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# PSC 511: Seminar in American Politics

4 credits

Spring 2023

Online

**Instructor:**  Matthew Geras, Assistant Professor

**Office:**  PAC 358

**Office Hours:**  Mondays & Thursdays: 3:30pm-5:00pm central (in person or via Zoom)

By appointment (in person or via Zoom)

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## **Course Description**

This is a graduate-level seminar designed to explore the breadth of what it means to study American politics from the perspective of a political scientist. American politics is a large and diverse field. As a result, we will not be able to cover all facets of American politics, but throughout the semester, we will cover 14 different topics, ranging from representation to political institutions to campaigns and elections, to gain insight into the current state of American politics research. Since this is a seminar, you can expect to read and write on a weekly basis.

## **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of the course, students will:

* Understand the breadth of what it means to study American politics.
* Be able to critically analyze scientific research in the field of American politics.
* Learn how to synthesize and connect the arguments and findings from multiple research articles to build a collective understanding of the following themes in recent political science research: representation in American politics, American political institutions, political parties, campaigns and election, the media, and political participation.

**Learning Objectives**

* Students will identify, describe, and communicate the current state of research in different subfields in American politics through the completion of reading synthesis assignments.
* Students will complete a literature review on a topic pertaining to American politics.
* Students will contribute to class discussions through participation and the submission of discussion questions.
* Students will demonstrate their knowledge of American politics by completing a written comprehensive examination and several shorter quizzes.

## **Course Expectations**

The course has a modular structure. Each module will consist of a set of assigned readings, discussions board questions, an optional synchronous Zoom meeting, and short video lecture(s) that will highlight the main arguments and themes from that week of readings. Additionally, students are expected to submit 2 discussion questions or other talking points for each week of readings, which will be used to help me structure class discussions.

This course is designed on principles of collaborative learning and active participation. By registering for this online course, students commit to self-motivated study, participation in online course activities, and the submission of all assignments on time. Furthermore, they commit to accessing the course Web site and checking email at least four times a week and to devoting at least as much time to this online course as to a comparable traditional class on campus.

## **UIS Academic Integrity Policy**

I support the UIS policy on Academic Integrity, which states, in part: “Academic integrity is at the heart of the university’s commitment to academic excellence. The UIS community strives to communicate and support clear standards of integrity, so that undergraduate and graduate students can internalize those standards and carry them forward in their personal and professional lives. Living a life with integrity prepares students to assume leadership roles in their communities as well as in their chosen profession. Alumni can be proud of their education and the larger society will benefit from the University’s contribution to the development of ethical leaders. Violations of academic integrity demean the violator, degrade the learning process, deflate the meaning of grades, discredit the accomplishments of past and present students, and tarnish the reputation of the university for all its members.”

Academic sanctions range from a warning to expulsion from the university, depending on the severity of your violation and your history of violations. Whatever the sanction, I will file a report of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Provost.

You are responsible for understanding and complying with the [UIS Academic Integrity Policy](http://www.uis.edu/academicintegrity).

Academic dishonesty in an online learning environment may include the following scenarios:

* Having a tutor or friend complete a portion of your assignments
* Having a reviewer make extensive revisions to an assignment
* Copying work submitted by another student to a public class meeting
* Using information from online information services without proper citation
* Posting any work as your own that has been written by another author(s)

## **Academic Accommodations**

If you are a student with a documented temporary or ongoing disability in need of academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 217-206-6666.

Disabilities may include, but are not limited to: Psychological, Health, Learning, Sensory, Mobility, ADHD, TBI and Autism Spectrum Disorder. In some cases, accommodations are also available for shorter term disabling conditions such as severe medical situations. Accommodations are based upon underlying medical and cognitive conditions and may include but are not limited to extended time for tests and quizzes, distraction free environment for tests and quizzes, a note taker, interpreter and FM devices.

Students who have made a request for an academic accommodation that has been reviewed and approved by the ODS will receive an accommodation letter which should be provided by the student to the instructor as soon as possible, preferably in the first week of class.

For assistance in seeking academic accommodations please contact the UIS Office of Disability Services (ODS) in the Human Resources Building, Room 80, phone number 217-206-6666.

## **Library Resources**

You can access library resources, databases, and helpful research guides from [Brookens Library](http://library.uis.edu/). For in-depth help, please contact one of our librarians directly: [View full list of librarians by subject](https://libguides.uis.edu/librarians).

