# Psychology of Mass Political Behavior

POSC 213 – Spring 2020
Carleton College
(MW 12:30 - 1:40 pm; F 1:10-2:10 pm)
Willis 204

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## Course Description

In this class, we turn to psychology to understand how citizens make political choices and judgements. While elite political behavior, collective political behavior (mass psychology), and international relations all have ties to political psychology, this course limits itself to the exploration of the political psychology of *individual judgement and choice*. We will examine the role of cognition and emotions, values, personality, predispositions, and social identities on judgement and choice. From this approach, we will address the larger debate regarding the quality of democratic citizenship.

## Course Objectives

This course is about both learning substantive theories and developing specific skills. As a class we will select and investigate a research topic that is related to political psychology. Together we will produce knowledge, not just consume it. As we do this, you will develop additional skills and knowledge including:

- *Analytical skills*: Thinking critically about existing research is difficult, but it is important for the goal of producing good research. In this course, you should further your ability to identify broad research agendas, compare and contrast existing theories and concepts, recognize the limitations of prior research, and identify the implications of prior research for future research, and develop interesting questions and hypotheses from the patterns you see in the world around you.

- *Writing skills*: Communication is also a fundamental component of good research. Through clear and concise delivery, research can be verified, applied, and expanded upon. You should further develop professional writing skills including the ability to construct a persuasive argument using logic, relevant evidence, and good mechanics. You should learn how to present data verbally as well as in writing.

- *Research skills*: You will learn about the process required to set up and carry out a sophisticated research project that explains a political phenomena using the theories and tools of political psychology. For the class project, you will clearly identify and operationalize a set of variables, develop a theory explaining how you hypothesize these variables are related to each other, and support your expectations with systematic evidence. As a class, we will test our hypotheses and analyze the experimental data.

- *Substantive knowledge*: You will come to understand the key theories, concepts, and literatures of political psychology. You will also become familiar with the unique modes of thinking, theorizing, and inquiry within the subfield of political psychology. Finally, you will be able to identify the psychological facets of other major subfields of political science including racial politics, public opinion, voting behavior, and mass political behavior.

## Required Readings

There is no formal text for this class. All readings will be actual political psychology research and relevant excerpts from important books in the field.

## Remote Plan, Course Requirements, and Expectations

My plan for moving to online instructions relies heavily on Moodle. Any student without reliable internet access needs to email/call me directly as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements. While we will still have opportunities for synchronous discussions through Zoom (Google Hangouts will be used as backup if Zoom has issues) during the regular class period, I have planned the class using an asynchronous model, so you can complete work on your own schedule if needed. The following structure will organize what you are expected to do for each lecture:

1. Complete assigned readings.

2. View Pre-Recorded Lecture (around 15-20 minutes) on Moodle.

3. Check Class Project Forum and contribute thoughts/ideas/work as needed.

4. Participate in Lecture Discussion (*two options*:)

   - OPTION 1: Participate in Zoom Discussion 1:00 - 1:30 pm Central Time & post ONE comment/response/question to Lecture Discussion Forum on Moodle on your own schedule. We will often break out into smaller discussion groups to give everyone an opportunity to participate.
   - OPTION 2: Post THREE comments/responses and ONE question to the Lecture Discussion Forum on Moodle on your own schedule.
   - NOTE: Comments can be audio/video/written.

The majority of assigned readings draw on pertinent academic articles. I would recommend you be strategic in your reading. First, do not try to understand every minor point an author makes; instead, find (and note) the most important themes. Second, pay special attention to summary sections when they are available. The literature reviews are particularly useful in providing a more

general survey of the topic. Finally, do not try to understand the details of complicated statistics and research designs, just be sure you understand the main results and implications of the author's research. I also encourage, but do not require, you to pay attention to a quality daily newspaper (recommended papers include *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal*).

### Remote Learning Resources

- **VPN:** You will want to make sure you have the Carleton VPN (Virtual Private Network) on the main device that you will be using during the term. If the VPN is turned on, you will be able to access more academic articles when searching in Google Scholar. See Carleton ITS for more information if you need to set this up:
  https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/its/services/accounts/offcampus/
- **Minute to Learn it Videos:** https://vimeopro.com/academictechnology/minutetolearnit2019
- **Video Conferencing and Capture:** https://tinyurl.com/yx8yhaj6
- **Gould Library Guide:** Learn how to locate and cite quality political research, data, and current events at https://gouldguides.carleton.edu/politicalscience. Sean Leahy is the Political Science Department's amazing library liaison and is available to meet remotely if you would like further guidance.

