

Psychology 350: Political Psychology (Fall 2011)

Meeting times and location: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00-2:20 pm in Arts Lecture Hall 208

Course staff:

Instructor: Richard Eibach, **Office:** PAS 3053, **Email:** reibach@uwaterloo.ca,

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm, or by appointment

Teaching assistants:

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Course description:

What can psychology contribute to our understanding of political behavior? To answer this question we will review classic and state-of-the art research in political psychology. Lectures and readings will emphasize theory-based research from social, personality, and cognitive psychology that has implications for understanding such topics as voter decision-making, the roots of liberal and conservative ideologies, the forces that maintain the status quo versus the forces that promote social change, barriers to conflict resolution, the influence of media framing and propaganda campaigns on public opinion, the causes of political extremism, scapegoating, and violence, and the determinants of social cohesion and national well-being.

Required reading

Articles have been assigned and digital version are available on UW-ACE

(<https://uwangel.uwaterloo.ca/uwangel/>)

Exams and assignment

Course grades will be based on one midterm exam (35%), one final exam (35%), and one essay assignment (30%). Exams will consist of multiple-choice questions covering material from both the lectures and the assigned readings. Exam review sessions will be scheduled to take place on an evening before the exam. Dates, times, and locations of exam review sessions will be announced. The essay assignment is due by 11p.m. on November 25 (see details below). The final exam will take place during the final examination period.

UW-ACE

All lecture outlines will be posted on the course UW-ACE site following each lecture. The UW-ACE site will also be used to post course announcements. UW-ACE can be accessed through the following link: <https://uwangel.uwaterloo.ca/uwangel/>

Lecture topics and reading assignments

September 13: Course overview and introduction to topics

September 15: Errors and biases in political judgment

1. Menand, L. (2005, December 5). Everybody's an expert. *The New Yorker*, 98-101.
2. Rachlinski, J. J. (2000). The psychology of global climate change. *University of Illinois Law Review*, 299-319.
3. Sunstein, C. R., & Vermeule, A. (2009). Conspiracy theories: Causes and cures. *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 17, 202-227.

September 20: Using psychology to design more effective policy interventions

1. Bertrand, M., Mullainathan, S., & Shafir, E. (2004). Behavioral economics and marketing in aid of decision-making among the poor. *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, 25, 8-23.
2. Grunwald, M. (2009, April 2). How Obama is using the science of change. *Time Magazine*.
3. Yates, S. M., & Aronson, E. M. (1983). A social psychological perspective on energy conservation in residential buildings. *American Psychologist*, 435-444.

September 22: Emotional influences on political decision-making

1. Pyszczynski, T. (2004). What are we afraid of? A terror management theory perspective on the politics of fear. *Social Research*, 71, 827-848.
2. Slovic, P. (2007). "If I look at the mass I will never act": Psychic numbing and genocide. *Judgment and Decision Making*, 2, 79-95.

September 27: The structure and measurement of public opinion

1. Kinder, D. R. (2006). Belief systems today. *Critical Review*, 18, 197-216.
2. Schwarz, N. (1999). Self-reports: How the questions shape the answers. *American Psychologist*, 54, 93-105.

September 29: Media influences and symbolic politics

1. Iyengar, S. (1990). The accessibility bias in politics: Television news and public opinion. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 2, 1-15.

October 4: Propaganda and political persuasion

1. Crocker, J., & Hughes, S. B. (2009). Ecosystem perspective and Barack Obama's campaign for the presidency. *Du Bois Review*, 6, 125-136.
2. Petty, R. E., & Brinol, P. (2008). Persuasion: From single to multiple to metacognitive processes. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 3, 137-147.
3. Polletta, F. (2008). Storytelling in politics. *Contexts*, 7, 26-31.

October 6: Psychological roots of conservatism and liberalism

1. Altemeyer, B. (2003). What happens when authoritarians inherit the earth? A simulation. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 3, 161-169.
2. Jost, J. T., Nosek, B. A., & Gosling, S. D. (2008). Ideology: Its resurgence in social, personality, and political psychology. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 3, 126-136.
3. Kinder, D. R. (2006). Politics and the life cycle. *Science*, 312, 1905-1908.

October 11: Culture wars and ideological conflict

1. Ditto, P. H., & Koleva, S. P. (2011). Moral empathy gaps and the American culture war. *Emotion Review*, 3, 331-332.
2. Kahan, D. M., & Braman, D. (2006). Cultural cognition and public policy. *Yale Law and Policy Review*, 24, 149-172.