**The Learning Hub**

The Learning Hub provides students on campus with many services including online and face-to-face tutoring for writing, science, exercise science, academic skills, business, computer science, and math; supplemental instruction; workshops; and online resources. Any student who is enrolled at UIS is eligible for the free services.

If you feel like you need extra help in the class, please use this service along with instructor help.

Appointments can be made by contacting The Learning Hub at (217) 206-6503, [thehub@uis.edu](mailto:thehub@uis.edu), or in person at Brookens 460. You may also use this link to access a “Make an Appointment” form to ensure you give them all the information needed to schedule an appointment. When making an appointment, please have the following information ready:

* Course number
* Instructor
* Assignment/Paper Length
* Available Days and Times

## **Required Texts**

There are no required books for this class. Instead, all course readings will be posted to Canvas.

Readings will include a combination of scientific journal articles, podcasts, news articles, book excerpts, and interviews.

## **UIS Resources**

[University of Illinois at Springfield](http://www.uis.edu/)

[[Information Technology Services (ITS)](http://www.uis.edu/)](http://www.uis.edu/its)

[University Webmail](http://webmail.uis.edu)

[Canvas](https://go.uis.edu/canvas)

[The Learning Hub](http://www.uis.edu/thelearninghub/)

[The Career Development Center](http://www.uis.edu/career/)

## **Course Requirements**

## Complete all assigned readings, lecture videos, and graded assignments. As a best practice, please keep a backup copy of all assignments that you submit. As a UIS student you have access to a [Box](https://www.uis.edu/its/services-uis/box) account, which can be used to back up your assignments

## **Adhere to assignment deadlines as outlined on Canvas and the course schedule. I accept late work, but assignments submitted after their due date will be subject to a penalty of 2% per day. I recognize that some late work occurs due to circumstances outside a student’s control. As a result, I may waive this penalty in such circumstances, especially if you are proactive in letting me know you will be submitting work late before the assignment deadline. Most importantly, keep in mind that if you are consistently submitting assignments lates, you are limiting your ability to receive feedback on your assignments.**

## ***While it is important that we all do our best to adhere to these requirements, I recognize we all continue to live through unprecedented times. If you find yourself in a situation where your ability to meet course deadlines is compromised, please let me know. I will, to the best of my abilities, work with you to come up with a solution that will allow you to complete the required components of this course.***

## **Technology Requirements**

Students will use the internet to access the Canvas course page and their UIS email. Other programs used will be Zoom, Microsoft Office, Zotero or some other bibliographic management software (optional), and resources from the UIS library. All these programs are available to students through their enrollment in UIS classes or are freely available online.

## **Course Communication**

The best way to contact me is through email or the messenger function on Canvas. As needed, we can also schedule Zoom meetings and telephone consultations. I typically respond to emails within 24 hours Monday through Thursday and within 48 hours Friday through Sunday. You will likely receive a response from me much faster than this timeline. If fact, if you do not receive a response from me within this timeframe, it is okay to assume I did not receive your original message and you are welcome to contact me again.

Keep in mind that the messenger app on Canvas sometimes struggles with file attachments, especially in cases where you are responding to a Canvas message through email. As a result, email or UIS’s protected email application ([PEAR](https://www.aits.uillinois.edu/services/application_services/PEAR/)) is the better option in these circumstances. Additionally, keep in mind that I am not allowed to discuss grades through email.

Office Hours:

My office hours are Mondays and Thursdays from 3:30pm to 5:00pm central and by appointment. To set up a meeting, send me an email with some suggested times. I encourage all students to attend office hours whenever they wish to discuss course content and assignments. Please view my office hours as time that I have set aside to answer your questions, clarify class discussions, and help you succeed in class. All office hours will be available either in person or via Zoom.

### Netiquette

In any social interaction, certain rules of etiquette are expected and contribute to more enjoyable and productive communication. I recommend you review the following [tips for interacting online](https://www.livinginternet.com/i/ia_nq.htm) in e-mail and/or discussion board messages compiled by Chuq Von Rospach and Gene Spafford.

Everyone must plan an active role in helping to facilitate and maintain a safe and comfortable learning environment where everyone should feel free to participate, ask questions, engage the course and support one another. To do this successfully, we must remain mindful and respectful of each other’s freedom of thought and speech and provide mutual respect. Everyone should feel comfortable expressing themselves and their views. There must be a clear respect for diversity of participants including respect for gender, race/ethnicity, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, as well as culture, beliefs, and personal values.

