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2020

### Psychology of Politics

Lisa Babel

*CUNY City College*

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## PSYCHOLOGY 31900 (**Psychology of Politics**)

Fall 2020

Monday/Wednesday, 3:30PM-4:45PM, Blackboard Collaborate Ultra

Instructor: Lisa Babel

Email: lbabel@gradcenter.cuny.edu

Office Hours: By Remote Appointment

**Course Description:** This course is designed to give you an understanding of psychological and contextual approaches to politics and political environments. We will begin by reviewing basic ideological principles that people adhere to today. Then, to identify why people think and behave as they do politically, we will look at how both personal and outside influences have had a psychological impact on our thought processes, rationales, openness (or lack thereof) or misgivings when debating politics different than our own. By the end of this course, you should understand the psychological nature behind your own, as well as others' political viewpoints, enabling you to apply the material to your personal experiences. The goal of this course is not to debate what is right and wrong, the intent is to recognize people's attitudes, circumstances, social influences, and how their belief systems manifest. In so doing, people with opposing views may have a better chance working together toward the greater common good.

### **Course Materials**

All readings can be found on Blackboard, with no cost to the student.

### **Course Objectives**

- Apply critical thinking abilities to political theory, influence, and behavior.
- Integrate concepts, principles and research findings to your own lives and experiences.
- Demonstrate effective writing and oral skills relevant to the psychology of politics.

### **Course Format**

This course will be a combination of lecture, discussion, and group work relevant to the issues involving the psychology of politics. Lectures will be based on the assigned readings for the week. Students are expected to have completed all required readings before class and to come prepared to be an active contributor to class discussions.

### **Blackboard**

An electronic version of this syllabus, readings, attendance/participation, assignments, papers, presentations, announcements, and other pertinent information about this course will be communicated through links to this course on Blackboard. We use Blackboard to ensure privacy in notifying you of your grades and attendance. To log on to Blackboard, you must first register your CUNY Portal account using this address: <http://portal.cuny.edu>. Once inside the portal, you will click on the link for Blackboard. There you will find a listing of all the CCNY courses for which you are currently enrolled. Click on the link for PSY 319 to view the course material. If you have trouble logging onto Blackboard, or viewing the PSY 319 link, contact the computer consultants in NAC 1-506 immediately.

## **Technology**

Research on note taking has shown evidence that handwritten notes facilitate encoding and engagement in students. That said, it is OK to use your laptop to take notes during lectures or for group work, **BUT** you should not use your laptop for anything other than taking notes and communicating with the class. If I can tell you are surfing the internet on your laptop during class time, I will deduct your participation points for that particular day.

## **Email**

When sending me an email, please include your full name in both the subject heading, and identify yourself in the email. My email is listed on the top of the syllabus. I will respond to your message within 24 hours.

## **Class Attendance**

Attendance is mandatory. Beginning on Wednesday, August 26th, students will be required to attend all classes during the semester, to arrive on time, and to remain in the virtual classroom for the entire period. Students who fail to attend class when attendance is checked, or leave halfway through with no notice, will be marked absent. Only students with approved documentation will be given an excused absence. You must give your excused documentation to me within 3 days of your absence or it will not be accepted. After 3 excused absences, or 2 unexcused absences, the student's grade will decrease.

In addition, CUNY Policy allows for a WU grade to be given for excessive absences. If you have 3 or more unexcused absences OR 5 or more total absences, whether excused or unexcused, you will receive a WU grade. (NOTE: If you accrue excessive absences prior to the last day to withdraw, you can withdraw with a W grade instead of a WU (which converts to an F grade). The last day to withdraw with a W grade is Friday, November 6<sup>th</sup>.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

Your grade will be based on the following:

1) Attendance (26 Points): I would like to stress the importance of coming to class every day and on time. Please note, that being late to class is disruptive, so be on time. If you are late to class three times, it will result in 1 absence. You will receive 1 attendance point per class.

2) Participation (52 Points): While in class, participation is graded, therefore, I encourage questions and discussion from everyone. You can earn up to 2 participation points per class.

3) Discussion Leader (10 Points): You are required to sign up to be a discussion leader for one class this semester. For each discussion, you will do the following:

- Email 3 OPEN-ENDED questions to me for approval no later than 48 hours before you are scheduled to lead the discussion. I will choose 1 question for you to pose to the class.
- Give your take on the readings (what you liked/didn't like, what it made you think of, questions it raised for you, etc.)
- Pose your question to the class and keep the discussion going for a minimum of 10 minutes.