October 13: Social hierarchy, ethnocentrism, and nationalism

1. Hassin, R. R., Ferguson, M. J., Kardosh, R., Porter, S. C., Carter, T. J., & Dudareva, V. (2009). Précis of implicit nationalism. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1167, 135-145.
2. Huddy, L., & Feldman, S. (2009). On assessing the political effects of racial prejudice. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12, 423-447.

October 18: Sexist ideology and the reproduction of male privilege

1. Glick, P., & Fiske, S. T. (2001). An ambivalent alliance: Hostile and benevolent sexism as complementary justifications for gender inequality. *American Psychologist*, 56, 109-118.

October 20: Tolerance, pluralism, and multiculturalism

1. Mendelberg, T., & Oleske, J. (2000). Race and public deliberation. *Political Communication*, 17, 169-191.
2. Pettigrew, T. F., Tropp, L. R., Wagner, U., & Christ, O. (2011). Recent advances in intergroup contact theory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35, 271-280.

October 25: Midterm The midterm will include all of the lecture material and readings up to and including what was covered on October 20.

October 27: Film

1. Bade, D. (2010). Groupthink, Iraq, and the war on terror: Explaining U.S. policy shift toward Iraq. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 6, 277-296.
2. Gladwell, M. (2009, July 27). Cocksure: Banks, battles, and the psychology of overconfidence. *New Yorker*, 85.

November 1: Power, leadership, and group decision-making

1. Ballard, E. J. (1983). Canadian prime ministers: Complexity in political crises. *Canadian Psychology*, 24, 125-129.
2. Brauer, M., & Bourhais, R. Y. (2006). Social power. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 36, 601-616.
3. McAdam, D. P. (2011). Redemptive narratives in the life and the presidency of George W. Bush. In C. B. Strozier & D. Offer, & O. Abdyli (Eds.), *The leader: Psychological essays (2nd Edition)*, (pp. 135-151). New York: Springer.

November 3: Justice and political legitimacy

1. Norton, M. I., & Ariely, D. (2011). Building a better America – one wealth quintile at a time. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 6, 9-12.
2. Skitka, L. J. (2010). The psychology of moral conviction. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 4, 267-281.
3. Tyler, T. R. (2000). Social justice: Outcome and procedure. *International Journal of Psychology*, 35, 117-125.

November 8: Just world beliefs and defending the status quo

1. Jost, J. T. & Hunyady, O. (2005). Antecedents and consequences of system justifying ideologies. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 14, 260-265.
2. Lerner, M. (2003). The justice motive: Where social psychologists found it, how they lost it, and why they may not find it again. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 7, 389-399.

November 10: Social movements (I): Framing and consciousness raising

1. Benford, R. D., & Snow, D. A. (2000). Framing processes in social movements. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, 611-639.
2. Goldfarb, J. C. (2006). The politics of small things, left and right. *Contexts*, 5, 26-32.

November 15: Social movements (II): Politicized identities, social networks, and protest channels

1. Gladwell, M. (2010, October 4). Small change: Why the revolution will not be tweeted. *New Yorker*, 86.
2. Shirky, C. (2011). The political power of social media: Technology, the public sphere, and social change. *Foreign Affairs*, 90, 28-41.
3. Simon, B., & Klandermans, B. (2000). Politicized collective identity. *American Psychologist*, 56, 319-331.

November 17: Riots, revolution, and social breakdown

1. Keizer, K., Lindenberg, S., & Steg, L. (2008). The spreading of disorder. *Science*, 322, 1681-1685.
2. Kurzban, R. (1996). Can understanding undermine explanation? The confused experience of revolution. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 34, 328-351.

November 22: Psychological barriers to conflict resolution

1. Atran, S., & Axelrod, R. (2008). Reframing sacred values. *Negotiation Journal*, 24, 221-246.
2. Baron, J., Bazerman, M. H., & Shonk, K. (2006). Enlarging the societal pie through wise legislation: A psychological perspective. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 1, 123-132.
3. Gilbert, D. (2006, July 24). He who cast the first stone probably didn't. *New York Times*.
4. Kahneman, D., & Renshon, J. (2007). Why hawks win. *Foreign Policy*, 158, 34-38.

