1 Course Description

This course is the undergraduate Introduction to Political Psychology. No background in political science or psychology is required, though those that do have experience in these areas are, of course, welcome and appreciated. The goal of the course is to introduce you to some of the major topics and questions in Political Psychology, such as:

- Where do our political beliefs come from?
- How do we decide who to vote for?
- How do emotions affect us? Should emotions affect our beliefs and actions?
- Are some types of personalities better suited to be President?
- Is it possible to ‘psychologically profile’ dictators?
- How do our leaders decide whether to go to war?

Along the way, as we delve into these and other topics, we will discuss methodology, and learn about how different approaches can yield different (and sometimes conflicting) answers. The course will consist of a combination of lectures, presentations by students and discussions.

2 Guidelines

For this specific class:

- If you have a question, or want to know if a reading is available, please check my website for any announcements and download the latest copy of the syllabus before emailing.

- If you ever have any questions, or are confused about something, please do not hesitate to come to office hours and meet with me. Please also consider making an appointment just to introduce yourself and tell me how the course is going. Office hours are Thursday between 1-3pm, and you can make an appointment at the following website: [https://calendar.wisc.edu/scheduling-assistant/public/profiles/jSWjsloX.html](https://calendar.wisc.edu/scheduling-assistant/public/profiles/jSWjsloX.html) If you are unavailable at that time due to a conflict with another class, you can email me to schedule an appointment.
• You are responsible for the readings listed under each class.

• If you are not presenting that class, then you are not responsible for reading the Presentation Readings, unless specifically noted (you will get an email reminder in those cases).

• In terms of exams, you are responsible for all of the all of the readings and anything discussed in class. Thus, you may be asked about something in the Presentation Reading if it was discussed in class.

• If you have a disability or circumstance that could affect your performance, please contact me early in the semester so that we can consider accommodations. The McBurney Center for Disability Services can provide official documentation of disabilities.

• Obviously, academic misconduct is not tolerated. Please make sure you are familiar with the policies outlined by the Dean of Students.

Some basic guidelines for this class (these probably apply to any class you take):

• Do the readings in preparation for each class. If you miss one, don’t ignore it and move on, but make an effort to catch up.

• Come to class on time.

• It’s fine to use a computer to take notes, but please don’t bring your computer so you can write emails and read the news during class (it’s much more obvious than you realize).

• There are legitimate reasons to have to miss class, but if you must, please email me ahead of time to let me know.

• If you have any questions about anything related to the course, email me and I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours.

• One exception: I will not respond to emails sent the night before an assignment is due or before a midterm or final exam.

3 Assignments

1. Keep up with the readings and be prepared to discuss them in class.

2. Sign up for one presentation slot. For that slot, you will be responsible for:

   (a) carefully reading the designated Presentation Reading

   (b) presenting it to the class (in about 5-6 minutes). Feel free to use slides if you’d like, though if you’d like to do that, please come to class a few minutes early to set those up.

   (c) helping to lead a short discussion on your topic
(d) On the day of your presentation, turning in a short, **2-page response paper** on the reading you are presenting. Your paper should briefly summarize the work in question, and then critique it (e.g. what would you have done differently if you wrote that paper? What questions did it raise that were particularly interesting? etc.). The paper should be turned in as a (stapled) hard-copy to me during class on the day you present. If you are presenting as part of a team of two people, you are each responsible for your own, individual (and not identical) response papers.

3. Complete and turn in the two assignments during the semester. They are both (short!) online surveys that you will take prior to the class where we discuss them.

4  **Grading**

Your final grade will be composed of:

- **35%** - Class Participation (includes presentation + response paper)
- **25%** - In-class Midterm
- **40%** - Final Exam

5  **Readings Used in the Course**

**Journal articles and edited book chapters** - These are generally available through the UW Library website. If they are not accessible online, then there will be a clickable link on the syllabus.

**Textbooks** - You may wish to purchase these, but readings will (unless noted) be available online.

1. *Introduction to Political Psychology* (2nd ed.), Martha L. Cottam, Beth Dietz-Uhler, Elena Mastors & Thomas Preston (Taylor & Francis, 2010).
   ⇒ Abbreviation on list of reading(s): **ITPP**.

   ⇒ Abbreviation on list of reading(s): **PP**.

   ⇒ Abbreviation on list of reading(s): **OHPP**.
Schedule

1. Introduction [September 3]
   - NO READINGS

2. What is Political Psychology? [September 5]
   - ITPP Chapter 1: Political Psychology: Introduction and Overview, pp. 1-12 [link]

3. How do you measure beliefs and perceptions? (I)? [September 10]
   - Experimental Methodology in Political Science (2002), Rose McDermott, Political Analysis 10: 325-342

Presentation reading(s):

(a) How Large and Long-lasting Are the Persuasive Effects of Televised Campaign Ads? Results from a Randomized Field Experiment (2011), Alan S. Gerber, James P. Gimpel, Donald P. Green & Daron R. Shaw, American Political Science Review 105/1: 135-150

(b) Testosterone and Aggression in a Simulated Crisis Game (2007), Rose McDermott, Dominic Johnson, Jonathan Cowden & Stephen Rosen, ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 614/1: 15-33

4. How do you measure beliefs and perceptions (II)? [September 12]
Presentation reading(s):

(a) When Public Statements Reveal Private Beliefs: Assessing Operational Codes at a Distance (2009), Jonathan Renshon, Political Psychology 30/4: 649-661

