Political Psychology

This goal of this course is for students to be able to effectively use psychological theory and research in the study of political phenomena and to design original research to successfully test psychological theories of politics.

Professor Ryan D. Enos
office: CGIS K406
office hours: Thursday 3:40–5:30PM and by appointment
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class meeting:
Tuesdays, 2-4PM, CGIS K109

1 Topics by Date

1. Introduction to class
   • January 27: canceled
2. Predispositions
   • February 3: Ideology (and introduction to course)
   • February 10: Genetic and other biological roots
   • February 17: Personality
   • February 24: Socialization
3. Political Cognition
   • March 3: Decision-Making
   • March 10: Emotion
   • March 24: Moral Cognition
4. March 31: Identity
5. April 7: International Relations (guest seminar leader)
6. Stimuli
   • April 14: Interpersonal
   • April 21: Mass mediated
7. April 28: Wrap-up and presentations

2 Assignments

2.1 participation

All students are expected to attend every class and participate by talking during every class. You are also, occasionally, expected to make contributions to the wiki. The latter
requirement will be easy if you simply remain an active reader of the wiki, which will enrich your experience with the course.

2.2 research journal

Each week, reflect in writing on how the weekly topic is applicable to your substantive interests. Propose a related research design. Do this before class. Update it after class with any additional insight.

2.3 primary course wiki contribution

Because this is a research course and your instructor does not have a monopoly on knowledge, we will maintain a course wiki that is intended to supplement our weekly meetings. This wiki will be a repository for resources related to the course. Resources include, but are not limited to, insights, relevant articles not included in the syllabus, research by other scholars, and data sources. Each student will be tasked with being the primary contributor to this wiki during an assigned week. Contributions should be substantial, useful, and should teach us things we might not have known otherwise.

Included in this contribution, you should add clarity and background to any social and cognitive psychology theories that are discussed in, and seem central to, the reading. As we go through readings and in class discussions, we will come across theories or research paradigms from cognitive or social psychology in service to a particular political psychology study. When you are making your wiki contribution, if the theories seem important, write up a brief summary of the theory or paradigm and cite major literature around the topic.

You will be expected to briefly and unceremoniously present your wiki contributions to the class during the week of your assignment.

After the class meeting, you should update the wiki with any other additionally useful material that came to light during the discussion.

We will assign weeks as enrollment is set.

2.4 original research

Your final project in this course is to pilot an original research project. This project should be testing a political psychology theory—either an existing theory or your own. This means gathering enough data to make initial inferences about the validity of the design. Data can be gathered in anyway you see fit.

A note on this: often in graduate school you are asked to write a research proposal. This is probably a useful exercise, but I have found that critical thinking about theory and design usually only occurs when you actually have to implement research.

When you have designed and completed your research, turn in a paper (probably about 5–10 pages) describing the motivation, design, results, and any changes that would be made for a full-scale implementation.

You can collaborate on this, but each student must turn in his or her own paper.

This is due May 14, 2015.
3 Grades

Grades for this class will be based on participation, research journal, primary wiki contribution, and the final project. All are weighted equally toward the final grade.

4 Collaboration

Collaboration is allowed in this class. You should do your own research journal, because otherwise that’d be pretty pointless.

5 Books

Obtain:


6 Readings by Date

Readings should be completed by the dates below. “Handbook” refers to *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*. Readings not in the books listed above are available on the course website. Those under “related readings” are optional.

- February 3:
  Handbook, chapter 19


Related Readings:


**February 10:**

Handbook, chapters 7 and 8


Related Readings:


Evan Charney and William English. Genopolitics and the science of


- February 17:
  Handbook, chapter 2
  – read chapters 1–4 and 9–11, skim chapters 5–8

- February 24:
  Handbook, chapter 3

Related Readings:

- March 3:
  Handbook, chapters 5 and 17
  – chapters 1–7

Related Readings:

- March 10:
  - Handbook, chapter 6


- Related Readings:


- **March 24:**
  - chapters 1–8

Related Readings:

- **March 31:**
  - Handbook, chapters 23 and 25
  - chapter 2
  - read chapters 1–3, skim chapters 4–10

Related Readings:

- **April 7:**
  - TBA

- **April 14:**
  - Handbook, chapter 21


**April 21:**
Handbook, chapter 18


– chapters 3–4


**Related Readings:**


**April 28:**
Ryan reserves the right to add readings