



UNIVERSITY OF  
**GEORGIA**

**School of Public and International Affairs  
Department of Political Science**

POLS 4400: Political Psychology

Spring 2021

Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:35 - 10:50AM

Room: Baldwin 101D

Instructor: Dr. Alexa Bankert

Contact: [alexa.bankert@uga.edu](mailto:alexa.bankert@uga.edu)

Office Hours: By appointment via Zoom.

**Course Description and Objective**

This course examines what social and cognitive psychology can tell us about political phenomena. We will go beyond describing what happened in politics and instead identify explanations for why we observe certain political behaviors by studying individual-level psychological processes. For example, why and how do people identify with certain groups such as political parties? How do people form political attitudes and how do they make political decisions, especially in the absence of sufficient knowledge? You will be introduced to various theories as well as their empirical evidence that aim to explain these processes in the U.S. and beyond. Throughout the course, you will also be introduced to various research and writing methods as a tool to conduct, evaluate, and articulate research in political psychology.

When this course is over, you should have a general understanding of four things:

1. Individual-level processes that affect political behavior such as cognition, emotions, and personality.
2. Intergroup relations and their impact on political behavior such as group identity, prejudice, and discrimination.
3. Different research methods to study political psychology empirically.
4. Basic elements of writing.

## **Fair Warning**

This class requires a substantial amount of reading and writing. Please accept this as an inevitable truth.

## **Feeling Lost?**

I will strive to make sure that the course is understandable and that assignments and exams are manageable. 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 the hybrid delivery of our material. If you email me before 5pm, you can expect an answer on the same day. If you email me after 5pm, I will get back to you first thing in the morning.

## **Course Structure and Administration**

The course will be taught synchronously, following a hybrid model. In other words, we will meet – both online and in-person – every Tuesday and Thursday from 9:35-10:50am. Since our classroom cannot accommodate all students while also complying with social distance requirements, I will divide you into three groups. While one group will come to class in-person, the other two groups will join the class via Zoom. We will rotate the groups every week. Please refer to the syllabus to see which group can attend in-person. I will assign you to a group at the beginning of the semester.

## **Zoom Etiquette**

When you join us via Zoom, please make sure to be on time, have your full name listed as your username, and have your camera on so we can all see you and engage with you during class. You will be muted upon joining. You can leave questions in the Zoom chat. During class discussions, you can “raise your hand” using the corresponding icon on Zoom.

## **Required Technology: eLC**

Our course is administered through eLC. You will find all of our course materials through this website. You will also submit assignments using Dropboxes on eLC. Finally, my primary means of communication with the class will be through announcements posted in eLC. Make sure you receive eLC updates for our class automatically via email (eLC > Click on your profile > Notifications > Instant Notifications). Please note that you cannot reply to an email I send out via eLC (ending in @uga.view.usg.edu emails).

## **Required Technology: Qualtrics**

You will use the software platform Qualtrics to design your survey. Qualtrics allows you to easily write survey questions, collect responses, and analyze your results. Best yet, it is free to use for all UGA undergraduates. If you have not already done so for another class, you need to submit a request to EITS to activate your account. You can find more information

here: [https://eits.uga.edu/web\\_and\\_applications/qualtrics/](https://eits.uga.edu/web_and_applications/qualtrics/)

## Required Books

We will require *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (2nd edition) by Huddy, Sears, and Levy. I will post additional articles to eLC.

## Course Requirements

**Midterm:** There will be a midterm exam to make sure that you are familiar with the core concepts of political psychology research we have covered up to that point. The exam will primarily consist of multiple-choice questions with varying levels of difficulty but will also entail a few short answer questions. *As of now, the **midterm exam** is scheduled for Thursday, March 11<sup>th</sup> and will be available on eLC from 10am – 5pm. Please note that everybody will take the exam online.* If you accidentally miss the midterm exam, I will, regrettably, not be able to offer a make-up exam.

