

Political Attitudes and Behavior
POL 472.01 Spring 2008
Tuesdays/Thursdays
8am-9:20am AB1 Room 306

Professor: Dr. Dunaway

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:20 am-10am, 2-3pm (and by appointment).

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is a course about two main topics: 1) how average people relate to politics (i.e. how they think about politics, how they form their opinions, and what those opinions and attitudes mean for the political system); and 2) political behavior. We will discuss the nature and consequences of the public's understanding of politics, public opinion on issues, the media's impact, and the impact of public opinion on the political system as a whole. We will also focus on things such as: political participation, party identification, elections and voting behavior, political psychology, the formation of political ideology and beliefs, and various theories on political behavior. The readings for this class are varied, and will come from both journal articles and books. 3 Credit Hours. Prerequisites: 6 hours of political science.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Class attendance is required and counts toward your participation grade, which is 15% of your total grade. See general university regulations. Makeup exams are available only at the instructor's discretion and convenience. If you miss an exam you are not guaranteed an opportunity to make it up. Make up exams (when allowed) are cumulative and won't be given until the end of the semester.

IMPORTANT NOTES ON E-MAILING THE PROFESSOR: I DO NOT accept assignments over e-mail. I will delete all e-mails that do not contain your full name and course information (POL 472) in the body or heading of the e-mail. I will only accept e-mails with one of two subject headings: 1) "Request for Appointment;" or 2) "Substantive question regarding the reading or course material." The latter DOES NOT INCLUDE questions about what to read, when tests are, if we are having class, if there is an assignment, when the exams are, why you missed class, paper due dates, etc. Substantive questions are about *the course material*. An example might be: in the Prior (2005) article, what does the author mean by videomalaise? Another example might be: I am having trouble understanding the difference between agenda setting and priming. Can you help with this? If you want to discuss anything else with me, you may: consult the syllabus for information, see me in class, or make an appointment for an in person or telephone meeting. If you e-mail me about missing class (regardless of the reason), I reserve the right to deduct points from your participation grade. Even if you have a legitimate reason for absence and a university-approved excuse, you do not need to update me via e-mail. You can update me when you return to class (or in an appointment) and we can make the appropriate decisions then. I am happy to schedule appointments for a phone conversation if my office hours are not compatible with your schedule.

EXAMS: There will be three exams, counting equally toward the final grade. The format of the exams will be partly objective — that is, matching/true-false questions, with — mostly—short identifications or essay questions. Final dates of and formats of exams will be announced in class. I reserve the right to change the format of the tests during the semester if I deem it necessary.

GRADING PLAN: Grades are based on exams (60%), and out-of-class and in-class research paper assignments (40%). This means the three exams will be averaged and weighted 60%, while the other assignments and participation together will be weighted 40%. If it becomes necessary, weekly quizzes can be incorporated into the grading scheme as well. I reserve the right to change the grading plan. For all assignments and exams the normal grading scale is used: 90 and above, A; 80-89, B; 70-79, C; 60-69, D; 59 and below, F.

Course Outline: Topics			Readings and Assignments
1/17	TH	Introduction and Overview.	
1/22	T	Measuring the American Mind	R33
1/24	TH	Political Knowledge	R1-R3
1/29	T	Political Knowledge	R4
1/31	TH	Evaluating candidates/Election 2008	R10
2/5	T	Elections 2008	TBA
2/7	TH	Latinos/Acculturation	R26-27
2/12	T	Attitudes toward Immigration	TBA
2/14	TH	Terrorism/Iraq War	R 34/R25
2/19	T	Catch up and Review	-----
2/21	TH	Exam I	-----
2/26	T	Draft of Intro/Lit Review Due.	Draft of Intro/Lit Review Due.
2/26	T	Information Shortcuts	R14
2/28	TH	Information Shortcuts	R15
3/4	T	The Media and Opinion	R16-18
3/6	TH	The Media and Opinion	R19-20
3/10-14		SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS	NO READING
3/18	T	Negative Campaigns/Ads	R21
3/20	TH	Negative Campaigns/Ads	R29-30
3/25	T	Negative Campaigns /Ads	DVD on Political Ads/review
3/27	TH	Exam II	-----
4/1	T	Theory, Hypotheses, Methods Due	Theory, Hypotheses, Methods Due.
4/1	T	Information Processing	R5
4/3	TH	Information Processing	R6
4/8	T	Tolerance	R7/8
4/10	TH	Paper First Complete Draft Due.	First Complete Draft Due.
4/10	TH	Attribution Theory	R9
4/15	T	Political Trust	R12
4/17	TH	Personality and Political Behavior	R13
4/22	T	Evaluating Institutions	R28
4/24	TH	Political Orientations/Participation	R31
4/29	T	Political Orientations/Participation	R32
5/1	TH	Final Papers due.	Final Papers due.
5/1	T	Paper Presentations	Critiques due in class.
5/6-5/8		Paper Presentations	Critiques due in class. Review .

