

Voting Behavior and Political Participation - Four Credits
Political Science 3251
Fall 2016

Instructor: Adam Olson

Office: Imholte 20D

Office Hours: Tu: 2:00-4:00, W: 10:30-11:30, and by appointment

Class Hours: MWF - 1:00-2:05

This class is concerned with how people participate in the American political system. In recent years we have seen bitterly contested primary contests, the rise of both liberal and conservative mass movements, and a current presidential nominee who garnered enough votes to garner the Republican nomination despite the fact that most Republican elites were stridently against his candidacy. How unusual are these developments? How different is political participation in 2016 from other years? This course seeks to answer some of those questions. The first third of this course is focused on elections and electoral participation by citizens. It deals with questions of turnout, motivation, rules, media, and others. The second third of the course is focused on mass movements and interest groups and non-electoral participation. It deals with social capital, protests, and we will discuss at length the serious changes in the Republican Party. The last third of the class deals with questions of 'policy feedback' or how public policies can change the way people behave politically.

The main objective of this course is to help you develop an intuition for the types of political activity that occurs in the United States, the types of people who participate, and develop an understanding for what drives them to participate. With that in mind, by the end of the semester you will have an understanding of the current research regarding participation and voting behavior by the American masses. You will also be able to critically assess the future of American political participation.

This course is designed to encourage you to take an active role in pursuing your education and I will do my best to provide the proper guidance to help you make the most of your time. Structurally, this means that each class session will be composed of both lecture and seminar style discussion. Since it is an election year, I hope that we have an abundance of examples to draw on when grappling with some of the questions of this course. Attendance is not mandatory but those who miss class often may find it very difficult to do well. Make up examinations will be allowed provided that you either let me know ahead of time or have a legitimate/reasonable absence. I expect there to be several opportunities for extra credit, given that this is an election year, so should one arise I will announce it in class.

Class will meet on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 1:00 pm in Imholte Hall 114. Slides for each individual lecture will be posted online after class. I will also create study guides for each exam and hand them out ahead of time. If there is interest for study sessions to answer questions before a test, they can be arranged. As with most political

science courses, your enjoyment and ability to participate will greatly benefit by following the news. By reading a variety of news sources with a range of view points you'll develop a reservoir of political knowledge and intuition that you can use to critically examine the points made by me, the readings and future events as they arise.

Final grades for the course will be determined according to the following four assignments:

20% Midterm One

20% Midterm Two

20% Critical Electoral Recap

40% Final Examination

Each midterm examination will be a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. There are two non-cumulative midterm examinations which are thematically arranged around that relevant chunk of the course. The final examination will be a cumulative take home test with three essay questions and no multiple choice or short answer questions. The goal is for you to synthesize the material from this semester. The final will be open note and open book. You may not discuss your answers with your peers before you turn it in. It will be due to me by 1:00pm on December 15th – the end of our scheduled final time.

The Critical Election Recap is a 5-6 page paper where you analyze the 2016 election using some material from this course as your lens. Topics may include why turnout increased or decreased from the 2012 election, the impact that the election may have on public policy, the role of different groups in deciding the election, etc. The topic is open ended and you do not need to clear it with me, but it wouldn't be a bad idea to bounce ideas off of me. I will provide an assignment sheet later in the semester.

All grades for this class follow the standard scale: >93%=A, >90%=A-, >88%=B+, >83%=B, >80%=B-, >78%=C+, >73%=C, >70%=C-, >68%=D+, >63%=D, >60%=D-, <60%=F

Books to Purchase:

Required

1. Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson (2012). *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press
2. Jan E Leighley and Jonathan Nagler (2013). *Who Votes Now?: Demographics, Issues, Inequality and Turnout in the United States*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press
3. Betsy Sinclair (2012). *The Social Citizen: Peer Networks and Political Behavior*. Chicago Studies in American Politics. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press

4. Richard G Niemi, Herbert F Wiesberg, and David Kimball (2010). *Controversies in Voting Behavior*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press

Reading assignments that come from sources other than the required books will be posted online.

University Statements

Senate student academic workload policy

For undergraduate courses, one credit is defined as equivalent to an average of three hours of learning effort per week (over a full semester) necessary for an average student to achieve an average grade in the course. For example, a student taking a four credit course that meets for four hours a week should expect to spend an additional eight hours a week on course work outside the classroom.