**Final Exam:** The final exam will consist of one of possible two essay questions. The first essay question tests your breadth of knowledge regarding political psychology –that is, whether you can bring together various strands of literature and integrate them into a response that reflects the complexity of the field. The second essay question aims to assess your depth of knowledge regarding a specific course topic and its corresponding theoretical and empirical foundations. *As of now, the **final exam** is scheduled for Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup> and will be available on eLC from 10am – 5pm. Please note that everybody will take the exam online.* If you accidentally miss the final exam, I will, regrettably, not be able to offer a make-up exam.

**Quizzes:** You are required to complete **4 quizzes** in this class that test your comprehension of the reading assignments and the lectures. Quizzes will be open-book, open-note, and available on eLC **the day before Tuesday class**. Please refer to the course schedule below for specific deadlines. I am dropping the worst quiz score at the end of the semester.

**Readings:** I expect everyone to finish the readings. I will draw from the readings and the lecture to create quiz questions. I will provide you with a concept list to help you navigate the readings.

**Experimental Design:** You will develop an experimental design as a final paper for this class. This experimental design needs to be methodologically sound, meant to test a novel hypothesis, and grounded in the class readings (6-8 pages). You will also have to program your survey questionnaire in Qualtrics but you won't have to collect actual data. An experimental design is merely the blueprint for an experiment. You can find details on the paper's requirements on eLC. *The first version of the paper is due by 6pm on Thursday, April 15. The final version is due by 6pm on Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup>.*

**Peer-Review:** You will review the draft of a classmate's experimental design. I will provide

guidelines on how to be an effective reviewer. The peer review should be 1-2 pages and be helpful to your classmate so s/he can incorporate your feedback in the final version of their paper. *The peer-review is due by 6pm on Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>.*

**Participation:** Participation in class discussions is essential for a good participation grade. There will be regular activities/writing assignments that you are required to complete in class. The nature of the activity will depend on the week's material. Some of these activities are graded on a pass/fail basis. I will also offer extra-credit assignments.

**Attendance:** Attendance – both in-person or online – is required. If you cannot make it to class, please let me know in advance. Otherwise, numerous unexcused absences will affect your participation grade.

**Grade Distribution:**

Midterm Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

Quizzes: 15%

Experimental Design: 25%

Participation: 15%

Peer Review: 5%

**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	

*Please note that there is no standard rounding policy. Rounding decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.*

**Important Class Dates**

First Day of Class: Thursday, January 14

Quiz 1: Monday, January 25

Quiz 2: Monday, February 15

Midterm Exam: Thursday, March 11

Quiz 3: Monday, March 29

Quiz 4: Monday, April 12

Experimental Design Paper Preliminary Deadline: Thursday, April 15

Peer-Review Due: Thursday, April 22

Last Day of Our Class: Thursday, April 29

Experimental Design Paper Final Deadline: Thursday, April 29

Reading Day: Tuesday, May 4

Final Exam: Tuesday, May 11

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

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. In the case of a paper, I will re-grade your entire paper. Therefore, your grade can go up or down.

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. Just email me and I will fix the mistake.

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 an exam (e.g., religious holiday, medical emergency, or illness) must be **presented and accepted prior** to the exam when feasible. Late assignments will be docked 5 percent per day (half letter grade), for each day that a project is late (including weekends). If you need a (reasonable) extension, talk to your teaching assistant.

## **Office Hour (via Zoom)**

If you are having difficulty with the course materials and/or assignments, do not hesitate to make an appointment with me. However, please note that office hours are for clarification of material, not for recreating lectures or asking *extremely* detailed questions about the quizzes or the exam. (My epitaph will read: “Will this be on the exam?”)

## **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. Please note that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, class schedules might change. There is not much I can do about that, except to help you navigate those changes. In turn, I ask for your patience and flexibility.

## **Culture of Honesty Policy**

The University of Georgia has an academic 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>. 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 automatically receive an F in the course.