5. Where do Political Preferences Come from? [September 17]

- OHPP: Childhood and Adult Political Development, David O. Sears & Sheri Levy, pp. 60-109 [link]

Presentation reading(s):


- Rationality as Process and as Product of Thought (1978), Herbert A. Simon, American Economic Review 68/2: 1-16
- Psychology and Rational Actor Theory (1995), Kristen Renwick Monroe, Political Psychology 16/1: 1-21

Presentation reading(s):

(a) PP: Contrasting Rational and Psychological Analysis of Political Choice, George A. Quattrone & Amos Tversky, pp. 244-258 [link]


- ITPP (Part of) Chapter 3: Cognition, Identity, Emotions and Attitudes, pp. 39-43 [link]

**Presentation reading(s):**


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8. Priming and Framing [September 26]


**Presentation reading(s):**


(b) PP: Altering the Foundations of Support for the President Through Priming, John A. Krosnick & Donald R. Kinder, pp. 150-162 [link]

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9. Emotions (I): Individual Level/Background [October 1]

• Affect and Emotion (2009), in *Political Psychology: Situations, Individuals and Cases*, David Patrick Houghton (Routledge), pp. 132-142 [link]


**Presentation reading(s):**


(b) Emotion Priming and Attributions for Terrorism: Americans’ Reactions in a National Field Experiment (2006), Deborah A. Small, Jennifer S. Lerner & Baruch Fischoff, *Political Psychology* 27/2: 289-298
10. Emotions (II): Implications for the Political System [October 3]

- It’s My Campaign and I’ll Cry if I Want To: How and When Campaigns Use Emotional Appeals (2011), Travis N. Ridout & Kathleen Searles, Political Psychology 32/3: 439-458

Presentation reading(s):

(b) Affect and Cognition in Party Identification (2005), Barry C. Burden & Casey A. Klofstad, Political Psychology 26/6: 869-886

11. Personality and Politics (I): Background and Big 5 [October 8]

⇒ ASSIGNMENT 1: Take online “Big 5” Personality Test. Available at: http://www.personalitytest.org.uk/

- ITPP Chapter 2: Personality and Politics, pp. 13-36 [link]

Presentation reading(s):


**Presentation reading(s):**


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- **PP**: The Authoritarian Personality and the Organization of Attitudes, Roger Brown, pp. 39-68 [link]
- **PP**: The Other “Authoritarian Personality,” Bob Altemeyer, pp. 85-107 [link]
- **PP**: Social Dominance Theory: A New Synthesis, Jim Sidanius and Felicia Pratto, pp. 315-332 [link]

**Presentation reading(s):**


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14. FILM [October 17]

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15. Personality and Politics (IV): Psychological Profiling of Leaders [October 22]

- Saddam Hussein: Personality Traits and Motivational Biases, Walter Weintraub and David Winter, pp. 367-374 [link]
- Saddam Hussein: Beliefs and Integrative Complexity, Stephen G. Walker, Mark Schafer, Michael D. Young & Peter Suedfeld, pp. 387-398 [link]

**Presentation reading(s):**

17. IN-CLASS MIDTERM [October 29]

18. Ideology, Belief Systems and ‘Implicit’ Attitudes [October 31]

⇒ ASSIGNMENT: Take online Implicit Association Test for Gender-Career. Available at:
   https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html

- PP: Does Ideology Exist?, pp. 177-180
- PP: The Nature of Beliefs Systems in Mass Publics, Philip E. Converse, pp. 181-199

*Presentation reading(s)*:

(a) PP: Cognitive Style and Political Belief Systems in the British House of Commons, Philip E. Tetlock, pp. 230-240


19. Values and Trade-offs [November 5]


*Presentation reading(s):*


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*Presentation reading(s):*

(a) Understanding Party Identification: A Social Identity Approach (1999), Steven Greene, *Political Psychology*, 20/2: 393-403

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- **ITPP** Chapter 4: The Political Psychology of Groups, pp. 65-99 [link]

*Presentation reading(s):*


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22. Group Psychology (III): Polarization and Groupthink [November 14]
23. Elite Decision-Making & Prospect Theory [November 19]

- ITPP Chapter 5: The Study of Political Leaders, pp. 101-130 [link]

*Presentation reading(s):*


24. Psychology and International Relations (I): Background [November 21]

- ITPP Chapter 12: The Political Psychology of International Security and Conflict, pp. 293-316 [link]
- OHPP: Political Psychology and Foreign Policy, Jack S. Levy, 253-284 [link]

*Presentation reading(s):*


25. Psychology and International Relations (II): Terrorism [November 26]
Presentation reading(s):
(a) The Mind of the Terrorist: A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches (2005), Jeff Victoroff, Journal of Conflict Resolution 49/1: 3-42

26. Psychology and International Relations (III): Defining the Situation [December 3]

- Metaphors and Foreign Policy Decision Making (1994), Keith L. Shimko, Political Psychology 15/4: 655-671

Presentation reading(s):

27. Psychology and International Relations IV: Decision-Making in Wartime [December 5]


Presentation reading(s):
(b) Misperception and the Causes of War: Theoretical Linkages and Analytical Problems (1983), Jack S. Levy, World Politics 36/1: 76-99
28. TBD [December 10]

29. Review & Discussion of Final Exam [December 12]