

The University of Georgia
School of Public and International Affairs
Department of Political Science

POLS 8790 Special Topics in American Politics: Political Behavior
Fall 2017

Tuesdays 3:30-6:15
Baldwin Hall 302

Professor Alexa Bankert
Baldwin Hall 380F
Office hours: Thursdays 1-2pm and by appointment

This course provides an introduction to the continuously growing research on public opinion and mass political behavior, especially in the American political context. For this purpose, we will focus almost exclusively on the behavior of non-elite political actors (i.e. individual voters as well as groups of voters). The significance of this course lies in its departure from the Rational Choice paradigm that dominated prior political science research to a large extent. Instead, we will examine the psychological mechanisms that shape citizens' attitudes, values, voting decision, as well as other forms of political participation. Thereby, we will answer questions that are important for our understanding of *actual, rather than ideal*, democratic decision-making such as: How do people form opinions? How do people process information to form political evaluations? Do people care more about their party's victory than political issues? What is affective polarization and how does it impact American democracy? Throughout the course, we will also examine commonly used methodological tools in political behavior research such as survey research and experiments.

Course Requirements

This course is a seminar – a format that only works if you have read and critically thought about the week's readings and if you actively participate in the discussion so please come prepared. In order to help you accomplish this goal, you are required to write a short essay each week of no more than ONE page, responding to each week's readings. These essays should try to engage a number of the week's readings by doing one or more of the following: juxtaposing and commenting on alternative explanations or approaches to a substantive topic; criticizing the methodologies used and proposing other strategies of research; criticizing the conceptualization and/or measurement of a particular construct; analyzing the implications of a set of findings;

suggesting new questions or hypotheses for research; developing similarities and contrasts with arguments or research found in the readings from previous weeks. More generally, these papers should *contain an argument*, not a summary or description of the readings. These papers should be turned in to me by email no later than 11pm on Monday before the scheduled Tuesday meeting.

Additionally, each student will pick a topic from the syllabus and make a presentation about a research question based on that week's required readings and guide the discussion of the seminar.

You have two choices for written work in this course:

Choice A: Write three 5–7 page papers *critically* reviewing the literature on a topic from the syllabus. Each paper should consist of:

1. A description of the work that has been published on your topic of choice.
2. A critical evaluation of the strengths and weakness of the differing perspectives.
3. An evaluation of what sort of future research would be most important to further our understanding of the specific topic you chose.

These three papers are due September 26, October 24, and November 28.

Option B: Complete a research paper on some aspect of American political behavior, and it must be approved in advance. You will be asked to consider and identify a potential topic early in the semester. Ideally, this project will serve some concrete purpose beyond the course; for example, as part of a dissertation prospectus or chapter, a conference paper, or an article for submission to a journal. For this purpose, you will also have the opportunity to collect data using the student subject pool generated through various POLS1101 classes.

Finally, each student will present his or her own work during a symposium on the last day of class. If you complete Option A, you will present one of your three literature reviews; if you complete Option B you will present that work.

Your grade will be based on weekly participation (reaction papers, in-class presentation, and discussion; 25%), final presentation (25%), and written work (50%).

Grading Scale for Final Semester Grades

100-94 A	79-77 C+	63-60 D-
93-90 A-	76-74 C	59-0 F

89-87 B+	73-70 C-
86-84 B	69-67 D+
83-80 B-	66-64 D

Grade Appeals, Incompletes, Late Assignments, and Make-Up Policy

Formal grade appeals must be made in writing, and in the case of a paper, I will re-grade your entire paper. Therefore, your grade can go up or down. A final grade of “Incomplete” will only be given in this course under exceptional circumstances and is solely at the discretion of the instructor. If an incomplete is given, it is the student’s responsibility to complete the necessary requirements as early in the following semester as possible. Legitimate excuses for absence from class (e.g., religious holiday, medical emergency, or illness) must be presented to me prior to the class when feasible. Late assignments will be docked 5 percent per day (half letter grade), for each day that a project is late (including weekends).

Office Hours

Students who are having difficulty with the course materials and/or assignments are encouraged to make an appointment with. Don’t be afraid to come by. However, please note that office hours are for clarification of material, not for recreating a lecture if you skipped class. If you like to talk to me, feel free to stop by my office during office hours but please email me in advance if possible.

