Course Syllabus

Spring Semester 2016

Instructor Contact

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Course Information

- Course Name: Political Behavior
- Course ID & Section: POS 4204-0W59
- Credit Hours: 3
- Semester/Year: Spring 2016
- Location: Online Asynchronous

Course Description

Mass political behavior, concentrating on voting and participation, primarily in the United States. PREREQUISITES: POS 2041 or consent of the instructor.

Course Objectives

As the instructor of this course, I expect that my students at the end of the course will:

- Be able to critique research on the determinants of both individual-level and group-level political behavior.
- Be able to discuss areas of disagreement and debate regarding how political attitudes and values are developed.
- Be able to evaluate contextual factors that help explain variation in political behavior across various demographic groups.
- Be able to discern the difficulties in trying to measure and evaluate social phenomena.
- Be able to review, analyze, and connect preexisting research in a useful and coherent way.
- Be able to express arguments rooted in substantive evidence.
- Be able to respectfully and intelligently critique arguments made by others.
- Be able to develop a writing style that is focused and informative for readers.
- Be able to communicate your ideas to others with precision and clarity.
- Be able to harness technological tools to construct a critical assessment of concepts.

Required Textbook

- Niemi, Richard G., Herbert F. Weisberg, and David C. Kimball, eds. 2011. *Controversies in Voting Behavior*. 5th ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- All other required materials will come primarily from the electronic holdings of the UCF Library. A link to reach the materials will be posted within the corresponding week in which it is assigned on the course schedule.

Course Requirements

The course requires successful completion of several assignments that at all times adhere to existing UCF standards of academic integrity, as well as standards pertaining to the display of respect for others within the learning environment. Details of all of these aspects are discussed in greater detail in the ensuing sections of the syllabus, as well as the course expectations page within the Week One module.

Missed Assignments/Make-Ups/Extra Credit

Due to the nature of the class, late assignments are not accepted unless a note from an appropriate source
confirms a university excused reason for the work needing to be submitted late. Students must provide legitimate documentation for any instance where a student will not meet an assignment deadline that meets university guidelines for a permissible absence. This documentation must be provided the same business week of the absence. Documentation can be left in the department main office and should be time-stamped by an office worker. Once legitimate documentation has been provided, students will be provided an opportunity to submit the assignment at a time agreed upon by both instructor and student.

No extra credit is offered in the course.

Evaluation and Grading

Final grades are out of one hundred points possible (a Z designation represents academic dishonesty) –

Letter Grade	Points
A	91.5-100 points
A-	90.0-91.4 points
B+	88.6-89.9 points
B	81.5-88.5 points
B-	80.0-81.4 points
C+	78.6-79.9 points
C	71.5-78.5 points
C-	70.0-71.4 points
D+	68.6-69.9 points
D	61.5-68.5 points
D-	60.0-61.4 points
F	59.9 or less points

Required Graded Course Items	Points
Weekly Concept Worksheet	30
Weekly Analytical Papers	30
Final Examination	40
Total	100

Description of Assignments

Weekly Concept Worksheet (30 points): For each week of the fifteen weeks of course instruction, students will have an opportunity to answer a series of questions about the course materials for the week. Each worksheet must be completed by Sunday of the corresponding course week at 11:59 pm EST. No collaboration is allowed on these worksheets. The worksheets must be completed by following a closed note, closed book, and closed external resource protocol. **Failure to do so, even in just one worksheet, will result in an automatic zero out of thirty for the entire assignment on the semester.** Using the variety of question and response formats provided through the Materia online interface, students will attempt to complete the worksheet after reviewing the course materials each week. Students have one chance to complete the worksheet each week (once answers have been submitted, the worksheet cannot be completed again). Each worksheet is worth two points. The points are allotted based on the percentage of questions the student answers correctly. Please note that the percentage correct will not be rounded up. The point breakdown each week is as follows:

100% correct: 2

95-99.99% correct: 1.8

90-94.99% correct: 1.6

85-89.99% correct: 1.4

80-84.99% correct: 1.2

75-79.99% correct: 1

70-74.99% correct: 0.8

65-69.99% correct: 0.6

60-64.99% correct: 0.4

55-59.99% correct: 0.2

54.99% or below correct: 0

Weekly Analytical Papers (30 points): For each week of the fifteen weeks of course instruction, a discussion prompt will be posted in the module for the corresponding week. Students will be required to submit a one to two page maximum response to the prompt. The submission must be made through webcourses@ucf/Canvas with a .doc, a .docx, or a .pdf file. The student must follow specific formatting rules (12-pt. Times New Roman font, **single spaced**, one inch margins on all sides, and do not use headers/footers). The student must cite the relevant course materials using the APSA citation and reference formatting style. Every submission will be checked for academic integrity by submitting the work to TurnItIn's plagiarism monitor via webcourses@ucf/Canvas. The analytical paper must be submitted each week on Wednesday at 11:59 pm EST. An analytical paper that fails to follow these instructions will receive a grade of zero. Students can earn up to 1 point each week for providing a thorough initial analysis of the discussion prompt that follows the submission guidelines.