## Grading

Your grade will be based on the following:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Class Participation and Attendance | | 5% |
| Reading Analysis Paper | | 15% |
| Group Presentation Assignment (Due May 31) | | 10% |
| Course Research Project | | 60% |
| Annotated Bibliography, Hypothesis, and Proposed Research Design (Due Apr. 10) | 10% | |
| Theory and Literature Review (Due May 1) | 10% | |
| Methods and Data Paper (Due May 13) | 10% | |
| Discussion and Conclusion Paper (Due May 20) | 10% | |
| Final Paper (Due May 29) | 20% | |
| Lecture and Reading Assessments | | 10% |
| **Total** | | **100%** |

### Class Participation (Attendance, Discussion and In-Class Activities) - 5%

In order for this class to be productive, regular attendance is required, and you should come to class (whether synchronous or asynchronous) ready to discuss the weaknesses, implications, and any questions you may have regarding the week's assigned readings. Those who have submitted an analysis paper for a particular lecture are expected to be very actively involved in the class discussion–providing insights and questions to help improve the quality of discussion.

I will be tracking both asynchronous (e.g. viewing pre-recorded lectures and participating in any related exercises) and synchronous (e.g., participating in group discussions during normal class time) participation. An absence will be counted as failure to view the lecture's video, failure to

check the Group Project forum on Moodle, and failure to participate in the lecture's discussion board (4 entries OR 1 brief entry + Zoom participation). I will be tracking all of your Moodle access and expect to see you regularly logging in and engaging with the class. If for some reason, you become so ill or are unable to participate in class, try to notify me as soon as possible. If you need substantial accommodations, I ask that you first contact your class student dean to ensure you get the holistic support you need.

| Number of Unexcused Absences | Penalty |
| --- | --- |
| 3 | Participation grade lowered by 1/3 (e.g., from B+ to B) |
| 4 | Participation grade lowered by full grade (e.g., from B+ to C+) |
| 5 | Participation grade lowered by two full grade (e.g., from B+ to D+) |
| 6 | Participation grade = 0 |
| 7 | Automatic F for the class |

## Reading Analysis Paper - 15%

**DUE: 10:00 p.m. the day before the class to which you have been assigned.**

At the beginning of the term, you be assigned to of the lectures. Drawing on the assigned reading and other research related to the topic, you will write a brief (1-2 pages single spaced) analysis paper due **before class that day**. These papers may summarize some key points from the reading, but they **must** ANALYZE the reading in some way. The format of the response papers is flexible. Some ideas on how to structure it include:

- Discuss how the reading applies to to current events.
- Extend the reading by developing an idea which picks up on a point made by the author.
- Suggest alternative explanations that were not addressed by authors.
- Connect this reading to concepts discussed in earlier weeks.
- Suggest political science related research inspired by the theories in these readings.
- Are there any underlying assumptions or logic in the theory that may be faulty?
- Is there anything in the research method or data used that might undermine the validity (internal or external) of the research results? (e.g., biased sampled, possible spurious relationships, omitted variables, model mispecifications, failure to consider important subgroups, etc.)
- What contributions does the selected research make to its field? What is the paper's "So What" answer? Does the paper address an empirical puzzle seen in the real world? Does the paper apply an abstract theory to real data? Does the paper defy convention wisdom? Does it bring anything new to the table? (Note: While you can add your own perspective to this question, you can also draw on the author's claims. Authors' justifications of their research question and findings is often most easily found in the introduction, literature review, discussion, or conclusion sections).
- Has there been any response or research that complements, critiques, or contradicts the paper's findings? Are there any conflicting research findings conducted by other scholars? (Note: You can often find this by using the Cited Reference Search in Web of Science or clicking on the "cited by" link in the Google Scholar search results).

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Remember to properly attribute and cite all ideas that are not your own in these papers. Provide a complete reference for any citations that are not on the list of required readings for that week.

## Grading

1. Content (60%) Does the paper provide adequate and insightful analysis of the article that pushes or expands the reading in some manner? Are ideas clearly explained? Is the summary adequate, concise, and well connected to the analytical aspect of the paper?

2. Style (30%) Is the paper generally free of spelling, typographical, and grammatical errors? Are sentences well formed and appropriately varied in length and style. Are citations correct and consistent (APA format preferred; in-text parenthetical citations)?

