POLS 4490: Special Topics
Political Psychology
Fall 2017

Instructor: Dr. April A. Johnson
Class Time: Mon/Wed 2:00pm-3:15pm
Class Location: Social Sciences Building, Room 3031
Office Hours: Mon/Wed 1:00pm-2:00pm
Office Location: Social Sciences Building, Room 5071
E-Mail: ajohn551@kennesaw.edu
Phone: 470-578-4973

Course Description
Why do groups go to war? What personality traits differentiate liberals from conservatives? Does prejudice factor into vote choice? This course explores how individual-level psychological processes relate to aggregate-level political behavior. We will examine various aspects of human psychology including personality, motivation, information processing, emotions, and intergroup dynamics and consider their influence on political attitudes and decision making. The format of this class will primarily reflect that of a seminar, as we will devote a significant amount of time to discussing and understanding current political events in the context of psychological phenomena. Critical thinking and a vibrant class discussion are essential to the structure of this course (3 credit hours). Prerequisites: POLS 1101 American Government

Learning Objectives
At the end of this semester you should have a general understanding of:
1) Individual-level processes that affect political decision-making and behavior.
2) Intergroup relations and their impact on political behavior.
3) Experimental methodology as a tool for political science.

Required Texts

Evaluation
Quizzes: There will be six quizzes given during class time. For the most part quiz questions will come from previous readings/lectures, however some questions may reference the reading assigned for that day (i.e., you must read before coming to class). There will be no makeup quizzes allowed under any circumstances, though the lowest grade of the six quizzes will be dropped.

Papers: Each student will be required to write one 10 page midterm paper and one 10 page final paper in which they analyze and evaluate the concepts we’ve discussed. Instructions for this written assignment will be handed out roughly three weeks before it is due. Papers should be uploaded to the Dropbox in D2L by the deadline listed. Late papers will not be accepted for any reason.
**Class Leader:** At the beginning of the semester each student will sign up for one class period in which they will serve as Class Leader. After thoroughly reading the required material for that day, our Leader will create a 5-10 minute PowerPoint presentation which summarizes the readings, highlights key terms/theories, and poses a few critical thinking questions for your classmates. Detailed expectations and a grading rubric for this assignment will be provided during the second week of class.

**Attendance/Participation/Professionalism:** Students are given one excused absence per semester. In general, however, I expect students to come to each class, to be attentive, and to be engaged in both lectures and discussion. *Please note that showing up late and/or leaving early is disruptive to the classroom flow (meaning- don’t do it!).*

Attending class does not equate to participating in it. Participation includes asking questions about the readings (write down questions as you read!), answering questions posed by the instructor, and responding to the comments made by your classmates. I encourage all students to think critically and to share their insights and inquiries with the class.

In addition to attendance and participation, students will be assessed on the professionalism with which they conduct themselves. Professionalism means that students are focused on course material, accountable for their own learning and respectful in their communication both inside and outside of the classroom. Incivilities, such as texting, chatting, or excessive classroom disruptions, will lower your grade in this course.

**Readings:** There is no getting around it- you MUST read for this course! Because lectures follow a seminar-like format it is your thoughts, perspectives, and reactions to the readings that fuel the course. In addition to the designated textbook there will be a significant amount of required readings posted on D2L. Many of these readings come from scholarly journals. Although these articles may be dense and methodologically complex you should comprehend the overall purpose of the article, the theoretical rationale, and the general way in which researchers came to their conclusions.

**Distribution of Grades**
Quizzes 20% (4% each)
Class Leader 20%
Midterm Paper 20%
Final Paper 20%
Attendance/Participation/Professionalism 20%

**Grading Scale**
- A 90-100
- B 80-89
- C 70-79
- D 60-69
- F 59 or below

**Electronics Policy**
*Above all, please be respectful to both the instructor and your fellow classmates when using electronic devices.* While electronics are not prohibited in the classroom, students generally do better by *taking handwritten notes* and *minimizing digital distractions*. In order to maximize your in-class learning, attentiveness and participation I highly recommend unplugging. If a student’s use of electronics is consistently problematic/disruptive I will ask them to leave the classroom.
Policy for Missed or Late Work
Missing or late work/attendance will be accepted only under extenuating circumstances and with proper (medical) documentation. Students will generally not be allowed to make up missing coursework/attendance due to transportation, weather, technology, family and/or personal issues, though certain exceptions may be made on a case by case basis.

Religious Holidays
Students who wish to observe religious holidays must notify the instructor of the date(s) they will be absent within the first two weeks of class. The instructor will make every reasonable effort to honor the request and not penalize the student for missing the class. If an examination or project is due during the absence the instructor will give the student an opportunity to complete the assessment at an earlier date.

