
POLS-Y490

Political Behavior Around the World

Course Overview

This seminar provides an introduction to some of the major themes in political behavior, including partisanship, elections, political attitudes, information, ideology, participation, and the role of the mass media in shaping the public's political beliefs and orientations. We will consider how well our theories explain political outcomes in both democracies and autocracies.

Instructor

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Office Hours: Please sign up at <https://calendly.com/jasonywu/meeting>

Requirements and Grading

Students are expected to regularly attend class, actively contribute to class discussions, and complete the reading assignments.

For one class in the semester, you will be assigned to present that week's readings. The presentation should do the following:

- Briefly motivate the topic for that week: why does it matter?
- Establish the principal research questions behind the assigned readings. Don't present one question per reading; rather, gather readings together and organize the debates they speak to.
- Summarize the readings' main claims in response to those questions. Again, draw linkages across readings wherever possible ("One set of texts addresses the moral hazard wrought by these institutional arrangements; the other set. . ."). The goal here is to tease out the positive contributions the readings make in pushing forward the literature.
- Pinpoint some salient critiques. These may center on internal inconsistencies within a theory, flaws in research design, interpretation of results, unarticulated assumptions, scope conditions, etc. Try to propose ways ahead.
- Conclude the presentation by offering a few "big picture" questions to guide subsequent class discussion.

- The best presentations will lay out an incisive, analytical summary of the material, call attention to its main shortcomings, and set the agenda for the remainder of the class.
- The presentation should be no longer than 5 minutes.
- If you are giving a powerpoint presentation, prepare no more than 5 slides.
- You may wish to practice the presentation beforehand, and you may need to coordinate your efforts with another student if two people are scheduled to present.

There will be a weekly reading quiz, starting the second week. The two lowest grades will be dropped, but no make-up quizzes are allowed.

For the writing component of this course, students will be required to write a research paper which identifies an important research question, surveys the relevant literature, synthesizes the available evidence, and presents a theoretical argument.

A topic, research question, and brief description of the motivation (300 words) is due on February 6, while a literature review and a revised description of the topic (1500 words) are due on March 13. The final paper (5000 words) will be due on May 1.

- Participation: 20%
- Reading Quizzes: 20%
- Research Paper: 50%
- Presentation: 10%

Course Policies

Academic Integrity

You are expected to abide by the guidelines of the IU Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct (<http://studentcode.iu.edu/responsibilities/academic-misconduct.html>) regarding cheating and plagiarism. Any ideas or materials taken from another source must be fully acknowledged and cited.

Disability Accommodation

Please contact me if you require assistance or academic accommodations for a disability. You should establish your eligibility for disability support services through the Office of Disability Services for Students in Wells Library W302, 812-855-7578.

Generative Artificial Intelligence

You may use AI programs e.g. ChatGPT to help generate ideas, brainstorm, collect or clean data, code, and get feedback on your work. However, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic.

You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material. In general, however, your citations should be to peer-reviewed articles and books.

Technology Policy

Electronic devices are allowed in class for the purposes of taking notes and accessing readings.

Late Policy

Late assignments will be penalized by one grade (e.g. A- to B+) every twenty-four hours, with a maximum penalty of 20 %.

Week 1: Introduction

January 14

- No reading assignment this week.

Week 2: Ideology

January 21

- Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren E Miller, and Donald E Stokes. *The American Voter*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1960, Chapter 10.
- Christopher H Achen and Larry M Bartels. *Democracy for Realists*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2016, Chapter 2.
- Michael Barber and Jeremy C Pope. Does party trump ideology? Disentangling party and ideology in America. *American Political Science Review*, 113(1):38–54, 2019.
- Jason Y Wu. Categorical confusion: Ideological labels in china. *Political Research Quarterly*, 76(2):524–539, 2023

Week 3: Information

January 28

- John Zaller and Stanley Feldman. A simple theory of the survey response: Answering questions versus revealing preferences. *American Journal of Political Science*, 36(3):579–616, 1992.
- Samuel L Popkin. *The Reasoning Voter*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1994, Chapters 1, 4.
- Arturas Rozenas and Denis Stukal. How Autocrats Manipulate Economic News: Evidence from Russia's State-Controlled Television. *The Journal of Politics*, 81(3):982–996, July 2019
- Sergei Guriev and Daniel Treisman. Informational Autocrats. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 33(4):100–127, November 2019.

