

POL 344: American Political Ideology and Public Opinion

Tuesdays and Thursdays 6:30pm-7:50pm
Frey Hall 201

Course Syllabus-Fall 2021 (Version 9.9.21)

Contact Information

Instructor: Shawn Kim

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Office Location: S749 SBS (Social and Behavioral Sciences Building)

Office Hours: Tuesday 11:30am-1:00pm or by appointment ([Zoom link](#))

Course Information

Course Description

An examination of the nature of contemporary political ideology and public opinion in the United States. The goal is to understand political conflict and debate in the U.S. and the ways in which the public influences that debate. Major topics in public opinion include political tolerance and trust, attitudes toward women and African Americans, the role of the mass media, and the impact of political values and ideology on political campaigns and elections.

Learning Objectives

- Definitions/conceptualizations of different ideologies in American publics
- Psychology underlying ideologies and political attitudes
- How ideology does (or doesn't) make its way into aggregate public opinion

Assignments and Grading

Your overall course grade will be based on **attendance (10%)**, **participation (10%)**, **homework (10%)**, **short paper assignment (20%)**, **ideology group project/presentation (25%)**, and **final exam (25%)**.

Grading Scale

93+	A	73 - 76	C
90 - 92	A-	70 - 72	C-
87 - 89	B+	67 - 69	D+
83 - 86	B	63 - 66	D
80 - 82	B-	60 - 62	D-
77 - 79	C+	0-59	F

Attendance (10%)

- Everyone starts with a 100% attendance grade.
- **4 absence passes:** No penalty for the first 4 absences w/ or w/out notice (i.e., “using” an absence pass doesn’t require notifying me)
- A 5% deduction in attendance grade (.5% deduction in overall grade) for every absence after the first 4.
- For those of you who enrolled in the course late, missed sessions before your enrollment will NOT count toward your absence passes.
- **You will receive a 1% course extra credit point if you have used 0 absence pass by the end of the semester.**
- **You will receive a .5% course extra credit point if you have used only 1 absence pass by the end of the semester.**
- This policy is to reward those of you who show an exemplary commitment to class throughout the semester, rather than to punish absences.
- Don’t forget: your health >>>> school/work

Participation (10%)

- In-class discussions
- In-class questions or clarifications
- In-class comments or observations
- After class questions or clarifications
- Attending office hours

Homework (10%)

- Two homework assignments in total
- The homework assignments involve answering public opinion and survey questions online to learn more about your own ideology. After completing the survey you need to write a **1 page double spaced response paper (12 pt Times New Roman, 1 inch margins)**. You should give your impression of the survey and questions. Think about the survey/questions and what it is supposed to measure.
- The following are examples of things you might write about but you do not need to talk about all of these nor are you limited to these ideas. Did your results surprise you? Did you learn anything new about yourself? Do you agree with the results? Do the survey questions appear to measure what it is supposed to measure? Do you still have questions about how the survey measures the construct is claims to measure? If you have any problems or criticisms of the survey then consider how they might influence the results of research.
- Homework I: Take the political ideology survey and write a response paper. **Turn in the response paper through Blackboard by beginning of class on Thursday, September 7th.** Please look at the sections of your results labeled “Your Ideology” and “Your political themes”. <https://www.isidewith.com/political-quiz>.
- Homework II: Read the short article and take the partisan IAT. Write a response paper either the article or the IAT or both. **Turn in your response through Blackboard by the beginning of class on Tuesday, October 26th.** After the article click “Start the test” then press “T” for instructions. Finally, press “T” to begin the test. Do you feel like you prefer the party that the results indicate? <http://www.vox.com/2015/12/7/9828120/partisan-test>.

Short Paper Assignment (20%)

- You must select one reading on which you will write your short paper from the supplementary reading list (each topic has 2 or more supplementary readings you can choose from) and email me your choice **by beginning of class on Tuesday, September 28th**.
- More than one person can choose the same article for their short paper assignment.
- Your short paper **must be 2-3 page double-spaced (12 pt Times new Roman, 1 inch margins)** – writing more than 3 pages is discouraged.

