

# AMERICAN & COMPARATIVE POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

PSCI 7108.002

SPRING 2010

THURSDAY 11 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.

KETCHUM 116

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This course concerns the joy and magic that is the study of political behavior. In many ways, public opinion is the currency of a representative democracy. It is the expression of what people expect, desire, and think of their government. And it is what politicians follow, influence, and are held accountable to. We will consider the structure and dynamics of public opinion from the perspectives of both American politics and comparative politics. We will analyze what influences public opinion as well as how it shapes other aspects of politics and public life.

This course is part of a two-semester sequence. Participants in the course this semester are required to have enrolled in the first portion of the course last semester.

## READING ASSIGNMENTS

Course readings are drawn from several texts as well as journal articles. Journal articles are accessible through the library's website, while book chapters have been placed on the library's e-reserves.

In addition, the following books will be used the course:

- Berelson, Bernard R., Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and William N. McPhee. 1954. *Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hetherington, Marc J., and Jonathan D. Weiler. 2009. *Authoritarianism and Polarization in American Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lane, Robert E. 1962. *Political Ideology: Why the American Common Man Believes What He Does*. New York: Free Press.
- Sniderman, Paul M., and Louk Hagendoorn. 2009. *When Ways of Life Collide. When Ways of Life Collide: Multiculturalism and Its Discontents in the Netherlands*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

## REQUIREMENTS

participation (20% of your final grade)

One important prerequisite of participation is class attendance. Class attendance is vital and required.

It is essential to read all of the assigned readings and think carefully about what you have read in advance of the class session. Frantically skimming the articles in the minutes before class begins will limit the quality of our class discussion and impede your ability to learn anything useful. Your education and our class discussion of the readings will both benefit from your careful reading of the articles as well as the time you spend in advance of class reflecting on what you have read and learned.

You will also be expected actively participate in class discussions in a thoughtful way.

### book discussion leadership (5% of your final grade)

We will read four books this semester, and you will be responsible for leading class discussion about one of these books. Your goal is to ensure that the class engages in thoughtful reflection about what we can learn from that week's book. How you do this is up to you and your fellow discussion leaders. You could spend time discussing the main points of the book, connecting that week's book to prior readings from this semester or last, or discussing ways to extend and elaborate on the week's readings. Your grade will reflect the quality of your preparation, as well as the quantity and quality of class discussion you generate.

### presentation of research and leadership of class discussion (5% of your final grade)

You will be responsible for leading class one week this semester, centered on your research project and some of the surrounding literature. You will select a slate of readings that inform your research project, and we will discuss these in the first half of the class session. In the second half of the class, you will give a ten minute presentation of your research, in the manner of a conference presentation. The remainder of the class session will be devoted to discussion of your project.

### paper discussant (5% of your final grade)

In another week this semester, you will act as a co-discussion leader and paper discussant for another student's research project. You will assist in leading the discussion about the companion readings in the first half of the class, and in the second half of class, discuss the paper of one of your classmates in the manner of a conference discussant.

### feedback on student papers (each is worth 5% of your final grade)

For three of the student presentations this semester, you will turn in written feedback that responds to the research presented by your classmate and connects it to the assigned readings as well. These papers should be single-spaced and two to three pages in length. Please turn in two copies.

Your feedback memos should include:

- Discussion of the paper's strengths. Where is the paper strongest? What parts of the paper struck you as most innovative or most compelling? Based on your understanding of the field, what do you think is the most important contribution of the research project?
- Discussion of the paper's weaknesses. Where does the paper need the most work? How might the author improve the paper? What suggestions do you have in terms of literature, methods, theory, or the framing of the paper? Do you disagree with any of the author's assertions?
- Connection to the other readings from the week. How does this paper contribute to the research in this area? How might insights from these readings be used to improve the author's paper?
- Extensions to the project. How might the author build on this research in the future?

### research paper (50% of your final grade)

The final project for this class will be to revise and refine the paper you wrote in the previous semester of the course. You should aim to submit a paper at the end of the semester that is polished enough for submission for publication. This paper should follow the conventions of academic writing – including development of a research question, a review of relevant literature, theory, tests of these explanations, and interpretation of what you find.

Throughout the semester, there will be a variety of short assignments related to refining your research paper. More details about these assignments will be outlined on separate handouts.

## **CULEARN IS YOUR FRIEND**

This syllabus, assignments, and other exciting material can be accessed on the class website on [culearn.colorado.edu](http://culearn.colorado.edu).

## **SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS**

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to us a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. You can contact the Disability Services office for more information at [www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices).

## **SOME IMPORTANT COMMENTS ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you are not familiar with the rules of citing sources in written work or what constitutes plagiarism, you should contact us or refer to the University Honor Code at [www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode](http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode). Academic dishonesty will result in an F in the course and referral to the Honor Court for additional non-academic sanctions.