4) Assignment #1 (5 Points): This is about your political background. The assignment should be 1-2 FULL pages. For this assignment, you will address the following:

- Your immediate family's political background and how you were exposed to politics.
- Why you decided to take this course.

5) Assignment #2 (15 Points): This is about using a critical lens to evaluate one of the debates during the 2020 election. This assignment should be 2-3 FULL pages. For this assignment, you will address the following:

- One paragraph on what the Democratic candidate did right.
- One paragraph on what the Democratic candidate did wrong.
- One paragraph on what the Republican candidate did right.
- One paragraph on what the Republican candidate did wrong.
- One paragraph on how this particular debate will impact voters on each side.
- You will NOT summarize any of the debate.

6) Assignment #3 (5 Points): This is a reflection on election night/results. The assignment will be one DETAILED paragraph (at least 5, well-thought out sentences) on the Blackboard discussion thread. Your response will be made public to your fellow classmates, as well as myself. For this assignment, you will do the following:

- Address your feelings and thought processes you experienced on election day and the incoming results.
- If you have time, I encourage you to read some of the other students' reflections prior to class on Wednesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>.

7) Assignment #4 (5 Points): This is a critical analysis of your own political background. The assignment should be 1-2 FULL pages. For this assignment, you will address the following:

- Reflect on what you wrote in Assignment #1 (NOT a summary).
- Identify outside influences that impacted your own political beliefs and behaviors today.
- What you've learned this semester.
- This assignment can be turned in anytime after Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup>.

8) Outline (15 Points): Provide an outline of what your final paper will look like. For this assignment, you will include the following:

- A hypothesis and a brief explanation of why you chose your topic (3-5 sentences).
- Break your paper down by sections, using bullet points.
- List a minimum of 5 scholarly sources you *could* use for your final paper (you will have a lot more than 5 for the final).

9) Outline Appointment (3 Points): You MUST send me an email to schedule a 5-10 minute remote meeting with me to go over your outline. All meetings must be done by Tuesday, 9/29 at 4:45PM. Appointments are first come, first serve, so please reserve a spot early.

10) Draft (20 Points): You will turn in your draft as if it was the final version of the paper. I will review it, and send it back for you to make revisions. You should have at least 4 FULL pages, excluding the bibliography. Please do NOT include a cover page.

11) Draft Appointment (5 Points): You MUST send me an email to schedule a 5-10 remote meeting with me to go over your draft. All meetings must be done by Monday, 11/23 at 4:45PM. Appointments are first come, first serve, so please reserve a spot early.

12) Peer Review (4 Points): Each student will be randomly assigned a partner on peer review day. This will take place during class in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. For this assignment, you will:

- Email your paper to your partner and vice versa.
- Read, edit, and make comments to your partner's paper.
- Discuss each other's edits/comments.
- Email peer reviewed papers (which include the edits/comments) to the instructor by 11:59PM that day.

13) Final Paper (60 Points): This will be a paper on a topic of your choosing that involves the psychology of politics. This paper should be 4-5 **FULL** pages (excluding the bibliography). Please do NOT include a cover page. Also, this is the only assignment that is NOT in first-person. See Final Paper Rubric for further guidelines.

14) Presentation (25 Points): Your group will give a 10 minute Power Point presentation on your own idea for a research study that would allow for a better understanding of people's political beliefs and actions.

15) Extra Credit: Scholarly Source (5 Points): Email me an article from a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal that could go with one of the topics we discuss over the semester. The scholarly source should be from 2010 and onward. For this assignment, you will do the following:

- Email me a PDF (not a Word Doc or a link) of the article.
- Provide a brief explanation of which topic the article could go with and why it is an important article to read (3-5 detailed sentences).

### **Grading Scale**

There are a total of 250 points you can earn throughout the semester. Your grade will be determined by how many points you earn divided by the total amount of points available for the class. Depending on the amount of points you earn, your grade will be the following:

A+: 242~      B+: 217-223      C+: 192-198      D: 162-173

A : 232-241      B : 207-216      C : 182-191      F : ~161

A-: 224-231      B-: 199-206      C-: 174-181

Academic Dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, (1) plagiarism: using another's words, ideas, or paraphrases and implying that they are your own; (2) having another person fulfill your assignment (e.g., homework and/or paper).

