

POS 4400: Political Psychology

Summer 2020

May 13 – June 3

Online Instruction

Professor: Geoffrey Sheagley

Email: geoff.sheagley@uga.edu

Office Hours: By appointment. Available via Skype or Zoom. Schedule via email.

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of political psychology. The content of this course draws on theories and research from political science, psychology, and mass communication to understand different aspects of politics. Our focus in this class is on members of the mass public, with the expectation being that completing this course will provide you a better understanding of how politics and political processes operate from the perspective of ordinary people.

In the first portion of the course we will examine the formation and expression of people's political beliefs. We will pay particular attention to how people process information, memory, and motivation. In the second portion of the class we will focus on political identities. The final portion of our class covers the mass media.

Office Hours and Help

I will strive to make sure that the course is understandable and that you do not feel lost. If you have any questions about the course content, structure, or assignments please do not hesitate to contact me. This is especially important because of how quickly we will cover material during the summer session and due to the online delivery of our material.

Structure

The course will be taught using asynchronous delivery. This is a fancy term meaning that we will not have live meetings, but rather I will post materials and you will have some control over when you engage with them. There will still be regular deadlines, however you will have some control over when you complete them.

The class is divided into six short units, each of which will consist of readings, some form of individual or group reflection, and an open-book/open-note quiz. You are also required to write two short papers for the class.

Required Books

There are no required books for this class. All of the assigned readings are available on eLC.

Grading

Your letter grade in the class reflects the percentage of the total number of available points you obtain in the class. The distribution I use is:

Grade	Percent
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D	60-69
F	<60

The following are each of the areas in which points are assigned in the class.

1. Experimental Design (40%)

You are required to write an experimental design as a final paper for this class. A portion of this grade is also based on you successfully writing a rough draft and participating in a peer review session. A detailed assignment sheet with deadlines is available on eLC.

2. Module Quizzes (30%)

Each content module contains a quiz that you are required to complete. Quizzes are open-book and open-note. They are also timed. Each quiz is worth 6% of your grade. Quizzes are available on eLC.

3. Final Exam (20%)

A written final exam is a required portion of this class. The exam will be a response to a broad essay prompt, and you will have a series of days in which to write up your answer. The exam is open-note and open-book.

4. Participation (10%)

There are regular activities that you are required to complete for the course. The nature of the activity will depend on the module. These activities are generally graded on a pass/fail basis.

Grade Change

Any appeals of a grade must be made at least **24-hours after** I hand back the assignment or test. If you would like to appeal a grade, prior to meeting with me you must submit a written statement detailing why you think that your grade should be changed. I will then meet with you to discuss your statement.

If I have made a mistake in totaling your grade in the class (e.g., I did not add up all of the points correctly) then you do not need to write the statement. Talk to me after class or during office hours and I will fix the mistake.

Class Administration

eLearning

You will submit assignments and obtain additional reading assignments from the eLearning site associated with our class (<https://uga.view.usg.edu>). Check the site periodically for any updates to the course readings.

Deadlines

All assignments are due *at the beginning of class* on the due date. If an assignment is turned in after the beginning of class on the due date 15% will be deducted from your assignment grade. An additional 15% will be deducted for each day the assignment is late. For example, if you turn in an assignment one full day after it was due, it will be deducted 30% (15% for not being turned in at the start of class on the day it was due and another 15% for being turned in one day later). Assignments turned in more than 3 days late will receive an F.

Academic Honesty

The University of Georgia has an academic honesty policy. Academic integrity is required for a positive learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an F in the course. Additionally, I will forward your name to the University. You can read the policies in their entirety here: [https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/Definitions for Purposes of this Policy/](https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/Definitions%20for%20Purposes%20of%20this%20Policy/)

Disability Resource Center

If you anticipate needing classroom or exam accommodations due to the impact of a disability or medical condition, you must register for services with the Disability Resource Center. Additional information can be found here: <http://drc.uga.edu/>

Withdrawal Policy

Undergraduate students can only withdraw from four courses and receive a withdrawal- passing (WP) grade while enrolled at the University. Students can drop any class without penalty during the drop/add period at the beginning of every semester. Dropped courses during the drop/add period do not qualify as withdrawals. Instructors have the ability to withdraw a student from the class due to excessive absences. Please carefully review the policy in its entirety here:
<http://www.reg.uga.edu/policies/withdrawals>

Class Schedule & Structure

The class is divided into six modules. Each module will open and close on set dates, however, within those dates you have the freedom to watch the lectures, read, and complete assignments when you want to. In addition, all of the readings are available at the start of the class.

Module 1 – Introductions & Basics

Topics: Basic thinking & reasoning about politics; experimental methods

Readings: Kahneman (Chs. 1,2, & 7); McDermott 2002 (pgs. 31-41; 50-57); Druckman et al. 2011 (all)

Deadlines: Quiz 1 (5/18 by 8am)

Module 2 – Information Processing, Motivation, & Political Knowledge

Topics: How people process & store information in memory; Motivation; Bias; Knowledge

Readings: Taber 2003 (pages 433-446); Taber 2001; Bolsen and Druckman 2016; Pew report 2017; Lau and Redlawsk 2001(selected portions)

Deadlines: Quiz 2 (5/21 by 8am)

Module 3 – Party Identification

Topics: Party Identification; political independents

Readings: Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002; Klar and Krupnikov (assorted)

Deadlines: Paper rough draft for peer review (by 5/22 at 5pm); Quiz 3 by 5/25 at 8am.

Module 4 – Intergroup Attitudes & Race

Topics: Group identity; racial attitudes; rural identity

Readings: Huddy 2013; Tesler 2016 (Ch. 1); Devine 1989; Cramer 2016 (assorted)

Deadlines: Final paper draft by 5/29 at 5pm. Quiz 4 by 6/1 at 8am.

Module 5 – Mass Media

Topics: Media effects

Readings: Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Mutz 2015 (Chapters 1 & 2)

Deadlines: Quiz 5 by 6/3 at 5pm – **note the adjusted time!**

Final Exam

Distributed: 6/3 at 5pm

Deadline: 6/5 at 5pm.