Syllabus Policy:

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus if necessary. I will give you fair notice (at least a week) if something, such as a reading assignment, is to change.

Culture of Honesty Policy

You are responsible for knowing and complying with the policy and procedures relating to academic honesty. To understand what constitutes dishonest work, as defined by the University, please carefully review the policy here: <https://ovpi.uga.edu/academichonesty/academic-honesty-policy>

Readings

The following are required books.

Lewis-Beck, Michael S., Helmut Norpoth, William G. Jacoby, Herbert F. Weisberg. 2008. *The American Voter Revisited*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Donald Green, Bradley Palmquist, and Eric Schickler. 2004. *Partisan Hearts and Minds*. New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press.

Fiorina, M. P., Abrams, S. J., & Pope, J. 2006. *Culture war?: The myth of a polarized America*. Longman Publishing Group.

Klar, Samara, and Yanna Krupnikov. 2016. *Independent politics*. Cambridge University Press.

Achen, C.H. and Bartels, L.M., 2016. *Democracy for realists: Why elections do not produce responsive government*. Princeton University Press.

Most other readings can be accessed through GoogleScholar or will be provided on eLC.

Course Schedule

August 15th: Course introduction and overview

August 22nd: How do we know what the public wants? The measurement and meaning of public opinion

Herbst, Susan. 2012. "The History and Meaning of Public Opinion" in *New Directions in Public Opinion*, ed. Adam Berinsky. New York: Routledge, ch. 1.

Verba, Sidney. 1996. "The Citizen as Respondent: Sample Surveys and American Democracy." *American Political Science Review* 90(1):1-7.

Zaller, John. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, ch. 1.

Zaller, J., & Feldman, S. 1992. A simple theory of the survey response: Answering questions versus revealing preferences. *American journal of political science*, 579-616.

Feldman, Stanley. 1988. Structure and consistency in public opinion: The role of core beliefs and values. *American Journal of political science*, 416-440.

Achen, C.H. and Bartels, L.M., 2016. *Democracy for realists: Why elections do not produce responsive government*. Princeton University Press. Chapters 1 & 2.

August 29th: No class due to APSA

September 5th: How much does the average citizen know about politics? Political knowledge and sophistication among American voters

Delli Carpini, Michael X. and Scott Keeter. 1996. *What Americans Know About Politics and Why It Matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press, chapter 4.

James Kuklinski, et al. 2000. "Misinformation and the Currency of Democratic Citizenship." *Journal of Politics*, 62: 790-816.

Barabas, J., Jerit, J., Pollock, W., & Rainey, C. 2014. The question (s) of political knowledge. *American Political Science Review*, 108(4), 840-855.

Gilens, M. 2001. Political ignorance and collective policy preferences. *American Political Science Review*, 95(2), 379-396.

Jerit, J., & Barabas, J. 2012. Partisan perceptual bias and the information environment. *The Journal of Politics*, 74(3), 672-684.

Blank, J. M., & Shaw, D. (2015). Does partisanship shape attitudes toward science and public policy? The case for ideology and religion. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 658(1), 18-35.

September 12th: How much does the average citizen know about ideology? Ideological self-identification among voters

Converse, Philip E. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics." In *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David Ernest Apter. New York: Free Press, 206-61. Reprinted Jeffrey Friedman (ed.), *Is Democratic Competence Possible?* A special issue of *Critical Review* 18 (1-3):1-74.

Jost, John T., Christopher M. Federico, and Jaime L. Napier. 2009. "Political Ideology: Its Structure, Functions, and Elective Affinities." *Annual Review of Psychology* 60 (1):307-37.

Conover, Pamela J. and Stanley Feldman. 1981. "The Origins and Meaning of Liberal/Conservative Self- Identifications." *American Journal of Political Science* 25(4):617-45.

Feldman, S., & Johnston, C. 2014. Understanding the determinants of political ideology: Implications of structural complexity. *Political Psychology*, 35(3), 337-358.

Ellis, C., & Stimson, J. A. 2009. Symbolic ideology in the American electorate. *Electoral Studies*, 28(3), 388-402.

September 19th: Are attitudes stable? Attitudes and Attitudes Change

Valentino, Nicholas A. 1999. "Crime News and the Priming of Racial Attitudes During Evaluations of the President." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 63(3):293-320.

