POS4206.0001: POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY
Spring 2024 (3 credits)

Monday and Wednesday, 9:00am – 10:20am EST (face-to-face)
Location: NSC 0110

Instructor: Dr. Kelsey Larsen
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Email: kelsey.larsen@ucf.edu
Phone: 407-823-2608
Office Hours (in person or via Zoom):
- Monday 10:30am-12:00pm
- Tuesday 12:00-1:00pm
- By appointment

You can pre-reserve your Office Hours slots at
https://calendly.com/kelseylarsen/officehours
(see Instructor Contact Information below for more guidance)
Graduate Teaching Assistant: Anthony Anta (contact via Webcourses messaging)

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to train learners to identify and evaluate the multiple psychological inputs that inform political decision-making. It uses psychology, behavioral economics, and neuroscience to explore the sometimes complimentary, sometimes at-odds nature of cognitive and affective inputs to choices, and explores how those inputs can differ among various political stakeholders and environments. The course material begins with a consideration of traditional and emerging theories of psychological behavior, considering how things like heuristic biases, utility calculations, and stress might impact political decision-making processes. It then has students consider the lessons of those theories in a variety of contemporary political issues, including foreign and domestic policies. Finally, the course concludes by considering the influence of morality on political decision-making—helping students learn not just how actors make decisions and what decisions they make, but also what decisions they *should* make. By the end of this course, learners will be able to more appropriately identify and interact with the many decision-making inputs of others and themselves, and in doing so, better evaluate and implement political decisions.

Course learning objectives:
When you successfully complete this course, you will be able to:
1. Identify and explain the major theories of psychological decision-making in political science.
2. Apply lessons of psychological decision-making theories to historical and contemporary policy cases, as well as your own personal experiences.
3. Clearly communicate the inputs to political choices for diverse audiences.

Required Readings:

- Note that there is **no required textbook** for this course; instead, we will make use of a variety of articles, book chapters, and other open-source materials as a means of learning the topic. All of the materials will be made available to students via the POS4206 Webcourses site. Note that sometimes, readings will be easier than a traditional textbook… and at times, they'll be harder. We'll cover the basics of how to best consume this information in class; learners should just come prepared to challenge themselves.

Graded Assignments:

Class Participation (15%)
Reflections (20%)
Exam 1 (25%)
Exam 2 (25%)
Final Paper (15%)

Class Participation (150 points):
Students are expected to attend every class session, to have read the assigned readings for a class section before attending that class, and to actively listen to and participate in class discussions. Class participation will be evaluated based on items like your active engagement with in-class discussions, your completion of assigned readings, and your timely submittal of assignments.

Reflections (200 points):
Students will complete a series of ten short Reflections throughout the semester, in which they offer responses to instructor-provided prompts relevant to the most recent class Modules.

Exams 1 and 2 (500 points total):
Students will take two in-class exams surveying the material from the preceding weeks of instruction. The instructor will provide information on the specific format and topics surveyed in the weeks prior to the Exams.

Final paper (150 points):
Students will craft a 10-12 page paper in APA format, to be submitted via the Webcourses@UCF course site. The paper prompt, as well as specific information and guidelines, will be provided by the instructor in the weeks preceding the final paper.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Total points
A	93%-100%	925- 1000
A-	90-93%	895 - 924
B+	87-89%	865 - 894
B	84-86%	835 - 864
B-	80-83%	795 - 834
C+	77-79%	765 - 794
C	74-76%	735 - 764
C-	70-73%	695 - 734
D+	67-69%	665 - 694
D	64-66%	635 - 664
D-	60-63%	595 - 634
F	0-59%	0-594

Policy on Late Reflections

Students are expected to submit all Reflections by the assigned due dates. But, we all know that sometimes work/life/otherwise gets in the way—our work schedules get moved, or our car breaks down, or we catch a cold, and just can't quite meet the deadline set. In those cases, **late reflections are accepted with a half-grade deduction** (e.g., A to A-) for every 24 hour period the response is late. Be smart, and use that policy to your strategic benefit—noting that you can still often earn Bs on assignments that are 2-3 days late, but also that anything more than 10 days late is a failing assignment. However, keep in mind that this policy applies only to reflections, and <u>not</u> to other categories of assessments.

Policy on Absences

As noted in the Class Participation grade section, it is expected that any student enrolling in the course is committed to attending every class session, completing course tasks, and engaging in course discussions. Excused absences apply to when a student experiences an emergency (e.g., hospitalization, family death, religious observance, military service, emergency medical provider visit)—any students in this category should contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss available make-up policies and procedures such as rescheduling a due date. However, if a student chooses to miss class for a work obligation, a previously scheduled appointment, non-University affiliated travel, or other reasons, that absence is not considered excused, and the student should borrow notes from classmates or book an Office Hours appointment to ensure they do not fall behind.