All papers are expected to be original work, not previously or simultaneously handed in for credit in another course (unless prior approval of all instructors involved is obtained).

# AMERICAN AND COMPARATIVE POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### 1. PLAN FOR THE SEMESTER

**Thursday, January 14**

### 2. BOOK WEEK: THE CLASSICS

**Thursday, January 21**

- Berelson, Bernard R., Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and William N. McPhee. 1954. *Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

### 3. BOOK WEEK: THE CLASSICS

**Thursday, January 28**

- Lane, Robert E. 1962. *Political Ideology: Why the American Common Man Believes What He Does*. New York: Free Press.

### 4. BOOK WEEK: POLITICAL BEHAVIOR FIFTY YEARS LATER

**Thursday, February 4**

- Hetherington, Marc J., and Jonathan D. Weiler. 2009. *Authoritarianism and Polarization in American Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

### 5. BOOK WEEK: POLITICAL BEHAVIOR FIFTY YEARS LATER

**Thursday, February 11**

- Sniderman, Paul M., and Louk Hagendoorn. 2009. *When Ways of Life Collide. When Ways of Life Collide: Multiculturalism and Its Discontents in the Netherlands*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

## 6. TRUST IN GOVERNMENT ACROSS COUNTRIES

**Thursday, February 18**

*Why do some people have greater confidence in government than others?*

- Nunez, Jami. 2010. "The Effects of Performance and Voice on Confidence in Government." Working paper.
- Newton, Cleary, Matthew R., and Susan Carol Stokes. 2006. *Democracy and the Culture of Skepticism: Political Trust in Argentina and Mexico*. Russell Sage Foundation Publications. Chapters 1, 5, and 6.
- Cook, Timothy E., and Paul Gronke. 2005. "The Skeptical American: Revisiting the Meanings of Trust in Government and Confidence in Institutions." *The Journal of Politics* 67(03): 784-803.
- Hibbing, John R., and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse. 2002. *Stealth Democracy*. Cambridge University Press. Introduction and Chapter 6.

## 7. CORRECT VOTING IN CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

**Thursday, February 25**

*How often, and under what conditions, do citizens succeed in casting a vote that reflects their preferences?*

- Jaeger, William. 2010. "An Analysis of Correct Voting in the 2006 Senate Elections." Working paper.
- Bartels, Larry M. 1996. "Uninformed Votes: Information Effects in Presidential Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 40(1):194-230.
- Gronke, Paul. 2000. *The Electorate, the Campaign, and the Office: A Unified Approach to House and Senate Elections*. University of Michigan Press. Chapter 6.
- Jacobson, Gary C. 2006. "Campaign Spending Effects in U.S. Senate Elections: Evidence from the National Annenberg Election Survey." *Electoral Studies* 25(2):195-226.
- Lau, Richard R., David J. Anderson, and David P. Redlawsk. 2008. "An Exploration of Correct Voting in Recent U.S. Presidential Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 52(2):395-411. (Including the Methodological Appendix).

## 8. ETHNIC DIVERSITY AND INTOLERANCE

**Thursday, March 4**

*Why do people develop ethnic intolerance?*

- Hilbert, Jenna. 2010. "Ethnic Intolerance in Romania: Immigrants vs. Historical Minorities." Working paper.
- Branton, Regina P., and Bradford S. Jones. 2005. "Reexamining Racial Attitudes: The Conditional Relationship between Diversity and Socioeconomic Environment." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(2): 359-372.
- Kronenfeld, Daniel A. 2005. "The Effects of Interethnic Contact on Ethnic Identity: Evidence from Latvia." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 21(3): 247-277.
- Glaser, James M. 2003. "Social Context and Inter-Group Political Attitudes: Experiments in Group Conflict Theory." *British Journal of Political Science* 33(4): 607-620.
- Weldon, Steven A. 2006. "The Institutional Context of Tolerance for Ethnic Minorities: A Comparative, Multilevel Analysis of Western Europe." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(2): 331-349.

## 9. REGIONAL IDENTITY AND SUPPORT FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION

### Thursday, March 11

*Why does support for the EU vary?*

- Curtis, Katherine Amber. 2010. "Determinants of EU Support: Assessing the Effects of Exclusive Regional Identity." Working paper.
- Garry, John, and James Tilley. 2009. "The Macroeconomic Factors Conditioning the Impact of Identity on Attitudes towards the EU." *European Union Politics* 10(3): 361-379.
- Lubbers, Marcel, and Peer Scheepers. 2007. "Explanations of Political Euro-Skepticism at the Individual, Regional, and National Levels." *European Societies* 9(4): 643-669.
- Olsson, Anna. 2009. "Euroscepticism Revisited – Regional Interest Representation in Brussels and the Link to Citizen Attitudes towards European Integration." Prepared for the 11th Biennial International Conference on the European Union Studies Association, Los Angeles, CA.