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities are available. The Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) provides a supportive environment for students with disabilities and can be helpful in arranging student accommodations, support services, and academic adjustments. Please contact the office at 212-650-5913 early in the semester to schedule an appointment. If after meeting with SDS it is determined that you would benefit from in-class accommodations,

the office will ask you to bring me an Academic Adjustment Memo that specifies the nature of the accommodations. I can work with you to ensure that these accommodations are met.

Late Assignments by more than one day (3:30PM the next day) will not be accepted. If you turn in an assignment late on the day it is due (after 3:30PM), you will receive a deduction in points. If you have a valid, documented excuse for missing class on days that the aforementioned tasks will be due, however, then you should see me beforehand to seek permission to make up the work.

Writing Format: Assignments should be in Times New Roman, 12 inch font, 1 inch margins, and double-spaced (single space for outline only). Bigger font and/or extra spacing will result in a point deduction.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Readings and discussion topics are subject to change.\*\*\*\*\*

Date	Topic	In class activity/assignment due
Wednesday Aug. 26	Syllabus	<b>ACTIVITY:</b> Meet & Greet
Monday Aug. 31	Intro to Political Thought	<b>DUE:</b> Assignment #1  <b>ACTIVITY:</b> Assign Discussion Leaders
Wednesday Sept. 2	<i>Theory:</i> Conservativism	Oakeshott
Monday Sept. 7	<b>CLOSED</b>	
Wednesday Sept. 9	<i>Theory:</i> Liberalism	Bell
Monday Sept. 14	<i>Theory:</i> Fascism; Socialism; Anarchism	Bataille & Lovitt; Hayek
Wednesday Sept. 16	<i>Theory:</i> Feminism & Environmentalism	Lorde; Dewitt
Monday Sept. 21	<b>BLACKBOARD CRASH</b>	
Wednesday Sept. 23	<i>Influences:</i> Nationalism & Globalism	<b>DUE:</b> Outline  Bonikowski & DiMaggio; Amadi
Monday Sept. 28	<b>CLOSED</b>	
Tuesday Sept. 29	Monday Schedule <i>No Lecture</i>	<i>Outline Appointments</i>
Wednesday Sept. 30	<i>Influences:</i> Family & Friends	Levinson & Yndigegn

Monday Oct. 5	<i>Influences: School &amp; Work</i>	<b>DUE:</b> Assignment #2 >> Presidential Debate #1* (Held TU 9/29)  Kahne et al; Emmenegger
Wednesday Oct. 7	<i>Influences: Tech &amp; Media</i>	Zuniga et al
Monday Oct. 12	<b>CLOSED</b>	
Wednesday Oct. 14	<i>Influences: Race</i>	<b>DUE:</b> Assignment #2>> VP Debate* (Held W 10/7)  Soss & Weaver
Monday Oct. 19	<i>Influences: Social Class</i>	Brown-Iannuzzi
Wednesday Oct. 21	<i>Influences: Gender &amp; Sexuality</i>	<b>DUE:</b> Assignment #2>> Presidential Debate #2* (Held TH 10/15)  Diekman
Monday Oct. 26	<i>Influences: Religion &amp; Culture</i>	Olson
Wednesday Oct. 28	<i>Behavior: Messaging &amp; Meanings</i>	<b>DUE:</b> Assignment #2>> Presidential Debate #3* (Held TH 10/22)  Carraro & Castelli
Monday Nov. 2	<i>Behavior: Voting (Choices &amp; Participation)</i>	Sloam
Wednesday Nov. 4	Election Aftermath	<b>DUE:</b> Assignment #3
Monday Nov. 9	<i>Behavior: 2016 vs 2020 (Context &amp; Strategy)</i>	Sides et al
Wednesday Nov. 11	<i>Behavior: Political Identity &amp; Partisanship</i>	Iyengar & Krupenkin
Monday Nov. 16	<i>Behavior: Morality &amp; Values</i>	Miles & Vaisey
Wednesday Nov. 18	<i>Behavior: Major Topics &amp; Public Opinion</i>	<b>DUE:</b> Draft  Goren et al  <b>ACTIVITY:</b> Assign Presentation Groups
Monday Nov. 23	<i>Behavior: Reflections and Understandings</i>	<i>Draft Appointments</i>  <i>Presentation Group Work</i>

