POS 6045 - Seminar in American National Politics

Section: 0001

College of Sciences

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

Course Information

Term: Spring 2025
Class Meeting Days: T
Class Meeting Time: 06:00PM - 08:50PM
Class Meeting Location: HPH O305G
Modality: P
Credit Hours: 3.00

Course Description

POS 6045 COS-POLS 3(3,0)Seminar in American National Politics: PR: Admission to a graduate degree-seeking program or C.I. Examines major aspects of the American system, including mass behavior, public opinion, and political institutions. Fall.

This graduate seminar is designed to meet the needs of graduate students who wish to acquire greater knowledge about American politics, teach American politics or who want in the near future to do original research, such as a MA thesis or non-thesis option paper. Additionally, this course will provide a solid foundation for more specialized graduate seminars in political science that you might take in the future, as well as serving as an introduction and overview of the American politics literature for those who intend to go on at some point to enter a doctoral program.

An introductory course such as this generally aims to acquaint students with the breadth of work in the field and does so at the expense of depth. In many ways this course will be no different. But the breadth of work in American Politics is huge, and we will not be able to cover it all. However, I hope the selected topics and readings, will provide you with an introduction to a wide array of substantive concerns, intellectual problems, controversies, theoretical approaches, research design, and methods of inquiry that relate to contemporary American politics.

I look forward to the seminar and hope you find it enjoyable and informative. I look forward to learning a lot from you!

Instructor Information

Dr. Jonathan Knuckey
Office Location: HPH 302L
Office Hours:
Tuesday, 10.00-11.30am

Thursday, 10.00-11.30am.

I can also meet by appointment on other days and times.

Your success in this seminar is important to me. I encourage you to use office hours to not only ask anything about the course material and let me know how the course is working out, but to also chat about any research ideas you might have or if you just want to talk about future educational or career plans.

Zoom: Use this link for any Zoom meetings https://ucf.zoom.us/j/6720872288

Email: Use the Inbox in Canvas to message me

About Me

I joined UCF in 1999. I received my BA in Political Theory and Institutions from the **University of Liverpool,** my MA in U.S. History and Politics from the **University of**

Keele and my Ph.D. in Political Science from the **University of New Orleans**.

My main areas of research and teaching are southern politics, voting behavior, campaigns and elections, political parties, race and politics, and gender and politics.

Student Learning Outcomes

Our seminar has the following learning goals and objectives:

- **Understanding Theoretical Foundations**: Students will be able to critically analyze and discuss the key theories and concepts that underpin American political behavior, including political political participation, political socialization, attitude formation and voting behavior.

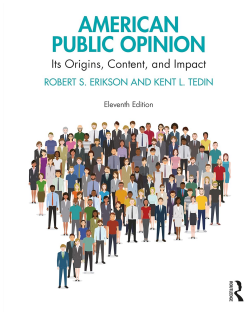
- **Research Methodologies**: Students will demonstrate proficiency in the research methodologies used to study American political behavior, including quantitative analysis, survey research, and experimental design.

- **Critical Analysis**: Students will develop the ability to critically assess academic literature and empirical studies in the field of American political behavior, identifying strengths, weaknesses, potential biases, and avenues for future research

- **Application of Knowledge**: Students will apply theoretical and empirical knowledge to contemporary issues in American politics, demonstrating the ability to conduct independent research and present their findings.

- **Interdisciplinary Perspectives**: Students will appreciate the interdisciplinary nature of political behavior research, integrating insights from psychology, sociology, economics, and other related fields.

Course Materials and Resources



American Public Opinion: It's Origins, Content, and Impact
ISBN: 978-1032354255
Authors: Robert S. Erikson & Kent L. Tedin
Publisher: Routledge
Edition: Eleventh

Book

Note: The American Pubic Opinion textbook is not a required text per se. It is listed here as a reference that provides general background and foundational material on most of the topics covered in our seminar. It can be also be rented on Amazon kindle.

Weekly Seminar Meetings

Our weekly format is a face-to-face seminar. My role in the seminar is to facilitate your input into the seminar, and answer questions you may have about the readings for the week.

Please note that as the stated modality of the seminar is face-to-face, "attending" our seminar via Zoom is <u>not</u> an option.

Seminar Participation

The key to a good seminar experience is active and regular participation. Part of your participation involves your own comments and questions during our discussions. The

other part will be determined by the luck of the draw. Specifically, when we begin to discuss each assigned article, a student will be chosen at random to start the discussion by giving a short (about 2 minutes) summary of the article. You should be able to remind the seminar of the author(s) main argument and methodology (i.e., how do they support the work's claims?), the key findings or takeaways from the article and provide a few initial comments and observations to help direct the discussion. As four of the five articles assigned will be ones that that everyone will have read for the week, that means four students -- one for each article -- will be randomly selected in this manner each week.

I know you might not immediately understand everything in the readings, and the research design and methods sections of articles can be difficult to follow for those who have yet to take an advanced data analysis seminar. I understand that, and simply ask you read and reflect upon each article we read. Even absent the technical background you still ought to get a sense of what the findings are articles and why they are important in the study of political behavior and politics more generally. Come to the seminar prepared to discuss, critique, ask questions about the readings and think how we might use these articles as stepping stones to future research -- maybe even your own MA thesis or PhD dissertation!

