Seminar in American Politics POS6045

Pollock / Fall 2014

Office	302 Phillips Hall
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Books:

Steven J. Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*

James Stimson, *Public Opinion*

David R. Mayhew, *Electoral Realignments: A Critique of an American Genre*

Morris P. Fiorina, Samuel J. Abrams, and Jeremy C. Pope, *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America* (3rd ed.)

Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*

Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder, *News That Matters: Television and American Opinion*

Course description

This seminar covers many—but not all—major topics and controversies in American politics. You will become conversant with the political science literature on political participation, ideology, political sophistication, partisanship and voting behavior, public opinion, political tolerance, realignment and political change, media, collective action, cultural politics, congress, the presidency, and the judiciary. When you have completed this course, you will be well versed in the major literature and equipped for an in-depth exploration of any of these topics.

Requirements

Discussion. This is a seminar, not a lecture course. In fact, this is *your* seminar, which means that you are responsible for its content and dynamics. You must come to class fully prepared to discuss the material. No discussion, no seminar.

Attendance. Attendance is essential and therefore required. Do not arrive late. Do not depart early. You may accrue one absence without grade penalty. However, two absences will result in a one-half course grade reduction. Three absences will result in a full course grade reduction. Four or more absences will result in an F. Regardless of your attendance, you are responsible for meeting your seminar obligations and course requirements. ***If you know that your obligations outside of school will prevent you from regularly attending, then drop the course.***

Article summaries. (25%) Each will you will read all of the material. Each week you will prepare a one-page précis of each assigned article or book. The summation will address each of the following aspects:

1. The main questions / hypotheses / scholarly controversies addressed by the article or book. Describe one question that you found in the body of the work (include page numbers).
2. The data and methods used to investigate questions/hypotheses /controversies. Describe one methodological application from the body of the work (include page numbers).
3. The main findings. Describe specifics from tables or analyses (include page numbers).
4. Your critical evaluation of the contribution of the analysis to scholarly knowledge of the topic.

Team presentation. (25%) Each week, two of you will lead the discussion of that week's readings. Your two-person team will be "experts of the week." You will present the main points of each assigned reading—plus, you will incorporate ***at least two additional, related readings*** that help to expand and illuminate the assigned readings. You may elect to use Power Point, although it is not required. In any event, the presentation must be of professional quality and organization.

Research design. (50%) You will write a research design paper of 15-20 pages, ***excluding bibliography***. Your design will be based on one of the topics (or a blending of topics) discussed during the semester. You may choose an alternative topic. However, the alternative must have an American politics focus and it must be approved by me. This paper is an "everything but the analysis" paper. It is due no later than ***Wednesday, December 3 at 7 p.m***. It must be organized as follows:

1. Research question (4-5 pages)
    a. Introduction to the problem
    b. Theory and process
2. Literature review (6-7 pages)
    a. Descriptive review. (Must include at ***least five new, unassigned sources.***)
    b. Critical review
3. Hypotheses and data (5-6)
    a. Data and variables
    b. Measurement
    c. Hypotheses

Course grade

Your course grade will be determined by your performance on all course requirements.

Schedule for the term. Note: At my discretion, I may make changes to the assigned reading.

Week 1: August 20. Course introduction. No assigned readings.
Week 2: August 27. Political Participation
Steven J. Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen. 2003. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*. Pearson.

Henry Brady, Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. "Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Participation." *American Political Science Review* 89(2): 271-294.

Alan S. Gerber, Donald P. Green, and Christopher Larimer. 2008. "Social Pressure And Voter Turnout: Evidence From A Large-Scale Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 102 (1): 33-48.

Ryan D. Enos, Anthony Fowler, and Lynn Vavreck. 2014. "Increasing Inequality: The Effect of GOTV Mobilization on the Composition of the Electorate." *Journal of Politics* 76 (1): 273-288.

Week 3: September 3. Ideology
Philip Converse. 1964. "The Nature of Beliefs Systems in Mass Publics," in David Apter (ed.), *Ideology and Discontent* (New York: Free Press): 206-261.

Stephen Ansolabehere, Jonathan Rodden, and James M. Snyder, Jr. 2008. "The Strength of Issues: Using Multiple Measures to Gauge Preference Stability, Ideological Constraint, and Issue Voting." *American Political Science Review* 102(2): 215-232.