Here are some tips for discussing serious and potential sensitive topics with your peers:

* Be empathetic and remember that this environment is a safe place for making mistakes.
* Use nonjudgmental language and phrases that do not attack an individual. One way of doing this is to ask the individual to discuss their process for making their final decision.
* Use specific questions, examples, and research as a way of making your point.

## **Methods of Evaluation**

## You will be assessed on class participation, a cumulative final exam, several short quizzes, a literature review, two reading synthesis assignments, and the submission of weekly discussing questions or other talking points.

Final Exam

The final exam for this class will be a take-home essay examination modeled after the comprehensive exam you might take for PSC 590. The exam will consist of several questions that you should be able to answer by the end of the semester and you will be required to answer two of these questions. Your answer to each question should be about 5-7 pages in length and will rely on the assigned readings, class discussions, and your own thoughts on the question. A good answer will drawn upon the readings and discussions from multiple weeks of class and you must cite your sources of information as you would in a research paper. The exam will be distributed during the final week of class and will be **due on May 9th by 11:59pm**.

Unit Quizzes

There will be three short quizzes throughout the semester. Quizzes will ask students to demonstrate their understanding of the assigned readings and class discussions. Quizzes will be taken on Canvas and will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short-answer questions. Collectively these quizzes will constitute 10% of your final grade with your lowest score being dropped from your average. A schedule for these quizzes can be seen below:

Quiz 1: Representation Modules 1-3

Quiz 2: Political Institutions Modules 4-7

Quiz 3: Political Behavior Modules 8-12

Literature Review

You will be required to write a literature review that examines a central research question or controversy about American politics. A literature review is a critical part of any research paper because it tells the reader how your research connects to, and builds off of, past research on the topic. This means within your literature review you should analyze how, and how well, the existing literature has addressed the question or controversy you have selected and then discuss ways in which future research could shed new light on the question or controversy.

Your literature review is **due by April 4th at 11:59pm** and you should have your topic approved by me no later than **March 7th**. To get your topic approved, all you need to do is send me a short email explaining your topic. When selecting your topic, make sure it is not too broad. For example, Congress or elections are too broad, but you could write your literature on review on “factors that influence committee assignments in Congress” or “the influence of the economy on vote choice in US elections.”

When writing your literature review, you are welcome to start with readings assigned in this class, or another class, but you must do your own research to find additional sources related to your topic. This means you can continue to research a topic you have investigated previously, but you must collect and analyze new sources and you cannot simply submit work you completed in a previous class. Overall, you should be analyzing and synthesizing at least 15 to 20 sources total and your literature review should be about 8-10 pages double spaced, not including your references.

A good literature review will tell the reader what is already known about your topic and in some cases, how we know it. While doing this requires some summary of past research, a good literature review brings together and synthesizes past research in a way that is most relevant to the topic at hand. As a result, your literature review should not simply be a string of paragraphs where each paragraph provides a detailed summary of an individual piece of past research. In fact, organizing your literature review in such a way where each paragraph is about an individual source is generally a bad idea and will result in a lower grade on this assignment. Instead, you should be making connections between individual pieces of past research and present this information in an organized manner that tells a story of how the literature has developed and changed over time. This may require you to write lengthier summaries about a few pieces of literature that are key to your topic, but for the most part, you should be talking about past research in the context of what it means to the literature as a whole and the question that motivated your interest in the topic.

If you are looking for examples of literature reviews, I recommend starting with many of the assigned readings. Additionally, you can find more information on how to write a good literature review on the [Center for Academic Success’ website](https://www.uis.edu/cas/thelearninghub/writing/handouts/research-methods/literature-review/).

Reading Syntheses

The ability to synthesize and analyze a body of research is a critical skill for graduate students to develop. You will be required to complete two reading synthesis assignments over the course of the semester. For each assignment, you will select a module and either write approximately 4 to 5 double-spaced pages or record a 10 to 12-minute presentation synthesizing and analyzing the readings from that module. I strongly encourage you to submit your reading synthesis assignments during the week in which we discuss the module you are analyzing. This will help you to keep the readings and their arguments fresh in your mind. However, the official deadlines are March 21st and May 2nd. 

Each of your assignments should contain the following sections.

*Section 1: Summary (~1-2 pages)*

Begin your reading synthesis by briefly summarizing the readings’ arguments and findings. This section should consider what the readings tell us about the research questions under observation and/or the theme(s) for that module.