Your participation in our seminar will be assessed using the following rubric:

Criterion	***Strong***	***Needs Development***	***Unsatisfactory***
Listening	*Actively listens to peers and instructor, demonstrates understanding by building on others' ideas, and shows respect during discussions*	*Listens but may occasionally be distracted or not fully engaged, shows some understanding of others' ideas although more limited effort in building upon them.*	*Rarely listens, frequently distracted (including browsing other materials during class, texting, etc.), does not demonstrate understanding or respect for others' ideas.*

Preparation	*Usually arrives on time, fully prepared with all reading assignments completed, has notes on reading, and observations and questions ready. Clearly prepared when called upon to introduce and discuss an article.*	*Usually arrives on time, fully prepared with all reading assignments completed, but more limited evidence of notes on readings, and observations and questions ready. Might be less prepared when called upon to introduce and discuss an article.*	*Often arrives late and/or little evidence of having thoroughly completed or thought about assigned material. Often is unprepared to introduce and discuss article when selected. Sitting in a seminar without access to the articles for the week usually is a good tip off that you are not prepared!*
Quality of contributions	*Comments are directed to all members of the seminar, not just the professor. Regularly contributes meaningful insights, asks thoughtful questions, and provides relevant examples that enhance the discussion.*	*Comments tend to be directed more toward the professor rather than other members of the seminar and/or lack depth or relevance. Occasionally may rely on anecdotes/opinions. More limited enhancement of the discussion.*	*Comments are often off-topic or unconstructive, reflecting little understanding of either the articles or previous remarks by others. Tendency to rely exclusively on anecdotes or opinions uninformed by the readings. Minimal enhancement of the discussion*
Frequency of participation	*Actively participates in meaningful ways in every session, including volunteering comments and ideas and not just when called upon.*	*Participates when called upon, with some meaningful contributions, but may be inconsistent in volunteering comments and ideas.*	*Rarely participates and only when called upon*

Impact on seminar	*Positively influences the seminar dynamics, fosters a collaborative learning environment, and encourages others to participate. Keeps the discussion moving forward.*	*Occasionally influences the seminar positively, but inconsistent in fostering a collaborative environment. Keeps the conversation on track, but do little to move it forward*	*Little to no positive impact on the seminar, may disrupt or detract from the collaborative learning environment.*

To provide a sense of how I am evaluating your participation, I will provide you with a participation grade (out of 10) at the end of week 5, 11, and 13. These grades will be cumulative over the course of the semester. I am also happy to meet at any point in the semester to identify how your participation might be improved.

Weekly Readings & Reviews

We will read **five articles** each week (the exception being the single article assigned in week 1). Four are assigned by me (see the reading schedule at the end of the syllabus) and the fifth you will select yourself.

Criteria for article selected by you.

The fifth article you choose should meet the following criteria:

- ***The article* must be on the general topic of the week**, e.g., for the seminar on September 5th the article must be the topic of voter competence and political knowledge.
- ***The article must be on some aspect of American political behavior.*** I don't mind if the article involves a comparison of political behavior across different nations, but one of those nations must be the United States.

- ***The article must be from one of the following journals:***
    - *American Political Science Review*
    - *American Journal of Political Science*
    - *American Sociological Review*
    - *American Journal of Sociology*
    - *American Politics Research*
    - *British Journal of Political Science*
    - *Canadian Journal of Political Science*
    - *Electoral Studies*
    - *Journal of Politics*
    - *Journal of Race, Ethnicity and Politics,*
    - *Journal of Elections Public Opinion and Parties*
    - *Journal of Experimental Political Science*
    - *Journal of Political Marketing*
    - *Party Politics*
    - *Political Research Quarterly*
    - *Political Behavior*
    - *Political Psychology*
    - *Politics, Groups, and Identities*
    - *Public Opinion Quarterly*
    - *Politics and Gender*
    - *Presidential Studies Quarterly*
    - *Political Science Quarterly*
    - *Political Communication*
    - *Political Science Research and Methods*
    - *PS: Political Science*
    - *Perspectives on Politics*
    - *Research and Politics*

    - *Social Forces*
    - *Social Science Quarterly*
    - *Social Science Journal*
    - *Social Science Research*
    - *The Forum*
- ***The article should have been published in the last 6 years*** -- so anything from **2018 onwards.**
- ***The article should be an actual research design that tests hypotheses,*** not a review essay or summary of previously published research.
- Obviously the article you choose should **not** be any of the articles we are going to read later on in the semester! When you select your article double-check it's not one assigned later.
- In your weekly review (see below), please provide the full article citation for your chosen article along with a hyper-text link to the URL for the article. This will then allow me to go directly the to article to refer to it if needed. *(Obviously only provide the URL for your article, you don't need to do so for the articles I assigned)*
- You might find Google Scholar useful for locating articles by keywords and journal. You can also do a key word search within any of the journals noted above.
- A good strategy is to find several articles that fit the topic for the week. Then choose the one article that really speaks to a topic or theme that interests you -- don't just select the first one that pops up on Google Scholar.
- You should not have trouble finding an article, given the various journals you can choose from. However, if you are really having trouble finding one let me know, and I will assign you one.

