GOV 312L: Political Psychology and Democratic Representation
Instructor: Philip Moniz
pmoniz@utexas.edu

Office Hours: MEZ 3.228 on M 11am-1pm & W 11am-12pm

Unique #: 37255
Meeting Place: PAR 301
Meeting Time: M, W, F 10am-11am

Intellectual Mission
The purpose of this course is to acquaint you with the study of public opinion and representation in the United States. A functioning republic depends on the accountability of representatives by citizens, and we will focus on how the American public meets or fails to meet this requirement. We will begin with the origins and consequences of the American public's political psychology. Along the way to theories and empirical studies of how the government responds to the public, we will explore sources of social, economic, and political inequality in American representation. By the end of the course, you will be able to think more critically about the structure and operation of American government, as well as understand the origins of our modern identity-driven, nationalized mass politics. You will also be familiarized with the methods of political-science research, including the use of administrative, survey, and field experimental data.

Prerequisites
There are no prerequisites.

Readings
All readings will be posted on Canvas as PDFs. You don't need to buy any books.

Technology Policy
You are permitted to have a computer out in class so long as you use it only to take notes and quizzes related to the course.

Grades
The grades for this course will come from:
(4) Exams (40%)
Quizzes/attendance/participation (25%)
Homework assignments (35%)

Homework assignments, exams, and quizzes will be submitted through Canvas.

Exams
Exams test material covered in the last 2 or 3 units. They are administered *in class* and may take a whole class period. They are not cumulative. You will take them on Canvas using your computer.

Quizzes
Quizzes are shorter than exams (about 10 minutes) and are administered at some point during a unit, usually in class. If you have done the reading and attended lecture, you should be able to ace these. Your 2 lowest quiz grades are dropped from your final grade.

Homework Assignments
Homework assignments are usually short (about 1-page) written exercises, but they may involve completing an online survey or participating in an online discussion. Details of homework assignments will be announced as their deadlines approach. Your lowest assignment grade is dropped from your final grade. Late submissions will be penalized 1 point per day.

Participation
Attendance will not be taken, but I do expect you to come to class. The quizzes, some of which will be administered in class without prior notice, will serve as an occasional attendance-check, as you will get a 0 if you are not in class to take it.

Grades will not be rounded. Therefore, an 82.9 is a B- and an 86.9 is a B. If you want to appeal a grade, you must do so, at office hours, within one week after the assignment is returned to you. I will not offer make-up exams or quizzes. Final grades will be assigned according to the following structure: F: below 60; D: 60-69; C-: 70-72; C: 73-76; C+: 77-79; B-: 80-82; B: 83-86; B+: 87-89; A-: 90-92; A: 93-100.

Academic Dishonesty
There is really no winning if you cheat on your studies. This includes plagiarism, cheating, or engaging in any other unethical academic practices. You won't have learned anything and you will probably get a lower grade in the course than if you had given an honest effort. It is also punished rather severely.

Accommodations
If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). You may refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: http://community.utexas.edu/disability/. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations.

Course Schedule and Readings, Unit by Unit
The course is divided into "units" on a given topic (listed here by uppercase Roman numeral). Units do not have a set length. Some will take a week, others may take up to 3 weeks, depending on the amount of content we cover. Once we complete a unit or two, we will have an exam on that unit's material.

Readings will be posted on Canvas and should be read by the end of the each unit.

I. Primordial Politics
   1) Henrich (2020, ch. 1)
   2) Henrich (2020, ch. 2)
   3) Henrich (2020, ch. 5)
   4) Henrich (2020, ch. 9)

5) Assignment: Example of WEIRDness in US Politics
6) Exam 1

II. Identity Politics
1) The Power of Us (Van Bavel and Packer 2021, ch. 2)
2) Mason (2018, ch. 3)
3) Hetherington and Weiler (2018, chs. 1 and 2)
4) Mutz (2018)
5) Assignment 2: Political Survey
6) Assignment 3: Example of Worldview in US Politics
7) Exam 2

III. Democracy and Representation
1) Downs (1957, ch. 1)
2) Achen and Bartels (2016, chs. 2 and 9)
3) Assignment 4: Examples of the Rational Voter and Retrospective Voter Models
4) Exam 3

IV. Party Politics and Representation
1) Lee (2016, chs. 1 and 2)
2) Levitsky and Ziblatt (2023, chs. 3 and 7)
3) Assignment 5: Example of Party Messaging
4) Exam 4

Bibliography

Achen, Christopher H., and Larry M. Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row.

Henrich, Joseph. 2020. *The WEIRDest People in the World: How the West Became Psychologically Peculiar and Particularly Prosperous*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Hetherington, Marc J., and Jonathan Weiler. 2018. *Prius or Pickup? How the Answers to Four Simple Questions Explain America's Great Divide*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Lee, Frances E. 2016. *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mason, Lilliana. 2018. *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Mutz, Diana C. 2018. "Status Threat, Not Economic Hardship, Explains the 2016 Presidential Vote." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 115 (19).

Van Bavel, Jay J., and Dominic J. Packer. 2020. *The Power of Us: Harnessing Our Shared Identities to Improve Performance, Increase Cooperation, and Promote Social Harmony*. New York: Little, Brown Spark.