

# POLI 4000: Political Psychology

POLI 4000 Political Psychology  
Class Time: T R 130-250 pm  
Class Location: 116 Stubbs Hall  
Instructor: Dr. Bauer

Office: Stubbs Hall 208B  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 915-1015 am  
Wednesdays 100-200 pm, or by appointment  
Contact: nbauer4@lsu.edu

## Course Description:

The goal of political science is to explain why citizens engage in certain types of political behavior, and how citizens think about politics. Psychology offers a way to explain *how* and *why* individuals behave the way they do. We will consider the role of personality, cognition, emotions, stereotypes, and group dynamics in politics, campaigns, and voting. Throughout the semester, we will learn about key concepts from psychology and we will apply these concepts to politics. We will also investigate how experimental methods can provide insight into what motivations political attitudes and behaviors. **As this is an upper level course, there will be an extensive amount of writing in this class.**

## Required Textbooks:

Cottam, Martha L., Beth Dietz-Uhler, Elena Masters, & Thomas Preston. 2016. Introduction to Political Psychology. 3rd Edition. Great Britain: Psychology Press.

## Course Objectives:

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define core psychological concepts and theories, and explain how they apply to politics.
- Synthesize the research questions, hypotheses, methods used, results, and findings from peer-reviewed academic research.
- Explain the limits of rational choice in explaining political behaviors, opinions and attitude formation.
- Develop an original research question and hypotheses that uses psychology to explain political behaviors, opinions and attitude formation.
- Design an original experiment that measures the psychological motivations behind a political behavior, attitude, or opinion.
- Develop strong analytical writing skills including the ability to develop coherent, logical, and carefully edited prose.

## Course Policies:

- Participation grades are based on not only regular attendance, but on participation in class discussions. There will be many opportunities for us to discuss the core themes of this class, and I do expect all students to contribute.
- Class sessions will be a combination of lectures, discussions, and other in-class activities. Regular attendance and keeping up with the course readings are necessary to do well in this class. Moreover, the class is structured to encourage discussion of key concepts, and these discussions are essential to student learning.
- Lectures will not repeat the readings. The lectures will expand on the concepts introduced in the readings, and will often introduce new concepts that may not be included in the readings.
- If you do need to miss class be sure to check with a classmate about getting the notes.
- When I use PowerPoint in class, I will post those slides to the course website **after** class. Note that in order to do well on the exams and assignments you should plan to take notes in addition to these slides.
- The larger academic setting and this course, in particular, requires an open, inclusive, and engaging learning environment in which students feel comfortable expressing their own opinions as well as being exposed to opinions, cultures, viewpoints, and personal experiences different from their own. With this in mind, students are expected to engage one another with respect, courtesy, and sensitivity both inside and outside of this classroom.
- Please be sure to silence your cell phone during class. You are welcome to use a laptop for taking notes or accessing the online readings. If it is clear you are using the laptop for another purpose, I will ask you to put it away. Do note that students who do best in my classes are those who DO NOT use laptops as they are unnecessarily distracting.
- I do not discuss grades with students over email. If you would like to discuss a grade you must set up a time to do so in person. This policy applies to mid-semester grade calculations. You will all receive mid-term grades in accordance with LSU policy. However, if you want to know your grade at another point in the semester it is up to you to do that calculation. I will return all assignments in a timely manner, and this syllabus has details about the grade distribution.
- Late assignments will receive a 10% penalty for every hour they are late. Five minutes late means 10% deduction. One hour late means a 10% deduction. Five hours late means a 50% deduction. After five hours late, your assignment will receive a failing grade.
- If you require an accommodation, I am happy to work with you to make the appropriate arrangements; however, you do need to let me know right away.

- Any case of academic misconduct, including plagiarism or cheating, will be considered a violation of the University’s honor code and these violations will be referred to the appropriate office at LSU.