Weekly Review of Articles

From week 3 you will also provide a short review of the articles for the week. These will always be due by **midnight on Tuesday** of each week. Late papers will receive a late penalty (see *Policies for Course Grade* below).

These papers are really designed to help facilitate your participation in our seminar so make sure you have access to your weekly review to refer to during our seminar. I will often make reference to points made in your reviews and ask for further explanation or clarification. Not remembering what you have written is never a good sign!

The weekly review is completed in three parts:

Part I: Key Questions

This part of the written review answers the following three questions for the five articles for the week, i.e., the four articles assigned by me and the one article you have selected yourself. Note that the Eriskon and Tedin textbook is simply for background and does not need to be discussed.

Start your answer to each of the five articles on a separate page, with the article citation at the top. ***Answer each of these in no more than a couple sentences***. You don't need to write more than that and obviously, you will be given the chance to further elaborate of these points when I follow up during our seminar meetings.

1. How did the research question(s) addressed by the article seek to address a new problem/puzzle on the broader topic of the week or seek to ameliorate a gap in the existing literature on the broader topic? (Note a good way to start thinking about this is to ask yourself "Why was this article deemed worthy for publication?")

2. How did the article contribute to your own learning about the broader topic we covered this week? (Could be something you learned from a theoretical or methodological perspective or about the substantive contribution of the article to the topic of the week).

3. If the author(s) was presenting this work at a conference what probing/devastating/reputation-making question would you pose to them? Please avoid what I refer to as "low hanging fruit" type questions, e.g., "isn't this work out of date," "isn't there inherent response bias in the survey data you used," etc., etc.

Part II: Award the Gold Star or Raspberry of the Week.

Focusing on one of the four articles I assigned (so excluding the fifth article you chose) did one article merit the "Gold Star of the Week" for standing out above the others in terms of the substantive topic is addressed, the execution of its research design, its findings and its general contribution to the research topic and field of political behavior in particular?

Alternatively, you can instead award the "Raspberry of the Week!" You can give this award to an article that you identified as having major deficiencies. This would cover any or all aspects of the article, data, variables, methods, and substantive contributions and conclusions drawn.

Some points to note:

- Simply identify the article that gets the Gold Star or Raspberry Award. You are not justifying, yet, your award! That will be done during our seminar. Of course, it would be wise to take your own notes on the rationale for the award so you will be ready to justify or defend your decision to the rest of us!
- The fifth article you selected yourself should not be considered for a Gold Star or Raspberry.
- Remember, only a Gold Star OR a Raspberry should be awarded. Not both!

Part III: Future research

Finally, thinking again about the four articles I assigned for the week, identify one of the articles that might provide a spring board for future research you might wish to undertake. It might be that one article raised new questions or didn't fully answer the question it had set out to. Or maybe you think the research design could be modified. Or you might be interested in updating the article with different or more recent data.

Once again, all you need to do is identify the article, you don't need to explain your choice in your paper, yet. You will get the chance to do that during our seminar meeting.

Overall, I hope you can see that the weekly review papers are not designed to be lengthy and time-consuming to write. Rather, they will help structure our seminar each week and

hopefully help facilitate your successful participation in it.

Research Proposal

The goal of the research proposal is for you to produce an original research project on any topic in American political behavior, such as, but not limited to: political participation, vote choice, attitudes and issue preferences. The proposal will include the following:

- A cover page, which consists of your title and name. No other information is required here. There is no need to put my name of the course name on the cover sheet.
- An introduction identifying the research question and its significance to the field;
- A literature review that situates the research question and argument relative to existing research;
- A theory section that makes a novel argument that answers the research question and articulates one or more testable hypotheses;
- A proposed research design for empirically testing these hypotheses using the 2020 American National Election Study (ANES). This would include identification of dependent, independent and control variables, the specific variables from the 2020 ANES used to measure concepts as well as testable hypotheses. Refer to the "data and methods" section of any article we read this semester for a good idea what to include

Basically what you will be doing here is completing the same steps found in any journal article we read. The only exception is that you are **not** actually analyzing the data and writing up your findings. Of course, this is something many of you will do when you write your MA thesis or PhD dissertation proposal, so it's good practice! It could provide the basis of a later paper you might present at a professional conference when you will undertake the actual data analysis.

Note: While the actual data analysis is not required, advanced students, who have successfully completed POS 6746 Quantitative Methods of Political Research may want to do some preliminary data analysis and report findings. If you do, let me know and I will be happy to work with you.

Some possible topics

The 2020 ANES contains content on a wide variety of topics. You might be interested in explaining vote choice in 2020, or different types of political participation, which every ANES routinely asks about. New content for the 2020 pre-election ANES survey that might be of interest includes variables on: sexual harassment and misconduct, health insurance, identity politics, immigration, media trust and misinformation, institutional legitimacy, campaigns, party images, trade tariffs and tax policy. New content for the 2020 post-election ANES survey includes: voting experiences, attitudes toward public health officials and organizations, anti-elitism, faith in experts/science, climate change, gun control, opioids, rural-urban identity, international trade, sexual harassment and MeToo, transgender military service, perception of foreign countries, group empathy, social media usage, misinformation, and personal experiences.