- (More will be explained in class) The main objective is to raise a clear, critical question about a specific aspect of their selected reading (e.g., assumptions underlying the authors' theory, data/methods the authors used to test their predictions).
- You must also demonstrate that you have a clear understanding of the theoretical/research background of the article, key arguments advanced by the author(s), hypotheses, data/methods used to test the hypotheses, results and implications.
- **Turn in the paper through Blackboard by beginning of class on Tuesday, November 30th.**
- You are responsible for reaching out to me in advance should you have trouble with your selected supplementary short paper reading. This can be done via after class, office hours, or email.

Ideology Group Project/Presentation (25%)

- On the first day of class (8/24), you will be randomly assigned into groups of 3-5 (depending on the course enrollment). Each group will choose their presentation date from 11/16 (Tue), 11/18 (Thurs), or 11/30 (Tue) – more than one group will go on the same day.
- (Details will be provided in class) Each group will develop a comprehensive plan of governance guided by the group's proposed ideology in a hypothetical scenario/context. Everyone will be given common information which they need to work with, but will need to design and describe/explain additional information about the context unique to each group. You will also need to make sure that you not only correctly incorporate knowledge about political ideology and attitudes/beliefs learned in the course into the proposed group ideology and plan of governance, but also ensure consistency between the group ideology and governance plan, as well as consistency between these and additional environmental parameters your group define.
- The primary objectives of the project are for you 1) to think deeply about the knowledge of political ideology and attitude/belief formations from the course; 2) to apply this knowledge to a context that requires little bit of thinking outside the box; and 3) to understand the complexity of our belief systems (and governance) and tradeoffs between people's preferences and ideologically coherent governance.
- No matter when your group's presentation date is, **every group must submit their proposal of group ideology and governance plan through Blackboard by beginning of class on Thursday, November 11th.** Again, details will be explained in class.

- The grading will be three-part:
 - Instructor evaluation of the submitted proposal (40%)**
 - Instructor evaluation of the presentation (30%)**
 - Peer ratings of the presentation (30%)**

Final Exam (25%)

- The final exam will be multiple choice with some true/false questions based on both lectures and required (**NOT supplementary or optional**) readings.
- **Final Exam Date/Time (Frey Hall 201): Thursday, December 9th 5:30pm-8pm**

Extra Credit

There are a few extra credit opportunities, which will be covered on the first day of class.

University/Course Mask-wearing Policy

In compliance with university policy, students enrolled in this course, regardless of their vaccination status, will be required to wear masks while they are in the classroom (as well as inside other campus buildings) until further notice. Mask noncompliance in the classroom will be considered a disruptive behavior and will not be tolerated.

To further ensure all of our safety, I ask you all to space yourselves out in the classroom as much as possible. To better assist with the university's effort to keep the spread of the virus under control, I need to ask you all to sit in the same seat for the remainder of the semester. We should also keep in mind of and be prepared for the possibility that the mode of instruction may go online depending on the circumstances. Importantly, let's not forget that vaccinations are the strongest weapon against the spread of Covid-19!

Make-up Policy

Other than the final exam at the end of the semester, there is no other exam in this course. Per Office of the Registrar, it is the responsibility of the student to plan a class schedule that avoids exam conflicts and too many exams in the same day. However, should there be any emergency for which you can provide necessary proof that conflicts with the final exam date, you need to let me know at least one week in advance.

Please note that make up exams will not necessarily be the same exam as for the rest of the class.

Late Policy

Homework Assignments: 50% credit if turned in within 48 hours past the original deadline; 0 credit if turned in after that

Short Paper Assignment: 80% credit if by beginning of the next class period (December 2nd); 50% credit if turned in by 6:30pm on December 4th; 0 credit if turned in after that

Group Project: Will be explained in class

Policy Regarding Group Project Contribution

Each of you will submit evaluations of other group members' contribution to the project. Depending on the peer contribution ratings, the students' group project grades may be adjusted accordingly.

