

GOV 379D/LAH 351K
Spring, 2022
Unique Numbers: 38140, 30705

Robert C. Luskin
University of Texas at Austin
M 3:00-6:00, Zoom

Email: rcluskin@austin.utexas.edu
Office Hours: by Zoom, Skype, or phone, by appointment

Citizenship in Democratic Politics

This course examines the role of ordinary citizens in democratic politics: what is required of them, how well they fulfill such requirements, and what if anything can be done to address any shortcomings. It spans the empirics of political cognition, public opinion, political communication, political participation, and voting behavior, while also considering their normative implications. There are no formal prerequisites beyond eligibility to take upper division Government courses.

The course is an online, synchronous seminar, in which I expect the students, collectively, to talk more than I—and not just to talk for the sake of talking but to make sensible, insightful contributions, informed by, though not necessarily confined to, the readings and relevant current events. You should therefore **keep up both with the readings and the news pages of at least one major national newspaper (the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*)**. Note that I recommend a newspaper, not a cable news channel, and **the news pages, not the editorial pages or op-ed columns!**

The platform will be Zoom. **NB: Please keep your camera on for the whole of every session.** It helps for us to see, as well as hear, one another. **If there is some technical reason you can't do this, let me know. Otherwise, you will be counted as absent.**

We shall begin each session by discussing course-relevant current events for roughly 10-20 minutes, before turning to the designated topic of the day. To encourage preparation and participation (and let the discussion go, within broad limits, where it may), **I shall designate one or more class members to lead/organize each day's discussion of the main topic and another one or more to lead/organize the day's discussion of relevant current events. The designated student(s) will prepare and distribute, by noon on the preceding Sunday, a list of questions for discussion.** The list should be at least a fairly full page for current events and 1-2 pages for the main topic. Everyone should expect to lead/organize at least a couple of discussions over the course of the semester. As a further incentive to keep up with the readings, **I may also ask individual students who are not among a session's co-leaders to share what they found particularly interesting, important, or debatable in the week's readings, and explain why.** You should come prepared to field that question.

There will be no exams, although the reading load is heavy, and **there will be a term paper of roughly 15-25 pages**, on a topic of your choosing, in which you will be expected to make explicit, sensible, and plentiful use of the course readings.

The goal is for students to learn and think about contemporary American election campaigns—about both how they work and the ways in which that may be desirable or undesirable. The paper, written discussion questions, and contributions to class discussion will

be the means of assessing how far individual students have met that course goal.

The syllabus, below, indicates what topics we shall cover, and when. The class will use the UT Canvas website, on which I shall post some course materials, and through which I shall send emails as necessary. **If you need to reach me, however, please email me at rcluskin@austin.utexas.edu.** Do **NOT** send me anything via Canvas.

Texts

- Achen, Christopher H. and Larry M. Bartels. 2017. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Berinsky, Adam J. (ed.). 2019. *New Directions in Public Opinion* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bowden, Mark and Matthew Teague. 2022. *The Steal: The Attempt to Overturn the 2020 Election and the People Who Stopped It*. New York, NY: Atlantic Monthly Press.
- Dahl, Robert A. and Ian Shapiro. 2015. *On Democracy* (2nd ed.). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Frum, David. 2018. *Trumpocracy: The Corruption of the American Republic*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Kinder, Donald R. and Nathan P. Kalmoe. 2017. *Neither Liberal nor Conservative: Ideological Innocence in the American Public*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Levitsky, Steven and Daniel Ziblatt. 2018. *How Democracies Die*. New York, NY: Crown Publishing.
- Maravall, José Maria and Adam Przeworski, eds. 2003. *Democracy and the Rule of Law*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- McIntyre, Lee. 2018. *Post-Truth*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Mercier, Hugo and Dan Sperber. 2017. *The Enigma of Reason*. 2017. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mounck, Yascha. 2018. *The People vs. Democracy: Why Our Freedom Is in Danger and How to Save It*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Norris, Pippa and Ronald Inglehart. 2019. *Cultural Backlash: Trump, Brexit, and Authoritarian Populism*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Persily, Nathaniel (ed.). 2020. *Social Media and Democracy*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Rosenfeld, Sophia. 2018. *Democracy and Truth: A Short History*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Thurber, James A. and Antoine Yoshinaka, eds. 2016. *American Gridlock: The Sources, Character, and Impact of Political Polarization*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Walter, Barbara F. 2022. *How Civil Wars Start: And How to Stop Them*. New York, NY: Crown.

Outline and Readings

I Organizational (January 24)

II Democracy

A. What Is It? Why Should We Value It? What Does It Ask of Its Citizens? (January 31)

Dahl and Shapiro, chs. 2, 4-7, 8-11, 17.

Mounck, chs. 1-2.

Fishman, Robert M. 2016. Rethinking Dimensions of Democracy for Empirical Analysis: Authenticity, Quality, Depth, and Consolidation. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 19: 289–309.

Grofman, Bernard. 2016. Perspectives on the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 19: 523–540.

