

Department of Political Science  
POSC260: Economic and Elections (Political Psychology)  
Spring 2017

**Contact Information**

Course Instructor: Professor Jennifer Merolla  
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Office hours: Thursdays, 11:00 to 12:00, or by appointment

**Course Schedule**

Semester: Spring 2017  
Meeting day, time: Tuesdays, 9:10-12:00  
Course Location: Watkins 2145

**Course Description**

This course is a general introduction to the field of political psychology. The focus will be on how psychological factors affect how people think about and engage with the political world. The empirical articles will be focused on applications to politics (though background reading from psychology is listed in the recommended reading sections). The class format is a seminar, and thus is largely based on class discussion.

**Background Preparations (Prerequisites)**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

**By the end of this course, students will be able to:**

1. Understand the major theories in political psychology.
2. Understand the challenges of working at the intersection of political science and psychology.
3. Critically assess the academic literature on political psychology.
4. Develop an original research paper/project in one of the sub-fields of political psychology.
5. Design an experimental study.
6. Refine communication skills in seminar participation and assignments.
7. Improve writing skills in course assignments.

**Texts and Journal References**

The following books are available in the Huntley bookstore.

- Huddy, Leonie, Sears, David O., and Jack S. Levy. 2013. *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Oxford University Press.
- Merolla, Jennifer and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister. 2009. *Democracy at Risk: How Terrorist Threats affect the Public*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kinder, Donald R. and Cindy D. Kam. 2009. *Us Against Them: Ethnocentric Foundations of American Public Opinion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Journal articles and other book chapters are listed in the list of weekly readings section. Unless otherwise stated, journal articles can be accessed through the library website. Chapters from other books will be available on iLearn.

Recommended background for the course:

Fiske, Susan and Shelly Taylor. 2017. *Social Cognition: From Brains to Culture*. McGraw-Hill.

### **Course Requirements & Assignments:**

1. There will be three short writing assignments throughout the course that are tied to the reading in a given week. Each assignment should be distributed on the Monday before class by 9:00. Each is worth 10% of your grade (for a total of 30%). Papers should be between three to four double spaced pages. You will sign up for each type of assignment in a given week at the first class meeting.
  - a. Identify important themes, questions, and points of agreement/disagreement across the week's readings.
  - b. Take an in-depth look at one of the readings, critiquing its research questions, hypotheses, design, and analysis.
  - c. Highlight the findings of one or more of the readings and propose a detailed experimental design for future research.
2. A book review and presentation of one book that is listed in the syllabus. The review should be distributed by Monday at 9:00 a.m. before class. Reviews should not exceed 10 double spaced pages. You will want to summarize the research questions, theoretical arguments, methodology, and main findings. You should also provide your own evaluation of the book. The presentation should convey the major points of the book and should be 20-25 minutes long. 15% of the grade.
3. There is a heavy reading load but you are expected to read all materials assigned (some more closely than others) and to participate in class discussions. The quality of the seminar depends on active participation. Overall class participation: 15% of the grade.
4. Preparation of a research paper/project pertaining to one of the topics we cover. Students will present their project to the class at the last class meeting on June 6<sup>th</sup> (and potentially exam week as well). The final paper is due on June 13<sup>th</sup>. The paper should not exceed 35 double spaced pages, including appendices and references. Paper: 40% of the grade.

### **Course Policies:**

#### **Attendance**

Students are expected to attend all classes. Students who are unable to attend class must notify the professor. Unapproved absences or late attendance for two or more classes may result in a lower grade or an “incomplete” for the course.

### **Scientific and Professional Ethics**

The work you do in this course must be your own. Feel free to build on, react to, criticize, and analyze the ideas of others but, when you do, make it known whose ideas you are working with. You must explicitly acknowledge when your work builds on someone else's ideas, including ideas of classmates, professors, and authors you read. If you ever have questions about drawing the line between others' work and your own, ask the course professor who will give you guidance. If I suspect a violation of academic integrity, I will meet with the student and report the incident to the Graduate Division. *Additional information on UCR academic honesty is available at: ([http://graduate.ucr.edu/academic\\_integrity.html](http://graduate.ucr.edu/academic_integrity.html)).*

### **Instructor Feedback and Communication**

The best way to get in touch with me is via email. I will respond to email within two business days. If you do not hear from me in two business days, please re-send your message since it may have gone into spam mail.

