

POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY (POLS 301)

Dr. Rebecca J. Hannagan

Office: 406 Zulauf Hall

Hours: Mondays 1:00 - 2:00 pm & Wednesdays 3:30-5:30 pm

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Course Objective: Political psychology as a field is defined largely by its preoccupation with the role of human thought, emotion, and behavior in politics. Political psychology speaks to so many aspects of political phenomena – from American politics and voting behavior, to comparative politics, to international relations.

Course Materials:

- *Blink* by Malcolm Gladwell
- *Political Psychology* by David Patrick Houghton
- Articles posted on Blackboard (pdf format)

You are expected to have your reading done each day before you come to class. This is a seminar style course, based more on discussion than lecture. It is important that you come to class prepared to discuss the material.

Calculation of Grades:

Your grade in this course will consist of your performance on two exams (a midterm and a final exam), three short reaction papers, and one longer paper. The following is a breakdown of how the grades will be weighted:

Midterm Exam	20%	Reaction Papers	30%
Final Exam	30%	Paper	20%

All papers must be submitted via Blackboard. I will use SafeAssign to check for plagiarism.

I will adhere to the following grading scale:

100-97% = A+	89-87% = B+	79-77% = C+	69-67% = D+	59% < = F
96-93% = A	86-83% = B	76-73% = C	66-63% = D	
92-90% = A-	82-80% = B-	72-70% = C-	62-60% = D-	

General Information:

I do not accept late work, nor do I offer make-up exams (NO EXCEPTIONS! Don't ask). If your homework or paper is late, you will receive a 0 on that assignment. Since your work must be submitted via Blackboard, the date stamp must reflect the date the assignment is due, as well as the time at or before the beginning of class. If you are not present for an exam, you will receive a 0 on that exam. If you have a situation that requires exception (i.e. death of a family member, you are having a baby, etc.), you must notify me and/or be prepared to produce documentation of your situation.

Your papers must be submitted via Blackboard. I will use SafeAssign to check for plagiarism.

Blackboard is your friend. Check it often for announcements and important course documents. I reserve the right to modify the schedule in the interest of time or due to the difficulty of the material. If I decide to modify the schedule I will notify the class immediately of my decision. If changes are made and you are not aware of them because you do not regularly attend class or choose to sleep during class there will

be no exceptions made to accommodate you. It is in your best interest to attend every class and pay attention to the material being covered.

No cell phone use during class (including text messaging). Please turn your cell phones to silent or off (and not just on vibrate). No laptop or blackberry use during class. Do not text message, read the newspaper, sleep during class, come late or leave class early as these are inappropriate behaviors for a university class and are disruptive to your peers. Be respectful of those who are interested in being active participants in their education.

This syllabus is a contract between me (the professor) and you (the student). The syllabus will be available on Blackboard throughout the semester for your reference. If you choose to remain in this class I assume that you agree to the policies and procedures I have set forth in the syllabus.

Academic Dishonesty:

The maintenance of academic honesty and integrity is of vital concern to the Department of Political Science and the University community. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty shall be subject to both academic and disciplinary sanctions. If I find that you have plagiarized your academic work, you will receive an F on the assignment – no exceptions. If you are caught cheating, falsifying, or otherwise misrepresenting your work twice you will fail the class. In addition, if I suspect academic dishonesty your name will be turned over to the Director of Undergraduate Studies and the Chair of the Political Science Department who will make a determination as to further disciplinary action which may include academic probation or expulsion.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, fabrication and falsification, plagiarism, and misrepresentation to avoid academic work. I would like to reiterate that I take this very seriously and therefore, so should you.

Other Information:

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NIU is committed to making reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Those students with disabilities that may have some impact on their coursework and for which they may require accommodations should notify the Center for Access-Ability Resources (CAAR) on the fourth floor of the Health Services Building. CAAR will assist students in making appropriate accommodations with course instructors. It is important that CAAR and instructors be informed of any disability-related needs during the first two weeks of the semester.