Of course, there are many other variables and topics, so select one that you are going to enjoy finding out more through your research!

What I will look for in your research proposal

I am looking more for promise in these proposal than a completely polished end product. I'm happy to read and consult over any aspect of the proposal The research process should be interactive, with you benefiting from input. Indeed, the best proposals I have read take this approach, rather than the ones I am seeing for the first time when you submit them at the end of the semester!

The best way to structure your proposal is to follow the structure most of the articles we will read this semester. Here are some guidelines to help you get a sense of what I am looking for:

Introduction

- Is the purpose of the proposal clearly stated? Is the question placed in some theoretical context or contexts?

Research Question

- Is the research question stated in the form of an hypothesis (or hypotheses), with clearly defined independent and dependent variables?

- Does the proposal place the research question in the context of the literature that has been reviewed?
- Does it explain how the answer to this question will advance our general knowledge of the subject matter?

Literature Review

- Does the proposal identify and describe the major orientations to the question?
- Does the proposal properly place major pieces of research into those orientations, and show how each piece fits and contributes to that orientation?
- Does the proposal identify the major concepts that others have used, and how those concepts are used in the research?
- Does the proposal reflect the nature of the empirical research (research designs, data) and how that might affect the findings in the field?
- The following is a useful article that might be helpful for compiling the literature review for this, or indeed any other papers you write as graduate students: Knopf Jeffrey W. 2006. "Doing a Literature Review." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 39(1): 127-132.

Research Design/Theory

- Are hypotheses grounded in theoretical explanations?
- Does the proposal discuss how the variables will be measured?
- Are the items suitable for measuring the variables of interest?
- Does the proposal discuss the kind of analysis that would be appropriate for the data that will be examined?

Conclusion

- Have you noted what your anticipated findings are? *(Note: If you have actually executed the data analysis as an option you will obviously give a recap of the major findings here).*
- Have you noted any limitations of of your research design?
- Have you provided some directions for future research on your topic -- whether for yourself or other scholars?

General

- Is the proposal well written? Focused? Integrated?
- Can the reader follow the ideas that are expressed?
- Is this proposal different than the one that you submitted for another seminar? (*Note:* I certainly do not mind you building upon prior work -- indeed I would encourage it -- but resubmitting an identical paper really is not stretching yourself intellectually).

Style

- The proposal should follow the **American Political Science Association style** guidelines for citations (Note: You can find these on-line, and many of the article we read follow this format).
- The proposal should be double-spaced throughout using 12-point font. I except these papers can be completed in about 10 pages (excluding the first page cover sheet and the bibliography)

The 2020 American National Election Study

As noted your research proposal is one that would use the 2020 ANES data set. The ANES is one of the best sources of data for studying American political behavior, and indeed many of the articles we will read this semester use ANES data.

When deciding on your research topic and variables you will use, it is often useful to first browse through what items the ANES have asked question. Simply doing this can often involve some brainstorming when it comes to research ideas!

Therefore there is a link below to the list of variables in the ANES dataset and a codebook showing how variables are operationalized or coded.

2020 ANES variable list

2020 ANES codebook

If you are planning to actually perform some data analysis -- and remember that's not a requirement -- let me know and I can provide access to the dataset in a format for the

program you are using to analyze the data (SPSS, STATA or R)

Poster Presentation

We will have a poster session that summarizes your research proposal. Details on the requirements and format of the poster presentation will be discussed in detail toward the end of the semester.

Poster presentations of research are increasingly common for undergraduate and graduate students at professional conferences, so this will be a good chance to learn how to create one to provide a sense to others what your topic and research design involve.

Summary of Key Dates for Research Proposal

Friday, October 1st: A meeting should have been held with me to approve a topic you have identified for your proposal. Really the earlier this is done the better!

Wednesday, November 27th: Submit final research proposal in Webcourses.

Thursday, December 5th: Poster presentation of research proposal. Note this takes place during the time allotted for the final exam. Details on the poster and the format of presentations will be provided.

Other Considerations

The Importance of Being on Time

Obviously you should be seated and ready for the start of the seminar at **6pm** and should remain for the duration of our seminar.

While an occasional late arrival is acceptable, repeated tardiness and/or constantly coming and going during the seminar -- without explanation -- is not, and will result in a written warning. If this situation continues to persist after the warning your overall course grade will be reduced by **one letter grade.**

Nearly 3 hours for our seminar is a long time, so we will have a short break each week after about 1 hour.

Use of Electronic Devices

Please use laptops and tablets in class **only** for referencing course materials, taking notes, and occasionally tracking down online items that are necessary for our discussions. Using laptops for any other purposes -- browsing, messaging or doing work for another class -- will get my attention very quickly. It's also rude and disrespectful to others to be using your laptop or tablet for non-course related purposes when others are talking.

Cell phones should always be quieted and stowed away for later use. If you devote time in the seminar to constantly checking your cell phone I will assume you are not participating in the seminar. If, however, you know you must take an important call or text message during our seminar that is fine, but please let me know prior to the start of the seminar, as then I will know why you will need access to your cell phone.