3. Structure (10%) Is the structure apparent and easy to follow? Is there a logical flow to the structure and adequate transitions to help connect ideas? Do paragraphs hold together?

## Group Presentation Project 10%

**DUE: MEMO Sunday May 31 10:00 p.m. - presentation on assigned day**

In groups, pick a U.S. House or Senate campaign that *lost* by a small vote margin (less than 10% of the vote) during the 2018 election. Drawing on political psychology research and particulars related to that race, what recommendations would you make for a future bid? The race background information, psychological research, and recommendations will be presented by your group to the class during a 10 minute presentation (5 minute transition and/or Q&A) during the last three class periods of the term. This presentation and Q&A can done synchronously or asynchronously–but you will need to let me know which format your group will be using. Your group will submit a one page MEMO.

## Grading

1. Case Study (15%) - Draws on a range of sources to present an interesting and relevant description of the election case study. What are some factors that lead to the campaign's loss? Which of these factors are exogenous (outside of the campaign's control) and which were endogenous (within the campaign's control)?

2. Academic sources (15%)- Main point accurately and succinctly described. Logically connected to case and recommendation.

3. Memo (15%)- Informative, visually pleasing, and easy to find main assessments and recommendations. Cite sources.

4. Presentation (25%) - Engaging, included a good hook. Each group member is involved in the presentation. Does not exceed time limit.

5. Content (30%)- Recommendation realistic, based on academic research, grounded in research of the local situation/problems.

## Research Project - 60%

**See "Class Project Details" pdf on Moodle for more information.**

Good research is produced through a long process of trial, error, and revision. To mimic this process, several smaller assignments will be completed throughout the semester. While we will be conducting the research project as a class, you will all produce paper results individually. That is, you will independently produce your own research design proposal, literature review and theory development paper, interpretation of the data analysis that I will conduct, and production of a final paper. A separate assignment sheet can be found on with more details for each of the individual components of the research project.

## Assessments - 10%

To ensure you are engaged and mastering the class content, small assessments will be embedded throughout the term. The assessments may include timed multiple choice quizzes, oral examination, and/or short take-home timed open book examinations.

# Course Policies

## Grading Policies

| | |
|----|-------------|
| A | 93 or higher |
| A- | 90-92 |
| B+ | 87-89 |
| B | 83-86 |
| B- | 80-82 |
| C+ | 77-79 |
| C | 73-76 |
| C- | 70-72 |
| D+ | 67-69 |
| D | 63-66 |
| D- | 60-62 |
| F | Below 60 |

## Late Work

Assignments are due by 10:00 p.m. (Central Time) on the deadline date indicated in the assignment. All written work should be submitted electronically on Moodle (do not submit as Google doc–you need to export and then upload an actual file). Note that Moodle time stamps identify the minute of submission, so be sure to give yourself enough time and don't try to cut things too close. Any work submitted late (even by a minute) will face an automatic deduction of 4 percentage points (roughly equivalent to 1/3 letter grade) per 24 hours past the deadline. For example, if a 89% (B+) paper was submitted 1 minute late, it is automatically deducted to 85% (B). If the the paper was submitted 24 hours late, the grade will be reduced by 6 points to 81% (B-), etc. Unless there are campus-wide issues, technological difficulties do not excuse late work. Always backup your work. I highly recommend storing your files on Dropbox. Do not expect any grace period with online submissions.

## Extensions

Being able to reliably meet deadlines is a very useful skill. Simply having a lot of work or having a schedule conflict is not grounds for an extension. Take the time at the beginning of the term and build a clear calendar of your respective deadlines and then plan ahead. If you have a conflicting event, find a way to get your assignment done in advance. Prioritize your learning. In the case of an emergency or serious conflict, I ask that you reach out to your student dean and have them contact me, and we work to find an appropriate accommodation. Because I understand the difficulties of juggling schedules and the fast pace of the Carleton term, I will allow you to have a 24-hour extension for only ONE assignment (does not apply to the reading response, final project, or assessments).

## Grade Complaints/Concerns

I will not receive grade complaints if more than one week has passed after the assignment has been returned to you. Before I review your grade you must first:

- Wait 24 hours (Technical problem dealing with errors in score calculations can be sent immediately).
- Schedule a time to meet with me to discuss your grade.
- Submit a formal appeal via email that clearly identifies content in the assignment and the reasons why you think your grade should be changed. Be clear that it is the an appeal in the subject heading. These appeals should refer to specific things in the assignment, and not to vague reasons like "I worked really hard."

