

POIS 385: POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Spring 2021 (HyFlex)

Instructor: Florian Justwan, Ph.D.
Class: Tuesday, Thursday; 9:30 am - 10:45 am (Administration 326)
Office Hours: Thursday; 03:00 pm - 05:00 pm; Administration 323 or via zoom (link see below)
Zoom Link: <https://uidaho.zoom.us/j/9457372902>
Phone: 208-885-4156
Email: fjustwan@uidaho.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Most political phenomena are shaped by the beliefs and actions of individual leaders. As a result, the study of politics requires us to examine the psychological factors that affect the decision-making processes of government representatives. The main goal of this course is to provide students with a general understanding of the cognitive biases that influence the choices that individuals make in the realm of global politics. After a short introduction in which we discuss rational choice theory (the “paradigmatic core” of most existing research in Comparative Politics and International Relations), we investigate the role of a wide range of psychological variables in the domestic and international decision-making process. Furthermore, we will study the impact of various biases on general public opinion. Throughout the course, we will draw from numerous substantive examples in International Relations and Comparative Politics. As such, we will examine theories relating to international conflict, civil war, and public opinion. At the end of the term, students should be able to: (1) identify the relative strengths and weaknesses of the approaches covered in class and (2) discuss the role of psychological biases in the policy formulation process.

HyFLEX FORMAT

This course will be taught using the “HyFlex” Instruction Method. This method is designed to provide students the opportunity of an in-class experience while allowing for social distancing. Here is what a typical week is going to look like:

- a. On any given class day, there will be a number of readings for you to complete. Each day with a reading on the syllabus will have an associated reading quiz (**to be completed on bblearn prior to the regular start time of our class**).
- b. There will be a lecture for every class day on the syllabus (Tuesday and Thursday). **It is your responsibility to attend both lectures during a given week.** Attendance is mandatory. Here is how this will work in practice:
 - i. To accommodate social distancing, only half of all enrolled course participants will come to class. There will be 2 student groups: Group Silver and Group Gold. Your group assignment is presented to you on bblearn. Both groups will have the option of coming to class on Tuesday

- or Thursday on an alternating schedule. Important: in-person attendance is *not* mandatory. Instead, you can choose to attend our class meetings virtually (via zoom).
- ii. Every class meeting will be livestreamed via zoom (<https://uidaho.zoom.us/j/9457372902>).
 - iii. As noted, it is your responsibility to **attend both class meetings during a given week**. You can attend both meetings via zoom **OR** you can attend one meeting in-person and the other meeting via zoom.
- c. You are permitted THREE unexcused absences. Every other absence will lower your discussion grade by 5 percent unless you have a valid excuse (medical, academic, etc.) AND proper documentation. Please note: even if you use one of your “free” unexcused absences, you still have to take the reading quiz for that day.
 - d. If you are encountering larger issues that are making it difficult for you to attend class or complete assignments, reach out to me as soon as these issues materialize. We can then find a solution together. I cannot make accommodations for problems that have occurred in the past. If you are encountering a problem, be proactive and reach out to me!

COURSE MATERIALS

You will need to buy the following materials for this class:

- Textbook: Houghton, David Patrick (2015). Political Psychology. Situations, Individuals, and Cases. New York and London: Routledge.
- Popular Press Book: Woodward, Bob (2020). Rage. New York and London: Simon and Schuster.
- Movie: Ghosts of Abu Ghraib (Documentary).

All other readings will be provided to you online. It is essential that you carefully read all of the required material prior to each class session. I expect that you take your responsibilities seriously. Failing to do so will both significantly impact your grade and the quality of our in-class discussion.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES

- 5% Two Mandatory Zoom Check-Ins
- 20% Participation in Class Discussions
- 35% Online Reading Quizzes
- 40% Two Analytical Papers

Two Mandatory Zoom Check-Ins (5 percent)

Every student is required to meet with me via zoom or telephone at least twice over the course of the semester. Each of those required meetings represents 2.5 percent of your overall course grade. My regular office hours are Thursday from 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm. However, if this does not work for you, please send me an email and we can schedule a time slot for our chat.