Cell phones should not be used to access your notes or articles during the seminar. Use a laptop, a tablet, or have the articles printed out.

Violation of these policies will result in lower seminar participation evaluations.

Food and Drink

Given the time of our seminar I have no problem with you bringing food and drink. But please remove any trash from our conference room at the end of the night, as remember someone will have to use the room the next morning.

Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

All work will receive a grade out of 10 points.

Your overall grade will be weighted as follows:

Seminar participation: 35%

Weekly article reviews: 25%

Meeting to have research proposal approved: 5%

Research proposal: 25%

Poster presentation of research proposal: 10%

Note: To receive a passing grade in the course students must complete <u>ALL</u> of the above course requirements.

Grading Scale

Overall course grade boundaries are as follows:

A: 94%+

A-: 90-93.9%

B: 80-89.9%

C: 70-79.9%

D: 60-69.9%

F: Below 60%

Policies for Course Grade

Late Weekly Reviews

Weekly reviews are always due at **midnight on Tuesday** of each week.

I will accept late assignments subject to a grade reduction as follows:

- *After midnight up to 9am on Wednesday, 2 point grade reduction (maximum grade would be 8).*
- *After 9am on Wednesday up to 12.00 noon on Wednesday, 3 point grade reduction (maximum grade would be 7)*
- *Work submitted after 12.00 noon on Wednesday is not acceptable and will receive zero credit*

Late Research Proposals

The research proposal should be submitted in Canvas by midnight on **Tuesday, November 26th**. The same late penalty applies as for weekly assignments noted above.

Absences from the Seminar

You should notify me ahead of time if you are unable to attend a seminar meeting. If you miss a seminar meeting an additional assignment will be required, which will be in lieu of your participation in the seminar for the week. **This is in addition to the usual weekly review.** Details of the additional assignment are **here**. If this additional assignment is not completed, your participation grade for the week missed will be zero.

This is how absences from the seminar will affect your grade:

- You first absence will be considered a "free" absence, which will have no penalty attached. However, obviously you will still be required to submit the weekly review and the additional assignment in lieu of participation.
- Additional unexcused absences beyond your first absence will result in a *two-point deduction from your end of semester earned grade per absence (e.g., if your*

overall grade was at 93%, it would be reduced to 91% if you had one unexcused absence).

- Absences beyond your first may be considered excused and are not subject to the deduction to the overall grade noted above. Excused absences might include: attending a professional conference (documentation required), personal illness or emergency (you can inform me of this using discreet language without going into specifics), unforeseen childcare or transportation issues, a job interview (documentation required), or serious illness or death within the *immediate* family. Even if an absence is excused, you will still be required to submit the weekly review <u>and</u> complete the additional assignment in lieu of participation. Vacations or non-essential trips out of town are not eligible to count as excused absences.
- Please note that our first seminar meeting on August 22nd counts as a class meeting and is also subject to the attendance policy and requirements noted above.

Extra Credit

The only criteria for which a grade can be earned in our seminar are those stated in the syllabus. Therefore, there are no extra credit assignments offered. Assignments that were not submitted during the semester cannot be submitted for credit at the end of the semester.

Incomplete Grades

Grades of “Incomplete” are only given when the student has completed the vast majority of work for the semester and emergency circumstances prevent submission of assignments in the final weeks of class.

Since degrees will not be certified with an incomplete on the degree audit, "I" grades will be changed to "F" if not resolved by the stipulated deadlines. "I" grades are considered "unsatisfactory" grades until resolved for program of study purposes.

Please also note that incomplete grades are not counted as completed courses or recognized as such by Financial Aid. Therefore, students on financial assistance must

check with the Financial Aid office to see if the receipt of an incomplete grade will affect their financial award.

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) (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.

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Code of Conduct at Student Conduct and Integrity Office. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

a. Academic misconduct is defined as any submitted work or behavior that obstructs the instructor of record's ability to accurately assess the student's understanding or completion of the course materials or degree requirements (e.g., assignment, quiz, and/or exam). Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to: plagiarism, unauthorized assistance to complete an academic exercise; unauthorized communication with others during an examination, course assignment, or project; falsifying or misrepresenting academic work; providing misleading information to create a personal advantage to complete course/degree requirements; or multiple submission(s) of academic work without permission of the instructor of record.

b. Any student who knowingly helps another violate academic behavior standards is also in violation of the standards.

c. Commercial Use of Academic Material. Selling of course material to another person and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the University and the instructor of record. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, the instructor of record's slide deck, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, and handouts.

d. Soliciting assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements. The solicitation of assistance with an assignment, lab, quiz, test, paper, etc., without authorization of the instructor of record or designee is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to asking for answers to a quiz, trading answers, or offering to pay another to complete an assignment. It is considered Academic Misconduct to solicit assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements, even if the solicitation did not yield actual assistance (for example, if there was no response to the solicitation).

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*. 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 and Academic Integrity, 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: take the zero, not a shortcut.

A Note About the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

When you submit any work for our seminar my assumption is that it involves your own words, thoughts, ideas and reflections. Therefore, content **produced or inspired** by generative AI is not permitted for any assignment in this course.