Important Registrar Dates and Deadlines:

- Drop/Swap deadline: Friday January 12, 2024 by 11:59pm EST
- Withdrawal deadline: Friday March 29, 2024 by 11:59pm EST
- Grade Forgiveness Deadline (see here for rules and regulations): Monday April 22, 2024 at 11:59pm EST

Instructor Contact Information

Office Hours will be held in-person and via Zoom, unless otherwise noted in class. Office Hours appointments can be pre-reserved—indeed, it's highly recommended you reserve your own dedicated slot to avoid having to wait endlessly in the waiting room! Reservations are easy: First, visit https://calendly.com/kelseylarsen/officehours. Then, it's a simple two-click process:

- Select the time/date you'd like to meet and click 'Confirm.' Don't see a time available? That means it's already filled up, so see if you can find another that works.
- Enter some basic details: your name/email, what you're hoping to chat about, and the format you'd prefer to meet in.
- Once your details are entered, click 'Schedule event.' You'll receive an email invitation (with your personal Zoom link, if applicable), and your dedicated meeting time will be all locked in!

Please limit yourself to no more than 2 reservations on any given date, to be sure everyone gets their questions answered. If you feel like you'll need more time than that or have other scheduling concerns, contact Dr. Larsen directly to make an appointment.

Of course, you can also message the instructor with written questions/concerns anytime—she pledges to respond to you as soon as possible. This typically means between 24-36 hours during the week, and 36-48 hours during the weekend. If you send a message and ever don't receive a response within those weekday/weekend time limits, feel comfortable sending it again-- Dr. Larsen never intentionally ignores any message, so it may have just gone to the wrong folder!

UCF CARES

UCF's expectations of you as a student have returned to pre-pandemic levels. This latest shift can at times feel overwhelming, so if at any point you're feeling swamped by academic, financial, or other obligations, UCF has made a multitude of resources available to all students. Please head straight to UCFCares.com to find resources and support for yourself or others-- free services and information are included for a variety of concerns you might have, including but not limited to access to food, bias incidents, mental health concerns, and financial challenges. You can also e-mail ucfcares@ucf.edu with questions or for additional assistance. You can reach a UCF Cares staff member between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. by calling 407-823-5607. If you are in immediate distress, please call Counseling and Psychological Services to speak directly with a counselor 24/7 at 407-823-2811, or please call 911.

Inclement Weather Statement

If any inclement weather impacts our course's regularly scheduled programming, we will always follow official UCF guidance regarding campus closures. In addition, the instructor will make any adaptations to the course schedule that are necessary for the lessons of the course to still be effectively learned, and will communicate those adaptations to the course via Webcourses.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES: GENERAL

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Rules of Conduct at <https://scai.sdes.ucf.edu/student-rules-of-conduct/>. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in any of the following. Note that although all items are essential, particularly relevant statements for our course are highlighted in **bold**.

1. Unauthorized assistance: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating.
2. **Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means: The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else's efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.**
3. Commercial Use of Academic Material: Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor's PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.
4. Falsifying or misrepresenting the student's own academic work.
5. Plagiarism: Using or appropriating another's work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.
6. **Multiple Submissions: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.**
7. Helping another violate academic behavior standards.
8. Soliciting assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements.

Statement on Using AI Tools

This class may make use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) such as ChatGPT in various ways. Note that learners are permitted to use AI only in the manner and means described in class; any attempt to represent AI output inappropriately as their own work that does not comply with those rules will be treated as plagiarism.

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating
Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, *The Golden Rule*<https://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/>. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and respond to academic misconduct when necessary. Penalties for violating rules, policies, and instructions within this course can range from a zero on the exercise to an "F" letter grade in the course. In addition, an Academic Misconduct report could be filed with the Office of Student Conduct, which could lead to disciplinary warning, disciplinary probation, or deferred suspension or separation from the University through suspension, dismissal, or expulsion with the addition of a "Z" designation on one's transcript.

Being found in violation of academic conduct standards could result in a student having to disclose such behavior on a graduate school application, being removed from a leadership position within a student organization, the recipient of scholarships, participation in University activities such as study abroad, internships, etc.

Let's avoid all of this by demonstrating values of honesty, trust, and integrity. No grade is worth compromising your integrity and moving your moral compass. Stay true to doing the right thing: talk to your instructor, make a plan, take a compromise rather than a shortcut.

Please note: Students are not allowed to use GroupMe, WhatsApp, or any other form of technology to exchange course material associated with a graded assignment, quiz, test, et cetera. Just because you may not be in a formal classroom setting while completing an assignment does not mean that the completion of graded work should not be treated with integrity.

The following is not all-inclusive of what is considered academic misconduct. These examples show how the use of technology can be considered academic misconduct and could result in the same penalties as cheating in a face-to-face class:

- **Taking a screen shot of an online quiz or test question, posting it to GroupMe or WhatsApp, and asking for assistance is considered academic misconduct.**
- **Answering an online quiz or test question posted to GroupMe or WhatsApp is considered academic misconduct. Giving advice, assistance, or suggestions on how to complete a question associated with an online assignment, quiz, or test is considered academic misconduct.**
- **The use of outside assistance from another student or by searching the internet, Googling for answers, use of websites such as Quizlet, Course Hero, Chegg Study, etc. is considered academic misconduct.**
- **Gathering to take an online quiz or test with others and sharing answers in the process is considered academic misconduct.**
- **Representing AI output inappropriately as your own work, in a way that does not follow course guidance, is considered academic misconduct.**

If a student or group of students are found to be exchanging material associated with a graded assignment, quiz, or test through any form of technology (GroupMe, WhatsApp, etc.), or use outside assistance (Googling answers, use of websites such as Quizlet, Course Hero, Chegg Study, etc.), they could receive anywhere from a zero grade on the exercise to an "F" in the course depending on the act.