## A Note on Communication

Outside of my office hours, email is almost always the best way to get in touch with me. To ensure a timely response to your email I ask that students follow professional email etiquette. Each email subject line should include which course you are enrolled in and a brief description of the content of the email. For example, you might have a question about an upcoming due date so the subject should read “POLI 4000 Assignment Due Date.” You should always start your email with a greeting. For example, Dear Professor Bauer or Hello Dr. Bauer, are completely appropriate email greetings. Be sure to include some kind of sign off that identifies who you are. I may not always be able to tell who the email is from, especially if you send from a non-university account. These may seem a bit nit picky, but emails without a subject line often get automatically sorted into a Spam or Junk folder before I ever see them. **I will not respond to emails that do not follow these basic guidelines.**

As long as these rules are followed, I’ll generally respond to emails within 1 business day. If you send me an email on Friday I might not get to it until Monday. If you do not hear from me within 2 business days, you should follow-up with a second email or say something to me before class or during office hours.

## Grading:

Below is the breakdown for how I will calculate your grades.

Do note that the research design paper, mid-term, and final exams all involve extensive amounts of writing, and these assignments will be graded, in part, on the clarity of your writing. This means you must be able to write a well-reasoned paper with structured arguments, and you must adhere to the proper rules of style and grammar.

Participation: 25%

Research Design Final Paper: 25%

Mid-Term Exam: 25%

Final Exam: 25%

100-97 = A	87-89 = B+	79-77 = C+	69-67 = D+	59 or below = F
96-93 = A	86-83 = B	76-73 = C	66-63 = D	
92-90 = A-	82-80 = B-	72-70 = C-	62-60 = D-	

A - Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.

B - Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.

C - Achievement that meets course requirements in every respect.

D - Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.

F - Reflects failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the professor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

## Key Dates

August 30, 2018: Final Paper Topic approval deadline

September 11, 2018: Draft Literature Review due

October 2, 2018: Mid-term Due

October 25, 2018: Draft Theory Section due

December 2, 2018: Final Paper Due

December 6, 2018: Final Exam Due

## Assignments

**Participation:** Participation grades are based on not only regular attendance, but on participation in class discussions. There will be many opportunities for us to discuss the core themes of this class, and I do expect all students to contribute. The larger academic setting and this course, in particular, requires an open, inclusive, and engaging learning environment in which students feel comfortable expressing their own opinions as well as being exposed to opinions, cultures, viewpoints, and personal experiences different from their own. With this in mind, students are expected to engage one another with respect, courtesy, and sensitivity both inside and outside of this classroom.

**Research Design Paper:** Over the course of the semester you will design an experiment that applies a psychological theory to studying a political phenomenon, this can be an attitude, a behavior, or an aspect of public opinion. You will work on this project over the course of the semester in stages. On Moodle, there are more details about the paper. Writing a paper in stages may be a little different for some of you, but this method allows you to receive continuous feedback all semester long on your work, and it allows you to delve more deeply into your topic. You will receive feedback on the study proposal, literature review, and theoretical frameworks within 1 week of their due date, and be provided with feedback for how to strengthen your writing and arguments for the final draft. **Please note that this paper involves ONLY a research design. Due to limitations, we will not be able to carry out the experiments this semester. However, designing an experiment is much more difficult than actually conducting an experiment.**

**Study Proposal:** Turn in a 1 paragraph proposal and meet with the professor to discuss your topic. Identify what aspect of political psychology you want to study, why this is an interesting topic to study, and start to develop some hypotheses about what you expect to

find. Alternatively, you are welcome to ask other questions about political attitudes, voting behaviors, etc. Remember with your idea to think about what aspect of politics you want to explain with political psychology. This is worth 5% of the total paper grade and graded on a pass or fail basis. **Keep in mind that while we will not conduct these studies this semester the projects should still be doable, and you may wish to carry out this research in your future studies. Also, note that all students must turn in a 1-paragraph description of your project and schedule a meeting with Dr. Bauer to have your final topic approved. Your paper topic must be approved by August 30, 2018.**

