Gabriel S., and Chappell Lawson. 2011. "Looking the Part: Television Leads Less Informed Citizens to Vote Based on Candidates' Appearance." *American Journal of Political Science*. 55(3): 574-89.
- Olivola, Christopher Y., and Alexander Todorov. 2010. "Elected in 100 Milliseconds: Appearance-Based Trait Inferences and Voting." *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*. 34(1): 83-110.

Nov. 28 – Comprehending Candidates continued

- Bauer, Nichole M. "The Effects of Counterstereotypic Gender Strategies on Candidate Evaluations." forthcoming. *Political Psychology*.



- Krupnikov, Yanna, Spencer Piston, and Nichole M. Bauer. 2016. "Saving Face: Identifying Voter Responses to Black Candidates and Female Candidates." *Political Psychology*. 37(2): 253-73.

Nov. 30 – Lab Day

**Week 16: Final Presentations – draft due to your discussant by 5PM on the date assigned**

Dec. 3, 5, & 7 - Presentations