After Wednesday at 11:59 pm EST, people will be assigned the paper of a classmate for a peer response. The peer response should offer a polite and thoughtful critique of the analysis offered in the analytical paper submission. A discussion of the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the substantive points of the paper is necessary. Peer reviewers should discuss aspects from the course materials for the week when explaining their outlook on the submission. These responses should be at minimum eight sentences in length. The purpose is for students to engage in a meaningful dialogue with peers about the concepts raised in the course materials. Peer responses will be completed over the webcourses@ucf/Canvas interface. Peer responses are due by Sunday at 11:59 pm EST each course week. Students can earn up to 1 point each week for providing a detailed review of the analytical paper submission offered by a peer.

For both the analytical paper and the peer review, it is absolutely essential that students refrain from giving unsubstantiated personal views. **Do not write about your personal ideology and/or pure opinions; an impartial analysis of all perspectives is required.** A discussion of the course materials is needed, not an individual editorial. In addition, analytical papers and peer responses should only cite and reference course materials; in other words, do not use outside sources in your responses. Refusal to follow these directions results in an automatic zero on both portions of the assignment for the week. Please note the participation guidelines for this assignment in the "Attendance and Behavior Policy."

Final Examination (40 points): For this assignment, students will be presented with a variety of questions about the course material presented over the course of the semester. The purpose is to gauge your comprehension of the concepts discussed in the course. The final examination will be available between the UCF final examination period (opening April 28th at 12 am EST and closing on May 4th at 11:59 pm EST). Students will have one opportunity to take and submit their responses to the questions. The time window available for students to complete the examination is three hours. All components of the examination will be completed over the webcourses@ucf/Canvas interface.

All students must have or acquire a working webcam enabled that submits a visual of you completing the examination, as the final examination will use the ProctorHub tool that monitors student behavior while taking an online assessment. You must give permission to webcourses@ucf/Canvas to enable monitoring your behavior during your examination period. If you complete the examination online but there is no webcam enabled or working, the student will automatically earn a zero on the final. There will be no exceptions; no webcam visualization of student behavior during the examination period results in a score of zero on the assignment. It is mandatory to have a visualization of student behavior to be sure of academic honesty and integrity of the course assessment. There will be a brief practice use of the ProctorHub tool two weeks prior to the final examination. Those students who have issues with webcam visualization during this practice run will be contacted. In instances where an alternative webcam solution cannot be found, the student must contact me before the exam week so that an in-person final examination can be arranged.

Attendance and Behavior Policy

The course is focused heavily on student participation. Active learning is a major emphasis in my approach to teaching. A major portion of class is devoted to class discussion that will occur through the submission and peer review of papers over the webcourses@ucf/Canvas learning management system. A positive environment is a good learning environment, and is especially important in a course with little face-to-face interaction between students and the instructor. Students must show respect to their peers and the instructor at all times.

Since we will be exchanging ideas and at times touch on controversial political topics through the online forum, you will in all likelihood encounter a statement you disagree with. Regardless, you must never belittle, shout down, insult, or mock another person for their position. Doing so can lead to a person's dismissal from the course. The intention of the course is to learn how to think critically using substantiated evidence about political phenomena pertaining to individual-level and group-level political participation. Any behavior that hinders the ability of others to learn the materials is not permissible.

If students do not participate in submitting either an analytical paper or a peer review for at least three class weeks, they will automatically receive a score of zero in the weekly analytical papers portion of the course.

Academic Honesty

No form of academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will be tolerated. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you have permission of that person. This includes copying material from books, reports, journals, pamphlets, handouts, other publications, web sites, etc., without giving appropriate credit for those ideas and/or without identifying material as quotations when taken directly from another source.

If you are still uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook (http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/) for further details. As in all UCF courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. At my discretion, you may also receive a failing grade for the course. Confirmation of such incidents can also result in expulsion from the University.

Note that TurnItIn is used in the course. The service is an automated system which instructors can use to quickly and easily compare the assignment of each student with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. After the assignment is processed, I receive a report from http://www.turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. This report is used as a tool when assessing academic dishonesty.

Academic Accommodations for a Disability

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Accessibility Services before requesting accommodations from the professor. Student Accessibility Services is located in Ferrell Commons Room 185. The office can be contacted by phone 407.823.2371, or TTY/TDD-only phone 407.823.2116. Visit the Student Accessibility website at the following link: http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/

Note: The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities.

UCF Guidelines on a Diverse and Inclusive Learning Environment

The University of Central Florida considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission. UCF expects every member of the university community to contribute to an inclusive and respectful culture for all in its classrooms, work environments, and at campus events. Dimensions of diversity can include sex, race, age, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, intellectual and physical ability, sexual orientation, income, faith and non-faith perspectives, socio-economic class, political ideology, education, primary language, family status, military experience, cognitive style, and communication style. The individual intersection of these experiences and characteristics must be valued in our community.