### **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>

### **Prohibition on Recording Lectures**

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

### **COVID-19 Safety Procedures**

**Face coverings.** Face coverings in public spaces, including classrooms, are mandatory for all. Wearing a face covering is in addition to and not a substitute for also maintaining six

feet social distancing. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area.

**Keeping a safe distance.** Please maintain six feet between you and others. The seating capacity in your classroom has been modified to allow for social distancing. Please sit in designated, marked seats. In all public spaces, including classrooms, you should not remove signage or re-arrange furniture, even if it appears that furniture is not being used. To help maintain distance, please keep right, where possible.

**Don't congregate.** If you want to spend some time chatting with someone, please take it outside or online. We are also requesting that you enter and exit any building without delay, staying outside of the building as long as practicable before your class begins and then leaving once your class is finished.

**Keeping it clean.** Cleaning and disinfecting of public spaces are important to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19. Classrooms are only being cleaned once-per-day. There are sanitation wipes/buckets and stands in proximity to your classroom. Prior to heading in to class, you should take a wipe from the station and wipe down all high-touch surfaces associated with your seat. You should help further slow the spread of the virus by frequently washing your hands.

**Your health.** You have been provided with a digital thermometer and are required to self-monitor for signs or symptoms of COVID-19. By coming to campus, you are acknowledging that you have checked, and do not have, symptoms of COVID-19. UGA is using a notification application to remind you daily to check for symptoms prior to coming to campus and self-report in the event you display COVID-19 symptoms. If you report symptoms, the University follows a confidential process for securely notifying health officials who can begin contact tracing and provide appropriate support services. If you have an underlying medical condition or, for any reason, believe that you are at a high risk of developing a serious case of COVID-19, you may request an accommodation through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at [drc@uga.edu](mailto:drc@uga.edu) or 706-542-8719. More information can be found at - [https://drc.uga.edu/content\\_page/student-accommodation-guidelines](https://drc.uga.edu/content_page/student-accommodation-guidelines)

Check your email regularly so you don't miss important information, and also check the University COVID-19 website for updates and resources, this web site includes links from student affairs with helpful, up-to-date messages for students and parents.

**Mental Health and Wellness Resources.** If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

- UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support

- <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).
- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.
  - Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

## Course Schedule

### Week #1 (starting Thursday, Jan. 14)

**Welcome to your class!** We'll meet on Zoom at 9:35am for an informal conversation about the syllabus, class requirements and expectations, as well as a brief introduction to eLC.

*Assignment:* Complete the (ungraded) syllabus quiz available via eLC on Friday, Jan. 15 between 10am-5pm.

### Week #2 (starting Tuesday, Jan. 19)

*Lecture Topic:* A Brief Overview of Political Psychology and Its Research Methods

*Readings:*

- 1) Chapter 1 in Huddy, Sears, and Levy 2016
- 2) Chapter 1 in Field and Hole (on eLC)

*Assignment:* Read *The Atlantic* article “The Coddling of the American Mind” (<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/09/the-coddling-of-the-americanmind/399356/>). We will discuss the article in class on Thursday, Jan. 21. To prepare for our discussion, try to summarize the article’s argument. Do you agree or disagree with it? Do you see any connections to our political discourse? How do you think this class might be able to address some of these concerns?

*In-Person Attendance:* Group I

### Week #3 (starting Tuesday, Jan. 26)

*Lecture Topic:* (Experimental) Research in Political Psychology

*Readings:*

- 1) Chapter 2 in Field and Hole (on eLC)
- 2) Chapter 3 in Field and Hole (on eLC)
- 3) Morton and Williams 2016 (on eLC)

*Quiz:* Available on eLC on Monday, Jan. 25 from 10am – 10pm.