It becomes obvious very quickly when AI has been used. **Any assignment either in part or whole that in my judgment lacks in originality/your own voice and which sounds like it could have been produced by AI will at most receive a grade of 5/10.** This applies to the weekly reviews and the research proposal.

Developing strong competencies in writing and critical thinking will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Part of why you learn to write is learning how to think and how to be a smarter, more articulate, better functioning version of yourself. **You lose that if you hand it off to a machine.**

Reporting an Incident or Issue

If you believe you have experienced abusive or discriminatory behavior by any faculty or staff member, contact the Office of Institutional Equity online or at 407-823-1336. You can also choose to report using the UCF Integrity Line and can report anonymously or as yourself at 1-855-877-6049 or using the online form. UCF cares about you and takes every report seriously. For more information see the Reporting an Incident or Issue Webpage.

Title IX

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 Let's Be Clear and UCF Cares.

For more information on diversity and inclusion, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – OIE – Office of Institutional Equity & askanadvocate@ucf.edu

- Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services – Student Accessibility Services & sas@ucf.edu
- Access and Community Engagement (including the Ginsberg Center for Inclusion and Community Engagement, Military and Veteran Student Success, and HSI Initiatives)
- UCF Compliance and Ethics Office – Compliance, Ethics, and Risk Office & complianceandethics@ucf.edu
- The Ombuds Office is a safe place to discuss concerns.

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.

Campus Safety

At UCF Public Safety and Police, safety is the top priority. Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise, it's important to be familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In an emergency, always dial 911.
- Every UCF classroom has an **Emergency Procedure Guide** posted on a wall near the door, which will show you how to respond to a variety of situations. This guide can also be found online here.
- In the event of an active threat, remember **AVOID, DENY, DEFEND**. Choose the best course of action and act immediately. Watch the video here to learn more.
    - **AVOID**. Pay attention to your surroundings and have an exit plan. Get as much distance and as many barriers between you and the threat as quickly as possible.
    - **DENY.** When avoiding is difficult or impossible, deny the threat access to you and your space. Lockdown by creating barriers, turning the lights off and

remaining quiet and out of sight. Make sure your cell phone is silenced, but do not turn it off.

    - **DEFEND.** When you are unable to put distance between yourself and the threat, be prepared to protect yourself. Commit to your actions, be aggressive and do not fight fairly. Do whatever it takes to survive.

- For emergencies on campus, UCF will utilize the UCF Alert system. All UCF students, faculty and staff are automatically enrolled to receive these email and text alerts, however, it's a good idea to frequently ensure your contact information is up to date.

Financial Aid Accountability

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 this activity 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.

Disclaimer

I reserve the right to modify the syllabus, timeline or specific readings as needed. Of course advance notification will be given for any changes.

Class Schedule

Note that the readings for the Erikson and Tedin textbook will **not** be discussed directly in our seminars. It is listed here as a resource and reference that provides general background and foundational material on topics we will cover or that may interest you for future research. It is also a useful resource to consult when compiling the literature review for your research proposal.

The **additional article** you choose from the third week of the seminar onwards should be an article that interests you on the topic of the week. Refer back to the criteria above in the syllabus on selecting your article.

August 22nd: Seminar Overview/Introduction

Assigned reading:

- Mutz, Diane. 2010. "The Dog that Didn't Bark: The Role of Canines in the 2008 Campaign." *PS: Political Science & Politics,* 43(4), 707-712.

Please make sure this article is read before our seminar meeting. A short written assignment will be given on it during our first seminar meeting, so also make sure you have access to the article.

August 29th: *No Seminar UCF closed for a "football" game*

Our seminar is pre-empted because of the "football" game, so we will not hold a seminar meeting. You can read ahead or even use the week to get and early start about thinking about your research topic!

Assigned readings: (note this is optional but highly recommended if you feel like you don't have an undergraduate background in political behavior):

- Erikson and Tedin, *American Public Opinion*, Chapters 1 and 2.

September 5th: Political Knowledge, Information, and Misinformation

Assigned readings:

- Erikson and Tedin, *American Public Opinion*, Chapter 3 (pp. 56-70).
- Dolan, Kathleen. 2011. "Do Women and Men Know Different Things? Measuring Gender Differences in Political Knowledge." *Journal of Politics* 73(1): 97-107.
- Schaffner, Brian F., and Samantha Luks. 2018. "Misinformation or Expressive Responding? What an Inauguration Crowd Can Tell Us about the Source of Political Misinformation in Surveys." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 82(1)*:* 135-147.