**Draft Literature Review:** Part of the final research paper will include a review of literature previous conducted on your topic. This literature review should identify what the conventional wisdom is the research is on your topic, whether there are any disagreements among scholars, and how your paper will contribute to this research. This first draft of the literature review does not have to mention every single study every conducted on a topic, but should identify the most important. Be sure that you do not simply summarize existing work, but analyze its strengths and weaknesses. If you are unsure about where/how to look for research then make an appointment with me or come to my office hours and I can provide some assistance. These initial drafts should be 2-3 pages in length. This is worth 5% of the total paper grade and graded on a pass or fail basis. **Your first draft must be turned in by September 11, 2018**

**Draft Theoretical Framework & Hypotheses:** In this paper, you are applying a psychological theory to a political behavior. The theory section should identify the psychological theory (or theories) you are studying and why this theory is the best theory for studying the phenomenon you chose. You will use this theory to develop a set of testable research hypotheses. The theory should explain how and why you predict these effects. The Moodle site, under the Resources folder, includes information about how to find academic peer-reviewed research. This is worth 5% of the total paper grade and graded on a pass or fail basis. **Your first draft must be turned in by October 25, 2018.**

**Final Paper:** During the final week of class, you will turn in your final paper. The course website includes more details about what you should include in your final papers. Briefly, each paper should include an introduction, a statement about why your topic is important, the literature review, your hypotheses, how you tested these hypotheses, and the plan for how you will carry out the experiment including all the materials you will use in the experiment. The final product is worth 85% of the total final paper grade. **Your final paper must be turned in by December 2, 2018 by 5 p.m..**

I encourage you all to use the writing resources at LSU as you work on this paper. You can make appointments with writing coaches who will help you with your writing organization and writing styles. The writing center link is: <http://www.lsu.edu/academicaffairs/exc/writing.php>.

## Extra Credit

I will offer extra credit to students who participate in the Media Effects Lab experimental subject pool. The extra credit will count toward your final exam grade. I will post more details about this extra credit opportunity on Moodle.

From time to time, I will offer extra credit for attending and writing about various events on campus. These opportunities will be discussed in class as they come up, but you must be physically present in class to take advantage of these opportunities.

## Tentative Course Outline:

The weekly coverage might change as it depends on the progress of the class. However, you must keep up with the reading assignments. You should plan to do the scheduled readings *before* coming to class on the day they are assigned. Readings from outside the class textbook are available on the course website.

## The Basics of Political Psychology

August 21, 2018: Course Introduction

- Class Syllabus
- Stromberg, Joseph. 2014. “Why you should take notes by hand and not on a laptop.” Vox.com. (on course website)
- Kornell, Nate. 2013. “Close That Laptop in Class.” *Psychology Today*. (on course website)

August 23, 2018: What is Political Psychology

- Cottam Chapter 1

## Personality

August 28, 2018: Researching Political Psychology

- McDermott, Rose. 2002. “Experimental Methodology in Political Science.” *Annual Review of Political Science* (on course website)
- Druckman, James N. and Kam, Cindy D. 2011. “Students as Experimental Participants: A Defense of the ‘Narrow Data Base’.” in The Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science. (on course website)
- Dickson, Eric S. 2011. “Economics vs. Psychology Experiments: Stylization, Incentives, and Deception.” in The Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science. (on course website)

August 30, 2018: Personality & Politics

- Cottam Chapter 2
- **Topic approved for final paper**

September 4, 2018: Non-Elites vs.Elite

- Mondak, Jeffrey, et al. 2010. “Personality and Civic Engagement: An Integrative Framework for the Study of Trait Effects on Political Behavior.” *American Political Science Review* 104: 85-110. (on course website)
- Cottam, Chapter 5

September 6, 2018: Literature Review Workshop

- Bagglione, Lisa. Chapter 4. (on course website)

September 11, 2018: **No class, literature review drafts by 5 p.m. via Moodle**

## Cognition

September 13, 2018: Cognition

- Cottam Chapter 3
- Lodge, Milton S. and Charles Taber. 2000. The Rationalizing Voter, Chapter 6. (on course website)

September 18, 2018: Heuristics

- Lau, Richard R. and David P. Redlawsk. 2001. “Advantages and Disadvantages of Cognitive Heuristics in Political Decision Making” *American Journal of Political Science*, 45(October): 951 - 971.