*In-Person Attendance:* Group II

#### **Week #4 (starting Tuesday, Feb. 2)**

*Lecture Topic:* Personality and Socialization I – The Big Five

*Readings:*

- 1) Chapter 2 in Huddy, Sears, and Levy 2016
- 2) Bakker, Hopmann, and Persson 2016: Personality Traits and Party Identification Over Time (on eLC)

*In-Person Attendance:* Group III

#### **Week #5 (starting Tuesday, Feb. 9)**

*Lecture Topic:* Personality and Socialization II – Authoritarianism

*Readings:*

- 1) The Rise of American Authoritarianism: (<http://www.vox.com/2016/3/1/11127424/trump-authoritarianism>)
- 2) Hetherington and Suhay 2011: Authoritarianism, Threat, and Americans' Support for the War on Terror
- 3) Wronski et al. 2018: How Authoritarianism Divides the Democratic Party

*In-Person Attendance:* Group I

#### **Week #6 (starting Tuesday, Feb. 16)**

*Lecture Topic:* Personality and Socialization III – Socialization and Genetic Influences

*Readings:*

- 1) Chapter 3 in Huddy, Sears, and Levy 2016
- 2) Chapter 8 in Huddy, Sears, and Levy 2016

*Quiz:* Available on eLC on Monday, Feb. 15 from 10am – 10pm.

*In-Person Attendance:* Group II

## **Week #7 (starting Tuesday, Feb. 23)**

*Lecture Topic:* Cognition I – How We Deviate From Rational Choice and Why That Matters

*Readings:*

- 1) Chapter 4 in Huddy, Sears, and Levy 2016
- 2) Chapter 5 in Huddy, Sears, and Levy 2016

*In-Person Attendance:* Group III

## **Week #8 (starting Tuesday, March 2)**

*Lecture Topic:* Cognition II – Motivated Reasoning OR Why Persuasion Is So Hard!

*Readings:*

- 1) Chapter 17 in Huddy, Sears, and Levy 2016
- 2) Taber and Lodge 2006: Motivated Skepticism in the Evaluation of Political Beliefs (on eLC)

*In-Person Attendance:* Group I

## **Week #9 (starting Tuesday, March 9)**

*Lecture Topic:* Midterm review & final paper workshop

**\*\*\*Midterm on Thursday, March 11\*\*\***

*In-Person Attendance:* Group II (ONLY on Tuesday)

## **Week #10 (starting Tuesday, March 16)**

*Lecture Topic:* Prejudice and Implicit Biases – Why Immigration Is Not Always About Jobs

*Readings:*

- 1) Chapter 17 in Huddy, Sears, and Levy 2016
- 2) Hainmueller and Hiscox 2010: Attitudes toward Highly Skilled and Low-Skilled Immigration: Evidence from a Survey Experiment (on eLC)

*Assignment:* Take the Implicit Attitude Test for Social Attitudes at <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/> and submit your results to eLC before class on Thursday.

*In-Person Attendance:* Group III

**Week #11 (starting Tuesday, March 23)**

*Lecture Topic:* Emotions in Political Behavior – Why Anger is Profitable in Politics

*Readings:*

- 1) Chapter 6 in Huddy, Sears, and Levy 2016
- 2) Brader 2005: Striking a Responsive Chord: How Political Ads Motivate and Persuade Voters by Appealing to Emotions

*Assignment:* Find two examples (video or audio) of rhetoric by political elites that is aimed to provoke fear or anger among their audience. Examples can come from the U.S. or abroad. Have your examples ready for class.

*In-Person Attendance:* Group I

**Week #12 (Tuesday, March 30)**

*Lecture Topic:* Political Communication – How the Media Guides Our Attention

*Readings:*

- 1) Chapter 18 in Huddy, Sears, and Levy 2016
- 2) Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley 1997: Media Framing of Civil Liberties Conflict (on eLC)

*Quiz:* Available on eLC on Monday, March 29 from 10am – 10pm.

