

# political psychology

PSCI 4028.008  
Spring 2005  
T TH 2:00-3:15 P.M.  
245 Eaton Humanities

**Dr. Jennifer Wolak**  
136 Ketchum Hall  
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Hours: W 9 A.M - 12 P.M.  
& by appointment

In this class, we will consider how politics works at the most micro level – within the minds of both political elites and average citizens. One feature that makes political psychology particularly fabulous to study is that it speaks to so many aspects of political phenomena – from American politics to comparative studies to international relations. Political psychology is important to understanding how religious and ethnic identities contribute to state conflict, how voters are affected by campaign rhetoric, and how the personalities of political leaders affects how political decisions are made. The readings for this course draw most heavily from American political behavior, but you are encouraged to think about applications outside the U.S. case and to bring other examples into class discussions.

## course outline

- We will start with an overview of the field of political psychology and the ways questions of political psychology are studied.
- Next, we will study the psychology of elite political behavior, including the role of personality and how political leaders make decisions.
- From there, we will consider the political psychology of citizens, including the mechanisms of how people construct political beliefs and determine political choices.
- Finally, we will study political psychology within groups, including the roles of social identities and stereotypes.

## WebCT is your friend

I will regularly update class information on the website for the class at [webct.colorado.edu](http://webct.colorado.edu). This syllabus will be posted there, as well as links to assignments and other exciting material.

## structure of the class

This class will follow a seminar format, with more focus on discussion than lecture. In the schedule at the end of the syllabus, you will see that each week we will consider another topic of political psychology. Classes on Tuesdays will generally follow a lecture format, where we will talk broadly about the topic for that week. On Thursdays, we will devote the greater share of the class session discussing the topic, particularly the assigned readings for that week.

## about the readings for the course

The assigned readings are a central part of this course – to build a working knowledge of the field of political psychology, and also to encourage you to ask questions, develop theories, and think about explanations for political phenomena. Given the seminar format of the class, keeping up with the assigned readings is an essential part of the class. You should complete the assigned readings before class that week. These readings will often raise concepts less familiar to you and offer a level of detail and complexity more challenging than other political science readings you have encountered. When you have questions about what the authors mean or how a passage should be understood, you are encouraged to bring those to class.

## textbooks and reading assignments

- Jost, John T., and Jim Sidanius, eds. 2004. *Political Psychology: Key Readings*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Marcus, George E., W. Russell Neuman, and Michael B. MacKuen. 2000. *Affective Intelligence and Political Judgment*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- A number of other journal articles and book chapters, which can be linked to from WebCT.
  - Some are accessible on JSTOR, an archive of social science journals: [www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org)
  - Some are available in the library's e-reserves: [libraries.colorado.edu/screens/course reserves.html](http://libraries.colorado.edu/screens/course reserves.html)
  - Some are articles from journals available online through the library's e-journal archives.

## requirements

In addition to the readings, you will also be responsible for the following:

### **critical analysis response papers** (each worth 10% of your final grade)

At the beginning of the course, you will select three topics from the syllabus and respond to the readings for that week in a two to three page essay. Papers should not be simply summaries of the readings, but should instead analyze and discuss more critically the issues at hand. Response papers are due at the beginning of class the Tuesday that we begin discussing that topic. Additional guidelines are detailed in a separate handout.

### **discussion questions** (worth 10% of your final grade)

In addition to the three topics you select to evaluate in your response papers, you will select three other topics to prepare questions for class discussion that week. You should prepare six to eight questions and e-mail these to [wolakj@colorado.edu](mailto:wolakj@colorado.edu) by Tuesday at noon. Additional details and suggestions on preparing questions are elaborated on a separate handout.

### **research design** (worth 30% of your final grade)

The final project for this class will be to develop an experimental design to test an interesting question of political psychology (of your own choosing, given instructor approval). You do not need to conduct the study itself, but you will develop the other parts of a research project, such as motivating your question, conducting a review of relevant literature, and discussing how these questions could be tested.

### **final exam** (worth 30% of your final grade)

## special accommodations

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. You can contact the Disability Services office for more information at [www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices).