Discussion Contributions (20 percent)

Your participation grade will be based on the quality and quantity of your verbal contributions during each week's class discussions (**via zoom or in-person**). As stated above, every student has to attend both lectures during a given week.

Online Reading Quizzes (35 percent)

Each day with a reading on the syllabus will have an associated reading quiz. This quiz needs to be completed on bblearn prior to the regular start time of our class (9:30am). Your lowest 3 quiz grades will be dropped at the end of the semester.

Paper (40 percent)

Every student is required to write two analytical papers. Each paper is worth 20 percent of your overall course grade. More details about both assignments will be provided in class.

GRADE SCALE

Note: final grades will NOT be rounded

- A = 90.00-100.00
- B = 80.00-89.99
- C = 70.00-79.99
- D = 60.00-69.99
- F = 00.00-59.99

COURSE POLICIES

Deadlines

The assignments in this class are all designed to help you familiarize yourself with the field of Political Psychology. In general, late work will not be accepted. However, I do recognize that we all live in unusual times. If there is a documented emergency that prevents you from completing one of the class assignments at the scheduled date, I would be happy to work with you. However, you have to reach out to me **prior to due date for a given assignment**.

Academic Honesty

It is the policy of our department to refer instances of suspected academic dishonesty to the Student Judicial Council. For the Dean of Students' Academic Integrity site which includes UI Policies and Student Academic Dishonesty Resources, see <https://www.uidaho.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students/student-conduct/academic-integrity>

Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have documented temporary or permanent disabilities. All accommodations must be approved through the Center for Disability Access and Resources located in the Bruce M. Pitman Center, Suite 127 in order to notify your instructor(s) as soon as possible regarding accommodation(s) needed for the course.

- Phone: 208-885-6307
- Email: cdar@uidaho.edu
- Website: www.uidaho.edu/current-students/cdar

Tutoring and College Success (TCS)

TCS offers three distinct services dedicated to student success: tutoring, SI-PASS, and Academic Coaching. Vandal Tutoring provides drop-in style tutoring in person at the Library or online through uidaho.edu/tutoringonline at no cost to undergraduates. SI-PASS provides peer assisted study sessions for difficult courses. You can find the schedule of currently supported courses at uidaho.edu/si. Academic Coaching offers students an opportunity to work with a coach, one on one, to improve their academic skills such as: effective studying, test taking, time management, and note taking. Visit uidaho.edu/academic-coaching to schedule an appointment.

Electronic Device Policy

The use of cell phones, iPods, iPads, or any other electronic device will not be permitted during class meetings. I will permit you a laptop ONLY to take notes and review online readings. Please note that I reserve the right to reverse this policy at any time.

Assignment and Grade Record-Keeping

Students are responsible for saving all graded work until final grades are recorded with the registrar and checked by the student.

Classroom Learning Civility

In any environment in which people gather to learn, it is essential that all members feel as free and safe as possible in their participation. To this end, it is expected that everyone in this course will be treated with mutual respect and civility, with an understanding that all of us (students, instructors, guests, and teaching assistants) will be respectful and civil to one another in discussion, in action, in teaching, and in learning. Should you feel our classroom interactions do not reflect an environment of civility and respect, you are encouraged to meet with your instructor during office hours to discuss your concern. Additional resources for expression of concern or requesting support include the Dean of Students office and staff (5-6757), the UI Counseling & Testing Center's confidential services (5-6716), or the UI Office of Human Rights, Access, & Inclusion (5-4285).

Grade Appeals

If you believe your exams or assignments have been graded unfairly, you can appeal your grade in written form. You have to hand in your appeal on the day after the assignment or exam was returned. Comparisons to other students' graded assignments will not be accepted for a complaint. Hand in the original copy of the graded assignment/exam together with the written appeal. I will reevaluate your grade in light of the argument that you made. However, the new grade may be the same, higher, or lower than the original grade and it will be final.