Luskin, Robert C. 2003. The Heavenly Public: What would a Fully Informed Citizenry Be Like? In Michael B. MacKuen and George Rabinowitz, eds., *Electoral Democracy*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Belinsky, ch. 2.

B. Lifelong Friends and Allies: Democracy, Truth, and the Rule of Law (February 7)

Rosenfeld, entire.

McIntyre, chs. 1-3, 6.

Waldron, Jeremy. 2020. The Rule of Law. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer). Edward N. Zalta (ed.).

<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2020/entries/rule-of-law/>

Maravall and Przeworski, chs. 1, 4, 5, 10.

IV Institutional Elements

A. Media and Social Media (February 21)

Persily, chs. 3-5, 6, 9-11.

Mounck, ch. 4.

McIntyre, chs. 4-5.

Thurber and Yoshinaka, chs. 12-13.

Kahne, Joseph and Benjamin Bowyer. 2017. Educating for Democracy in a Partisan Age: Confronting the Challenges of Motivated Reasoning and Misinformation. *American Educational Research Journal*, 54 (1): 3-34.

Iyengar, Shanto and Kyu S. Hahn. 2009. Red Media, Blue Media: Evidence of Ideological Selectivity in Media Use. *Journal of Communication*, 59 (1): 19-39.

B. Polarization, Gerrymandering, and Nominations (February 28)

Thurber and Yoshinaka, chs. 1-5, 16-17.

Norris and Inglehart, ch. 9.

Putnam, Joshua T. 2016. Rules Changes and the 2016 Presidential Nominations. *Society*, 53 (5): 493-497.

Thomsen, Danielle M. 2014. Ideological Moderates Won't Run: How Party Fit Matters for Partisan Polarization in Congress. *Journal of Politics*, 76 (3):786-797.

Hasen, Richard L. 2019. Polarization and the Judiciary. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 22: 261-276.

Berinsky, chs. 4, 11.

V Citizens

A. Interest and Knowledge (March 7)

Converse, Philip E. 2000. Assessing the Capacity of Mass Electorates. *Annual Review of Political Science* 3: 331-53.

Luskin, Robert C. 2002. From Denial to Extenuation (and Finally Beyond): Political Sophistication and Citizen Competence. In James H. Kuklinski (ed.), *Thinking about Political Psychology*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Luskin, Robert C. and John G. Bullock. "'Don't Know' Means 'Don't Know': DK Responses and the Public's Level of Political Knowledge." *Journal of Politics*, 73 (2011): 547-557.

Prior, Markus. 2010. You've Either Got It or You Don't? The Stability of Political Interest over the Life Cycle. *Journal of Politics*, 72 (3): 747-766

Fortunato, David, Randolph T. Stevenson, and Greg Vonnahme. 2016. Context and Political Knowledge: Explaining Cross-National Variation in Partisan Left-Right Knowledge. *Journal of Politics*, 78 (4): 1211-1228.

Dancey, Logan. and Geoffrey Sheagley. 2013. Heuristics Behaving Badly: Party Cues and Voter Knowledge. *American Journal of Political Science*, 57 (2): 312-325.

B. Misinformation and Motivated Reasoning (March 21)

Jerit, Jennifer and Yangzi Zhao. 2020. Political Misinformation. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 24: 77-94.

Mercier and Sperber, entire.

Achen and Bartels, ch. 10.

Mercier, Hugo. 2017. How Gullible Are We? A Review of the Evidence From Psychology and Social Science. *Review of General Psychology*, 21 (2): 103-122.

Lewandowsky, Stephan, Ullrich K. H. Ecker, and John Cook. 2017. Beyond Misinformation: Understanding and Coping with the "Post-Truth" Era. *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition*, 6 (4): 353-369.

Thorson, Emily. 2016. Belief Echoes: The Persistent Effects of Corrected Misinformation. *Political Communication*, 33 (3): 460-480.

Oliver, J. Eric and Thomas J. Wood. 2014. Conspiracy Theories and the Paranoid Style(s) of Mass Opinion. *American Journal of Political Science*, 58 (4): 952–966.

Persily, chs. 2, 8.

C. Ideology and Political Culture (March 28)

Kinder and Kalmoe, entire.

Norris and Inglehart, chs. 1-6

Jost, John T., Christopher M. Federico, and Jaime L. Napier. 2009. Political Ideology: Its Structure, Functions, and Elective Affinities. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60: 307–37

Graham, Jesse, Jonathan Haidt, and Brian A. Nosek. 2009. Liberals and Conservatives Rely on Different Sets of Moral Foundations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96 (5): 1029–1046.

Berinsky, ch. 3.

D. Partisanship and Identity (April 4)

Achen and Bartels, chs. 8-9, 11.

Iyengar, Shanto and Sean J. Westwood. 2015. Fear and Loathing Across Party Lines: New Evidence on Group Polarization. *American Journal of Political Science*, 59(3): 690–707.

Bartels, Larry M. 2018. Partisanship in the Trump Era. *Journal of Politics*, 80 (4): 1483 – 1494.