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action

The University provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Statement on accommodations for students with disabilities

It is University policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. This publication/material is available in alternative formats to persons with disabilities upon request. Please contact the Disability Resource Center, 589-6163, Room 362 Briggs Library to discuss accommodation needs.

Statement on classroom conduct

Students are expected to interact with the instructor and other students with respect and courtesy. Students should attend every class session prepared to learn and work. Participation in class is expected, which includes both speaking up and listening. Give class your full attention while here. Complete all assignments including the reading – in a timely fashion. Do not bring cell phones or recording equipment to class without the instructor's consent. Students whose behavior is disruptive either to the instructor or to other students will be asked to leave. Students whose behavior suggests the need for counseling or other assistance may be referred to counseling services. Students whose behavior violates the University Student Conduct Code will be subject to disciplinary action.

Statement on academic misconduct

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures,

or data analysis. In this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Statement regarding sexual harassment

University policy prohibits sexual harassment as defined by the University of Minnesota Regents' policy: <http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/SexHarassment.pdf>.

Course Outline

Introduction & Welcome

Wednesday, August 24

Voting Behavior & Elections

Friday, August 26 – Introduction

- Controversies 5th edition, pgs 1-40

Monday, August 29 - The Role of Campaigns

- The Gamble, Ch 7 *Moodle*

Wednesday, August 31 – Voter Registration and Institutional Rules

- John Sides et al. (2015). *Campaigns and Elections: Rules, Reality, Strategy, Choice*. New York, New York: W. W. Norton, Incorporated, Chapter Two *Moodle*

Friday, September 2 – Vote Determinants

- Controversies 5th edition, pgs 167-182

Monday, September 5 - **No class**

Wednesday, September 7 - Vote Determinants II

- Controversies 5th edition, pgs 200-220

Friday, September 9 - Partisanship I

- Controversies 5th edition, pgs 221-241
- Controversies 4th edition, pgs 322-335 *Moodle*

Monday, September 12 - America is Polarized

- Controversies 5th edition, pgs 266-289
- Controversies 5th edition, pgs 297-308

Wednesday, September 14 - America is Not Polarized

- Controversies 5th edition, pgs 290-297
- Controversies 5th edition, pgs 309-318

Friday, September 16 - Turnout I

- Who Votes Now? Chapter One

Monday, September 19 - Turnout II

- Who Votes Now? Chapter Two

Wednesday, September 21 - Turnout III

- Who Votes Now? Chapter Three

Friday, September 23 - Does Voting Matter?

- Who Votes Now? Chapter Six

Monday, September 26 - The Media

- John Sides et al. (2015). *Campaigns and Elections: Rules, Reality, Strategy, Choice*. New York, New York: W. W. Norton, Incorporated, Chapter Seven Moodle
- Hershey, Marjorie Randon. 2010. "The Media: Coloring the News" In *The Elections of 2008*, ed. Michael Nelson. Moodle

Wednesday, September 28 - Television Advertising

- John G Geer (2008). *In Defense of Negativity: Attack Ads in Presidential Campaigns*. Studies in Communication, Media, and Public Opinion. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, Chapters One, Three, Five Moodle

Friday, September 30 - The State of Political Information I

- Controversies, 5th edition, pg 75-90
- Michael X Delli Carpini and Scott Keeter (1996). *What Americans Know about Politics and why it Matters*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, Chapter Two

Monday, October 3 - The State of Political Information II

- Controversies 5th edition, pgs 111-140

Wednesday, October 5 - Priming and Framing

- James N Druckman (2001). "The Implications of Framing Effects for Citizen Competence". en. In: *Political Behavior* 23.3, pp. 225-256 Moodle
- Jon A Krosnick and Donald R Kinder (1990). "Altering the Foundations of Support for the President Through Priming". en. In: *American Political Science Review* 84.02, pp. 497-512 Moodle

Friday, October 7 - First Midterm

Political Action and Groups

Monday, October 10 - Networks I

- Social Citizen, preface and Chapter One

Wednesday, October 12 - Networks II

- Social Citizen, Chapter Two

Friday, October 14 - Networks III

- Social Citizen, Chapter Four

Monday, October 17 - **No Class**

Wednesday, October 19 - Networks IV

- Social Citizen, Chapter Five and Conclusion

Friday, October 21 - Pressure Groups and Political Conflict

- E E Schattschneider (1960). *The Semisovereign People*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Chapters One and Two *Moodle*