Lenz, Gabriel S. 2009. "Learning and Opinion Change, Not Priming: Reconsidering the Priming Hypothesis." *American Journal of Political Science* 53 (4):821-37.

Krosnick, Jon, and Donald Kinder. 1990. "Altering the Foundations of Support for the President through Priming." *American Political Science Review* 84 (2):497-512.

Nelson, Thomas E., Rosalee A. Clawson, and Zoe M. Oxley. 1997. "Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflict and Its Effect on Tolerance." *American Political Science Review* 91(3):67-83.

Druckman, James N. 2001. "On the Limits of Framing Effects: Who Can Frame?" *Journal of Politics* 63(4):1041-66.

Achen, C.H. and Bartels, L.M., 2016. *Democracy for realists: Why elections do not produce responsive government*. Princeton University Press. Chapter 3.

September 26th: How does race matter in American politics? Race as one example of important group identities

Kinder, Donald R. and Lynn M. Sanders. 1996. *Divided by Color*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapter 7.

White, Ismail K. 2007. "When Race Matters and When it Doesn't: Racial Group Differences in Response to Racial Cues." *American Political Science Review* 101(2):339-54.

Fiske, Susan T., Amy J. C. Cuddy, Peter Glick, and Jun Xu. 2002. "A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content: Competence and Warmth Respectively Follow from Perceived Status and Competition." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 82 (6):878-902.

Gay, Claudine. 2006. "Seeing Difference: The Effect of Economic Disparity on Black Attitudes toward Latinos." *American Journal of Political Science* 50 (4):982-97.

Feldman, Stanley and Huddy, Leonie, 2005. Racial resentment and white opposition to race-conscious programs: Principles or prejudice?. *American Journal of Political Science*, 49(1), pp.168-183.

Weber, C. R., Lavine, H., Huddy, L., & Federico, C. M. 2014. Placing racial stereotypes in context: Social desirability and the politics of racial hostility. *American Journal of Political Science*, 58(1), 63-78.

October 3rd: Is partisanship stable? The unmoved mover in American politics

Green, Donald P., Bradley Palmquist, and Eric Schickler. 2002. *Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identities of Voters*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapters 1 – 4.

Franklin, Charles H., and John E. Jackson. 1983. "The Dynamics of Party Identification." *The American Political Science Review* 77 (4): 957-73.

MacKuen, Michael, Robert Erikson, and James Stimson. 1989. "Macropartisanship." *American Political Science Review* 83 (4):1126-42.

Green, Donald, Bradley Palmquist; and Eric Schickler. 1998. "Macropartisanship: A Replication and Critique. *American Political Science Review* 92(4):883-99.

Bartels, Larry M. 2000. "Partisanship and Voting Behavior, 1952-1996." *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (1):35- 50.

October 10th: What is partisanship? The nature and origins of party identification

Lewis-Beck, Michael S., Helmut Norpoth, William G. Jacoby, Herbert F. Weisberg. 2008. *The American Voter Revisited*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapters 6 & 7.

Donald Green, Bradley Palmquist, and Eric Schickler. 2004. *Partisan Hearts and Minds*. New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press. Chapters 6 – 8.

Huddy, L., Mason, L., & Aarøe, L. 2015. Expressive partisanship: Campaign involvement, political emotion, and partisan identity. *American Political Science Review*, 109(1), 1-17.

Achen, C.H. and Bartels, L.M., 2016. *Democracy for realists: Why elections do not produce responsive government*. Princeton University Press. Chapters 6, 8, 9, & 10.

October 17th: What about those Independents? The wild card of the American electorate

Klar, Samara, and Yanna Krupnikov. 2016. *Independent politics*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 4, and 5.

Hajnal, Zoltan, and Taeku Lee. 2011. *Why Americans Don't Join the Party : Race, Immigration, and the Failure (of Political Parties) to Engage the Electorate*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. Chapters 4, 5, and 7.

Keith, Bruce E. 1992. *The Myth of the Independent Voter*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapters 1, 3, 4, and 5.

October 24th: Polarized America? Affective and ideological polarization

Fiorina, M. P., Abrams, S. J., & Pope, J. 2006. *Culture war?: The myth of a polarized America*. Longman Publishing Group. Chapters 1 – 5, 7 – 9.

Abramowitz, A. I., & Saunders, K. L. 2008. Is polarization a myth? *The Journal of Politics*, 70(2), 542-555.