### **Expectations and Logistics**

Political Psychology is a growing field that cuts across many sub-fields in political science and psychology. Even though there is a fairly heavy reading load, we will barely scratch the surface of the academic literature. I have posted a list of other recommended reading to the course materials page on iLearn.

The class format is a seminar, and thus is largely based on class discussion. It is expected that you will have completed and thought carefully about the reading before attending class. It is incumbent on every participant in the class (instructor and students alike) to maintain an environment conducive to learning. We should always remember that people bring differences with them into the classroom and that these differences should be respected. It is imperative that each of us maintain civility and professionalism when asking questions and making comments.

Since this is a seminar, participants should be talking to each other, rather than to computer screens. Typing away on a computer can be distracting to the conversation, so try to keep it to a minimum. It is expected that you are not using the computer for other activities during class (e.g. checking your face book page).

Please respect your fellow classmates—be on time, don't be disruptive, turn off your cell phones, and really listen to them.

Papers should be printed out and submitted to the instructor. Late assignments will lose 1/3 of a grade each day they are late, unless there is a documented emergency.

I will post information for the course on iLearn. Please check it often.

## List of Weekly Readings

### April 4th: Defining Political Psychology and Methodology

- Huddy, Sears, and Levy, Handbook of Political Psychology, Chapter 1
- Druckman, Jamie, James Kuklinski, and Lee Sigelman. 2009. "The Unmet Potential of Interdisciplinary Research: Political Psychological Approaches to Voting and Public Opinion." *Political Behavior* 31: 485-510.
- Hatemi, Peter K. and Rose McDermott. 2012. "Broadening Political Psychology." *Political Psychology* 33(1): 11-25.
- Morton and Williams, *Experimental Political Science and the Study of Causality*, Chapter 1  
*Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science*, Chapters 2 and 3

### April 11th: Personality: Elites and Masses

- Handbook, Chapter 2 and 14 (background)
- Winter, David G. 2011. "Philosopher-King or Polarizing Politician? A Personality Profile of Barack Obama." *Political Psychology* 32(6): 1059-1081.
- Dietrich, Bryce J., Scott Lasley, Jeffrey J. Mondak, Megan L. Rempel, and Joel Turner. 2012. "Personality and Legislative Politics: The Big Five Trait Dimensions among U.S. State Legislators." *Political Psychology* 33(2): 195-210.
- Gerber, Alan S., et al. 2010. "Personality and Political Attitudes: Relationships across Issue Domains and Political Contexts." *American Political Science Review* 104(1): 111-133.
- Gerber Alan S., Gregory A. Huber, David Doherty and Conor M. Dowling. 2012. "Personality and the Strength and Direction of Partisan Identification." *Political Behavior* 34: 653-688.
- Feldman, Stanley & Karen Stenner. 1997. "Perceived threat and Authoritarianism." *Political Psychology* 18(4): 741-770.
- Hetherington, Marc J. and Elizabeth Suhay. 2011. "Authoritarianism, Threat and Americans' Support for the War on Terror." *American Journal of Political Science* 55(3): 546-560.

### Book Review

- Johnston, Christopher, Howard Lavine, and Christopher Federico. 2017. *Open Versus Closed*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hetherington, Marc J. and Jonathan D. Weiler. 2009. *Authoritarianism & Polarization in American Politics*. Cambridge University Press.

### April 18th: Socialization and Genetics

- Handbook, Chapters 3 and 8 (background)
- Niemi, Richard G. and M. Kent Jennings. 1991. "Issues and Inheritance in the Formation of Party Identification." *American Journal of Political Science* 35: 970-988.
- Jennings, M. Kent, Laura Stoker, and Jake Bowers. 2009. "Politics across Generations: Family Transmission Reexamined." *Journal of Politics* 71: 782-799.
- Wolak, Jennifer and Michael McDevitt. 2011. "The Roots of the Gender Gap in Political Knowledge in Adolescence." *Political Behavior* 33: 505-533.
- Alford, John R., Carolyn L. Funk, and John R. Hibbing. 2005. "Are Political Orientations Genetically Transmitted?" *American Political Science Review* 99: 153-168.
- Hatemi, Peter, Sarah E. Medland, and Lindon J. Eaves. 2009. "Do Genes Contribute to the Gender Gap?" *Journal of Politics* 71: 262-276.