- Benegal, Salil, and Matt Motta. 2023. “Overconfident, Resentful, and Misinformed: How Racial Animus Motivates Confidence in False Beliefs.” *Social Science Quarterly* 104 (4): 947–970.
- Cacciatore, Michael A., et al. 2018. "Is Facebook Making Us Dumber? Exploring Social Media Use as a Predictor of Political Knowledge." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 95(2): 404-424.
- *One article of your choice on political knowledge, political sophistication, political information/misinformation, etc.*

September 12th: Political Participation

Assigned readings:

- Moreau, Julie, Stephen Nuño-Pérez, and Lisa M. Sanchez. 2019. "Intersectionality, Linked Fate, and LGBTQ Latinx Political Participation." *Political Research Quarterly* 72(4): 796-790
- Gerber, Alan S., et al. 2011. "Personality Traits and Participation in Political Processes," *Journal of Politics.* 73(3): 692-706.
- Baumgartner, Jody C. and Brad Lockerbie. 2018. "Maybe it Is More Than a Joke: Satire, Mobilization, and Political Participation." *Social Science Quarterly* 99(3): 1060-1074.
- Valentino, Nicholas A., et al. 2011. “Election Night’s Alright for Fighting: The Role of Emotions in Political Participation.” *Journal of Politics* 73(1): 156-70.
- *One article of your choice on political participation, political mobilization, and civic engagement.*

September 19th: Voter Turnout

Assigned readings:

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

- Hajnal, Zoltan, Nazita Lajevardi, and Lindsay Nielson. 2017. “Voter Identification Laws and the Suppression of Minority Votes.” *Journal of Politics* 79(2): 363–379.
- Bond, Robert M., et al. 2012. “A 61-million-person Experiment in Social Influence and Political Mobilization.” *Nature* 489: 295-298.
- Nickerson, David. 2008. “Is Voting Contagious? Evidence from Two Field Experiments.” *American Political Science Review* 102(1): 49-57.
- *One article of your choice on voter turnout. Note the article should be exclusively on some aspect of voter turnout as that is the specific theme of this week's readings rather than political participation more generally.*

September 26th: Ideology & Ideological Constraint - Seminar not held because of UCF closing for Hurricane Helene

Assigned readings:

- Erikson and Tedin, *American Public Opinio*n, Chapter 3 (pp. 70-82).
- Conover, Pamela Johnston, and Stanley Feldman. 1981. “Origins and Meaning of Liberal/Conservative Self-Identifications.” *American Journal of Political Science* 25(4): 617-645.
- Smith, Kevin B., et al. 2011. “Disgust Sensitivity and the Neurophysiology of Left-Right Political Orientations.” *PLoS One* 6 (10).
- Lilliana Mason. 2018. "Ideologues without Issues: The Polarizing Consequences of Ideological Identities." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 82, Issue S1: 866–887.
- Enders, Adam M. 2019. "Conspiratorial Thinking and Political Constraint." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 83(3): 510–533.
- *One article of your choice on ideology, ideological constraint, left-right or liberal/conservative identification.*

October 3rd: Partisanship

Assigned readings:

- Erikson and Tedin, *American Public Opinio*n, Chapter 3 (pp. 82-87).
- Greene, Steven. 2002. "The Social-Psychological Measurement of Partisanship." *Political Behavior* 24(3): 171–197.
- Abramowitz, Alan I., and Steven W. Webster. 2018. “Negative Partisanship: Why Americans Dislike Parties but Behave Like Rabid Partisans.” *Political Psycholog*y 39(1): 119-135.
- Banda, Kenneth. K., Thomas M. Carsey, and Serge Severenchuk. 2020. "Evidence of Conflict Extension in Partisans’ Evaluations of People and Inanimate Objects." *American Politics Research* 48(2): 275-285.
- Barber, Michael, and Jeremy C. Pope. 2018. "Does Party Trump Ideology? Disentangling Party and Ideology in America." *American Political Science Review* 113(1): 38-54.
- *One article of your choice on partisanship, party support, partisan identity.*

October 10th: No class - UCF closed due to Hurricane Milton

October 17th: Political Socialization & Learning: Where Do Opinions Come From?

Assigned readings:

- Erikson and Tedin, *American Public Opinion,* Chapters 5 & 8.
- Sharrow, Elizabeth A. et al. 2018. “The First-Daughter Effect: The Impact of Fathering Daughters on Men’s Preferences for Gender-Equality Policies.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 82(3): 493–523.
- Woessner, Matthew, and April Kelly-Woessner. 2020."Why College Students Drift Left: The Stability of Political Identity and Relative Malleability of Issue Positions among College Students." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 53(4): 657-664 .
- Peterson, Johnathan C., Kevin B. Smith, and John R. Hibbing. 2020. "Do People Really Become More Conservative as They Age?" *Journal of Politics* 82(2): 600-611.

- Gerber, Alan S. et al. 2010. "Personality and Political Attitudes: Relationships across Issue Domains and Political Contexts." *American Political Science Review* 104(1):111-133.
- *One article of your choice on political learning, political socialization and issue/attitude formation.*

October 24th: Social Group Identity & Attachments

Assigned readings:

- Erikson and Tedin, *American Public Opinion,* Chapter 7.
- Conover, Pamela Johnston. 1984. "The Influence of Group Identifications on Political Perception and Evaluation." *Journal of Politics* 46(3): 760-785.
- Jardina, Ashley., Nathan Kalmoe, and Kimberley Gross. 2021. "Disavowing White Identity: How Social Disgust can Change Social Identities." *Political Psychology* 42(4): 619-636.
- Ross, Ashely D., and Stella M. Rouse. 2022. "(Young) Generations as Social Identities: The Role of Latino*Millennial/Generation Z in Shaping Attitudes About Climate Change." *Political Behavior* 44(3): 1105–1124.
- Egan, Patrick J. 2020. "Identity as Dependent Variable: How Americans Shift Their Identities to Align with Their Politics." *American Journal of Political Science* 64(3): 699-716.
- *One article of your choice on group attachments, group identification and group identity. Note, you might be interested in any article on a specific demographic characteristic, which might include, but is not limited to race, gender, social class, education, age, urban-rural location, religion.*