*Section 2: Analysis (~2-4 pages)*

After summarizing the readings, you need to analyze them in some way. A good analysis can take many different forms, but here are some questions you might consider in this section:

* Are you convinced by the readings’ theories and findings? Why or why not?
* How do the readings agree/disagree and why?
* When the readings do disagree, which readings seem the most accurate? Why?
* Do you have any theoretical or methodological critiques of any of the readings? Why?
* Do the readings fail to answer specific questions and if so, how might future research consider these questions?
* How well do the readings fit together? Why do you believe this to be the case?

You likely will not have the space or time to answer all these questions, but your analysis should be more than further summary of the readings. Additionally, it is okay if your synthesis does not cover every reading that was assigned during the module, but it should certainty engage multiple readings. You are allowed to include sources that were not assigned if you think they will help you support the arguments/claims made in your analysis.

*Section 3: References*

Include a reference list for all the sources used in your analysis, regardless of whether they were assigned readings for class. Additionally, make sure you cite your sources of information in the text where necessary.

Participation

Since this is a seminar class, I expect students to actively participate in class on a weekly basis. You have two options for participating in class. You can participate in a weekly asynchronous online discussion board, or you can participate in a weekly synchronous Zoom meeting. You are not required to participate in class via the same method each week, for example, you may attend the Zoom meeting during Module 1 but use the online discussion board during Module 2.

*Zoom Meetings*

Zoom meetings will take place on Tuesday evenings from 6:30pm to about 8:30pm central. You can find the Zoom link for our synchronous meetings on Canvass. The weekly Zoom meetings are entirely optional, but in any week that you participate in the Zoom meeting, you are not required to participate in the online discussion board. Beyond attendance, to earn participation through the Zoom meeting, you should be actively engaged in the class discussion.

*Online Discussion Boards*

Each Tuesday night following the synchronous Zoom meeting, I will post 5 to 8 discussion questions on the discussion board for that module. The online discussion board will remain open until 11:59pm the following Monday night. You can participation in the discussion board at any point throughout the week, but you will get the most out of the discussion board if you are reading and contributing posts at several different points throughout the week.

*Assessing Participation*

Each week you will receive a participation score ranging from 0 to 4 regardless of your method of participation. A score of 0 indicates no participation and a score of 4 indicates outstanding participation. Your final participation grade will constitute 20% of your final grade and will be calculated by averaging your 13 highest participation scores. This means your lowest score will be dropped. Please note when I assess participation, I will consider the quality of your participation in addition to the quantity of your participation. In this sense, I am not simply counting the number of discussion board posts, questions, or comments you contributed to the class discussion. Instead, I will consider the content and quality of your participation. At the end of each week of class, I should be able to tell that you have completed the assigned readings and that you are able to discuss the reading’s main findings and the material covered in my module overviews in a critical manner. On Canvas you can find rubrics for how I will be evaluating participation. There is one rubric for asynchronous participation through the online discussion boards and a second rubric for synchronous participation. However, you will notice, the same metrics will be used to evaluate either form of participation. Failure to either attend our weekly Zoom meeting or participate in the asynchronous discussion board will result in a 0 for the week. Overall, participation is one of the most important elements of this class, but I have designed the course such that everyone can determine the best way to participate according to their individual schedule.

Talking Points

To help facilitate class discussions, each week you will submit 2 talking points pertaining to the readings for that week. Talking points should be the most interesting questions, thoughts, arguments, or comments you have about the week's material. Talking points should not be restatements of discussions from previous weeks of class. They should be submitted in the form of a sentence or short paragraph. To receive credit for your talking points, you must submit them to **Canvas by 11:59 pm each Monday night**. Due to time constraints, we will not cover all the talking points that have been submitted every week. However, submitting your talking points by the deadline, provided they are relatively fresh ideas not already addressed in discussions from previous weeks, is sufficient to receive credit regardless of whether your talking points are used that week. Each of your talking points will be evaluated according to the following scale:

**0 points** = no talking point was submitted

**1 point** = talking point is unlikely to generate discussion because it is either off topic, a statement of fact, or an opinion/critique of a reading that is not fully explained or justified

**2 points** = talking point is likely to generate discussion and demonstrates understanding of the assigned reading(s)

**Grading Scale**

Final Exam 20%

Quizzes 10%

Literature Review 20%

Reaching Synthesis Assignments (2 x 7.5%) 15%

### Participation 20%

Talking Points 15%

| Percent Range | Letter Grade |
| --- | --- |
| 100-93 | A |
| 92-90 | A- |
| 89-87 | B+ |
| 86-83 | B |
| 82-80 | B- |
| 79-77 | C+ |
| 76-73 | C |
| 72-70 | C- |
| 69-67 | D+ |
| 66-63 | D |
| 62-60 | D- |
| 59 and below | F |

## **Course Calendar**

Below is the course calendar with assigned readings and the due dates of major assignments. Please note this schedule is subject to change.