If you fail to show up to class on the scheduled group presentation date, you will automatically receive 0 credit for the entire group project grade. Moreover, the other group members presented the project in your absence will receive compensation points for the additional challenges/obstacles they had to overcome.

Course Website

Blackboard will allow students to access course materials. The Blackboard system is available from any computer with access to the Internet at the following website, <http://blackboard.stonybrook.edu>. Logging into Blackboard requires a NET ID and a Password. Use this page to obtain additional readings, electronic copies of assignments, and other course handouts and resources.

Reading

All readings will be posted on Blackboard. They will be labeled by topic which corresponds to the syllabus. Information from the required (not supplementary) readings will appear on the final exam.

Lecture Notes

Lecture slides will be posted to Blackboard. These are outlines of the lecture and are NOT a substitute for taking notes during lecture.

Email Policy

You are responsible for all the information that is sent to the class via email. If for some reason you cannot receive email through your Stony Brook email address it is your responsibility to let the instructor know as soon as possible.

Student Accessibility Support Center (SASC) Statement

If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact the Student Accessibility Support Center, Stony Brook Union Suite 107, (631) 632-6748, or at sasc@stonybrook.edu. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Academic Integrity Statement

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty is required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty please refer to the academic judiciary website at http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic_integrity/index.html.

Critical Incident Statement

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of University Community Standards any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. Further information about most academic matters can be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin, the Undergraduate Class Schedule, and the Faculty-Employee Handbook.

Course Materials and Copyright Statement

Course material accessed from Blackboard, SB Connect, SB Capture or a Stony Brook Course website is for the exclusive use of students who are currently en-

rolled in the course. Content from these systems cannot be reused or distributed without written permission of the instructor and/or the copyright holder. Duplication of materials protected by copyright, without permission of the copyright holder is a violation of the Federal copyright law, as well as a violation of Stony Brook's Academic Integrity.

Course Schedule

PLEASE FIRST READ THE ABOVE SECTION ABOUT 'Short Paper Assignment' AND DO NOT BE OVERWHELMED BY SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS YOU SEE BELOW. You'll need to read only ONE supplementary reading during the entire semester.

The course and readings are organized by topic. The **required** readings should be completed prior to the beginning of the section on that topic. For example, the topic for 9/23 to 9/28 is "Values and Ideology" and the reading for that topic is Ch. 6 of Ellis and Stimson's (2012) book. This means, there is no new reading for each class meeting – Ch. 6 serves as background reading for each of the class meetings on which we will discuss values and ideology.

*** denotes the topic has a required reading.**

Course Introduction

8/24. Tuesday

No Required Reading

No Supplementary Short Paper Reading

***Scientific Assessment of Public Opinion**

8/26. Thursday, 8/31. Tuesday & 9/2. Thursday

Required Reading:

- Ellis, Christopher and James A. Stimson. 2012. *Ideology in America*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 2, "Operational Ideology: Preferences Data", pp. 14-36.

No Supplementary Short Paper Readings

Optional Reading:

- Ellis, Christopher and James A. Stimson. 2012. *Ideology in America*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 1, "The Meaning of Ideology in America", pp. 1-13.

Structure of Ideology and Political Sophistication

9/7. Tuesday & 9/9. Thursday

Homework I Due 9/7

No Required Reading

Supplementary Short Paper Readings:

- Goren, Paul. 2004. "Political Sophistication and Policy Reasoning: A Reconsideration." *American Journal of Political Science* 48(3): 462–478.
- Feldman, Stanley and Christopher Johnston. 2014. "Understanding the Determinants of Political Ideology: Implications of Structural Complexity." *Political Psychology* 35(3): 337–358.
- Baldassarri, Delia and Amir Goldberg. 2014. "Neither Ideologues nor Agnostics: Alternative Voters' Belief System in an Age of Partisan Politics." *American Journal of Sociology* 120(1): 45–95.
- Freeder, Sean, Gabriel S. Lenz and Shad Turney. 2018. "The Importance of Knowing "What Goes with What": Reinterpreting the Evidence on Policy Attitude Stability." *Journal of Politics* 81(1): 274–290.