November 24: Extremism and the psychological roots of political violence

1. Fiske, S. T. (2008). From dehumanization and objectification to rehumanization: Neuroimaging studies on the building blocks of empathy. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1167, 31-34.
2. Glick, P. (2009). Scapegoating. In I. B. Weiner & W. E. Craighead (Eds.), *Corsini Encyclopedia of Psychology*. N.Y. Wiley.
3. Ginges, J., Atran, S., Sachdeva, S., & Medin, D. (2011). Psychology out of the laboratory: The challenge of violent extremism. *American Psychologist*, 66, 507-519.
4. Kruglanski, A. W., Crenshaw, M., Post, J. M., & Victoroff, J. (2008). Talking about terrorism. *Scientific American Mind*, 19, 59-65.

November 29: Civic engagement, prosocial norms, and trust

1. Cialdini, R. B. (2003). Crafting normative messages to protect the environment. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12, 105-109.
2. De Rooij, E. A., Green, D. P., & Gerber, A. S. (2009). Field experiments on political behavior and collective action. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12, 389-395.
3. Van Vugt, M. (2009). Averting the tragedy of the commons: Using social psychological science to protect the environment. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 18, 169-173.

December 1: National well-being and the politics of happiness

1. Diener, E. (2000). Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and a proposal for a national index. *American Psychologist*, 55, 34-43.
2. Wilkinson, R. (2004). Why is violence more common where inequality is greater? *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1036, 1-12.

Psych 350: Essay assignment (30% of final grade)

In this essay assignment you will have the opportunity to put what you learned in the course to practical use. Specifically, you will write an essay (approximately 8 pages) in which you apply concepts reviewed in the course to a particular political cause, social problem, or policy issue. This essay can take many possible forms depending on your particular passions and interests. Possibilities may include the following: a psychological analysis of a political advertisement, slogan, speech, or public information campaign; a detailed consultant's memo advising a political party, social movement, or government agency on strategies for media messaging or plans for a get-out-the-vote campaign; a script for a political advertisement, explaining how you would use psychological principles to help frame a specific political message; an editorial analyzing the political implications of an event such as an election outcome or polling result; a spin-doctor's strategy report for framing an event in a way that will benefit a political party or candidate; a description of a survey designed to gather more accurate information about public opinion on an issue; a critical analysis of the design or interpretation of a political opinion poll that contains important methodological biases or flaws. You are NOT restricted to contemporary political events, political events in Canada, party politics, or real world conditions and events. So, be imaginative! Regardless of the particular form your essay takes it must explicitly reference course concepts and apply those concepts creatively to a political topic.

Due date: The essay must be submitted to an electronic drop box on UW-ACE no later than 11 p.m. on Friday, November 25.

Accommodation Policies

Students who fail to complete an exam or do not submit the written assignment by the assigned date will receive no credit for that component of the course (i.e., a grade of 0 for that course component). Exceptions will be made only in case of illness or bereavement as described below.

Students who are requesting accommodation for course requirements (*assignment, midterm test, final exam*) due to illness should do the following:

- seek medical treatment as soon as possible and obtain a completed UW Verification of Illness
Form: http://www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/Health_Services/verification.html
- submit that form to the instructor within 48 hours.
- (preferably) inform the instructor by the due date for the course requirement that you will be unable to meet the deadline and that documentation will be forthcoming.

In the case of a missed final exam, the instructor and student will negotiate an extension for the final exam which will typically be written as soon as possible, but no later than the next offering of the course.

In the case of a missed assignment deadline or midterm test, the instructor will either:

- waive the course component and re-weight remaining term work as he/she deems fit according to circumstances and the goals of the course, or provide an extension.

In the case of bereavement, the instructor will provide similar accommodations to those for illness. Appropriate documentation to support the request will be required.

Students who are experiencing extenuating circumstances should also inform their academic advisors regarding their personal difficulties.

The Official Version of the Course Outline If there is a discrepancy between the hard copy outline (*i.e., if students were provided with a hard copy at the first class*) and the outline posted on UW-ACE, the outline on UW-ACE will be deemed the official version. Outlines on UW-ACE may change as instructors develop a course, but they become final as of the first class meeting for the term.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

Concerns About the Course or Instructor (Informal Stage) We in the Psychology Department take great pride in the high quality of our program and our instructors. Though infrequent, we know that students occasionally find themselves in situations of conflict with their instructors over course policies or grade assessments. If such a conflict arises, the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Affairs (Dr. Colin Ellard) is available for consultation and to mediate a resolution between the student and instructor. Dr. Ellard's contact information is as follows:

Email: cellard@uwaterloo.ca Ph 519-888- 4567 ext 36852

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. See Policy 70 and 71 below for further details.