**Module 1: Theories of Representation**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, January 24 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, January 30 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Mansbridge, Jane. 1999. “Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent ‘Yes.’” *The Journal of Politics* 61(3): 628–57.
* Lombardo, Emanuela, and Petra Meier. 2018. “Good Symbolic Representation: The Relevance of Inclusion.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 51(02): 327–30.
* Lowande, Kenneth, Melinda Ritchie, and Erinn Lauterbach. 2019. “Descriptive and Substantive Representation in Congress: Evidence from 80,000 Congressional Inquiries.” *American Journal of Political Science* 63(3): 644–59.
* Clayton, Amanda, Diana Z. O’Brien, and Jennifer M. Piscopo. 2019. “All Male Panels? Representation and Democratic Legitimacy.” *American Journal of Political Science* 63(1): 113–29.
* Dassonneville, Ruth, André Blais, Semra Sevi, and Jean-François Daoust. 2021. “How Citizens Want Their Legislator to Vote.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 46(2): 297–321.

**Module 2: Gender and American Politics**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, January 31 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, February 6 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Lawless, Jennifer L. 2015. “Female Candidates and Legislators.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 18(1): 349–66.
* Teele, Dawn Langan, Joshua Kalla, and Frances Rosenbluth. 2018. “The Ties That Double Bind: Social Roles and Women’s Underrepresentation in Politics.” *American Political Science Review* 112(3): 525–41.
* Fulton, Sarah A., and Kostanca Dhima. 2021. “The Gendered Politics of Congressional Elections.” *Political Behavior* 43(4): 1611–37.
* Bos, Angela L. et al. 2022. “This One’s for the Boys: How Gendered Political Socialization Limits Girls’ Political Ambition and Interest.” *American Political Science Review* 116(2): 484–501.
* Lawless, Jennifer L., Sean M. Theriault, and Samantha Guthrie. 2018. “Nice Girls? Sex, Collegiality, and Bipartisan Cooperation in the US Congress.” *The Journal of Politics* 80(4): 1268–82.

**Module 3: Race and American Politics**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, February 7 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, February 13 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Stout, Christopher T., Katherine Tate, and Meghan Wilson. 2021. “Does Black Representation Matter? A Review of Descriptive Representation for African Americans in Legislative Office.” *National Review of Black Politics* 2(1): 2–21.
* Lemi, Danielle Casarez. 2021. “Do Voters Prefer Just Any Descriptive Representative? The Case of Multiracial Candidates.” *Perspectives on Politics* 19(4): 1061–81.
* Stephens-Dougan, LaFleur. 2021. “The Persistence of Racial Cues and Appeals in American Elections.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 24(1): 301–20.
* Phoenix, Davin L., and Heather Ashbach. “The Anger Gap.” *| School of Social Sciences | UCI Social Sciences*. <https://www.socsci.uci.edu/newsevents/news/2020/2020-02-03-phoenix-anger-gap.php> (January 5, 2022).
  + If you are interested in reading more, a version of the book is available on Google Scholar: Phoenix, Davin L. 2019. *The Anger Gap: How Race Shapes Emotion in Politics*. Cambridge University Press.
* White, Ariel R., Noah L. Nathan, and Julie K. Faller. 2015. “What Do I Need to Vote? Bureaucratic Discretion and Discrimination by Local Election Officials.” *American Political Science Review* 109(1): 129–42.
* Conroy, Meredith, and Perry Bacon Jr. 2020. “There’s A Huge Gap in How Republicans and Democrats See Discrimination.” *FiveThirtyEight*. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/theres-still-a-huge-partisan-gap-in-how-americans-see-discrimination/> (June 22, 2020).