Hetherington, M. J. (2001). Resurgent mass partisanship: The role of elite polarization. *American Political Science Review*, 95(3), 619-631.

Layman, G. C., & Carsey, T. M. (2002). Party polarization and "conflict extension" in the American electorate. *American Journal of Political Science*, 786-802.

Mason, L. 2015. "I disrespectfully agree": The differential effects of partisan sorting on social and issue polarization. *American Journal of Political Science*, 59(1), 128-145.

Klar, Samara, and Yanna Krupnikov. 2016. *Independent politics*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 8.

October 31st: America First! National Identity in American politics

Transue, J. E. (2007). Identity salience, identity acceptance, and racial policy attitudes: American national identity as a uniting force. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 78-91.

De Figueiredo, R. J., & Elkins, Z. 2003. Are patriots bigots? An inquiry into the vices of in-group pride. *American Journal of Political Science*, 47(1), 171-188.

Huddy, L., & Khatib, N. 2007. American patriotism, national identity, and political involvement. *American journal of political science*, 51(1), 63-77.

Theiss-Morse, E. 2009. *Who counts as an American?: The boundaries of national identity*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 3 – 6.

Schildkraut, D. J. 2005. The rise and fall of political engagement among Latinos: The role of identity and perceptions of discrimination. *Political Behavior*, 27(3), 285-312.

November 7th: To campaign or not to campaign? Effects of political campaigns on voters' behavior

Gelman, Andrew, and Gary King. 1993. "Why Are American Presidential Election Campaign Polls So Variable When Votes Are So Predictable?" *British Journal of Political Science* 23 (4):409-51.

Bartels, Larry M. 2006. "Priming and Persuasion in Presidential Campaigns." In *Capturing Campaign Effects*, ed. Henry E. Brady and Richard Johnston. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 78-112.

Ansolabehere, Stephen, Shanto Iyengar, Adam Simon, and Nicholas Valentino. 1994. "Does Attack Advertising Demobilize the Electorate?" *American Political Science Review* 88 (4):829-38.

Krupnikov, Yanna. 2011. When does negativity demobilize? Tracing the conditional effect of negative campaigning on voter turnout. *American Journal of Political Science*, 55(4), 797-813.

Gilens, Martin, Lynn Vavreck, Martin Cohen. 2007. "The Mass Media and the Public's Assessments of Presidential Candidates, 1952-2000" *The Journal of Politics* 69 (4), 1160–1175.

Brader, Ted. 2005. Striking a responsive chord: How political ads motivate and persuade voters by appealing to emotions. *American Journal of Political Science*, 49(2), 388-405.

November 14th: Democracy for Beginners – Voting

Lewis-Beck, Michael S., Helmut Norpoth, William G. Jacoby, Herbert F. Weisberg. 2008. *The American Voter Revisited*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapters 3, 4, 14, 15.

Achen, C.H. and Bartels, L.M., 2016. *Democracy for realists: Why elections do not produce responsive government*. Princeton University Press. Chapters 4 & 5.

Fiorina, Morris. *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981. Chapters 1 & 2.

Frank, Thomas. 2007. *What's the matter with Kansas?: How conservatives won the heart of America*. Metropolitan Books. Chapters 1, 2 and 3.

November 28th: Advanced Democracy: Non-electoral forms of political participation

Lewis-Beck, Michael S., Helmut Norpoth, William G. Jacoby, Herbert F. Weisberg. 2008. *The American Voter Revisited*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 5.

Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. "Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation." *American Political Science Review* 89 (2):271-94.

Gerber, Alan and Donald P. Green. 2000. "The Effects of Canvassing, Direct Mail, and Telephone Contact on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 94:653-63.

Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman, Henry Brady, and Norman H. Nie. 1993. "Citizen Activity: Who Participates? What Do They Say?" *American Political Science Review* 87 (2):303-18.

Schlozman, Kay Lehman, Sidney Verba, and Henry E. Brady. 2010. "Weapon of the Strong? Participatory Inequality and the Internet." *Perspectives on Politics* 8 (2):487-509.

Valentino, N. A., Brader, T., Groenendyk, E. W., Gregorowicz, K., & Hutchings, V. L. 2011. Election night's alright for fighting: The role of emotions in political participation. *The Journal of Politics*, 73(1), 156-170.

December 5th: Symposium