The second grade, whether higher or lower, will become your grade on the assignment.

## Academic Honesty

You are expected to abide by fundamental standards of academic honesty. A discussion of plagiarism can be found at: https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity/. All work is expected to be your own. Cheating, plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without properly citing them), and all forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated and will be strictly handled according to university policy. If you are uncertain, cite your sources!

## Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Carleton College is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Services office (Henry House, 107 Union Street) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, autism spectrum disorders, chronic health, traumatic brain injury and concussions, vision, hearing, mobility, or speech impairments), please contact disability@carleton.edu or call Jan Foley, Student Accessibility Specialist (x4464) or Chris Dallager, Director of Disability Services (x5250) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

You can learn more about other academic support available at:

## Coping with COVID-19

A few reminders as we transition to online coursework:

- This is a stressful time for many so practice self care. Eat properly, get enough sleep, and take care of your physical and mental health.
- Be kind. I have not taught online classes before and am figuring this process out along with you. I promise to do my best to teach in this format, and I know you will do your best to learn.
- Let me know if you experience any technical problem or learning challenges and I will do my best to help.

Ways to reduce stress and cope with anxiety:

- Learning–connect to others through class; develop analytical skills/tools that might help you navigate complex and scary situations.
- Talk to someone.
- Write in a journal or meditate.
- Light exercise. Go for a walk, do some yoga, stretching. I personally have found jogging in place while watching an episode of the *Great British Baking Show* almost always helps!
- Take deep breaths.
- Use the "five senses" method if you are panicking (name five things you can see, hear, smell, and/or taste).

Where can I get help when I need it?

- Carleton Student Health: https://apps.carleton.edu/studenthealth/
- Office of Health Promotion: https://www.carleton.edu/health-promotion/
- Carleton Announcements: https://www.carleton.edu/disease-updates/coronavirus/

# Course Schedule

Readings should be completed BEFORE the lecture.

## WEEK 1

### Lecture 1 (Mon., April 6): Introduction and Logistics

Required Readings:

- NO READINGS REQUIRED TODAY

Recommended Readings:

- Huddy, L., Sears, D. O., and Levy, J. S. (2013). Introduction: Theoretical foundations of political psychology. In Huddy, L., Sears, D. O., and Levy, J. S., editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*. Oxford University Press, 2 edition.

### Lecture 2 (Wed., April 8): Causal Inference & Experimental Design

READINGS

- (pages 4-37) Levin, I. P. (1999). *Relating Statistics and Experimental Design: An Introduction*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Jordan, C. H. and Zanna, M. P. (1999). How to read a journal article in social psychology. In Baumeister, R. F., editor, *The Self in Social Psychology*. Psychological Press, Philadelphia.

### Lecture 3 (Fri., April 10): Causal Inference, Experimental Design, and Experimental Research and Online Labor Markets

READINGS

- (Read pages 19-38) Druckman, J. H., Green, D. P., Kuklinski, J. H., and Lupia, A., editors (2011). *Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science*. Cambridge University Press, New York.
- CHAPTER 3-"Direct and Indirect Treatments" and CHAPTER 4- "Population-Based Survey Experiments": Mutz, D. C. (2011). *Population-Based Survey Experiments*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.

## WEEK 2

### Lecture 4 (Mon., April 13): Candidate Impressions and Memory Models

READINGS

- Goggin, S. N. (2019). How quickly we selectively forget: Experimental tests of information order on memory and candidate evaluation. *Political Psychology*, 40(1):125–145.

### Lecture 5 (Wed., April 15): Political Cognition and Information Processing

READINGS

- Evans, J. S. B. T. and Stanovich, K. E. (2014). Dual-process theories of higher cognition: Advancing the debate. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 8(3):223–241.

## Lecture 6 (Fri., April 17): Political Knowledge

READINGS

- Jerit, J. and Barabas, J. (2017). Revisiting the gender gap in political knowledge. *Political Behavior*, 39(4):817–838.

## WEEK 3

## Lecture 7 (Mon., April 20): Heuristics and Cues

READINGS

- Amira, K., Cooper, C. A., Knotts, H. G., and Wofford, C. (2018). The Southern accent as a heuristic in American campaigns and elections. *American Politics Research*, 46(6):1065–1093.