Optional Reading:

- Kinder, Donald R. and Nathan P. Kalmoe. 2017. *Neither Liberal Nor Conservative: Ideological Innocence in the American Public*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Ch. 2, "The Great Debate", pp. 22–43.

***Cognitive Processes and Motivational Underpinnings of Ideology**

9/14. Tuesday, 9/16. Thursday & 9/21. Tuesday

Short Paper Supplementary Article Selection Due 9/21

Required Reading:

- Shook, Natalie J. and Russell H. Fazio. 2009. "Political Ideology, Exploration of Novel Stimuli, and Attitude Formation" *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 45(4): 995–998.

Supplementary Short Paper Readings:

- Taber, Charles S. and Milton Lodge. 2006. "Motivated Skepticism in the Evaluation of Political Beliefs." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(3): 755–769.
- Nam, H. Hannah, John T. Jost and Jay J. Van Bavel. 2013. "“Not for All the Tea in China!” Political Ideology and the Avoidance of Dissonance-Arousing Situation." *PLoS ONE* 8(4): e59837.
- Malka, Ariel, Christopher J. Soto, Michael Inzlicht and Yphtach Lelkes. 2014. "Do Needs for Security and Certainty Predict Cultural and Economic Conservatism? A Cross-National Analysis." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 106(6): 1031–1051.
- Talhelm, Thomas, Jonathan Haidt, Shigehiro Oishi, Xuemin Zhang, Felicity F. Miao and Shimin Chen. 2015. "Liberals Think More Analytically (More "WEIRD") Than Conservatives." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 41(2): 250–267.

Optional Reading:

- Jost, John T. and Margarita Krochik. 2014. "Ideological Differences in Epistemic Motivation: Implications for Attitude Structure, Depth of Information Processing, Susceptibility to Persuasion, and Stereotyping." *Advances in Motivation Science* 1: 181–231.

Values and Ideology*9/23. Thursday & 9/28. Tuesday****Required Reading:**

- Ellis, Christopher and James A. Stimson. 2012. *Ideology in America*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 6, "Conservatism as Social and Religious Identity", pp. 115-148.

Supplementary Short Paper Readings:

- Jacoby, William G. 2014. "Is There a Culture War? Conflicting Value Structures in American Public Opinion." *American Political Science Review* 108(4): 754-771.
- Goren, Paul, Harald Schoen, Jason Reifler, Thomas Scotto and William Chittick. 2016. "A Unified Theory of Value-Based Reasoning and U.S. Public Opinion." *Political Behavior* 38(4): 977-997.

Morality and Ideology**9/30. Thursday & 10/5. Tuesday****No Required Reading****Supplementary Short Paper Readings:**

- Iyer, Ravi, Spassena Koleva, Jesse Graham, Peter Ditto and Jonathan Haidt. 2012. "Understanding Libertarian Morality: The Psychological Dispositions of Self-Identified Libertarians." *PLoS ONE* 7(8): e42366.
- Hatemi, Peter K., Charles Crabtree and Kevin B. Smith. 2019. "Ideology Justifies Morality: Political Beliefs Predict Moral Foundations." *American Journal of Political Science* 63(4): 788-806.

Personality and Ideology**10/7. Thursday & 10/14. Thursday****No Required Reading****Supplementary Short Paper Readings:**

- Carney, Dana R., John T. Jost, Samuel D. Gosling and Jeff Potter. 2008. "The Secret Lives of Liberals and Conservatives: Personality Profiles, Interaction Styles, and the Things They Leave Behind." *Political Psychology* 29(6): 807-840.
- Bakker, Bert N. 2017. "Personality Traits, Income, and Economic Ideology." *Political Psychology* 38(6): 1025-1041.

10/12. Tuesday - No Class (Fall Break)***Intergroup Attitudes/Relations and Ideology****10/19. Tuesday & 10/21. Thursday****Required Reading:**

- Kinder, Donald R. and Cindy D. Kam. 2009. *Us Against Them: Ethnocentric Foundations of American Opinion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Ch. 3, "American Ethnocentrism Today", pp. 42-69.