FINALS: Check schedule of classes for exact times and date of final exam for this course.

READINGS: I have made most of these available via electronic reserve in the library. Many are also available on JSTOR (www.jstor.org). You will be responsible for getting the readings. I will provide instructions on how to access the electronic reserves for this course and on how to save and print most of these readings as .pdf documents.

1. Michael Delli Carpini and Scott Keeter, "Stability and Change in the US Public's Knowledge of Politics," *POQ* 55 (winter 1991): 583-612. (JSTOR)
2. W. Russell Neuman, Marion Just, and Ann Crigler, *Common Knowledge: News and the Construction of Political Meaning*. Chapter 1 pp. 1-16 (on eres until 10/8)
3. W. Russell Neuman, Marion Just, and Ann Crigler, *Common Knowledge: News and the Construction of Political Meaning*. Chapter 4. (On e-res after 10/9)
4. Prior, Markus. 2005. "News Vs. Entertainment: How Increasing Media Choice Widens Gap in Political Knowledge." *AJPS* 49:3
5. Taber, Charles. 2003. "Information Processing and Public Opinion." Chapter 13 in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*. New York, Oxford U. Press. Edited by: Sears, David O., Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis.
6. Graber, Doris. 1988. *Processing the News: How People Tame the Information Tide*. Ch. 1 (pp. 1-6); Chapter 5 (pp. 96-116); Chapter 10 (pp. 249-251.)
7. Kuklinski, James H., et al. 1991. "The Cognitive And Affective Bases Of Political Tolerance Judgments." *American Journal of Political Science* 35: 1-27. (JSTOR)
8. Thomas Nelson et al., "Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflict and Its Effect on Tolerance," *APSR*, 91 (Sep 1997): 567-83. (JSTOR)
9. Iyengar, Shanto. 1996. "Framing Responsibility for Political Issues." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 546. (JSTOR)
10. Funk, Caroline L. 1999. "Bringing the Candidate into Models of Candidate Evaluation." *The Journal of Politics* 61: 700-720. (JSTOR)
11. Marc J. Hetherington. 1998. "The Political Relevance of Political Trust." *APSR Vol. 92(4):791-808*. (JSTOR)
12. Mutz, Diana C. and Byron Reeves. 2005. "The New Videomalaise: Effects of Televised Incivility on Political Trust." *APSR* 99:1.
13. Hetherington and Weiler. 2005. "Authoritarian Values and Political Choice" Paper presented at the 2005 Midwest Political Science Association's Annual Meeting, April 7-10, Chicago.
14. Arthur Lupia. 1994. "Shortcuts versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California Insurance Reform Elections." *American Political Science Review* 88:63-76. (JSTOR)
15. Redlawsk, D. 2001. "Advantages and Disadvantages of Cognitive Heuristics in Political Decision Making." *American Journal of Political Science*. 45(October):951-971 [with Richard R. Lau.] (JSTOR)
16. Iyengar, Shanto/ Kinder, Donald R. (1987): News That Matters. Television and American Opinion, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapters 1 & 2.
17. Iyengar, Shanto/ Kinder, Donald R. (1987): News That Matters. Television and American Opinion, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapter 3. (eres 10/9)
18. Iyengar, Shanto/ Kinder, Donald R. (1987): News That Matters. Television and American Opinion, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapter 7
19. Valentino, Nicholas A., Vincent L. Hutchings and Ismail K. White. 2002. *Cues That Matter: How Political Ads Prime Racial Attitudes During Campaigns*. American Political Science Review Vol. 96 No. 1 (March): 75-90. (JSTOR)
20. Kim Fridkin Kahn and Patrick J. Kenny. 2002. "The Slant of the News: How Editorial Endorsements Influence Campaign Coverage and Citizens' Views of Candidates." American Political Science Review Vol. 96(2): 381-394. (JSTOR)