Undergraduate Writing Awards

The Department of Political Science will recognize, on an annual basis, outstanding undergraduate papers written in conjunction with 300-400 level political science courses or directed studies. Authors do not have to be political science majors or have a particular class standing. Winners are expected to attend the Department's spring graduation ceremony where they will receive a certificate and \$50.00. Papers, which can be submitted by students or faculty, must be supplied in triplicate to a department secretary by February 28. All copies should have two cover pages – one with the student's name and one without the student's name. Only papers written in the previous calendar year can be considered for the award. However, papers completed in the current spring semester are eligible for the following year's competition even if the student has graduated.

Department of Political Science Web Site

Undergraduates are strongly encouraged to consult the Department of Political Science web site on a regular basis. This up-to-date, central source of information will assist students in contacting faculty and staff, reviewing course requirements and syllabi, exploring graduate study, researching career options, tracking department events, and accessing important details related to undergraduate programs and activities. To reach the site, go to <http://polisci.niu.edu>

Tentative Schedule:

1/17 Martin Luther King Day - University Closed

1/19 First Day Introduction and Course Overview

I. Understanding the Mind - *Blink*

1/24 Intro: The statue that didn't look right; and Chapter 1: The theory of thin slices - how a little bit of knowledge goes a long way, pp. 3-47

- Gladwell, Malcolm. 2005. *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. New York: Little Brown.

1/26 Chapter 1: The theory of thin slices - how a little bit of knowledge goes a long way, pp. 18-47

- Gladwell, Malcolm. 2005. *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. New York: Little Brown.

1/31 Chapter 2: The locked door - the secret life of snap decisions, pp. 48-71

- Gladwell, Malcolm. 2005. *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. New York: Little Brown.

2/2 Chapter 3: The Warren Harding error - why we fall for tall, dark and handsome men, pp. 72-98

- Gladwell, Malcolm. 2005. *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. New York: Little Brown.

2/7 Chapter 4: Paul Van Riper's big victory - creating structure for spontaneity, pp. 99-146

- Gladwell, Malcolm. 2005. *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. New York: Little Brown.

2/9 Chapter 4: Paul Van Riper's big victory - creating structure for spontaneity, pp. 99-146

- Gladwell, Malcolm. 2005. *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. New York: Little Brown.

2/14 Chapter 5: Kenna's dilemma - the right and wrong way to ask people what they want, pp. 147-188

- Gladwell, Malcolm. 2005. *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. New York: Little Brown.

2/16 Chapter 6: Seven seconds in the Bronx - the delicate art of mind reading, pp. 189-244

- Gladwell, Malcolm. 2005. *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. New York: Little Brown.

2/21 Conclusion: Listening with your eyes - the lessons of Blink, pp. 245-end

- First Reaction Paper Due over *Blink*.

II. Political Psychology

2/23 Chapter 2: A Brief History of the Discipline & Chapter 3: Behaviorism and Human Freedom, pp. 22-33, 37-45