Shawn Trier and D. Sunshine Hillygus. 2009. "The Nature of Political Ideology in the Contemporary Electorate." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 73 (Winter): 679–703.

Week 4: September 10. Political knowledge
Scott L. Althaus. 1998. "Information Effects in Collective Preferences." *American Political Science Review* 92(3): 545-558.

Edward G. Carmines and James A. Stimson. 1980. "The Two Faces of Issue Voting." *American Political Science Review* 74(1): 78-91.

Markus Prior. 2014 "Visual Political Knowledge: A Different Road to Competence?" *Journal of Politics* 76 (1): 41–57.

Pew Research Center. February 5, 2013. "What the Public Knows – In Pictures, Maps, Graphs and Symbols."

Week 5: September 17. Tolerance
John L. Sullivan, James Piereson, and George E. Marcus. 1979. "An Alternative Conceptualization of Political Tolerance: Illusory Increases 1950s-1970s." *American Political Science Review* 73(3): 781-794.

James Gibson. 2006. "Enigmas of Intolerance: Fifty Years after Stouffer's Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties." *Perspectives on Politics* 4 (1): 21-34.

Marc J. Hetherington and Elizabeth Suhay. 2011. Authoritarianism, Threat, and Americans' Support for the War on Terror." *American Journal of Political Science* 55 (3): 546–560.

Philip Schwadel and Christopher R. H. Garneau. 2014. "An Age–Period–Cohort Analysis of Political Tolerance in the United States." *Sociological Quarterly* 55: 421–452.

Week 6: September 24. Partisanship and Voting Behavior
Steven Greene . 2002. "The Social-Psychological Measurement of Partisanship." *Political Behavior* 24(3): 171-197.

Joseph Bafumi and Robert Y. Shapiro. 2009. "A New Partisan Voter." *Journal of Politics*, 71: 1-24.

Morris P. Fiorina. 2002. "Parties and Partisanship: A 40-Year Retrospective." *Political Behavior* 24(2): 93-115.

Gregory A. Huber, Seth J. Hill, and Gabriel S. Lenz. 2012. "Sources of Bias in Retrospective Decision Making: Experimental Evidence on Voters' Limitations in Controlling Incumbents." *American Political Science Review* 106(4): 720-741.

Douglas L. Kriner and Andrew Reeves. 2012. "The Influence of Federal Spending on Presidential Elections." *American Political Science Review* 106(2): 348-366.

Week 7: October 1. Macro Opinion
James Stimson. 1991. *Public Opinion in America: Moods, Cycles, and Swings.* Boulder, CO: Westview.

Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro. 1994. "Public Opinion, Institutions, and Policy Making Studying Substantive Democracy." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 27(1): 9-17.

Martin Gilens. 2005. "Inequality and Democratic Responsiveness." *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Special Issue) 69 (5): 778-796.

Week 8: October 8. Party realignment and Issue evolution
David R. Mayhew. 2003. *Electoral Realignments: A Critique of an American Genre*. Yale.

Peter F. Nardulli. 1995. "The Concept of a Critical Realignment, Electoral Behavior, and Political Change." *American Political Science Review* 89(1): 10-22.

Edward G. Carmines and James A. Stimson. 1986. "On the Structure and Sequence of Issue Evolution." *American Political Science Review* 80(3): 901-920.

Edward M. Burmila. 2009. "The Electoral College after Census 2010 and 2020: The Political Impact of Population Growth and Redistribution." *Perspectives on Politics* 7 (4): 837-847.

Week 9: October 15. Culture and politics
Morris P. Fiorina, Samuel J. Abrams, and Jeremy C. Pope. 2005. *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*. 3rd ed.

Alan I. Abramowitz and Kyle L. Saunders. 2008. "Is Polarization a Myth?" *Journal of Politics* 70(2): 542-555.

Morris P. Fiorina, Samuel A. Abrams, and Jeremy C. Pope. 2008. "Polarization in the American Public: Misconceptions and Misreadings." *Journal of Politics* 70: 556-560.