Course Accessibility:

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need access to course content due to course design limitations should contact the professor as soon as possible. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) <http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/> (Ferrell Commons 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone 407-823-2371). For students connected with SAS, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential course access and accommodations that might be necessary and reasonable. Determining reasonable access and accommodations requires consideration of the course design, course learning objectives and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student. Further conversation with SAS, faculty and the student may be warranted to ensure an accessible course experience.

Campus Safety:

Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise during class, everyone needs to work together. Students should be aware of their surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.
- Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Students should make a note of the guide's physical location and review the online version at <http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html>.
- Students should know the evacuation routes from each of their classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency.
- If there is a medical emergency during class, students may need to access a first-aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those are located, see <https://ehs.ucf.edu/automated-external-defibrillator-aed-locations>.
- To stay informed about emergency situations, students can sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to <https://my.ucf.edu> and logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the toolbar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on the Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."
- Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.
- To learn about how to manage an active-shooter situation on campus or elsewhere, consider viewing this video (<https://youtu.be/NIKYajEx4pk>).

Deployed Active Duty Military students:
Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Make-up Assignments for authorized University Events/Co-curricular Activities:
Students who represent the university in an authorized event or activity (for example, student-athletes) and who are unable to meet a course deadline due to a conflict with that event must provide the instructor with documentation in advance to arrange a make-up. No penalty will be applied. For more information, see the UCF policy at <https://policies.ucf.edu/documents/4-401.pdf>

Religious Observances:
Students must notify their instructor in advance if they intend to miss class for a religious observance. For more information, see the UCF policy at <http://regulations.ucf.edu/chapter5/documents/5.020ReligiousObservancesFINALJan19.pdf>.

Title IX Policy:
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 https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu and http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/.

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.

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal educational use. A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject. Recording classroom activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations is prohibited. **Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance, and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member.** Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct as described in the Golden Rule.

General Technology Requirements:
In this class, the official mode of outside-meeting communication is through Webcourses messaging. All communication between student and instructor and between student and student should be respectful and professional. It is the student's responsibility to check their messages and emails frequently.

Academic Engagement Requirement:
All instructors/faculty 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 Webcourses@UCF quiz in the course site by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

This syllabus is exceptionally long, but all these policies are designed to inform (and protect!) you. Have any questions about these policies? Reach out to Dr. Larsen!

CORE COURSE SCHEDULE

The following course schedule is subject to amendment by the instructor with advance notice. ***Note that this course uses Webcourses@UCF to manage all assigned readings/guidance for each of these themes; learners should access detailed week-by-week information in the course 'Modules' page and complete course readings prior to the assigned course day.***

Module	Date	Theme	Key Assignments
Week 1	**08 January**	Course introduction	
	10 January	Can there be a 'psychology' of political science?	Academic Engagement Activity Due by Friday
Week 2	**15 January**	No class – Martin Luther King Jr. Day	
	17 January	Who is the 'decision-maker' we are psychologically analyzing?	
Week 3	**22 January**	The roots of human cognition	Reflection #1 due 1/22
	24 January	Being rational – expected utility and political choice	
Week 4	**29 January**	Being rationally irrational - heuristics	Reflection #2 due 1/29
	31 January	Being rationally irrational – biases	
Week 5	**05 February**	Personality traits and political behavior	Reflection #3 due 2/5
	07 February	Operational codes and belief systems	
Week 6	**12 February**	Political emotions	Reflection #4 due 2/12
	14 February	Anxiety	
Week 7	**19 February**	Stress and trauma shaping political choice	Reflection #5 due 2/19
	21 February	Genetic (political) expression	
Week 8	**26 February**	Exam 1 Review	

	28 February	EXAM 1 (In class)	Exam #1 due
Week 9	**04 March**	Social identity pt. 1	
	06 March	Social identity pt. 2	
Week 10	**11 March**	Decisions about immigration	
	13 March	Decisions about social issues	
Week 11	**18 March**	*No Class – Spring Break*	
	20 March	*No Class – Spring Break*	
Week 12	**25 March**	Decisions about the environment	Reflection #6 due 3/25
	27 March	Decisions about public health	
Week 13	**01 April**	Decisions about peace	Reflection #7 due 4/1
	03 April	Final Paper Workshop	
Week 14	**08 April**	Decisions about war	Reflection #8 due 4/8
	10 April	Morality and political preference pt. 1	
Week 15	**15 April**	Morality and political preference pt. 2	Reflection #9 due 4/15
	17 April	EXAM 2 (In Class)	Exam #2 due
Week 16	**22 April**	How do we use all that we know? Looking ahead in political psychology	Reflection #10 due 4/22
Exam Period	**29 April**	***Final Paper due Monday April 29th by 11:59pm EST***	