**Module 4: U.S. Congress**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, February 14 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, February 20 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Mayhew, David R. 2004. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. 2nd ed. New Haven: Yale University Press. (Excerpt)
* Fenno, Richard F. 1977. “US House Members in Their Constituencies: An Exploration.” *American Political Science Review* 71(3): 883–916.
* Furnas, Alexander C. et al. 2022. “More than Mere Access: An Experiment on Moneyed Interests, Information Provision, and Legislative Action in Congress.” *Political Research Quarterly*: 10659129221098744.
* Lee, Frances E. 2016. *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign*. University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 3: The Logic of Confrontation)
* Clarke, Andrew J. 2020. “Party Sub-Brands and American Party Factions.” *American Journal of Political Science* 64(3): 452–70.
* Curry, James M., and Frances E. Lee. 2020. “What Is Regular Order Worth? Partisan Lawmaking and Congressional Processes.” *The Journal of Politics* 82(2): 627–41.

**Module 5: The American Presidency**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, February 21 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, February 27 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Kreitner, Richard. 2016. “What Time Is It? Here’s What the 2016 Election Tells Us About Obama, Trump, and What Comes Next.” *The Nation*. <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/what-time-is-it-heres-what-the-2016-election-tells-us-about-obama-trump-and-what-comes-next/> (June 22, 2020).
* Franklin, Daniel Paul, and Michael P. Fix. 2016. “The Best of Times and the Worst of Times: Polarization and Presidential Success in Congress.” *Congress & the Presidency* 43(3): 377–94.
* Potter, Rachel Augustine, Andrew Rudalevige, Sharece Thrower, and Adam L. Warber. 2022. “Not by the Numbers: Evaluating Trump’s Administrative Presidency.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 52(3): 596–625.
* Thrower, Sharece. 2017. “To Revoke or Not Revoke? The Political Determinants of Executive Order Longevity.” *American Journal of Political Science* 61(3): 642–56.
* Reeves, Andrew, and Jon C. Rogowski. 2022. “Unilateral Inaction: Congressional Gridlock, Interbranch Conflict, and Public Evaluations of Executive Power.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 47(2): 427–57.

**Module 6: The Federal Judiciary**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, February 28 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, March 6 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Baum, Lawrence. 1994. “What Judges Want: Judges’ Goals and Judicial Behavior.” *Political Research Quarterly* 47(3): 749–68.
* Rutkowski, Adam G. 2021. “Constitutional Interpretation Styles of US Supreme Court Justices.” In *Open Judicial Politics*, eds. Rorie Spill Solberg and Eric Waltenburg. Oregon State University.
* Sen, Maya. 2014. “How Judicial Qualification Ratings May Disadvantage Minority and Female Candidates.” *Journal of Law and Courts* 2(1): 33–65.
* Bird, Christine C., and Zachary A. McGee. 2023. “Going Nuclear: Federalist Society Affiliated Judicial Nominees’ Prospects and a New Era of Confirmation Politics.” *American Politics Research* 51(1): 37–56.
* Armaly, Miles T., and Elizabeth A. Lane. 2023. “Politicized Battles: How Vacancies and Partisanship Influence Support for the Supreme Court.” *American Politics Research* 51(1): 23–36.

**Module 7: Political Parties**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, March 7 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, March 20 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Bawn, Kathleen et al. 2012. “A Theory of Political Parties: Groups, Policy Demands and Nominations in American Politics.” *Perspectives on Politics* 10(3): 571–97.
* Cohen, Marty, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller. 2008. *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform*. The University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 7: The Invisible Primary: Theory and Evidence)
* Crowder-Meyer, Melody. 2013. “Gendered Recruitment without Trying: How Local Party Recruiters Affect Women’s Representation.” *Politics & Gender* 9(04): 390–413.
* Hannah, A Lee, Kevin Reuning, and Anne Whitesell. 2022. “The Party Replies: Examining Local Party Responsiveness to Prospective Campaign Volunteers.” *Political Research Quarterly*: 10659129221119752.
* Feinstein, Brian D., and Eric Schickler. 2008. “Platforms and Partners: The Civil Rights Realignment Reconsidered.” *Studies in American Political Development* 22(1): 1–31.