Supplementary Short Paper Readings:

- Feldman, Stanley and Huddy, Leonie. 2005. "Racial Resentment and White Opposition to Race-Conscious Programs: Principles or Prejudice?" *American Journal of Political Science*, 49 (1): 168-183.
- Gay, Claudine. 2006. "Seeing Difference: The Effect of Economic Disparity on Black Attitudes toward Latinos." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(4): 982-997.
- McDaniel, Eric Leon, Irfan Nooruddin and Allyson Faith Shortle. 2011. "Divine Boundaries: How Religion Shapes Citizens' Attitudes Toward Immigrants." *American Politics Research* 39(1): 205-233.
- Craig, Maureen A. and Jennifer A. Richeson. 2014. "On the Precipice of a "Majority-Minority" America: Perceived Status Threat From the Racial Demographic Shift Affects White Americans' Political Ideology." *Psychological Science* 25(6): 1189-1197.
- Dietze, Pia and Maureen A. Craig. 2021. "Framing Economic Inequality and Policy as Group Disadvantages (versus Group Advantages) Spurs Support for Action." *Nature Human Behavior* 5(3): 349-360.

***Partisan Identities and Ideological Identities**

10/26. Tuesday & 10/28. Thursday

Homework II Due 10/26

Required Reading:

- Ellis, Christopher and James A. Stimson. 2012. *Ideology in America*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 4, "Ideological Self-Identification", pp. 57-89.

Supplementary Short Paper Readings:

- Theodoridis, Alexander G. 2017. "Me, Myself, and (I), (D), or (R)? Partisanship and Political Cognition through the Lens of Implicit Identity." *Journal of Politics* 79(4): 1253-1267.
- Mason, Lilliana. 2018. "Ideologues without Issues: The Polarizing Consequences of Ideological Identities." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 82(S1): 866-887.
- Pickup, Mark, Erik O. Kimbrough and Eline A. de Rooij. 2021. "Expressive Politics as (Costly) Norm Following." *Political Behavior*.

Genes, the Environment, and Ideology

11/2. Tuesday & 11/4. Thursday

No Required Reading

Supplementary Short Paper Readings:

- Settle, Jaime E., Christopher T. Dawes, Nicholas A. Christakis and James H. Fowler. 2010. "Friendships Moderate an Association between a Dopamine Gene Variant and Political Ideology." *Journal of Politics* 72(4): 1189-1198.

- Ksiazkiewicz, Aleksander, Steven Ludeke and Robert Krueger. 2016. "The Role of Cognitive Style in the Link Between Genes and Political Ideology." *Political Psychology* 37(6): 761-776.

***Neurophysiological and Other Biological Bases of Ideology**

11/9. Tuesday & 11/11. Thursday

Proposal of Group Ideology and Governance Plan Due 11/11

Required Reading:

- Schreiber, Darren. 2011. "From SCAN to Neuropolitics." In *Man Is by Nature a Political Animal: Evolution, Biology, and Politics*, eds. Peter K. Hatemi and Rose McDermott. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 273-299.

Supplementary Short Paper Readings:

- Nam, H. Hannah, John T. Jost, Michael R. Meager and Jay J. Van Bavel. 2021. "Toward a Neuropsychology of Political Orientation: Exploring Ideology in Patients with Frontal and Midbrain Lesions." *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* 376(1822): 20200137.
- Ksiazkiewicz, Aleksander. 2021. "Political Ideology and Diurnal Associations: A Dual-process Motivated Social Cognition Account." *Politics and the Life Sciences* 40(1): 56-71.

!!Ideology Group Presentations!!

11/16. Tuesday & 11/18. Thursday

11/23. Tuesday & 11/25. Thursday - No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

!!Ideology Group Presentations!!

11/30. Tuesday

Short Paper Assignment Due 11/30

Course/Final Review Day

12/2. Thursday

Final Exam

12/9. Thursday 5:30pm-8:00pm (Frey Hall 201)