Week 4: Motivated Reasoning and Conspiracy Theories

February 4

- Charles S Taber and Milton Lodge. Motivated skepticism in the evaluation of political beliefs. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(3):755–769, 2006.
- Haifeng Huang. A war of (Mis)Information: The political effects of rumors and rumor rebuttals in an authoritarian country. *British Journal of Political Science*, 47(2):283–311, 2015.
- Chengli Wang and Haifeng Huang. When “Fake News” Becomes Real: The Consequences of False Government Denials in an Authoritarian Country. *Comparative Political Studies*, 54(5):753–778, April 2021.
- Michael Bang Petersen, Mathias Osmundsen, and Kevin Arceneaux. The “need for chaos” and motivations to share hostile political rumors. *American Political Science Review*, 117(4):1486–1505, 2023

Research paper topic and question due February 6.

Week 5: Socialization and Influences

February 11

- John R Alford, Carolyn L Funk, and John R Hibbing. Are political orientations genetically transmitted? *American Political Science Review*, 99(02):153–167, May 2005.
- Jonathan Haidt. *The Righteous Mind*. Random House, New York, 2012, Chapters 1, 7.
- Samuel Greene and Graeme Robertson. Agreeable authoritarians: Personality and politics in contemporary Russia. *Comparative Political Studies*, 50(13):1802–1834, 2017.
- Rory Truex. Political Discontent in China Is Associated with Isolating Personality Traits. *The Journal of Politics*, 84(4):2172–2187, October 2022.

Week 6: Spatial Approaches

February 18

- Anthony Downs. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Harper Row, New York, 1957, Chapter 8.
- George Rabinowitz and Stuart Elaine Macdonald. A directional theory of issue voting. *American Political Science Review*, 83(1):93–121, 1989.
- Tarik Abou-Chadi and Werner Krause. The causal effect of radical right success on mainstream parties' policy positions: A regression discontinuity approach. *British Journal of Political Science*, 50(3):829–847, July 2020.
- Amory Gethin, Clara Martínez-Toledano, and Thomas Piketty. Brahmin left versus merchant right: Changing political cleavages in 21 western democracies, 1948–2020. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 137(1):1–48, 2022.

Week 7: Partisanship

February 25

- Christopher H Achen and Larry M Bartels. *Democracy for Realists*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2016, Chapter 9.
- Noam Lupu. Brand Dilution and the Breakdown of Political Parties in Latin America. *World Politics*, 66(4):561–602, October 2014.
- Anne Meng. Ruling parties in authoritarian regimes: Rethinking institutional strength. *British Journal of Political Science*, 51(2):526–540, 2021
- Stephanie Ternullo. Place-Based Partisanship: How Place (Re)produces Americans' Partisan Attachments. *American Journal of Sociology*, 130(2):293–343, September 2024.

Week 8: Inequality and the Influence of Economic Evaluations

March 4

- Christopher H Achen and Larry M Bartels. *Democracy for Realists*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2016, Chapters 4, 6.
- Jack Lucas, Lior Sheffer, Peter John Loewen, Stefaan Walgrave, Karolin Soontjens, Eran Amsalem, Stefanie Bailer, Nathalie Brack, Christian Breunig, Pirmin Bundi, Linda Coufal, Patrick Dumont, Sarah Lachance, Miguel M. Pereira, Mikael Persson, Jean-Benoit Pilet, Anne Rasmussen, Maj-Britt Sterba, and Frédéric Varone. Politicians' Theories of Voting Behavior. *American Political Science Review*, pages 1–18, November 2024.

- Eunji Kim. Entertaining Beliefs in Economic Mobility. *American Journal of Political Science*, 67(1):39–54, 2023.
- Broockman, David, Elizabeth Rhodes, Alexander Bartik, Karina Dotson, Patrick Krause, Sarah Miller, and Eva Vivalt. 2024. The Causal Effects of Income on Political Attitudes and Behavior: A Randomized Field Experiment. Working Paper.