Geoffrey C. Layman and John C. Green. 2006. "Wars and Rumours of Wars: The Contexts of Cultural Conflict in American Political Behaviour." *British Journal of Political Science* 36: 61-89.

Matthew S. Levendusky. 2010. "Clearer Cues, More Consistent Voters: A Benefit of Elite Polarization." *Political Behavior* 32:111–131.

Week 10: October 22. Collective Action
Mancur Olson. 1971. *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Harvard.

George A. Quattrone and Amos Tversky. 1988." Contrasting Rational and Psychological Analyses of Political Choice." *American Political Science Review* 82: 719-736.

Rose McDermott, James H. Fowler and Oleg Smirnov. 2008. "On the Evolutionary Origin of Prospect Theory Preferences. *Journal of Politics* 70: 335-350.

George Loewenstein, Scott Rick, and Jonathan D. Cohen. 2008. "Neuroeconomics." *Annual Review of Psychology* 59: 647-672.

Week 11: October 29. Media and Issue framing
Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder. 1989. *News That Matters: Television and American Opinion*. Chicago.

M. S. Levendusky. 2013. "Why Do Partisan Media Polarize Viewers?" *American Journal of Political Science* 57: 611–623.

Philip H. Pollock III. 1994. "Issues, Values, and Critical Moments: Did 'Magic' Johnson Transform Public Opinion on AIDS*?" American Journal of Political Science* 38(2): 426-446.

David A. Siegel. 2013. "Social Networks and the Mass Media." *American Political Science Review* 107 (4): 786-805.

James N. Druckman, Jordan Fein, and Thomas J. Leeper. 2012. "A Source of Bias in Public Opinion Stability." *American Political Science Review* 106(2): 430-454.

Week 12: November 5. Congress
Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes. 1963. "Constituency Influence in Congress." *American Political Science Review* 57(1): 45-56.

James A. Stimson, Michael B. Mackuen, and Robert S. Erikson. 1995. "Dynamic Representation." *American Political Science Review* 89(3): 543-565.

John D. Griffin and Brian Newman. 2005. "Are Voters Better Represented?" *Journal of Politics* 67(4): 1206-1227.

Stephen Ansolabehere and Philip Edward Jones. 2010. "Constituents' Responses to Congressional Roll-Call Voting." *American Journal of Political Science* 54(3): 583–597.

Joseph Bafumi and Michael C. Herron. 2010. "Leapfrog Representation and Extremism: A Study of American Voters and Their Members in Congress." *American Political Science Review* 104 (3): 519-542.

Week 13: November 12. Presidency
Canes-Wrone, Brandice and Kenneth W. Shotts. 2004. "The Conditional Nature of Presidential Responsiveness to Public Opinion." *American Journal of Political Science* 48(4): 690-706.

Rottinghaus, B. 2006. "Rethinking Presidential Responsiveness: The Public Presidency and Rhetorical Congruency, 1953–2001." *Journal of Politics*, 68: 720–732.

B. Dan Wood and Han Soo Lee. 2009. "Explaining the President's Issue Based Liberalism: Pandering, Partisanship, or Pragmatism." *Journal of Politics* 71: 1577-1592.

Eshbaugh-Soha, M. and Rottinghaus, B. 2013. "Presidential Position Taking and the Puzzle of Representation." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43: 1–15.

Week 14: November 19. Judiciary
Bartels, Brandon L. 2009. "The Constraining Capacity of Legal Doctrine on the U.S. Supreme Court." *American Political Science Review* 103(3): 474-495.

Peter K. Enns and Patrick C. Wohlfarth 2013. "The Swing Justice." *Journal of Politics* 75: 1089-1107.

Micheal W. Giles, Bethany Blackstone, and Richard L. Vining, Jr. 2008. "The Supreme Court in American Democracy: Unraveling the Linkages between Public Opinion and Judicial Decision Making." *Journal of Politics* 70 (2): 293–306.

Christopher J. Casillas, Peter K. Enns, and Patrick C. Wohlfarth. 2011. "How Public Opinion Constrains the U.S. Supreme Court." *American Journal of Political Science* 55: 74–88.

As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the following academic activity by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than August 27. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Go to the course site and complete the Academic Activity Quiz.