

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: Tuesday 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm EST, and Thursday 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm EST

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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.

Course Objectives

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

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

Weekly Concept Worksheet (30 points): For each week of the fifteen weeks of course instruction, students will have an opportunity to answer a series of questions about the course materials for the week. Each worksheet must be completed by Sunday of the corresponding course week at 11:59 pm EST. No collaboration is allowed on these worksheets. The worksheets must be completed by following a closed note, closed book, and closed external resource protocol. Failure to do so, even in just one worksheet, will result in an automatic zero out of thirty for the entire assignment on the semester. Using the variety of question and response formats provided through the Materia online interface, students will attempt to complete the worksheet after reviewing the course materials each week. Students have one chance to complete the worksheet each week (once answers have been submitted, the worksheet cannot be completed again). Each worksheet is worth two points. The points are allotted based on the percentage of questions the student answers correctly. Please note that the percentage correct will not be rounded up. The worksheets present questions in various unique and interactive formats. For an example, see this crossword worksheet: <https://materia.ucf.edu/play/o63Ie/weekly-concept-worksheet-1>

The point breakdown each week is as follows:

100% correct: 2
95-99.99% correct: 1.8
90-94.99% correct: 1.6
85-89.99% correct: 1.4
80-84.99% correct: 1.2
75-79.99% correct: 1
70-74.99% correct: 0.8
65-69.99% correct: 0.6
60-64.99% correct: 0.4
55-59.99% correct: 0.2
54.99% or below correct: 0

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

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

For both the analytical paper and the peer review, it is absolutely essential that students refrain from giving

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

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

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

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.

Attendance and Behavior Policy

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

Since we will be exchanging ideas and at times touch on controversial political topics through the online forum, you will in all likelihood encounter a statement you disagree with. Regardless, you must never belittle, shout down, insult, or mock another person for their position. Doing so can lead to a person's dismissal from the course. The intention of the course is to learn how to think critically using substantiated evidence about political phenomena pertaining to individual-level and group-level political opinion and participation. Any behavior that hinders the ability of others to learn the materials is not permissible. *If students do not participate in submitting either an analytical paper or a peer review for at least three class weeks, they will automatically receive a score of zero in the weekly analytical papers portion of the course.*

Academic 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.

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 could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information available on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Some assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personal sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Course Materials

- Niemi, Richard G., Herbert F. Weisberg, and David C. Kimball, eds. 2011. *Controversies in Voting Behavior*. 5th ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- All other required materials will come primarily from the electronic holdings available from the UCF Library.

Course Schedule

Week One - Course Orientation and the Study of Political Behavior

- Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapter 1.
- Read Powner. 2007. "Reading and understanding political science."
- Participate in 'Introduce Yourself' Discussion Thread.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #1 due 1/13/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Review Syllabus and Complete Syllabus Quiz due 1/15/16 by 12 pm EST.
- Review APSA Referencing/Citation Style Guidelines and Complete Citation Style Activity due 1/17/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #1 due 1/17/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Week Two - Democratic Beliefs and Democratic Values

- Read Theiss-Morse, E. 1993. "Conceptualizations of good citizenship and political participation." *Political Behavior*, 15(4), 355-380.
- Read Putnam, R. D. 1995. "Bowling alone: America's declining social capital." *Journal of Democracy*, 6(1), 65-78.
- Read Bennett, W. L. 1998. "The uncivic culture: Communication, identity, and the rise of lifestyle politics." *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 31(4), 741-761.
- Read Mondak, J. J., Hibbing, M. V., Canache, D., Seligson, M. A., & Anderson, M. R. 2010. "Personality and civic engagement: An integrative framework for the study of trait effects on political behavior." *American Political Science Review*, 104(1), 85-110.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #2 due 1/20/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #2 due 1/24/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #2 due 1/24/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Week Three - Electoral Strategy and System Change

- Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapters 18, 19, 20, and 21.
- Read Druckman, J. N., Hennessy, C. L., Kifer, M. J., & Parkin, M. 2010. "Issue engagement on congressional candidate web sites, 2002-2006." *Social Science Computer Review*, 28(1), 3-23.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #3 due 1/27/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #3 due 1/31/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #3 due 1/31/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Week Four - Voter Turnout

- Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapters 2, 3, and 4.

- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #4 due 2/3/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #4 due 2/7/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #4 due 2/7/16 by 11:59 pm EST

Week Five - Voter Turnout (continued)

- Read Gerber, A. S., Green, D. P., & Larimer, C. W. 2008. "Social pressure and voter turnout: Evidence from a large-scale field experiment." *American Political Science Review*, 102(1), 33-48.
- Read Ansolabehere, S. 2009. "Effects of identification requirements on voting: Evidence from the experiences of voters on Election Day." *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 42(1), 127-130.
- Read Holbrook, A. L., & Krosnick, J. A. 2010. "Social desirability bias in voter turnout reports tests using the item count technique." *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 74(1), 37-67.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #5 due 2/10/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #5 due 2/14/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #5 due 2/14/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Week Six - Partisanship and Polarization