- Houghton, David. 2009. *Political Psychology*

2/28 Chapter 4: The Psychology of Obedience, pp. 46-56

- Houghton, David. 2009. *Political Psychology*

- Watch the Milgram Experiment
- 3/2 Chapter 5: Creating a “Bad Barrel”, pp. 57-68
- Houghton, David. 2009. *Political Psychology*
- Watch the Stanford Prison Experiment
 - Watch Philip Zimbardo - Good, Evil and Situations (TED.com)
- 3/7 First Exam
- 3/9 Chapter 9: Cognition, pp. 114-131
- Houghton, David. 2009. *Political Psychology*
 - Read Huddy, Leonie, and Nayda Terkildsen. 1993. “The Consequences of Gender Stereotypes for Women Candidates at Different Levels and Types of Office.” *Political Research Quarterly*, 46: 503-525. (pdf on Blackboard)
- 3/14 - 3/20 No Classes - Spring Break
- 3/21 Chapter 10: Affect and Emotion, pp. 132-142
- Houghton, David. 2009. *Political Psychology*
 - Read Mutz, Diana. 2007. “Effects of “In-Your-Face” Television Discourse on Perceptions of a Legitimate Opposition.” *American Political Science Review* 101: 621-636. (pdf on Blackboard)
 - Second Reaction Paper Due over *Political Psychology* and readings
- 3/23 Chapter 11: Neuroscience, pp. 143-154
- Houghton, David. 2009. *Political Psychology*
 - Read Eisenberger et al., “Does Rejection Hurt? An fMRI Study of Social Exclusion.” *Science*. 302: 290-292.
- 3/28 Chapter 12: The Psychology of Voting Behavior, pp. 157-167
- Houghton, David. 2009. *Political Psychology*
- 3/30 The Psychology of Voting Behavior, continued
- Read Zaller, John R., and Stanley Feldman. 1992. “A Simple Theory of the Survey Response: Answering Questions Versus Revealing Preferences.” *American Journal of Political Science* 36: 579-616. (pdf on Blackboard)
- 4/4 The Psychology of Voting Behavior, continued
- Druckman, James and Arthur Lupia. 2000. “Preference Formation.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 3: 1-24. (pdf on Blackboard)
 - Watch Jonathan Haidt - The moral roots of liberalism and conservatism (Newyorker.com and TED.com)
- 4/6 The Psychology of Voting Behavior, continued
- Lodge, Milton, Marco R. Steenbergen, and Shawn Brau. 1995. “The Responsive Voter: Campaign Information and the Dynamics of Candidate Evaluation.” *American Political Science Review* 89: 309-326. (pdf on Blackboard)

- 4/11 Chapter 6: Group Decision Making, pp. 69-82
- Houghton, David. 2009. *Political Psychology*
- 4/13 Group Decision Making, continued
- Read Hannagan and Larimer “Decision Making in Gendered Groups: Evidence from a Laboratory Experiment.” *Political Behavior*.
 - Third Reaction Paper Due over *Political Psychology* and readings
- 4/18 Chapter 14: The Psychology of Racism and Political Intolerance, pp. 184-200
- Houghton, David. 2009. *Political Psychology*
 - Watch Nate Silver - Race and Voting (TED.com)
- 4/20 The Psychology of Racism and Political Intolerance, continued
- Read Richeson and Shelton, “When Prejudice Does Not Pay: Effects of Interracial Contact on Executive Function.” *Psychological Science*. 14: 287-290.
 - Read McDermott, Monika. 1998. “Race and Gender Cues in Low-Information Elections.” *Political Research Quarterly*, 51: 895-918. (pdf on Blackboard)
- 4/25 Chapter 15: The Psychology of Terrorism, pp. 201-215
- Houghton, David. 2009. *Political Psychology*
- 4/27 Chapter 16: The Psychology of International Relations, pp. 216-231
- Houghton, David. 2009. *Political Psychology*
- 5/2 The Psychology of International Relations, continued
- Read Johnson and McDermott, “Gender Differences in a Simulated War Game.”
- 5/4 The Psychology of International Relations, continued
- Paper Due & Review for final

Final Exam TBA

Reaction Paper Assignment

A reaction paper is a two-page (typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. font) “reaction” to a group of readings. I want you to *react* to the readings and not summarize the readings. I read them. I know what they are about. I do not want a book report. I want your reaction paper to illustrate that you had some sort of an “intellectual struggle” with the material. I want you to take up one or more of the issues raised and talk about the problems, implications, your proposed solution, a different (“better”) way of looking at the issue, etc. Think big. This is hard, but another challenge is that it must ONLY BE TWO PAGES LONG. You will be down-graded if you go beyond two pages. I recommend you get your thoughts down on paper then walk away from it for a day or so. When you come back to it with fresh eyes you will be able to decipher what is important to say and what is not. [Note: reaction papers done 20 minutes before class are generally really bad.]

Here are some Dos and Don'ts that may help you:

DO

- Be analytical – think BIG! What are the implications of the key points of a reading or readings in the short-term, long-term, etc.?
- Challenge the argument or assumptions being made by an author or authors and suggest an alternative
- Consider problems with the approach or methodology being used and suggest an alternative
- Integrate common themes among the readings wherever you can

DON'T

- Summarize
- Tell me you think the reading was long, boring, interesting, funny, etc. You are not a literary critic.
- State the obvious
- Ignore the important themes among the readings
- **GO OVER TWO PAGES!!!**

Long Paper Assignment: The Literature Review

The literature review should include 6 academic sources and should be 8-10 pages long (typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, regular margins) with proper citations. This must be submitted via Blackboard and will be checked with SafeAssign for plagiarism.