## 10. INTEREST IN LOCAL POLITICS

### Thursday, March 18

*What factors motivate political interest within a local context?*

- Kennedy, Joshua B. 2010. "Local Political Interest: Its Causes, Its Consequences, and Why It Matters." Manuscript.
- Bennett, Stephen Earl. 1986. *Apathy in America, 1960-1984: Causes and Consequences of Citizen Political Indifference*. Dobbs Ferry, NY: Transnational Publishers. Chapter 5.
- Oliver, J. Eric. 2000. "City Size and Civic Involvement in Metropolitan America." *The American Political Science Review* 94(2):361-373.
- Prior, Markus. Forthcoming. "You Either Got It or You Don't? The Stability of Political Interest over the Life Cycle." *The Journal of Politics*.

**Thursday, March 25** Spring break: class does not meet

## 11. EMOTION AND POLITICAL DISCUSSION

### Thursday, April 1

*Why do individuals engage in cross-cutting political discussion?*

- Lyons, Jeff. 2010. "The Effects of Emotion on Cross-Cutting Political Discussion." Working paper.
- Huckfeldt, Robert, and John Sprague. 1991. "Discussant Effects on Vote Choice: Intimacy, Structure, and Interdependence." *Journal of Politics* 53(1): 122-158.
- Huckfeldt, Robert, and Jeanette Morehouse Mendez. 2008. "Moths, Flames, and Political Engagement: Managing Disagreement within Communication Networks." *Journal of Politics* 70(1): 83-96.
- Huckfeldt, Robert. 2007. "Unanimity, Discord, and the Communication of Public Opinion." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(4): 978-995.
- MacKuen, Michael, Jennifer Wolak, Luke Keele, and George E. Marcus. Forthcoming. "Civic Engagements: Resolute Partisanship or Reflective Engagement." *American Journal of Political Science*.

## 12. SUPPORT FOR ETHNIC PARTIES IN BOLIVIA

**Thursday, April 8**

*Why do people support ethnic parties?*

- Foxworth, Raymond. 2010. "Ethnic Voting: The Bolivian Case." Working paper.
- Dawson, Michael. 1994. *Behind the Mule: Race and Class in African American Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1-3.
- Madrid, Raúl. 2005. "Indigenous Voters and Party System Fragmentation in Latin America." *Electoral Studies* 24 (4): 689-707.
- Van Cott, Donna Lee. 2005. *From Movements to Parties in Latin America: The Evolution of Ethnic Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Introduction, p. 1-21.
- Yashar, Deborah J. 2005. *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Introduction, p. 3-54.

## 13. SUPPORT FOR THE RADICAL RIGHT

**Thursday, April 15**

*Why do people vote for radical right parties?*

- Arzheimer, Kai. 2008. "Contextual Factors and the Extreme Right Vote in Western Europe, 1980-2002." *American Journal of Political Science* 53(2): 259-275.
- Kestila, Elina, and Peter Soderlund. 2007. "Subnational political opportunity structures and the success of the radical right: Evidence from the March 2004 regional elections in France." *European Journal of Political Research* 46(6): 773-796.
- Arzheimer, Kai. 2009. "How (Not) to Operationalise Subnational Political Opportunity Structures: A Critique of Kestilä and Söderlund's Study of Regional Elections." *European Journal of Political Research* 48(3): 335-358.
- Kestila, Elina, and Peter Soderlund. 2009. "Rejoinder: Response to Arzheimer and Carter." *European Journal of Political Research* 48(3):359-366.
- Swyngedouw, Marc. 2001. "The Subjective Cognitive and Affective Map of Extreme Right Voters: Using Open-Ended Questions in Exit Polls." *Electoral Studies* 20(2): 217-241.
- Van der Brug, Wouter, and Meindert Fennema. 2007. "Causes of Voting for the Radical Right." *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 19(4):474-487.

**Thursday, April 22**      Class does not meet.

## 14. PATRIOTISM

**Thursday, April 29**

*Why do levels of patriotism change over time?*

- Almond, Gabriel, and Sidney Verba. 1965. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Boston: Little, Brown. Chapters 3 and 8.
- Huddy, Leonie, and Nadia Khatib. 2007. "American Patriotism, National Identity, and Political Involvement." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(1): 63-77.

- Theiss-Morse, Elizabeth. 2009. *Who Counts as an American? The Boundaries of National Identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1 and 2.
- Citrin, Jack, Cara Wong, and Brian Duff. 2001. "The Meaning of American National Identity." In Richard Ashmore, Lee Jussim, and David Wilder, eds., *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Reduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.