

# POLS 4615: THE POLARIZATION OF AMERICAN POLITICS

Fall Semester AY2017-2018  
Department of Political Science  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA, 30602-1615

Classroom: 301 Baldwin Hall  
Time: 2:30 - 3:20PM Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Instructor: **Keith T. Poole**

Office: Room 304D Baldwin Hall  
E-Mail: [ktpoole@uga.edu](mailto:ktpoole@uga.edu)  
WebSite: [Course Home Page](#)

Office Hours: By Appointment

The following texts will be used in this course:

- Daniel Hopkins and John Sides. 2015. ***Political Polarization in American Politics***
- James A. Thurber and Antoine Yoshinaka (eds.). 2015. ***American Gridlock: The Sources, Character, and Impact of Political Polarization.***
- Nolan M. McCarty, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. 2016. ***Polarized America (2nd ed.)***

## Requirements

Grades will be determined by three examinations -- two mid-semester exams and a final exam. The exams will be Multiple Choice. The midterms will be worth ¼ each and the final 1/2 of the course grade.

The Multiple Choice exams will be about 25-30 questions each for the Midterms and 40-50 questions for the final. They will be straightforward with no "tricks".

The **first exam** is scheduled for Friday, 22 September 2017, 2:30 - 3:20PM.  
The **second exam** is scheduled for Friday, 20 October 2017, 2:30 - 3:20PM.

**The Final Exam is scheduled for Friday, 8 December 2017, 3:30 - 5:30PM.**

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## Course Outline

### 1. Introduction: What is Political Polarization and Why Does it Matter?

#### Assignment:

- Chapter 1, *Polarized America*
- Chapter 1, *Political Polarization in American Politics*

### 2. How do We Measure Congressional Polarization?

#### Assignment:

- Chapter 2, *Polarized America*
- ["Measuring Ideology"](#)
- ["The Decline and Rise of Party Polarization in Congress During the Twentieth Century."](#) *Extensions*, Fall 2005.
- ["The Roots of the Polarization of Modern U. S. Politics."](#) *Revista de Ciencia Politica*, December, 2008.
- [Growing Apart: The Mathematical Evidence for Congress' Growing Polarization](#), by Jordan Ellenberg  
(Note that the links to [voteview.uh.edu](http://voteview.uh.edu) should be [k7moa.com](http://k7moa.com). The pages are still on the website.)

### 3. Party Polarization of the Voters

#### Assignment:

- Chapters 3 and 4, *Polarized America*
- Chapters 1 to 5, *American Gridlock*
- Chapters 2 to 9, *Political Polarization in American Politics*
- ["An Empirical Analysis of Racial Differences in Police Use of Force."](#) by Roland G. Fryer, Jr

#### 4. Polarization in National Institutions

##### Assignment:

- Chapter 5, *Polarized America*
- Chapters 6 to 11, *American Gridlock*

#### 5. Polarization in the News Media

##### Assignment:

- Chapters 12 to 15, *American Gridlock*
- Chapters 10 to 17, *Political Polarization in American Politics*
- [DW-NOMINATE Movie Channel on YouTube](#)

#### 6. The Public Policy Consequences of Political Polarization

##### Assignment:

- Chapter 6 and 7, *Polarized America*
- Chapter 16, *American Gridlock*
- Chapters 21 to 26, *Political Polarization in American Politics*