POS 4204-0W59 Political Behavior

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Olds
Meeting Time: Online Asynchronous
Credit: 3 units, letter grade (including +/- modifiers)
Classroom: webcourses@ucf interface
Office Hours: Thursday 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm EST (in-person) and Friday 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm EST (via Skype), and by appointment
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Course Description

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

Taking this course without having taken American National Government previously will make it difficult to follow the materials.

Course Objectives

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

1. Critique research on the determinants of both individual-level and group-level political behavior.
2. Discuss areas of disagreement and debate regarding how political attitudes and values are developed.
3. Evaluate contextual factors that help explain variation in political behavior across various demographic groups.
4. Discern the difficulties in trying to measure and evaluate social phenomena.
5. Review, critique, and connect preexisting research in a useful and coherent way.
6. Express arguments rooted in substantive evidence.
7. Respectfully and intelligently critique arguments made by others.
8. Develop a writing style that is focused and informative for readers.
9. Communicate your ideas to others with precision and clarity.
10. Harness technological tools to construct a critical assessment of concepts.

Grades and Assignments

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

Grade Score
A = 91.5-100
A-= 90.0-91.4
B+= 88.6-89.9
B = 81.5-88.5
B-= 80.0-81.4
C+= 78.6-79.9
C = 71.5-78.5
C-= 70.0-71.4
D+= 68.6-69.9

D = 61.5-68.5
D-= 60.0-61.4
F = 59.9 or less

•*Description of Assignments*

Examinations (25 points each): Over the course of the semester, three examinations are administered over the webcourses@ucf class page. These examinations will be closed book, closed note, and closed collaboration. Each week where there is an examination assigned, students will have 60 minutes to complete the examination at any point that week, so long as the examination is completed before 11:59 pm EST on the Sunday of that week. Examinations can potentially be a mixture of question styles (essay-based, short answer fill-in, etc.). Not every examination administered in the course will necessarily have the same combination of question types. Specific examinations might also consist of just one question type. In other words, students should be prepared for a variety of different question styles. Refer to the course schedule for when exams are implemented. The examinations are all cumulative in terms of content.

All students must have or acquire a working webcam enabled that submits a visual of you completing each examination, as every examination will use the ProctorHub tool that monitors student behavior while taking an online assessment. You must give permission to webcourses@ucf to enable monitoring your behavior during your examination period. If you complete an examination online but there is no webcam enabled or working, the student will automatically earn a zero on that examination. There will be no exceptions; no webcam visualization of student behavior during the examination period results in a score of zero on that particular exam. Students that do not follow the closed book, closed note, and closed collaboration rule of the exams will receive a zero on any examination where an infraction takes place. It is mandatory to have a visualization of student behavior to be sure of academic honesty and integrity of every course assessment. There will be a brief practice use of the ProctorHub tool one week prior to the first 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 an exam period begins so that an in-person examination can be arranged.

Annotated Bibliography (25 points): Students will present a thorough review of previous research that pertains to an area of research on political behavior that interests them. The important/major works in the research area should be detailed in the annotated bibliography. This means the research that is highly cited by other scholars in the research area needs to be covered. It is the responsibility of the student to summarize these major works and determine ways in which their findings have shaped how the research area is currently understood. It is very important that students realize this project should not focus on political behavior of citizens in the presidential election this year, as not enough academic studies that analyze information from this election cycle have been performed.

In this assignment, students will offer a summary of at minimum fifteen sources that all pertain to the relevant topic of interest to them. The sources you select must evaluate a research question by collecting and evaluating information relevant to the question. For each source, you must summarize the following components: research question, research theory, research hypothesis, research method, and research findings. In each section, the student must provide a brief summary in their own words. **Absolutely no quoting directly from the works is allowed; everything must be written in your own voice**. All sources must be academic peer-reviewed sources (academic journal articles, books, and book chapters). You cannot collaborate with anyone on this project; not following this guideline will result in an automatic zero on the assignment.

Acceptable scholarly research sources include the following academic journals: *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, *Political Behavior*, *American Politics Research*, *American Political Science Review*, *Social Science Quarterly*, and *Political Research Quarterly*. In terms of books and book chapters, works from university presses (Cambridge University Press, Princeton University Press, Oxford University Press, University of Chicago Press, etc.) are ideal. The following are NOT ALLOWED as scholarly research

sources: blogs, websites, newspaper articles, popular novels, mainstream magazine articles, think tank reports, and interest group newsletters. The intention of this assignment is to summarize scholarly research, not to summarize examples written in non-academic outlets.

An example of the style of the annotated bibliography will be posted on webcourses@ucf.

Students must type the annotated bibliography in a word-processing computer program and follow specific formatting rules (12-pt. Times New Roman font, double spaced, and one inch margins on all sides). Microsoft Word .doc files are preferred. Students will be expected to avoid frequent spelling and grammatical errors. The student should cite all resources used by **consistently** following the citation guidelines presented in the style they are most familiar with (APSA, APA, MLA, Harvard, etc.). Every annotated bibliography assignment must be checked for academic integrity by submitting the work to TurnItIn's plagiarism monitor via webcourses@ucf. Refer to the course schedule for assignment due date.