- Read Bartels, L. M. 2000. "Partisanship and voting behavior, 1952-1996." *American Journal of Political Science*, 44(1), 35-50.
- Read Carsey, T. M., & Layman, G. C. 2006. "Changing sides or changing minds? Party identification and policy preferences in the American electorate." *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(2), 464-477.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #6 due 2/17/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #6 due 2/21/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #6 due 2/21/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Week Seven - Partisanship and Polarization (continued)

- Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapters 12, 13, and 14.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #7 due 2/24/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #7 due 2/28/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #7 due 2/28/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Week Eight - Partisanship and Polarization (continued)

- Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapters 15, 16, and 17.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #8 due 3/2/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #8 due 3/6/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #8 due 3/6/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Week Nine - Public Opinion and Political Information

- Read Converse, P. E. 2006. "The nature of belief systems in mass publics (1964)." *Critical Review*, 18(1-3), 1-74.
- Read Carmines, E. G., Ensley, M. J., & Wagner, M. W. 2012. "Political ideology in American politics: one, two, or none?" *The Forum*, 10(3), p. 4).
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #9 due 3/13/16 by 11:59 pm EST (adjustment made for Spring Break).
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #9 due 3/14/16 by 11:59 pm EST (adjustment made for Spring Break).
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #9 due 3/14/16 by 11:59 pm EST (adjustment made for Spring Break).

Week Ten - Public Opinion and Political Information (continued)

- Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #10 due 3/16/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #10 due 3/20/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #10 due 3/20/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Week Eleven - Social Groups and Social Networks

- Read Bond, R. M., Fariss, C. J., Jones, J. J., Kramer, A. D., Marlow, C., Settle, J. E., & Fowler, J. H. 2012. "A 61-million-person experiment in social influence and political mobilization." *Nature*, 489(7415), 295-298.
- Read Jennings, M. K., Stoker, L., & Bowers, J. 2009. "Politics across generations: Family transmission reexamined." *The Journal of Politics*, 71(3), 782-799.
- Read Alford, J. R., Hatemi, P. K., Hibbing, J. R., Martin, N. G., & Eaves, L. J. 2011. "The politics of mate choice." *The Journal of Politics*, 73(2), 362-379.
- Read Brader, T., Tucker, J. A., & Theriault, A. 2014. "Cross pressure scores: An individual-level measure of cumulative partisan pressures arising from social group memberships." *Political Behavior*, 36(1), 23-51.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #11 due 3/23/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #11 due 3/27/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #11 due 3/27/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Week Twelve - Mass Media and Persuasion

- Read Turner, J. 2007. "The messenger overwhelming the message: Ideological cues and perceptions of bias in television news." *Political Behavior*, 29(4), 441-464.
- Read Iyengar, S., & Hahn, K. S. 2009. "Red media, blue media: Evidence of ideological selectivity in media use." *Journal of Communication*, 59(1), 19-39.
- Read Nyhan, B., & Reifler, J. 2010. "When corrections fail: The persistence of political misperceptions." *Political Behavior*, 32(2), 303-330.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #12 due 3/30/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #12 due 4/3/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #12 due 4/3/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Week Thirteen - Vote Determinants

- Read Niemi, Weisberg, and Kimball. 2011. Chapters 9, 10, and 11.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #13 due 4/6/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #13 due 4/10/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #13 due 4/10/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Week Fourteen - Vote Determinants (continued)

- Read Rudolph, T. J. 2003. "Who's responsible for the economy? The formation and consequences of responsibility attributions." *American Journal of Political Science*, 47(4), 698-713.
- Read Koppell, J. G., & Steen, J. A. 2004. "The effects of ballot position on election outcomes." *Journal of Politics*, 66(1), 267-281.
- Read Hayes, D. 2005. "Candidate qualities through a partisan lens: A theory of trait ownership." *American Journal of Political Science*, 49(4), 908-923.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #14 due 4/13/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #14 due 4/17/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #14 due 4/17/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Week Fifteen - Survey Research Methodology

- Read Belli, R. F., Traugott, M. W., Young, M., & McGonagle, K. A. 1999. "Reducing vote overreporting in surveys: Social desirability, memory failure, and source monitoring." *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 63(1), 90-108.
- Read Bernstein, R., Chadha, A., & Montjoy, R. 2001. "Overreporting voting: Why it happens and why it matters." *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 65(1), 22-44.
- Read Brenner, P. S. 2012. "Overreporting of voting participation as a function of identity." *The Social Science Journal*, 49(4), 421-429.
- Original Submission of Weekly Analytical Paper #15 due 4/20/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Submit Weekly Concept Worksheet #15 due 4/24/16 by 11:59 pm EST.
- Peer Response to Weekly Analytical Paper #15 due 4/24/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Finals Week - Wrapping Things Up

- Complete Final Examination Posted on webcourses@ucf (40 points).
- Finish Final Examination between 4/28/16 at 12 am and 5/4/16 at 11:59 pm EST.
- Must take exam as early as possible, as you will not be able to take and submit any answers after 5/4/16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Syllabus subject to change at instructor's discretion