Smith, Kevin, John R. Alford, Peter K. Hatemi, Lindon J. Eaves, Carolyn Funk, and John R. Hibbing. 2012. "Biology, Ideology, and Epistemology: How do we Know Political Attitudes are Inherited and Why Should We Care?" *American Journal of Political Science* 56(1): 17-33.

#### Book Review

Hibbing, John R., Kevin B. Smith, and John R. Alford. 2013. *Predisposed: Liberals, Conservatives and the Biology of Political Difference*. Routledge.

Katherine Cramer. *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the rise of Scott Walker*. 2016. Chicago.

#### **April 25th: Cognition, Values, and Belief Systems**

Handbook, Chapter 17 and 19

Feldman, Stanley. 1988. "Structure and consistency in Public Opinion: The Role of Core Beliefs and Values." *American Journal of Political Science* 32(2): 416-440.

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): 1029-1046.

Schwartz, Shalom H., Gian Vittorio Caprara, and Michele Vecchione. 2010. "Basic Personal Values, Core Political Values, and Voting: A Longitudinal Analysis." *Political Psychology* 31(3): 421-452.

Kunda, Ziva. 1990. "The Case for Motivated Reasoning." *Psychological Bulletin* 108 (3): 480-498.

Redlawsk, David P. 2008. "Hot Cognition or Cool Consideration? Testing the Effects of Motivated Reasoning on Political Decision Making." *The Journal of Politics* 64 (04): 1021-1044.

Nyhan, Brendan and Jason Reifler. 2010. "When Corrections Fail: The Persistence of Political Misperceptions." *Political Behavior* 32: 303-330.

Miller, Joanne M., Kyle L. Saunders, and Christina E. Farhart. 2015. "Conspiracy Endorsement as Motivated Reasoning: The Moderating Roles of Political Knowledge and Trust." *American Journal of Political Science* 60(4): 824-844.

#### Book Review

Lau, Richard R. and David P. Redlawsk. 2006. *How Voters Decide*. Cambridge.

Lodge, Milton and Charles Taber. 2013. *The Rationalizing Voter*. Cambridge.

#### **May 2nd: Biases and Heuristics, Guest Speaker Professor Laura Stephenson**

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): 951-971.

Kam, Cindy D. 2005. "Who Ties the Party Line? Cues, Values, and Individual Differences." *Political Behavior* 27(2): 163-182.

Dolan, Kathleen. 2010. "The Impact of Gender Stereotyped Evaluations on Support for Women Candidates." *Political Behavior* 32: 69-88.

Schneider, Monica C. and Angela L. Bos. 2011. "An Exploration of the Content of Stereotypes of Black Politicians." *Political Psychology* 32(2): 205-233.

Jerit, Jennifer and Jason Barabas. 2012. "Partisan Perceptual Bias and the Information Environment." *Journal of Politics* 74(3): 672-684.

- Bauer, Nichole. 2015. "Emotional, Sensitive and Unfit for Office? Gender Stereotype Activation and Support for Female Candidates." *Political Psychology* 36: 691-708.
- Merolla, Jennifer L., Laura B. Stephenson, and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister 2016. "Deciding Correctly: Variance in the Use of Party Cues." In Blais, André, Jean-François Laslier, Karine Van der Straeten, Eds. *Voting Experiments*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing. pp. 19-42.