*In-Person Attendance:* Group II

**Week #13 (starting Tuesday, April 6) \*\*\*No class on Thursday, April 8\*\*\***

*Lecture Topic:* Ideology – What It Should Be, What It Is, and What It Is Not (in most cases)

*Readings:*

- 1) Chapter 19 in Huddy, Sears, and Levy 2016
- 2) Malka & Lelkes (2010): More Than Ideology: Conservative–Liberal Identity and Receptivity to Political Cues

*In-Person Attendance:* Group III (ONLY on Tuesday)

## **Week #14 (starting Tuesday, April 13)**

### **\*\*\*Experimental Design Paper Due for Peer Review on Thursday\*\*\***

*Lecture Topic:* Partisanship as an Identity – Why We Are (Socially) Polarized in the U.S.

*Readings:*

- 1) Mason 2015: The Differential Effects of Partisan Sorting on Social and Issue Polarization (on eLC)
- 2) Huddy, Mason, and Aaroe 2015: Expressive Partisanship: Campaign Involvement, Political Emotion, and Partisan Identity (on eLC)
- 3) Bankert (2020): Negative Partisanship in the 2016 U.S. Presidential Elections (on eLC)

*Quiz:* Available on eLC on Monday, April 12 from 10am – 10pm

*In-Person Attendance:* Group I

## **Week #15 (starting Tuesday, April 20)**

### **\*\*\*Peer Review Due on Thursday\*\*\***

*Lecture Topic:* Other Identities in U.S. Politics – How Our Identities Shape Our Reaction to Discrimination

*Readings:*

- 1) Barreto, M.A. 2007. Si Se Puede! Latino Candidates and the Mobilization of Latino Voters (on eLC)
- 2) Schildkraut 2005: The Rise and Fall of Political Engagement Among Latinos: The Role of Identity and Perceptions of Discrimination (on eLC)
- 3) Bankert (2020): The Effect Of Gender Discrimination on Liberal and Conservative Women (on eLC)

*In-Person Attendance:* Group II

## **Week #16 (starting Tuesday, April 27)**

### **\*\*\*Final Version of Experimental Design Due on Thursday\*\*\***

*Lecture Topic:* Are We Sufficiently Competent for Democracy?

*Readings:*

- 1) Achen and Bartels 2016: Pitfalls of Popular Control
- 2) Achen and Bartels 2016: Groups and Power – Toward a Realist Theory of Democracy

*In-Person Attendance: Group III*

**General Expectations**

What I expect from you:

- To acknowledge that this is an upper-level class. Thus, you might find some of the material challenging. That is the point. But trust me, you can do it if you put in the work.
- To check eLC (esp. announcements) on a regular basis during the week and read my emails. Even better: Enable automatic eLC updates.
- To follow professional norms when writing an email or a discussion post.
- To do the readings even when there is no quiz.
- To participate in the lectures.
- To submit assignments on time.
- To check the syllabus before you email me. (In 65% of student emails, the answer is in the syllabus.)
- To post questions about the readings and the lecture to our Q&A board on eLC.
- To email me when neither the syllabus nor the Q&A board have the answer you need.
- To work on your experimental design paper as soon as possible rather than last minute.
- To follow academic honesty policies during quizzes and exams.
- To be open-minded about the material – even if it is challenging.

What you can expect from me:

- To acknowledge that we are living through a pandemic that might come with caretaking responsibilities for some of you. If that is the case, please do not hesitate to reach out.

- To be available via email every week day (at least from 9-5pm) and Zoom (via appointment).
- To provide all additional readings via eLC.
- To communicate module goals, assignments, and deadlines on a weekly basis and to send out additional reminders.
- To be respectful when you seek help or advice.
- To grade quizzes, exams, and assignments within a week of submission.
- To provide a detailed rubric for your experimental design paper.
- To provide feedback while you work on your experimental design paper.
- To provide concept lists for each module's readings. These lists should help you identify key concepts and ideas.
- To provide lectures and other relevant course materials on time.
- To be comically excited about political psychology research.
- To be open-minded about your needs and expectations – even if it is challenging. ☺