Not to be confused with a book review or a book report, a literature review surveys scholarly articles, books and other sources (e.g. dissertations, conference proceedings) relevant to a particular issue, area of research, or theory, providing a description, summary, and critical evaluation of each work. The purpose is to offer an overview of significant literature published on a topic.

The purpose of a literature review is to:

- Place each work in the context of its contribution to the understanding of the subject under review
- Describe the relationship of each work to the others under consideration
- Identify new ways to interpret, and shed light on any gaps in, previous research
- Resolve conflicts amongst seemingly contradictory previous studies
- Identify areas of prior scholarship to prevent duplication of effort
- Point the way forward for further research
- Place one's original work (in the case of theses or dissertations) in the context of existing literature

Literature reviews should comprise the following elements:

- An overview of the subject, issue or theory under consideration, along with the objectives of the literature review
- Division of works under review into categories (e.g. those in support of a particular position, those against, and those offering alternative theses entirely)
- Explanation of how each work is similar to and how it varies from the others
- Conclusions as to which pieces are best considered in their argument, are most convincing of their opinions, and make the greatest contribution to the understanding and development of their area of research

In assessing each piece, consideration should be given to:

- Provenance—What are the author's credentials? Are the author's arguments supported by evidence (e.g. primary historical material, case studies, narratives, statistics, recent scientific findings)?
- Objectivity—Is the author's perspective even-handed or prejudicial? Is contrary data considered or is certain pertinent information ignored to prove the author's point?
- Persuasiveness—Which of the author's theses are most/least convincing?
- Value—Are the author's arguments and conclusions convincing? Does the work ultimately contribute in any significant way to an understanding of the subject?

After selecting a problem to investigate, you need to read all about your topic. A literature review should place your question or problem in the context of other work that has been done in the field. It would not be uncommon for you to read parts of 20 or more studies.

First, a word of what NOT to do: Do not write an annotated bibliography, which presents the sources one at a time and summarizes the articles. Instead, you want to integrate and synthesize the works you have read. Discuss the literature based on the dimensions of the problem that you are investigating.

If you are investigating an ongoing controversy, you might organize the information into opposing camps, and highlight not only the disagreements in conclusions, but also in assumptions, data, and methods.

Here is an important point to note: you may not find material exactly on your topic. Fine. Find *related* studies and findings. Again, your job is both to tell what is known and what is not known, but simply speculated, or theorized, about.

DO:

- Present the basic theory / theories in this field.
- Attempt to be exhaustive; this means thinking of all related angles.
- Make sure you get the very latest research included -- for instance, in many areas it would be common to cite literature from the last six months.
- Organize the literature to provide the contours of the field.
- Use names and dates of authors you are using.
- Paraphrase or use quotes.
- Look at examples. Journals can be a good source for identifying what a lit review is to look like.
- Make sure the articles you are examining are research articles, and not editorials or book reviews.

DO NOT:

- Think that you have to find something exactly on your topic -- if there was something already done on it, we could both read that study instead of your paper. Instead, think of the different components of your topic, and find relevant material.
- Plagiarize. This can be done in numerous ways, purposefully or accidentally. It is a serious infraction on academic integrity and will be treated as such. Three examples are drawn from Babbie (A-11):
 - "You cannot use another writer's exact words without using quotation marks and giving a complete citation, which indicates the source of the quotation such that your reader could locate the quotation in the original context."
 - "It is also not acceptable to edit or paraphrase another's words and present the revised version as your own work."
 - "Finally, it is not even acceptable to present another's ideas as your own -- even if you use totally different words to express those ideas."

Finally, you will want to consult with me if it has crossed your mind to use a paper that you have written for another class. This is referred to as “double-dipping.” It is the attitude of at least some of us in political science that this is not acceptable. I consider it a form of academic dishonesty. While it is good for students to have a substantive interest that they pursue in more than one paper, this is to be distinguished from the scenario of submitting in two classes the same paper. When in doubt, (a) err on the cautious side, and (b) talk with me.