Monday, October 24 - Non-electoral Political Participation I

- Bowling Alone, Chapter Two *Moodle*

Wednesday, October 26 - Non-electoral Political Activity II

- Moved to Action, Chapter Four *Moodle*

Friday, October 28 - Non-electoral Political Activity III

- Moved to Action, Chapter Five *Moodle*

Monday, October 31 - The Tea Party

- Skocpol and Williamson, Introduction and Chapter One

Wednesday, November 2 - The Tea Party

- Skocpol and Williamson, Skim Chapter Two, Chapter Three

Friday, November 4 - The Tea Party

- Skocpol and Williamson, Chapters Four and Five

Monday, November 7 - The Tea Party

- Skocpol and Williamson, Chapter Six and Epilogue

Wednesday, November 9 - Interlude for Real Life

- Talk about the election

Friday, November 11 - Midterm Two

Policy Feedback

Monday, November 14 - Introduction to Policy Feedback

- Donald P Moynihan and Joe Soss (2014). "Policy Feedback and the Politics of Administration". In: *Public Administrative Review* 74.3, pp. 320–332 Moodle

Wednesday, November 16 - Elite Feedback

- Paul Pierson (1993). "When Effect Becomes Cause: Policy Feedback and Political Change". In: *World Politics* 45.4, pp. 595–628 Moodle
- Theda Skocpol (1992). *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Introduction Moodle

Friday, November 18 - Mass Feedback

- Suzanne Mettler and Joe Soss (2004). "The Consequences of Public Policy for Democratic Citizenship: Bridging Policy Studies and Mass Politics". en. In: *Perspectives on Politics* 2.01, pp. 55–73 Moodle

Monday, November 21 - Participant Feedback

- Joe Soss and Sanford F Schram (2007). "A Public Transformed? Welfare Reform as Policy Feedback". In: *The American Political Science Review* 101.1, pp. 111–127

Wednesday, November 23 - **No Class**

Friday, November 25 - **No Class**

Monday, November 28 - Negative Feedbacks

- Alan M Jacobs and R Kent Weaver (2015). "When Policies Undo Themselves: Self-Undermining Feedback as a Source of Policy Change". In: *Governance* 28.4, pp. 441–457 Moodle
- Vesla M Weaver and Amy E Lerman (2010). "Political Consequences of the Carceral State". en. In: *American Political Science Review* 104.04, pp. 817–833 Moodle

- Negative Feedbacks II Wednesday, November 30 -

- Alan M Jacobs and R Kent Weaver (2015). "When Policies Undo Themselves: Self-Undermining Feedback as a Source of Policy Change". In: *Governance* 28.4, pp. 441–457 Moodle
- Vesla M Weaver and Amy E Lerman (2010). "Political Consequences of the Carceral State". en. In: *American Political Science Review* 104.04, pp. 817–833 Moodle

Friday, December 2 - Visible Policy Feedback

- Andrea Campbell (2005). *How Policies Make Citizens: Senior Political Activism and the American Welfare State*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, Chapters One & Two Moodle

- **Critical Election Recap Due**

Monday, December 5 - Hidden Policies and Undermining Support

- Kimberly J Morgan (2007). "Constructing the Welfare State: Tax Policy and the Political Movement Against Government". In: *Remaking America: Democracy and Public Policy in and Age of Inequality*. Ed. by Joe Soss, Jacob S Hacker, and Suzanne Mettler. New York, New York: The Russell Sage Foundation, pp. 27–50 Moodle
- Suzanne Mettler (2010). "Reconstituting the Submerged State: The Challenges of Social Policy Reform in the Obama Era". en. In: *Perspectives on Politics* 8.03, pp. 803–824 Moodle

Wednesday, December 7 - Feedback and Constructing Identities

- Suzanne Mettler (2005). *Soldiers to citizens: The GI Bill and the making of the greatest generation*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, Chapter One
- Clarissa Rile Hayward (2003). "The Difference States Make: Democracy, Identity, and the American City". en. In: *American Political Science Review* 97.04, pp. 501–514

Friday, December 9 - Bringing it all together

Thursday, December, 15 - Final Examination Due at 1:00pm