Disability Policy
Students who require accommodations (e.g., extra time on exams, designated note takers, etc.) to complete and participate in this course are welcome. However, in order for the instructor to recognize these accommodations students must officially document their disabilities with the office of Student Disability Services. Note: Students seeking accommodations should do so within the first two weeks of the semester, as testing and documentation often takes time. The instructor will not grant accommodations retroactively. Please visit the Student Disability Services website at sss.kennesaw.edu/sds.

Electronic Communication
Communication for this course will be sent to your official university email address. It is your responsibility to read the email in your official university email account and to do so in a timely manner (at least twice per week). If you choose to forward your official university email to another off-campus account, faculty are not responsible for any undeliverable messages to your alternative personal accounts.

Writing Assistance
The KSU Writing Center helps students in all disciplines improve their written work. Experienced, friendly writing assistants work with you on topic development, revision, research, documentation, grammar, and more. For more information or to make an appointment, visit www.kennesaw.edu/writingcenter, or stop by Room 242 in the English Building.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
Academic honesty and adherence to KSU’s Student Codes of Conduct is expected at all times. Any student found to have engaged in academic misconduct such as plagiarism, collusion, or submitting non-original work is subject to disciplinary sanctions from the Department of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. The term “collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with any other person in preparing work offered for academic credit. Students are advised that faculty routinely use online software (e.g., Turnitin, SafeAssign) both to prevent plagiarism and to assist in verifying when/if it has occurred.
If I suspect that a student has committed plagiarism, even if it is his or her first time, the student will receive a zero on the assignment and an incident report will be filed with the
Department of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. For more information about plagiarism and prevention go to www.plagiarism.org. To view the Kennesaw State University Student Codes of Conduct visit https://web.kennesaw.edu/scai/content/ksu-student-code-conduct.

Miscellaneous Policies
- Academic Honesty/Integrity Statement
- Confidentiality and Privacy Statement (FERPA)
- Course Accessibility Statement (ADA statement)
- Campus Carry Information
- Ethics Statement
- Sexual Harassment Statement
- University – Student Rights Statement

Disclaimer
The instructor reserves the right to amend or correct this course syllabus as necessary. If the instructor amends or corrects this syllabus students will be properly notified of any changes.