21. Brooks, Deborah Jordan and John G. Geer. 2007. "Beyond Negativity: The Effects of Incivility on the Electorate." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(1):1-16.
22. White, Ismail K., 2007. "When Race Matters and When It Doesn't: Racial Group Differences in Response to Racial Cues." *American Political Science Review* 101(2): 339-354.
23. Nelson, Thomas E., Kira Sanbonmatsu, and Harwood K. McClerking. 2007. "Playing a Different Race Card: Examining the Limits of Elite Influence on Perceptions of Racism." *The Journal of Politics* 69(2):416-429.
24. Gay, Claudine. 2007. "Legislating Without Constraints: The Effect of Minority Districting on Legislators' Responsiveness to Constituency Preferences." *The Journal of Politics* 69(2): 442-456.
25. Kam, Cindy D. and Donald R. Kinder. 2007. "Terror and Ethnocentrism: Foundations for American Support for the War on Terrorism." *The Journal of Politics* 69(2): 320-338.
26. Staton, Jeffrey K., Robert A. Jackson, and Damarys Canache. 2007. Dual Nationality Among Latinos: What are the Implications for Political Connectedness?" *The Journal of Politics* 69(2): 470-482.
27. Branton, Regina P. 2006. "Latino Attitudes Toward Various Areas of Public Policy: The Importance of Acculturation." *Political Research Quarterly* 60:293-203.
28. Mondak, Jeffery J., Edward G. Carmines, Robert Huckfeldt, Dona-Gene Mitchell, and Scot Schraufnagel. 2007. "Does Familiarity Breed Contempt? The Impact of Information on Mass Attitudes Toward Congress." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(1):34-48.
29. Brooks, Deborah Jordan. 2006. "The Resilient Voter: Moving Toward Closure in the Debate over Negative Campaigning and Turnout." *The Journal of Politics* 68(3):684-96.
30. Kahn, Kim F. and Patrick J. Kenney. 1999. Do Negative Campaigns Mobilize or Suppress Turnout? Clarifying the Relationship between Negativity and Participation." *American Political Science Review* 93(4):877-89.
31. Kam, Cindy. 2007. "When Duty Calls, Do Citizens Answer?" *The Journal of Politics* 69(1): 17-29.
32. Wattenberg, Martin P. 2008. Chapter 6 "Does Low Youth Turnout Really Matter?" in *Is Voting for Young People?*
33. Bardes and Oldendick, Chapter 6 in *Public Opinion: Measuring the American Mind*.
34. Article from Political Behavior Special Edition on 2004 Election and the Iraq War. Norpoth, Helmut, and Andrew Sidman. 2007. "Mission Accomplished: The Wartime Election of 2004." *Political Behavior* 29: 175-195.

ASSIGNMENTS: First, students are required to complete their daily readings prior to class. Second, assignments come in a variety of formats in the effort to cater to all the individual learning styles and strengths in the classroom. Finally, I require interactive discussion of the readings and lecture material in class. In the class discussions, my role is to facilitate debate and provide input and clarification when it is needed. Students are encouraged to offer arguments and to challenge arguments offered in class. The exchange of perspectives exposes students to a diversity of viewpoints, allows them the opportunity to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the various arguments offered, and gives them a chance to hone their public speaking skills and their ability to advance and defend their own assertions. If during the semester class participation is not at a level I think is acceptable, I reserve the right to deduct points from the participation portion of students' grades and to incorporate daily quizzes over the reading material.

A note on turning in assignments: Since I do not accept assignments via e-mail, I will allow hardcopies to be turned in to my faculty mailbox in AB1 Room 315 if you cannot turn in an assignment in class. Assignments may also be turned in to Mrs. Peggy Ellenberger (also in Room 315) if necessary. Late assignments will be docked 10 points for each day it is late. I will not accept any assignments after our last official day of class under any circumstances.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. Violation of this policy will result in a grade of 0 on an exam where there is cheating

CLASSROOM RULES OF CONDUCT: Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Cellular telephones and pagers must be turned off before the class begins. Students are prohibited from using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, talking at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a directive to leave class. Students who are especially disruptive also may be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy. You may not film or record this class without permission. The Code of Student Conduct and Discipline is found at: <https://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/dean/codeofconduct.html>.

TARDINESS: In the past I have had problems with students who are “chronically” late to class. This is disruptive to the class and to the other students in particular. If you have scheduled your classes such that it will be impossible to be on time to my class, change your schedule or drop this class. If you need to leave class early for any reason, please notify me at the beginning of class.

VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM: Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

INSTRUCTOR EVALUATIONS: Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation toward the end of the semester.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: will be accommodated in any way possible. Please let the instructor know early on in the semester. It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until a student registers with the Counseling Center.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS: the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day. Please let the instructor know early on in the semester. Syllabus is subject to change if circumstances so dictate.