September 20, 2018: Motivated Reasoning

- Kunda, Ziva. 1990. The case for motivated reasoning. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108(3), 480-498. (on course website)
- Lodge, Milton S. and Charles Taber. 2000. The Rationalizing Voter, Chapter 7. (on course website)

September 25, 2018: Sophistication

- Fiske, Susan and Kinder, Don. 1983. “The Novice and the Expert: Knowledge-Based Strategies in Political Cognition.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (on course website)

September 27, 2018: Emotions

- George E. Marcus, W. Russell Neuman, Michael MacKuen, and Ann N. Crigler. “Theorizing Affect’s Effect.” in The Affect Effect Chapter 1 (on course website)
- Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman, and Erin Cassesse. 2007. “On the Distinct Political Effects of Anxiety and Anger.” in The Affect Effect edited by George E. Marcus, W. Russell Neuman, Michael MacKuen, and Ann N. Crigler. (on course website)

October 2, 2018: **No class, take home mid-term due by 5 p.m. via Moodle**

October 4, 2018: **No Class, Happy Fall Break!**

## Group Dynamics

October 9, 2018: Identity Formation & Political Socialization:

- Cottam Ch. 3

October 11, 2018: Group Dynamics

- Cottam Chapter 4

October 16, 2018: Stereotypes & Prejudice: Race

- Cottam Chapter 8
- Winter, Nicholas J. G. Chapter 3
- Mendelberg, Tali. The Race Card, Chapter 6. (on course website)

October 18, 2018: Stereotypes & Prejudice: Gender

- Huddy, Leonie and Nayda Terkildsen. 1993. "Gender Stereotypes and the Perception of Male and Female Candidates." *American Journal of Political Science*
- Bauer, Nichole M. 2015. "Emotional, Sensitive, and Unfit for Office: Stereotype Activation and Support for Female Candidates." *Political Psychology*. (on course website)

October 23, 2018: Theory & Hypotheses Workshop

- Bagglione, Lisa. Chapter 5. (on course website)

October 25, 2018: **No Class, Take home mid-term, due by 5 p.m. via Moodle**

## Identity

October 30, 2018: Race & Gender Identities

- Piston, Spencer. 2014. "Lighter-Skinned Minorities are More Likely to Support Republicans." *Washington Post, Monkey Cage Blog Post*. (on course website)
- Dolan, Kathleen. 2008. "Is There a "Gender Affinity Effect" in American Politics? Information, Affect, and Candidate Sex in U.S House Elections." *Political Research Quarterly* (on course website)

November 1, 2018: Partisanship as Identity

- Klar, Samara. 2014. "Partisanship in a Social Setting" *American Journal of Political Science* (on course website)

## Political Behavior & Political Institutions

November 6, 2018: Framing

- Cottam Chapter 7
- Nelson, Thomas E, Rosalee A. Clawson and Zoe M. Oxley. 1997. "Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflict and Its Effect on Tolerance." *American Political Science Review*. (on course website)
- Druckman, James N. 2001 "On The Limits Of Framing Effects: Who Can Frame?" *The Journal of Politics* 63: 1041-1066. (on course website)

November 8, 2018: Priming

- Brader, Ted. 2005. "Striking a Responsive Chord: Striking a Responsive Chord: How Political Ads Motivate and Persuade Voters by Appealing to Emotions." *American Journal of Political Science* (on course website)

November 13, 2018: Campaign Effects

- Cottam Chapter 6
- Druckman, James N. 2004. "Priming the Vote: Campaign Effects in a U.S. Senate Election." *Political Psychology* (on course website)

November 15, 2018: no class work on final papers

November 20, 2018: no class work on final papers

November 27, 2018: no class work on final papers

November 28, 2018: **Final papers due November 28 by 5 pm via Moodle**

November 29, 2018: no class work on final exam

**Final Exam due December 5 by 5 pm via Moodle**