Assignments:

* Literature Review Topic Approval (due: 3/7)

**Module 8: Partisanship, Ideology, & Political Knowledge**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, March 21 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, March 27 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Ahler, Douglas J., and Gaurav Sood. 2018. “The Parties in Our Heads: Misperceptions about Party Composition and Their Consequences.” *The Journal of Politics* 80(3): 964–81.
* White, Ismail K., and Chryl N. Laird. 2020. “Why Black Voters Stick With Democrats.” *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/02/trump-doesnt-see-why-black-voters-stick-together/606379/> (July 6, 2020).
* Agadjanian, Alexander. 2021. “When Do Partisans Stop Following the Leader?” *Political Communication* 38(4): 351–69.
* Dolan, Kathleen. 2011. “Do Women and Men Know Different Things? Measuring Gender Differences in Political Knowledge.” *The Journal of Politics* 73(1): 97–107.
* Cramer, Katherine J., and Benjamin Toff. 2017. “The Fact of Experience: Rethinking Political Knowledge and Civic Competence.” *Perspectives on Politics* 15(3): 754–70.
* Cohen, Cathy J., and Matthew D. Luttig. 2020. “Reconceptualizing Political Knowledge: Race, Ethnicity, and Carceral Violence.” *Perspectives on Politics* 18(3): 805–18.

Assignments:

* Last Week to Submit 1st Reading Synthesis Assignment (due: 3/21)

**Module 9: Political Polarization**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, March 28 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, April 3 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Mason, Lilliana. 2018. *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 2: Using Old Words in New Ways)
* Kurtzleben, Danielle (Host), and Lilliana Mason (Guest). 2021. “What If We Don’t Need to Fix Polarization?” *NPR*. <https://www.npr.org/2021/03/19/979369761/is-todays-bitter-partisanship-a-step-toward-a-more-equal-democracy>. (Podcast)
* Enders, Adam M. 2021. “Issues versus Affect: How Do Elite and Mass Polarization Compare?” *The Journal of Politics* 83(4): 1872–77.
* Klar, Samara, Yanna Krupnikov, and John Barry Ryan. 2018. “Affective Polarization or Partisan Disdain?” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 82(2): 379–90.
* Kingzette, Jon et al. 2021. “How Affective Polarization Undermines Support for Democratic Norms.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 85(2): 663–77.
* Kalla, Joshua L., and David E. Broockman. 2022. “Voter Outreach Campaigns Can Reduce Affective Polarization among Implementing Political Activists: Evidence from Inside Three Campaigns.” *American Political Science Review* 116(4): 1516–22.

**Module 10: The Role of the Media in American Politics**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, April 4 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, April 10 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Santia, Martina, Raymond J. Pingree, Kirill Bryanov, and Brian K. Watson. 2022. “Agenda Setting by News and by the Audience in a News Portal Panel Experiment.” *Mass Communication and Society* 25(4): 554–77.
* Farris, Emily M., and Heather Silber Mohamed. 2018. “
* Dunaway, Johanna. 2013. “Media Ownership and Story Tone in Campaign News.” *American Politics Research* 41(1): 24–53.
* Wintersieck, Amanda, Kim Fridkin, and Patrick Kenney. 2021. “The Message Matters: The Influence of Fact-Checking on Evaluations of Political Messages.” *Journal of Political Marketing* 20(2): 93–120.
* Freeze, Melanie et al. 2021. “Fake Claims of Fake News: Political Misinformation, Warnings, and the Tainted Truth Effect.” *Political Behavior* 43(4): 1433–65.
* Lempinen, Edward. 2022. “What Happened When Fox News Viewers Watched CNN for a Month.” *Greater Good*. <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/what_happened_when_fox_news_viewers_watched_cnn_for_a_month> (January 5, 2023).

Assignments:

* Literature Review (due: 4/4)

**Module 11: Political Participation**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, April 11 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, April 17 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. “Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation.” *American Political Science Review* 89(2): 271–94.
* Bode, Leticia. 2012. “Facebooking It to the Polls: A Study in Online Social Networking and Political Behavior.” *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 9(4): 352–69.
* Bruch, Sarah K., Myra Marx Ferree, and Joe Soss. 2010. “From Policy to Polity: Democracy, Paternalism, and the Incorporation of Disadvantaged Citizens.” *American Sociological Review* 75(2): 205–26.
* Weaver, Vesla M., and Amy E. Lerman. 2010. “Political Consequences of the Carceral State.” *The American Political Science Review* 104(4): 817–33.
* Anoll, Allison, and Mackenzie Israel-Trummel. 2019. “Do Felony Disenfranchisement Laws (De)Mobilize? A Case of Surrogate Participation.” *The Journal of Politics* 81(4): 1523–27.
* McClendon, Gwyneth H. 2014. “Social Esteem and Participation in Contentious Politics: A Field Experiment at an LGBT Pride Rally.” *American Journal of Political Science* 58(2): 279–90.