Academic Integrity, Academic Offenses, Grievance, and Appeals

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check <http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/> for more informaton.]

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [check <http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>], to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about 'rules' for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 - Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm), <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm), <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm), <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>

Academic Integrity website (Arts): http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (UW): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

Graded final examination papers as well as unclaimed graded, essays, and midterm tests for this course will be kept in storage in the Psychology Department for a maximum of 16 months after the final grades have been submitted to the Registrar's Office. After that time, these documents will be destroyed in compliance with UW's confidential shredding procedures.

Research Experience Bonus Information and Guidelines

Experiential learning is considered an integral part of the undergraduate program in Psychology. Research participation is one example of this, article review is another. A number of undergraduate courses have been expanded to include opportunities for Psychology students to earn grades while gaining research experience.

Since experiential learning is highly valued in the Department of Psychology, students may earn a **"bonus" grade of up to 4%** in this course through research experience. Course work will make up 100% of the final mark and a "bonus" of up to 4% may be earned and will be added to the final grade if/as needed to bring your final grade up to 100%.

The two options for earning research experience grades (participation in research and article review) are described below. Students may complete any combination of these options to earn research experience grades.

Option 1: Participation in Psychology Research

Research participation is coordinated by the Research Experiences Group (REG). Psychology students may volunteer as research participants in lab and/or online (web-based) studies conducted by students and faculty in the Department of Psychology. Participation enables students to learn first-hand about psychology research and related concepts. Many students report that participation in research is both an educational and interesting experience. Please be assured that all Psychology studies have undergone prior ethics review and clearance through the Office of Research Ethics.

Educational focus of participation in research

To maximize the educational benefits of participating in research, students will receive feedback information following their participation in each study detailing the following elements:

- Purpose or objectives of the study
- Dependent and independent variables
- Expected results
- References for at least two related research articles
- Provisions to ensure confidentiality of data
- Contact information of the researcher should the student have further questions about the study
- Contact information for the Director of the Office of Research Ethics should the student wish to learn more about the general ethical issues surrounding research with human participants, or specific questions or concerns about the study in which s/he participated.

Participation is worth 0.5 participation credits (grade percentage points) for each half-hour of participation. Researchers will record student's participation and will advise the course instructor of the total credits earned by each student at the end of the term.

Study scheduling, participation and grade assignment is managed using the [SONA](#) online system. All students enrolled in this course have been set up with a SONA account. It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that you get an early start on your studies. For detailed instructions on [when and how access your SONA account](#) and for a list of [important dates and deadlines](#) please, as soon as possible, click on: <http://www.arts.uwaterloo.ca/~regadmin/regparticipant/sonainfo/#SonaSignUp>

**** Please do not ask the Course Instructor or REG Coordinator for information unless you have first thoroughly read the information provided on this website.****

More information about the REG program is available at:
<http://www.arts.uwaterloo.ca/~regadmin/regparticipant/>

Option 2: Article Review as an alternative to participation in research

Students are not required to participate in research, and not all students wish to do so. As an alternative, students may opt to gain research experience by writing short reviews (1½ to 2 pages) of research articles relevant to the course. The course instructor will specify a suitable source of articles for this course (i.e., scientific journals, newspapers, magazines, other printed media). *You must contact your TA to get approval for the article you have chosen before writing the review.* Each review article counts as one percentage point. To receive credit, you must follow specific guidelines. The article review must:

- **Be submitted before the last lecture. Late submissions will NOT be accepted under ANY circumstances.**
- Be typed
- Fully identify the title, author(s), source and date of the article. A copy of the article must be attached.
- Identify the psychological concepts in the article and indicate the pages in the textbook that are applicable. Critically evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article. If inappropriate or incorrect, identify the error and its implications for the validity of the article. You may find, for example, misleading headings, faulty research procedures, alternative explanations that are ignored, failures to distinguish factual findings from opinions, faulty statements of cause-effect relations, errors in reasoning, etc. Provide examples whenever possible.
- Clearly evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article.
- Keep a copy of your review in the unlikely event we misplace the original.