## some important comments on academic integrity

- Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you are not familiar with the rules of citing sources in written work or what constitutes plagiarism, you should contact me or refer to the University Honor Code at [www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode](http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode).
- All papers are expected to be original work, not previously or simultaneously handed in for credit in another course (unless prior approval of all instructors involved is obtained).

# class schedule – PSCI 4028

**First class session.** Tuesday, January 11

## What is political psychology?

### 1. About political psychology

**Thursday, January 13**

- McGuire, William J. 1993. "The Poly-Psy Relationship: Three Phases of a Long Affair." in Shanto Iyengar and William J. McGuire, eds., *Explorations in Political Psychology*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. (in Jost and Sidanius)
- Rahn, Wendy M., John L. Sullivan, and Thomas J. Rudolph. 2002. "Political Psychology and Political Science." In James H. Kuklinski, ed., *Thinking about Political Psychology*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (e-reserves)
- Kinder, Donald R. 2004. "Pale Democracy: Opinion and Action in Postwar America." In Edward D. Mansfield and Richard Sisson, eds., *The Evolution of Political Knowledge*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press. (e-reserves)

### 2. Experimental design

**Tuesday, January 18 and Thursday, January 20**

- McDermott, Rose. 2002. "Experimental Methodology in Political Science." *Political Analysis* 10:325-342. (online journal)
- Jordan, Christian H., and Mark P. Zanna. 2004. "How to Read a Journal Article in Social Psychology." (in the Appendix of Jost and Sidanius)

## Political psychology of elites

### 3. Personality

**Tuesday, January 25 and Thursday, January 27**

- Greenstein, Fred I. 1992. "Can Personality and Politics Be Studied Systematically?" *Political Psychology* 12: 105-128. (in Jost and Sidanius)
- Barber, James David. 1985. *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. Chapters 1 and 2. (e-reserves)
- Winter, David G. 1987. "Leader Appeal, Leader Performance, and the Motive Profile of Leaders and Followers: A Study of American Presidents and Elections." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 52:196-202. (in Jost and Sidanius)

### 4. Groups and political decision-making

**Tuesday, February 1 and Thursday, February 3**

- Tetlock, Philip E., Randall S. Peterson, Charles McGuire, Shi-jie Chang, and Peter Feld. 1992. "Assessing Political Group Dynamics: A Test of the GroupThink Model." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 63:403-425. (online journal)
- Breuning, Marijke. 2003. "The Role of Analogies and Abstract Reasoning in Decision-Making." *International Studies Quarterly* 47:229-245. (online journal)
- Levy, Jack S. 1992. "An Introduction to Prospect Theory." *Political Psychology* 13:171-186. (e-reserves)

- McDermott, Rose. 1992. "Prospect Theory in International Relations: The Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission." *Political Psychology* 13:237-263. (e-reserves)

## The political psychology of individual citizens

### 5. Personality

#### Tuesday, February 8 and Thursday, February 10

- Alford, John R., Carolyn L. Funk, and John R. Hibbing. 2004. "The Source of Political Attitudes and Behaviors: Assessing Genetic and Environmental Contributions." Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, IL. (on WebCT)
- Doty, Richard M., Bill E. Peterson, and David G. Winter. 1991. "Threat and Authoritarianism in the United States, 1978-1987." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 61(4):629-640. (in Jost and Sidanius)
- Altemeyer, Bob. 1998. "The Other 'Authoritarian' Personality." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 30:47-91. (in Jost and Sidanius)
- Lavine, Howard, Diana Burgess, Mark Snyder, John Transue, John L. Sullivan, Beth Haney, and Stephen H. Wagner. 1999. "Threat, Authoritarianism, and Voting: An Investigation of Personality and Persuasion." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 25:337-347. (online journal)

### 6. Attitudes and opinions

#### Tuesday, February 15 and Thursday, February 17

- Miller, Joanne, and David A. M. Peterson. 2004. "Theoretical and Empirical Implications of Attitude Strength." *Journal of Politics* 66:847-867. (online journal)
- Huckfeldt, Robert, and John Sprague. 2000. "Political Consequences of Inconsistency: The Accessibility and Stability of Abortion Attitudes." *Political Psychology* 21:57-79. (online journal)
- Sears, David O. 1993. "Symbolic Politics: A Socio-Psychological Theory." in Shanto Iyengar and William J. McGuire, eds., *Explorations in Political Psychology*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. (on e-reserves)
- Funk, Carolyn L. 2000. "The Dual Influence of Self-Interest and Societal Interest in Public Opinion." *Political Research Quarterly* 53:37-62. (on JSTOR)