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Required Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 8/14</td>
<td>Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 8/16</td>
<td>Introduction to Political Psychology</td>
<td>Houghton Chapter 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 8/21</td>
<td>No Class- Total Solar Eclipse!</td>
<td><a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/national/eclipse/?utm_term=.2f7e9784222f">https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/national/eclipse/?utm_term=.2f7e9784222f</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 8/23</td>
<td>Nature vs. Nurture</td>
<td>Houghton Chapters 1 and 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 8/28</td>
<td>Experimental Methods</td>
<td>*Experimentation in Political Science (Druckman, Green, Kuklinski, and Lupia, 2011)</td>
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<td>*Experiments: An Introduction to Core Concepts (Druckman, Green, Kuklinski, and Lupia, 2011)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 8/30</td>
<td>Personality Theories Quiz 1</td>
<td>*The Big Five Personality Traits in the Political Arena (Gerber, Huber, Doherty, and Dowling, 2011)</td>
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<td>Take the Big 5 test: <a href="https://www.truity.com/view/tests/big-five-personality">https://www.truity.com/view/tests/big-five-personality</a></td>
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<td>Mon 9/4</td>
<td>Labor Day Holiday No Class</td>
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<td>Wed 9/6</td>
<td>Political Leadership</td>
<td>Houghton Chapter 7</td>
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<td>*The Leadership Style of U.S. President Donald J. Trump (Immelman, 2017)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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Take the RWA test: [http://personality-testing.info/tests/RWAS/](http://personality-testing.info/tests/RWAS/) |
| Wed 9/13   | Worldviews and Belief Systems             | *The Worldview Problem for American Politics (Lakoff, 2002)  
*Does the American Electorate Have Daddy Issues? (Zak, 2016) |
| Mon 9/18   | Moral Foundations                         | *The Moral Matrix That Influences the Way People Vote (Gjersoe 2016)  
Watch Jonathan Haidt’s The Moral Roots of Liberals and Conservatives: [https://www.ted.com/talks/jonathan_haidt_on_the_moral_mind](https://www.ted.com/talks/jonathan_haidt_on_the_moral_mind) |
| Wed 9/20   | Evolutionary Approaches Quiz 2            | Houghton Chapter 11  
*Your Genes Tell You How to Vote (Mooney 2013)  
Video: How Are Conservative And Liberal Brains Different? [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4nMzD1OmDE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4nMzD1OmDE) |
| Mon 9/25   | Social Conformity                         | Houghton Chapters 4 and 5  
*Voter Shaming: What if the Neighbors Knew You Didn’t Vote? (Masumoto, 2016) |
| Wed 9/27   | Groupthink                                | Houghton Chapter 6  
*Media Bubbles, Groupthink, and Intolerance (Gregory 2017) |
| Mon 10/2   | Cognitive Structure and Function          | *The Relationship Between Social-Cultural Attitudes and Behavioral Measures of Cognitive Style (Van Hiel, Onraet, and De Pauw, 2010)  
*Study: Liberals, Conservatives See Mixed-Race People Differently (Jacobs 2013) |
| Wed 10/4   | Information Processing Quiz 3             | Houghton Chapter 9  
*Autopilot vs. Intentional System: The Rider and the Elephant (Tsipursky 2017) |
| Mon 10/9   | Behavioral Economics                      | *An Introduction to Behavioral Economics (Samson 2014)  
Video: Are We in Control of Our Own Decisions? [https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_ariely_asks_are_we_in_control_of_our_own_decisions#t-1000709](https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_ariely_asks_are_we_in_control_of_our_own_decisions#t-1000709) |
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed 10/11</td>
<td>No Class</td>
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<td>Mon 10/16</td>
<td>Identity Politics</td>
<td>*Social Identity Theory (McLeod, 2008)</td>
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<td>*Political Partisanship as a Social Identity (Huddy and Bankert, 2017)</td>
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<td>Wed 10/18</td>
<td>Us vs. Them</td>
<td>Houghton Chapter 14</td>
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<td>*See No Spanish: Language, Local Context, and Attitudes Toward Immigration (Hopkins, Tran, and Williamson, 2014)</td>
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<td>Mon 10/23</td>
<td>Racial Prejudice</td>
<td>Houghton Chapter 14</td>
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<td>*‘Racism’ (Still) Didn’t Elect Trump (Tuttle, 2017)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 10/25</td>
<td>The Psychology of Terrorism Quiz 4</td>
<td>Houghton Chapter 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 10/30</td>
<td>Emotions in Politics</td>
<td>Houghton Chapter 10</td>
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<td>*The Use and Consequences of Emotions in Politics (Searles and Ridout 2017)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 11/1</td>
<td>Motivated Reasoning</td>
<td>*Motivated Reasoning and Public Opinion (Strickland, Taber, and Lodge, 2011)</td>
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<td>*What is Motivated Reasoning? How Does It Work? (Mooney, 2011)</td>
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<td>Mon 11/6</td>
<td>Rational or Rationalizing?</td>
<td>*The Science of Why We Don’t Believe Science (Mooney 2011)</td>
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<td>*Why Fact-Checking Donald Trump Backfires (Kopplin, 2015)</td>
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<td>Wed 11/8</td>
<td>Communication and Media Quiz 5</td>
<td>Houghton Chapter 13</td>
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<td>Video: Effects of Mass Media on Knowledge and Beliefs</td>
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<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTS6nbGDbA8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTS6nbGDbA8</a></td>
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<td>Mon 11/13</td>
<td>Explorations in Voting Behavior</td>
<td>Houghton Chapter 12</td>
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<td>*Why Do People Vote? A Psychological Analysis of the Causes of Voter Turnout (Harder and Krosnick, 2008)</td>
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<td>Wed 11/15</td>
<td>Contextual Effects</td>
<td>*Contextual Priming: Where People Vote Affects How They Vote (Berger, Meredith, and Wheeler, 2008)</td>
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<td>*How Your Address Changes Your Politics (Mcraney, 2015)</td>
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| Mon 11/20 | Thanksgiving Holiday  
No Class | --- |
| Wed 11/22 | Thanksgiving Holiday  
No Class | --- |
| Mon 11/27 | Implicit Attitudes | *Implicit Attitude (Nosek and Banaji, 2009)  
*Are ‘Implicit’ Attitudes Unconscious? (Gawronski, Hofmann, and Wilbur, 2006)  
Take an implicit attitude test: [https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html) |
| Wed 11/29 | Automaticity and Bias | *How Unconscious Sexism Could Help Explain Trump’s Win (Bialik, 2017)  
*Are Police Shootings Racially Biased? (Cummins, 2016) |
| Mon 12/4 | Evaluating Democratic Competence  
Quiz 6 | *Democratic Ideals and Realities (Achen and Bartels, 2016) |

**Final Paper Due**  
Monday December 11, 2017  
By 11:59pm

*Posted in D2L  
To view academic deadlines, including add/drop and withdrawal dates, please visit [http://registrar.kennesaw.edu/](http://registrar.kennesaw.edu/)