Week 9: Culture and Identity

March 11

- Eric J. Hobsbawm. *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge university press, 1992, Introduction, Chapter 3.
- Fareed Zakaria and Lee Kuan Yew. Culture is destiny: A conversation with Lee Kuan Yew. *Foreign Affairs*, 73(2):109–126, 1994.
- Christopher H Achen and Larry M Bartels. *Democracy for Realists*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2016, Chapter 8.
- Chinoy, Sahil, Nathan Nunn, Sandra Sequeira, and Stefanie Stantcheva. 2024. Zero-Sum Thinking and the Roots of U.S. Political Divides. Working Paper.

Research paper/proposal literature reviews due March 13.

Week 10: Spring Break

Week 11: Populism and Democratic Backsliding

March 25

- Cas Mudde. The populist zeitgeist. *Government and opposition*, 39(4):541–563, 2004
- Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser. Exclusionary vs. inclusionary populism: Comparing contemporary Europe and Latin America. *Government and opposition*, 48(2):147–174, 2013
- Dan Slater. Democratic careening. *World Politics*, 65(4):729–763, 2013
- Noam Gidron and Peter A. Hall. Populism as a Problem of Social Integration. *Comparative Political Studies*, 53(7):1027–1059, June 2020

Week 12: Campaigns, Media Effects, and Propaganda

April 1

- John R Zaller. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge University Press, New York, 1992, Chapter 6.

- Eunji Kim and Shawn Patterson. The American Viewer: Political Consequences of Entertainment Media. *American Political Science Review*, pages 1–15, August 2024.
- Maja Adena, Ruben Enikolopov, Maria Petrova, Veronica Santarosa, and Ekaterina Zhuravskaya. Radio and the Rise of the Nazis in Prewar Germany. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 130(4):1885–1939, 2015.
- Jaimie Bleck and Kristin Michelitch. Capturing the Airwaves, Capturing the Nation? A Field Experiment on State-Run Media Effects in the Wake of a Coup. *The Journal of Politics*, 79(3):873–889, July 2017.

Week 13: Turnout and Low-Risk Participation

April 8

- Albert O Hirschman. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1970, Chapters 1-4.
- James C. Scott. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. Yale University Press, January 1985, Chapter 1.
- Carolina de Miguel, Amaney A Jamal, and Mark Tessler. Elections in the Arab world: Why do citizens turn out? *Comparative Political Studies*, 48(11):1355–1388, 2015.

Week 14: Protest, Contentious Politics, and High-Risk Participation

April 15

- James C Scott. *The Moral Economy of the Peasant*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1977, Chapters 1 and 7.
- Doug McAdam. Recruitment to high-risk activism: The case of freedom summer. *American Journal of Sociology*, 92(1):64–90, 1986.
- Herbert P Kitschelt. Political opportunity structures and political protest: Anti-nuclear movements in four democracies. *British Journal of Political Science*, 16(1):57–85, 1986

Week 15: Repression and State Control

April 22

- Sheena Chestnut Greitens. *Dictators and Their Secret Police*. Coercive Institutions and State Violence. Cambridge University Press, New York, 2016, Chapters 1, 3, 6.
- Eda Keremoğlu and Nils B. Weidmann. How Dictators Control the Internet: A Review Essay. *Comparative Political Studies*, 53(10-11):1690–1703, September 2020

- Benjamin A. Valentino. Why We Kill: The Political Science of Political Violence against Civilians. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 17(1):89–103, 2014

Week 16: Historical Legacies

April 29

- Nathan Nunn and Leonard Wantchekon. The slave trade and the origins of mistrust in Africa. *American economic review*, 101(7):3221–3252, 2011.
- Laia Balcells. The consequences of victimization on political identities: Evidence from Spain. *Politics and Society*, 40(3):311–347, 2012.
- Ji Yeon Hong, Sunkyoung Park, and Hyunjoo Yang. In Strongman We Trust: The Political Legacy of the New Village Movement in South Korea. *American Journal of Political Science*, 67(4):850–866, 2023.
- Alesina, Alberto F., Marlon Seror, David Y. Yang, Yang You, and Weihong Zeng. 2024. Persistence Despite Revolutions. Working Paper.

Final paper due May 1.