Mounck, ch.6.

Muirhead, Russell and Nancy L. Rosenblum. 2020. The Political Theory of Parties and Partisanship: Catching Up. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 23: 95–110.

Barber, Michael and Jeremy C. Pope. Does Party Trump Ideology? Disentangling Party and Ideology in America. *American Political Science Review*, 113 (1): 38-54.

E. Public Opinion: Policy Attitudes (April 6)

Berinsky, chs. 5-8, 14-15.

Sturgis, Patrick and Smith, Patten. 2010. Fictitious issues revisited: political knowledge, interest, and the generation of nonattitudes. *Political Studies*, 58 (1): 66-84.

Luskin, Robert C., James S. Fishkin, and Roger Jowell. 2002. Considered Opinions: Deliberative Polling in the U.K. *British Journal of Political Science*, 32 (July): 455-87.

F. Pro- and Anti-democratic Attitudes (April 11)

Mounck, ch. 7.

Norris and Inglehart, chs. 8, 10-13.

Howe, Paul. 2017. Eroding Norms and Democratic Deconsolidation. *Journal of Democracy*, 28 (4): 15-29.

Citrin, Jack and Laura Stoker. 2018. Political Trust in a Cynical age. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 21: 49-70.

Jamal, Amaney and Irfan Nooruddin. 2010. The Democratic Utility of Trust: A Cross-National Analysis. *Journal of Politics*, 72 (1): 45-59.

Miklikowska, Marta. 2012. Psychological underpinnings of democracy: Empathy, authoritarianism, self-esteem, interpersonal trust, normative identity style, and openness to experience as predictors of support for democratic values. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 53 (5): 603-608.

Urbinati, Nadia. 2019. Political Theory of Populism. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 22: 111-127.

G. Voting Participation (April 18)

Stockemer, Daniel. 2017. What Affects Voter Turnout? A Review Article/Meta-Analysis of Aggregate Research. *Government and Opposition*, 52 (4): 698-722.

Lijphart, Arend. 1997. Unequal Participation: Democracy's Unresolved Dilemma. *American Political Science Review* 91: 1-14.

Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and Christopher W. Larimer. 2008. Social pressure and voter turnout: Evidence from a large-scale field experiment. *American Political Science Review*, 102 (1): 33-48.

Hansford, Thomas G. and Brad T. Gomez. 2010. Estimating the Electoral Effects of Voter Turnout. *American Political Science Review*, 104 (2): 268-288.

Highton, Benjamin. 2017. Voter Identification Laws and Turnout in the United States. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 20: 149-167.

H. Vote Choice (April 25)

Achen and Bartels, chs. 2-7, 10.

Norris and Inglehart, ch. 8.

Arnold, Jason Ross. 2012. The electoral consequences of voter ignorance. *Electoral Studies*, 31 (4): 796-815.

Todorov, Alexander, Christopher Y. Olivola, Ron Dotsch, and Peter Mende-Siedlecki. 2015. Social Attributions from Faces: Determinants, Consequences, Accuracy, and Functional Significance. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 66: 519–545.

VI Democracy in Peril (May 2)

Levitsky and Ziblatt, chs. 1-8.

Frum, chs. 1-11.

Mounck, chs. 1-3.

Bowden and Teague, entire.

Walter, entire.

Requirements

Class Participation

Attendance is required. Unexcused absences affect your participation grade. **Come prepared** to participate sensibly and insightfully in the discussion. Also come prepared to lead/organize those discussions (of both course topics or current events) you have been assigned to lead/organize. To that end, **please keep up with and think about the readings and the news.** I shall share my interim estimate of your participation grade around the middle of the course.

Term Paper

The term paper, on a course-related topic of your choosing, should typically be between 15 and 25 pages. This precise range is not a requirement, just a confident expectation about what it will take to produce a good paper. **Do not pad** to increase the page count! I count off for padding. I encourage you to **consult me, at least 4-6 weeks before the paper is due, if you have any doubt about the suitability or promise of your topic.** The font should be 12 point, the margins between 1 and 1.25 inches. Endnotes, tables, figures (graphs), references, and appendices do not figure in these page totals. **Number your pages!!! Use the APSA format for citations.** (Look at the articles in any recent issue of the *American Political Science Review* or *American Journal of Political Science* to get the idea.) **The paper is due by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, May 1.** There will be no extension. **All papers should be submitted as email attachments (not via Canvas) in MS-Word format. No PDF's!**

Grading

The course grade (including a + or -, as appropriate) will be based on the quantity and quality of your participation in the discussions (25%), your role in leading/organizing them (25%), and your term paper (50%). There will be a penalty of 3 points on the usual 50-100 scale for every day (including weekend days) the paper is late. The penalty may only be waived for legitimate and fully documented excuses. (What is “legitimate” and “fully documented” is also up to me.)

Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating or plagiarism means a failing grade not only for the assignment in question but for the course.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

Writing Help

I encourage students who need additional help with their writing to work with the staff of the Undergraduate Writing Center in the Perry-Castaneda Library (PCL).