**Module 12: Who Votes, How Often, & Why?**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, April 18 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, April 24 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Leighly, Jan, and Jonathan Nagler. 2014. *Who Votes Now? Demographics, Issues, Inequality, and Turnout in the United States*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. (Chapter 2: Demographics of Turnout)
* Frey, William H. 2021. “Turnout in 2020 Election Spiked among Both Democratic and Republican Voting Groups, New Census Data Shows.” *Brookings*. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/turnout-in-2020-spiked-among-both-democratic-and-republican-voting-groups-new-census-data-shows/>.
* McGhee, Eric, Jennifer Paluch, and Mindy Romero. 2022. “Vote-by-Mail Policy and the 2020 Presidential Election.” *Research & Politics* 9(2): 20531680221089196.
* Kuk, John, Zoltan Hajnal, and Nazita Lajevardi. 2022. “A Disproportionate Burden: Strict Voter Identification Laws and Minority Turnout.” *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 10(1): 126–34.
* Grumbach, Jacob M., and Charlotte Hill. 2022. “Rock the Registration: Same Day Registration Increases Turnout of Young Voters.” *The Journal of Politics* 84(1): 405–17.
* Green, Donald P., and Alan S. Gerber. 2019. *Get Out the Vote: How to Increase Voter Turnout*. 4th ed. Brookings Institution Press. (Chapter 12: What Works, What Doesn’t, and What’s Next?)

**Module 13: Candidates & Campaigns**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, April 25 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Monday, May 1 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Dynes, Adam M., Hans J. G. Hassell, Matthew R. Miles, and Jessica Robinson Preece. 2021. “Personality and Gendered Selection Processes in the Political Pipeline.” *Politics & Gender* 17(1): 53–73.
* Green, Emma. 2017. “Millennials Are Unsatisfied With American Politics, but They’re Still Not Willing to Run for Office.” *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/01/millennials-running-for-office-shauna-shames/514493/> (July 13, 2020).
* Scott, Jamil, Nadia Brown, Lorrie Frasure, and Dianne Pinderhughes. 2021. “Destined to Run? The Role of Political Participation on Black Women’s Decision to Run for Elected Office.” *National Review of Black Politics* 2(1): 22–52.
* Hillygus, D. Sunshine, and Todd Shields. 2008. *The Persuadable Voter: Wedge Issues in Presidential Campaigns*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Chapter 2: The Reciprocal Campaign)
* Panagopoulos, Costas. 2016. “All about That Base: Changing Campaign Strategies in U.S. Presidential Elections.” *Party Politics* 22(2): 179–90.
* Gross, Justin H., and Kaylee T. Johnson. 2016. “Twitter Taunts and Tirades: Negative Campaigning in the Age of Trump.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 49(04): 748–54.

**Module 14: Other Factors that Influence Vote Choice**

Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, May 2 (6:30pm)

Discussion Board Due: Saturday, May 6 (11:59pm)

Readings:

* Jacobson, Gary C. 2015. “It’s Nothing Personal: The Decline of the Incumbency Advantage in US House Elections.” *Journal of Politics* 77(3): 861–73.
* Amlani, Sharif, and Carlos Algara. 2021. “Partisanship & Nationalization in American Elections: Evidence from Presidential, Senatorial, & Gubernatorial Elections in the U.S. Counties, 1872–2020.” *Electoral Studies* 73: 102387.
* Vavreck, Lynn. 2009. *The Message Matters: The Economy and Presidential Campaigns*. Princeton University Press. (Chapter 3: Context Matters: A Campaign Typology)
* Sides, John, Chris Tausanovitch, and Lynn Vavreck. 2022. *The Bitter End: The 2020 Presidential Campaign and the Challenge to American Democracy*. Princeton University Press. (Chapter 1)
* Lewis-Beck, Michael S., and Mary Stegmaier. 2014. “Introduction.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 47(2): 284–88.
* Jackson, Natalie. 2021. “Inconclusive Studies of 2020’s Pre-Election Polling Problems Could Be Good for the Industry – Sabato’s Crystal Ball.” <https://centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/inconclusive-studies-of-2020s-pre-election-polling-problems-could-be-good-for-the-industry/> (January 5, 2023).

Assignments:

* Last Week to Submit 2nd Reading Synthesis (due: 5/2
* Final Exam (due: 5/9)