Note: If you are in another one of my courses this semester, you are not allowed to submit the same topic and/or the same academic sources for multiple classes. If you have done an annotated bibliography for another instructor in another course, you cannot submit the same project. Students that are repeating this course from a prior semester cannot do the same subject area for the annotated bibliography.

The scoring of this assignment is based on the following (out of 25 points possible) —

•**5 Points:** The student collects at least fifteen relevant academic sources about a specific area regarding political behavior
•**10 Points:** The student provides a clear and informative summary in their own words of the five key research components for each source
•**5 Points:** The student provides citations for each academic source accurate and consistent with selected style guidelines
•**5 Points:** The writing is easy to follow, and also avoids frequent spelling and grammatical errors

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.

Grade Appeals

If a student has an issue with the grade they earned for one of the assignments, the student must write a one-page explanation describing what aspect or aspects the evaluation missed. A twenty-four hour cooling off period is required, meaning you cannot submit an appeal within the first twenty-four hours after you receive an assignment grade. The written appeal can only be submitted between the second and fourth day after you receive an assignment back. Please note that if you submit a grade appeal, the work can potentially be scored lower than the initial grade if the second review of the assignment suggests there are additional issues or problems with the assignment. Appeals should be submitted via email.

Class Behavior Policy

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, especially when there are informal discussion threads used at times in the course to stimulate critical thinking.

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. Any behavior that hinders the ability of others to learn the materials is not permissible.

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.

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.

Academic Honesty

◇ 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 copyrighted 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.
◇ Lecture notes may not be sold.
◇ 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.

UCF Writing Center

The University Writing Center (UWC) is a free resource for UCF undergraduates. At the UWC, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you on anything you're writing (in or out of class), at any point in the writing process, ranging from the brainstorming stage to the editing stage. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the UWC website at http://uwc.cah.ucf.edu/, or call 407.823.2197. Many features of the UWC are available through webcourses@ucf as well.

UCF Guidelines on Emergencies

Any closure of campus due to hurricanes or any other emergencies will be announced by the university with as much advance notice as possible. The UCF home page will announce campus closures and additional important information about the event. Note: Examples of an emergency could be a flood, tornado, institution-wide power outage, etc.

UCF Guidelines on Religious Observances

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

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.

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 might be used in the class during the semester, 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. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Course Materials

• Fiorina, Morris P, Samuel J. Abrams, and Jeremy C. Pope. 2011. *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*. New York: Pearson.

• Gelman, Andrew. 2009. *Red State, Blue State, Rich State, Poor State: Why Americans Vote the Way They Do*. New York: Princeton University Press.

• Hibbing, John R., Kevin B. Smith, and John R. Alford. 2013. *Predisposed: Liberals, Conservatives, and the Biology of Political Differences*. New York: Routledge.

• Kaufmann, Karen M., John R. Petrocik, and Daron R. Shaw. 2008. *Unconventional Wisdom: Facts and Myths about American Voters*. New York: Oxford University Press.

• Any other supplemental materials will come primarily from the electronic holdings of the UCF Library. A link to reach the materials will be posted within the online course module for the corresponding week in which it is relevant.

Course Schedule

Note: Informal ungraded discussion threads about relevant course materials will be included at various times in the course. These discussions will help students prepare for the examinations.

Week One
• Read and review course syllabus.
• Syllabus quiz due 8/26/16 by 12 pm EST (for financial aid purposes).
• Participate in the "Introduce Yourself" discussion thread.
• Make sure you have acquired the course texts to begin readings.

Week Two - Electoral Strategy and System Change
• Read Gelman. 2009. Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

Week Three - Voter Turnout
• Read Gelman. 2009. Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Week Four - Voter Turnout (continued)
• Read Gelman. 2009. Chapters 8, 9, and 10.
• Have working webcam prepared for practice run of ProctorHub tool in webcourses@ucf.

Week Five
• Complete Examination #1 by 9/25/16 at 11:59 pm EST.

Week Six - Partisanship and Polarization
• Read Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope. 2011. Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

Week Seven - Partisanship and Polarization (continued)
• Read Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope. 2011. Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

Week Eight - Clarifying Public Opinion and Political Information
• Read Kaufmann, Petrocik, and Shaw. 2008. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Week Nine - Clarifying Public Opinion and Political Information (continued)
• Read Kaufmann, Petrocik, and Shaw. 2008. Chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9.

Week Ten
• Complete Examination #2 by 10/30/16 at 11:59 pm EST.

Week Eleven - Biological Determinants of Political Behavior?
• Read Hibbing, Smith, and Alford. 2013. Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

Week Twelve - Biological Determinants of Political Behavior? (continued)
• Read Hibbing, Smith, and Alford. 2013. Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

Week Thirteen - Debates about What Determines Vote Choice
• Read Hibbing, Smith, and Alford. 2013. Chapters 7, 8, and 9.

Week Fourteen - Debates about What Determines Vote Choice
• Read Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope. 2011. Chapters 7, 8, 9, and 10.

Week Fifteen
• Complete Examination #3 by 12/4/16 at 11:59 pm EST.

Finals Week
• Digital file of Annotated Bibliography assignment submission due at webcourses@ucf on 12/9/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Syllabus subject to change at instructor's discretion