## Lecture 8 (Wed., April 22): Attitude Strength & Attitude Change

READINGS

- Braddock, K. (2019). Vaccinating against hate: Using attitudinal inoculation to confer resistance to persuasion by extremist propaganda. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, pages 1–23.

## Lecture 9 (Fri., April 24): Affect, Emotions, & Ambivalence

READINGS

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

## WEEK 4

## Lecture 10 (Mon., April 27): Automaticity and Implicit Attitudes

READINGS

- Ksiazkiewicz, A., Vitriol, J., and Farhart, C. (2018). Implicit candidate-trait associations in political campaigns. *Political Psychology*, 39(1):177–195.
- Bartlett, Tom. Can we really measure implicit bias? Maybe not. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Jan. 05, 2017 At: https://goo.gl/iHuySt

## Lecture 11 (Wed., April 29): Priming

READINGS

- Carter, T. J., Ferguson, M. J., and Hassin, R. R. (2011). A single exposure to the American flag shifts support toward republicanism up to 8 months later. *Psychological Science*, 22:1011–1018

## Lecture 12 (Fri., May 1): Midterm Assessment

Midterm Review and Assessment

## WEEK 5

### Lecture 13 MIDTERM BREAK (Mon., May 1)

### Lecture 14 (Wed., May 6): DATA LAB DAY

NO READINGS

### Lecture 15 (Fri., May 8): Framing

READINGS

- Liu, B. F. and Kim, S. (2011). How organizations framed the 2009 h1n1 pandemic via social and traditional media: Implications for us health communicators. *Public Relations Review*, 37(3):233–244.

## WEEK 6

### Lecture 16 (Mon., May 11): The Self and Social Identities

READINGS

- Kalin, M. and Sambanis, N. (2018). How to think about social identity. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 21(1):239–257.
- Brewer, M. B. (1991). The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17:475–482.

### Lecture 17 (Wed., May 13): Party Identification

READINGS

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

### Lecture 18 (Fri., May 15): Values and Ideology

READINGS

- Lupton, R. N., Smallpage, S. M., and Enders, A. M. (2017). Values and political predispositions in the age of polarization: Examining the relationship between partisanship and ideology in the united states, 1988–2012. *British Journal of Political Science*, pages 1–20

## WEEK 7

### Lecture 19 (Mon., May 18): Motivated Reasoning

READINGS

- Donovan, K., Kellstedt, P. M., Key, E. M., and Lebo, M. J. (2019). Motivated reasoning, public opinion, and presidential approval. *Political Behavior*, pages 1–21.

### Lecture 20 (Wed., May 20): Misinformation

READINGS

- Cook, J. and Lewandowsky, S. (2011). *The Debunking Handbook*. Unversity of Queensland. November 5. ISBN 978-0-646-56812-6. [http://sks.to/debunk].
- Carey, J. M., Chi, V., Flynn, D., Nyhan, B., and Zeitzoff, T. (2020). The effects of corrective information about disease epidemics and outbreaks: Evidence from Zika and yellow fever in Brazil. *Science Advances*, 6(5):1–10.

### Lecture 21 (Fri., May 22): Personality and Politics

READINGS

- Carney, D. R., Jost, J. T., Gosling, S. D., and Potter, J. (2008). The secret lives of liberals and conservatives: Personality profiles, interaction styles, and the things they leave behind. *Political Psychology*, 29:807–840.

## WEEK 8

### Lecture 22 (Mon., May 25): Authoritarianism

READINGS

- Stenner, K. (2005). *The Authoritarian Dynamic*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. (Chapters 1 and 2)
- MacWilliams, M. C. (2016). Who decides when the party doesn't? Authoritarian voters and the rise of Donald Trump. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 49(4):716–721.

### Lecture 23 (Wed., May 27): Context and Social Networks

READINGS

- Carlson, T. N., McClean, C. T., and Settle, J. E. (2019). Follow your heart: Could psychophysiology be associated with political discussion network homogeneity? *Political Psychology.*

### Lecture 24 (Fri., May 29): Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination

READINGS

- Gaertner, S. L., Dovidio, J. F., Nier, J. A., Ward, C. M., and Banker, B. S. (1999). Across cultural divides: The value of superordinate identity. In *Cultural Divides: Understanding and Overcoming Group Conflict*. Russell Sage, New York.

## WEEK 9

### Lecture 25 (Mon., June 1): Group Presentations

ALL MEMOS due today before class (May 31 at 10 pm)

### Lecture 26 (Mon., June 3): Group Presentations