October 31st: Voting Behavior - Issue Voting

Assigned readings:

- Erikson and Tedin, *American Public Opinion*, Ch.9
- Carmines, Edward G., and James A. Stimson. 1980. “The Two Faces of Issue Voting.” *American Political Science Review* 74(1): 78–91.
- Gomez, Brad T., and J. Matthew Wilson. 2001. "Political Sophistication and Economic Voting in the American Electorate: A Theory of Heterogeneous Attribution." *American Journal of Political Science* 45(4): 899-914.
- Piston, Spencer. 2010. "How Explicit Racial Prejudice Hurt Obama in the 2008 Election." *Political Behavior* 32 (4): 431–451.
- Gadarian, Shana Kushner. 2010. "Foreign Policy at the Ballot Box: How Citizens Use Foreign Policy to Judge and Choose Candidates." *Journal of Politics* 72(4): 1046-1062.
- *One article of your choice on issues and voting behavior. Note, I did not assign any articles on the two most recent presidential elections. However, you may still select an article on issue voting in the 2016 or 2020 election if you wish. Obviously, it should not be one of the articles that is assigned for our seminar on November 14th.*

November 7th: Voting Behavior- Candidate Effects

Assigned readings:

- Erikson and Tedin, *American Public Opinion*, Ch.9.
- Haider-Markel Donald P, et al. 2020. "LGBTQ State Legislative Candidates in an Era of Backlash. PS: *Political Science & Politics*. 53(3): 453-459.
- Fridkin, Kim L. and Patrick J. Kenney. 2011. "The Role of Candidate Traits in Campaigns." *Journal of Politics* 73(1): 61-73.
- Kalkan, Kerem Ozan, John Clifford Green, and Geoffrey C. Layman. 2018. "Will Americans Vote for Muslims? Cultural Outgroup Antipathy, Candidate Religion,

and U.S. Voting Behavior." *Politics and Religion* 11(4): 798-829.

- Bauer, Nichole M. 2020. “Shifting Standards: How Voters Evaluate the Qualifications of Female and Male Candidates.” *Journal of Politics* 82(1): 1-12.
- *One article of your choice on candidate image, candidate attributes/traits and voting behavior. Note, I did not assign any articles on the two most recent presidential elections. However, you may still select an article on candidate image in the 2016 or 2020 election if you wish. Obviously, it should not be one of the articles that is assigned for our seminar on November 14th.*

November 14th: Voting Behavior in 2016 & 2020....and Maybe Maybe Some Speculation on 2024!

Assigned readings:

- Schaffner, Brian F., Matthew MacWilliams, and Tatishe Nteta. 2018. “Understanding White Polarization in the 2016 Vote for President: The Sobering Role of Racism and Sexism.” *Political Science Quarterly* 133(1): 9-34.
- Whitehead, Andrew L., Samuel L. Perry, and Joseph O Baker. 2018. "Make America Christian Again: Christian Nationalism and Voting for Donald Trump in the 2016 Presidential Election." *Sociology of Religion* 79 (2): 147–171.
- Filindra, Alexandra, and Fagan, E. J. 2022. “Black, Immigrant, or Woman? The Implicit Influence of Kamala Harris' Vice Presidential Nomination on Support for Biden in 2020.” *Social Science Quarterly*. 103(4): 892-906.
- Shino E, Seth C. McKee, and Daniel A. Smith. 2024. "The Fall of Trump: Mobilization and Vote Switching in the 2020 Presidential Election. *Political Science Research and Methods* 12(2): 229-248.
- *One article of your choice on voting behavior in the 2016 or 2020 presidential election. Note that the article could be on the primary or general election. Obviously, the article should be different to any previous one you selected on the 2016 or 2020 election!*

November 21st: Democratic Value & Norms, Political Violence & Political Extremism

Assigned readings:

- Erikson and Tedin, *American Public Opinio*n, Chapter 6
- Enders, Adam, et al. 2022. "Who Supports QAnon? A Case Study in Political Extremism." *Journal of Politics* 84(3): 1844-1849.
- Albertson, Bethnay., and Kimberly Guiler. 2020. "Conspiracy Theories, Election Rigging, and Support for Democratic Norms." *Research & Politics* 7(3).
- Kalmoe, Nathan. P. 2014. "Fueling the Fire: Violent Metaphors, Trait Aggression, and Support for Political Violence." *Political Communication* 31(4), 545–563.
- Frye, Timothy. 2024. "Do Violations of Democratic Norms Change Political Attitudes? Evidence From the January 6th Insurrection." *American Politics Research* 52(2): 118-127.
- *One article of your choice on democratic values/norms, political violence or political extremism.*

Wednesday, November 27th: Research Papers Uploaded in Webcourses (midnight)

December 5th: Poster presentations of research papers

Details on the format of this session and poster requirements will be provided.