Healthy Vandals Policies

It is a longstanding tradition that Vandals take care of Vandals, and we all do our best to look out for the Vandal Family. The simple precautions listed below go a long way in reducing the impact of coronavirus on our campuses and in our communities. With everyone engaging in these small actions, we can continue to participate in our vibrant campus culture where we are

able to learn, live, and grow. Visit [U of I's COVID-19 page](#) often for updated information. Questions related to the University of Idaho's coronavirus response can be sent to covid19questions@uidaho.edu.

Refrain from attending class in-person if you are ill, if you are experiencing any of the [known symptoms of coronavirus](#), or if you have tested positive for COVID-19 or been potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19.

- If you display symptoms and/or test positive, you should quarantine following the [CDC's recommendations](#). Do not return to class until you meet the [CDC's requirements](#).
- If you have been exposed but are asymptomatic, you should stay home for 14 days from the last exposure if you remain asymptomatic, adhering to the [CDC's requirements](#).

Documentation (a doctor's note) for medical excuses is not required; instead, email me to make arrangements to submit any missed work and make plans to use Zoom and/or online course materials to stay current with the course schedule.

All faculty, staff, students and visitors across all U of I locations must use face coverings over the nose and mouth whenever in any U of I buildings. Thus, you are required to wear a face covering in the classroom at all times.

- If you have a medical condition that affects your ability to comply with the face covering policy, please contact the Center for Disability Access and Resources (CDAR) to request a reasonable accommodation.
- If you have other reasons you believe make you exempt from wearing face coverings, please contact the COVID-19 Coordinator.
- Failure to wear a face covering over your nose and mouth will require you to leave the classroom immediately. If a disruption to the learning experience occurs due to repeated offence and/or egregious behavior, you will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for a potential code violation.

COURSE SCHEDULE (This is only a tentative schedule for this course. Content may change)

Part I: Course Intro and RCT		
Week 1		Course Introduction
	Jan. 12 (T)	Winter Break. No class.
Zoom Only	Jan. 14 (R)	This syllabus.
Week 2		Rational Choice I: Foundations
Group Silver	Jan. 19 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This syllabus (seriously, please make sure to read it). • D. Green and I. Shapiro (1994). Chapter 2: The Nature of Rational Choice Theory. In: D. Green and I. Shapiro: Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 13.-17. • Economist (2012). Is It Irrational to Vote? In: The Economist (October 23, 2012).
Group Gold	Jan. 21 (R)	Reader on the Logic of Political Survival (available on bblearn).
Week 3		Rational Choice II: Modifications and Criticisms
Group Gold	Jan. 26 (T)	B. Mor (1991). Nasser's Decision-Making in the 1967 Middle East Crisis: A Rational-Choice Explanation. In: Journal of Peace Research 28 (4), pp. 359-375.
Group Silver	Jan. 28 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houghton Chapters 1 and 3. • Thaler, Richard (2015). Misbehaving. The Making of Behavioral Economics. New York: W.W. Norton. Chapter 1.
Part II: The Situation		
Week 4		Prospect Theory
Group Silver	Feb. 2 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thaler, Richard (2015). Misbehaving. The Making of Behavioral Economics. New York: W.W. Norton. Chapter 4. • Kahneman, Daniel (2009). Interview with Daniel Kahneman. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZUylXXJbhE.
Group Gold	Feb. 4 (R)	A. Levi and G. Whyte (1997). "A Cross-Cultural Exploration of the Reference Dependence of Crucial Group Decisions under Risk: Japan's 1941 Decision for War." In: Journal of Conflict Resolution 41 (6), pp. 792-813.
Week 5		Group Dynamics