Wednesday Nov. 25	Friday Schedule <b>(NO CLASS)</b>	
Monday Nov. 30		<b>ACTIVITY:</b> Peer Review of Final Paper
Wednesday Dec. 2		<b>DUE:</b> Assignment #4  <b>ACTIVITY:</b> Presentation Group Work
Monday Dec. 7		<b>DUE:</b> Final Paper  Group Presentations (1-4)**
Wednesday Dec. 9		<b>DUE:</b> Final Paper  Group Presentations (5-7)**

\* For Assignment #2, the student will only write on one debate. For example, if the student chooses to write on Presidential Debate #1, the assignment is due M 10/5. The student will not have to write, nor turn in an assignment for the other debates.

\*\* There will be seven group presentations. Students assigned to Groups 1-4 will present on M 12/7 and their final paper will be due W 12/9. Students assigned to Groups 5-7 will present on W 12/9 and their final paper will be due M 12/7.



## Readings

- Amadi, L. (2020). Globalization and the changing Liberal international order: A review of the literature. *Research in Globalization*.
- Bataille, G., & Lovitt, C. R. (1979). The psychological structure of fascism. *New German Critique*, (16), 64-87.
- Bell, D. (2014). What is liberalism?. *Political Theory*, 42(6), 682-715.
- Bonikowski, B., & DiMaggio, P. (2016). Varieties of American popular nationalism. *American Sociological Review*, 81(5), 949-980.
- Brown-Iannuzzi, J. L., Lundberg, K. B., Kay, A. C., & Payne, B. K. (2020). A Privileged Point of View: Effects of Subjective Socioeconomic Status on Naïve Realism and Political Division. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.
- Carraro, L., & Castelli, L. (2010). The implicit and explicit effects of negative political campaigns: Is the source really blamed?. *Political Psychology*, 31(4), 617-645.
- Dewitt, J. (1994). Civic environmentalism. *Issues in Science and Technology*, 10(4), 30-34.
- Diekman, A. B., & Schneider, M. C. (2010). A social role theory perspective on gender gaps in political attitudes. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 34(4), 486-497.
- Emmenegger, P. (2009). Barriers to entry: Insider/outsider politics and the political determinants of job security regulations. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 19(2), 131-146.
- Gil de Zúñiga, H., Weeks, B., & Ardèvol-Abreu, A. (2017). Effects of the news-finds-me perception in communication: Social media use implications for news seeking and learning about politics. *Journal of computer-mediated communication*, 22(3), 105-123.
- Goren, P., Schoen, H., Reifler, J., Scotto, T., & Chittick, W. (2016). A unified theory of value based reasoning and US public opinion. *Political behavior*, 38(4), 977-997.
- Hayek, F. A. (1949). The intellectuals and socialism. *The University of Chicago Law Review*, 16(3), 417-433.
- Iyengar, S., & Krupenkin, M. (2018). The strengthening of partisan affect. *Political Psychology*, 39, 201-218.
- Kahne, J., Crow, D., & Lee, N. J. (2013). Different pedagogy, different politics: High school learning opportunities and youth political engagement. *Political Psychology*, 34(3), 419-441.
- Levinson, K., & Yndigegn, C. (2015). Political discussions with family and friends: exploring the impact of political distance. *The Sociological Review*, 63, 72-91.
- Lorde, A. (1980). Age, race, class, and sex: Women redefining difference. *Women in Culture: An intersectional anthology for gender and women's studies*, 16-22.
- Miles, A., & Vaisey, S. (2015). Morality and politics: Comparing alternate theories. *Social Science Research*, 53, 252-269.
- Oakeshott, M. (1991). On being conservative. *Rationalism in politics and other essays*, 407-437.
- Olson, L. R. (2011). The essentiality of "culture" in the study of religion and politics. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 50(4), 639-653.
- Sides, J., Tesler, M., & Vavreck, L. (2017). The 2016 US election: How Trump lost and won. *Journal of Democracy*, 28(2), 34-44.
- Sloam, J. (2014). New voice, less equal: The civic and political engagement of young people in the United States and Europe. *Comparative Political Studies*, 47(5), 663-688.
- Soss, J., & Weaver, V. (2017). Police are our government: Politics, political science, and the policing of race-class subjugated communities. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 20.