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at http://shield.ucf.edu/ and http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/.

If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement, please contact me as soon as possible, and/or contact Student Accessibility Services.

UCF Guidelines on Religious Observances

Students are expected to notify me in advance if they are unavailable for class activities to observe a holy day of their religious faith. For additional information, contact the Office of Diversity Initiatives at 407.823.6479.

Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Any handouts used in this course are copyrighted. Handouts means all materials generated for this class, which include, but are not limited to: syllabi, notes, essay prompts, and review sheets. Because these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts unless the instructor expressly grants permission.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software, such as a blog, wiki, or audio content repository. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information available on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Some assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personal sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Course Schedule

Week/Dates	Topic	Assignments	Due Dates
Week 1	**Course Orientation and the Study of Political Behavior**	Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapter 1. Read Powner. 2007. Link (Links to an external site.) Review APSA Referencing/Citation Style Guidelines and Complete Citation Style Activity. Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #1. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #1. Review Syllabus and Complete Syllabus Quiz.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #1: 1/13/16 by 11:59 pm EST Syllabus Quiz: 1/15/16 by 12 pm EST Complete Citation Style Activity: 1/17/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #1: 1/17/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #1: 1/17/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 2	**Democratic Beliefs and Democratic Values**	Read Theiss-Moore. 1993. Link Read Putnam. 1995. Link Read Bennett. 1998. Link Read Mondak et al. 2010. Link Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #2. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #2.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #2: 1/20/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #2: 1/24/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #2: 1/24/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 3	**Electoral Strategy and System Change**	Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapters 18, 19, 20, and 21. Read Druckman et al. 2010. Link	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #3: 1/27/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #3: 1/31/16

		Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #3. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #3.	by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #3: 1/31/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 4	**Voter Turnout**	Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapters 2, 3, and 4. Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #4. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #4.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #4: 2/3/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #4: 2/7/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #4: 2/7/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 5	**Voter Turnout** (continued)	Read Gerber, Green, and Larimer. 2008. Link Read Ansolabehere. 2009. Link Read Holbrook and Krosnick. 2010. Link Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #5. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #5.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #5: 2/10/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #5: 2/14/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #5: 2/14/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 6	**Partisanship and Polarization**	Read Bartels. 2000. Link Read Carsey and Layman 2006. Link Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #6. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #6.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #6: 2/17/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #6: 2/21/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #6: 2/21/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 7	**Partisanship and Polarization**(continued)	Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapters 12, 13, and 14. Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #7. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #7.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #7: 2/24/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #7: 2/28/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #7: 2/28/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 8	**Partisanship and Polarization**(continued)	Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapters 15, 16, and 17. Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #8. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #8.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #8: 3/2/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #8: 3/6/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #8: 3/6/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 9	**Public Opinion and Political Information**	Read Converse. 1964. Link Read Carmines, Ensley, and Wagner. 2012. Link (Links to an external site.) Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #9. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #9.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #9: 3/9/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #9: 3/13/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #9: 3/13/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 10	**Public Opinion and Political Information** (continued)	Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8. Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #10. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #10.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #10: 3/16/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #10: 3/20/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #10: 3/20/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 11	**Social Groups and Social Networks**	Read Jennings, Stoker, and Bowers. 2009. Link Read Alford et al. 2011. Link Read Bond et al. 2012. Link Read Brader, Tucker, and Therriault.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #11: 3/23/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #11: 3/27/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #11: 3/27/16 by 11:59 pm EST

		2014. Link Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #11. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #11.	
Week 12	**Mass Media and Persuasion**	Read Turner. 2007. Link Read Iyengar and Hahn. 2009. Link Read Nyhan and Reifler. 2010. Link Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #12. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #12.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #12: 3/30/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #12: 4/3/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #12: 4/3/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 13	**Vote Determinants**	Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapters 9, 10, and 11. Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #13. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #13.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #13: 4/6/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #13: 4/10/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #13: 4/10/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 14	**Vote Determinants** (continued)	Read Rudolph. 2003. Link Read Koppell and Steen. 2004. Link Read Hayes. 2005. Link Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #14. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #14.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #14: 4/13/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #14: 4/17/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #14: 4/17/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 15	**Survey Research Methodology**	Read Belli et al. 1999. Link Read Bernstein, Chadha, and Montjoy. 2001. Link Read Brenner. 2012. Link Participate in Weekly Analytical Papers #15. Complete Weekly Concept Worksheet #15.	Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #15: 4/20/16 by 11:59 pm EST Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #15: 4/24/16 by 11:59 pm EST Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #15: 4/24/16 by 11:59 pm EST
Week 16	**Wrapping Things Up**	Complete Final Examination Posted on webcourses@ucf (40 points). **Ensure webcam availability that allows for ProctorHub monitoring.**	Finish Final Examination: Between 4/28/16 at 12 am and 5/4/16 by 11:59 pm EST.**Must take exam as early as possible, as you will not be able to take and submit any answers after 5/4/16 by 11:59 pm EST.**