### **May 9th: Affect and Emotion**

Handbook, Chapter 6

- Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman and Erin Cassese. 2007. "On the Distinct Political Effects of Anxiety and Anger." In Neuman, W. Russell, George E. Marcus, Ann Crigler, and Michael MacKuen, Eds. *The Affect Effect: Dynamics of Emotion in Political Thinking and Behavior*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Valentino, Nicholas A., Ted Brader, Eric W. Groenendyk, 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): 156-170.
- MacKuen, Michael, Jennifer Wolak, Luke Keele, and George E. Marcus. 2010. "Civic Engagements: Resolute Partisanship or Reflective Deliberation." *American Journal of Political Science* 54(2): 440-458.
- Gadarian, Shana Kushner and Bethany Albertson. 2013. Anxiety, Immigration and the Search for Information. *Political Psychology*, 35: 133-164.
- Banks, Antoine J. 2014. "The Public's Anger: White Racial Attitudes and Opinions Toward Health Care Reform" *Political Behavior*, 36: 493-514.
- Kam, Cindy D. and Beth A. Estes. 2016. "Disgust Sensitivity and Public Demand for Protection." *The Journal of Politics* 78(2): 481-496.

### Book Reviews

- Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen. 2000. *Affective Intelligence & Political Judgment*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Antoine J. Banks. 2014. *Anger and Racial Politics: The Emotional Foundation of Racial Attitudes in America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

### **May 16th: Threat and Political Behavior**

- Merolla and Zechmeister. 2009. *Democracy at Risk: How Terrorist Threats affect the Public*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman, Charles Taber, and Gallya Lahav. 2005. "Threat, Anxiety, and Support of Antiterrorism Policies." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(3): 593-608.
- Peffley, Mark, Marc L. Hutchison, and Michal Shamir. 2015. "The Impact of Persistent Terrorism on Political Tolerance: Israel 1980 to 2011." *American Political Science Review* 109(4): 1-16.

### Book Review

- Brooks, Clem and Jeff Manza. 2013. *Whose Rights? Counterterrorism and the Dark Side of American Public Opinion*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Albertson, Bethany, and Shana Kushner Gadarian. 2015. *Anxious Politics: Democratic Citizenship in a Threatening World*. Cambridge University Press.

### **May 23rd: Inter-group Relations, Week I**

Handbook, Chapter 23

Kinder, Donald R. and Cindy D. Kam. 2009. *Us Against Them: Ethnocentric Foundations of American Public Opinion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pettigrew, Thomas F. 1998. "Intergroup Contact Theory." *Annual Review of Psychology* 49: 65-85.

#### Book Review

Kinder, Donald R. and Lynn M. Sanders. 1996. *Divided by Color, Racial Politics and Democratic Ideals*. University of Chicago.

Karpowitz, Christopher and Tali Mendelberg. 2015. *The Silent Sex: Gender, Deliberation, and Institutions*. Princeton University Press.

### **May 30th: Inter-group Relations, Week 2**

Handbook, Chapter 25

Kinder, Donald R. and David O. Sears. 1981. "Prejudice and politics: Symbolic Racism versus Racial Threats to the Good Life." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 40: 414-431.

Hurwitz, Jon and Mark Peffley. 1997. "Public Perceptions of Race and Crime: The Role of Racial Stereotypes." *American Journal of Political Science* 41: 375-401.

Huddy, Leonie and Stanley Feldman. 2009. "On Assessing the Political Effects of Racial Prejudice." *Annual Review of Political Science*.

Pérez, Efrén O. 2010. "Explicit Evidence on the Import of Implicit Attitudes: The IAT and Immigration Policy Judgments." *Political Behavior* 32: 517-545.

Hutchings, Vincent L., and Jardina, Ashley E. 2009. "Experiments on Racial Priming in Political Campaigns." *Annual Review of Political Science*: 397-402.

Hutchings, Vincent, H. Walton Jr., Andrea Benjamin. 2010. "Explicit Racial Cues and Public Support for Confederate Symbols and Southern Partisanship." *The Journal of Politics* 72(4): 1175-1178.

#### Book Review

Pérez, Efrén O. 2016. *Unspoken Politics: Implicit Attitudes and Political Thinking*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tesler, Michael. 2016. *Post-Racial or Most-Racial: Race and Politics in the Obama Era*. University of Chicago Press.

### **June 6<sup>th</sup>: Presentations**

### **June 13<sup>th</sup>: Paper Due and More Presentations (if needed)**