Group Gold	Feb. 9 (T)	Houghton Chapter 6.
Group Silver	Feb. 11 (R)	D. Badie (2010). "Groupthink, Iraq, and the War on Terror: Explaining US Policy Shift toward Iraq." In: Foreign Policy Analysis 6 (4), pp. 277-296.
Week 6		Anxiety and Fear
Group Silver	Feb. 16 (T)	Albertson and Gadarian Chapters 2, 3 and 4.
Group Gold	Feb. 18 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L. M. Krauss (2016). "Thinking Rationally About Terror." In: The New Yorker (January 2, 2016). • J. Cassidy (2015) "Terrorism in the Age of Twitter." In: The New Yorker (November 23, 2015).
Week 7		Application Week: The Psychology of "Bad Behavior" I
Zoom only!	Feb. 23 (T)	Mandatory Library Workshop.
No class.	Feb. 25 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No class meeting • Watch the movie "Ghosts of Abu Ghraib."
Part III: The Individual		
Week 8		Personality and Beliefs I
Group Gold	March 2 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houghton Chapter 4. • Houghton Chapter 5.
Group Silver	March 4 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houghton Chapter 7. • M. Lewis (2012). "Obama's Way." In: Vanity Fair (October 1, 2012). From: http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2012/10/michael-lewis-profile-barack-obama.
Week 9		Personality and Beliefs II
Group Silver	March 9 (T)	B. Rathbun (2011). "Before Hegemony: Generalized Trust and the Creation and Design of International Security Organizations." In: International Organization 65 (1), pp. 243-273.
Group Gold	March 11 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B. Bayram (2017). "Due Deference: Cosmopolitan Social Identity and the Psychology of Legal Obligation in International Politics." International Organization 71 (S1), pp. S137–S163. • Paper I due at 11:59pm via bblearn.

Week 10		Spring Break!
	March 16 (T)	No class.
	March 18 (R)	No class.
Week 11		Personality and Beliefs III
Zoom only!	March 23 (T)	S. Webster (2018). "It's Personal: The Big Five Personality Traits and Negative Partisan Affect in Polarized US politics." In: American Behavioral Scientist 62 (1), pp. 127-145.
Zoom only!	March 25 (R)	No Readings. Start Reading the Material for next week.
Week 12		Morality
Group Gold	March 30 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haidt Chapter 1. • Haidt Chapter 2. • Haidt Chapter 5.
Group Silver	April 1 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haidt Chapter 6. • Haidt Chapter 7. • Haidt Chapter 8.
Week 13		Analogical Reasoning
Group Silver	April 6 (T)	Houghton Chapter 9.
Group Gold	April 8 (R)	D.P. Houghton (1996). "The Role of Analogical Reasoning in Novel Foreign-Policy Situations." In: British Journal of Political Science 26 (4), pp. 523-552.
Week 14		Affect and Emotion
Group Gold	April 13 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houghton Chapter 10. • C.S. Taber and M. Lodge (2006). "Motivated Skepticism in the Evaluation of Political Beliefs." In: American Journal of Political Science 50 (3), pp. 755 – 769.
Group Silver	April 15 (R)	Reader on Affect and Emotion (on bblearn).

Week 15		Application Week: The Psychology of President Trump
Group Silver	April 20 (T)	Woodward Chapters 1-27.
Group Gold	April 22 (R)	Woodward Chapters 28-46.
Week 16		Biopolitics
Group Gold	April 27 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houghton Chapter 11. • D. Schreiber et al. (2013). "Red brain, blue brain: Evaluative processes differ in Democrats and Republicans." In: PLoS One 8 (2).
Group Silver	April 29 (R)	J. Useem (2017). "Power Causes Brain Damage." In: The Atlantic Online (August 2017). From: https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/07/power-causes-brain-damage/528711/ .
Week 17		Case Study: Political Violence
Group Silver	May 4 (T)	Houghton Chapter 14.
Group Gold	May 6 (R)	Catch-up Day.
Week 18		Finals Week
	May 14 (F)	Paper II due at 11:59pm via bblearn.