### 7. Belief systems

#### Tuesday, February 22 and Thursday, February 24

- Converse, Philip E. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics." In David Apter, ed. *Ideology and Discontent*. New York: The Free Press. (in Jost and Sidanius)
- Conover, Pamela Johnston, and Stanley Feldman. 1981. "The Origins and Meaning of Liberal/Conservative Self-Identifications." *American Journal of Political Science* 25:617-645. (in Jost and Sidanius)
- Lane, Robert E. 1959. "The Fear of Equality." *American Political Science Review* 53:35-51. (in Jost and Sidanius)

### 8. Political cognition

#### Tuesday, March 1 and Thursday, March 3

- McGraw, Kathleen M. 2000. "Contributions of the Cognitive Approach to Political Psychology." *Political Psychology* 21: 805-832. (online journal)
- Lupia, Arthur, and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1998. *The Democratic Dilemma: Can Citizens Learn What They Need to Know?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2. (e-reserves)

- 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. (JSTOR)
- 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. (on JSTOR)

## 9. Inference and heuristics

**Tuesday, March 8 and Thursday, March 10**

- Conover, Pamela Johnston, and Stanley Feldman. 1989. "Candidate Perception in an Ambiguous World: Campaigns, Cues, and Inference Processes." *American Journal of Political Science* 33:912-940. (on JSTOR)
- Jervis, Robert. 1993. "The Drunkard's Search." in Shanto Iyengar and William J. McGuire, eds., *Explorations in Political Psychology*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. (in Jost and Sidanius)
- Lau, Richard R., and David P. Redlawsk. 1997. "Voting Correctly." *American Political Science Review* 91:585-598. (on JSTOR)
- Kuklinski, James H., and Paul J. Quirk. 2000. "Reconsidering the Rational Public: Cognition, Heuristics, and Mass Opinion." In Arthur Lupia, Mathew D. McCubbins, and Samuel L. Popkin, eds., *Elements of Reason: Cognition, Choice, and the Bounds of Rationality*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (e-reserves)

## 10. Motivation and bias

**Tuesday, March 15 and Thursday, March 17**

- Granberg, Donald. 1993. "Political Perception." in Shanto Iyengar and William J. McGuire, eds., *Explorations in Political Psychology*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. (e-reserves)
- Taber, Charles, Milton Lodge, and Jill Glathar. 2001. "The Motivated Construction of Political Judgments." In James H. Kuklinski, ed., *Citizens and Politics: Perspectives from Political Psychology*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (e-reserves)
- Redlawsk, David. 2002. "Hot Cognition or Cool Consideration? Testing the Effects of Motivated Reasoning on Political Decision Making." *Journal of Politics* 64:1021-1044. (online journal)
- Chaffee, Steven H., Melissa Nichols Saphir, Joseph Graf, Christian Sandvig, and Kyu Sup Hahn. 2001. "Attention to Counter-Attitudinal Messages in a State Election Campaign." *Political Communication* 18:247-272. (online journal)

**Spring break – class does not meet. Tuesday, March 22 and Thursday, March 24**

## 11. Emotion

**Tuesday, March 29 and Thursday, March 31**

- Marcus, George E., W. Russell Neuman, and Michael B. MacKuen. 2000. *Affective Intelligence and Political Judgment*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

## 12. Persuasion and attitude change

**Tuesday, April 5**

**Class will not meet on Thursday, April 7.**

- Druckman, James N., and Arthur Lupia. 2000. "Preference Formation." *Annual Review of Political Science* 3:1-24. (online journal)
- Milburn, Michael A. 1991. "Persuasive Communications and Attitude Change." in *Persuasion and Politics: The Social Psychology of Public Opinion*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. (e-reserves)

- Zaller, John. 1991. "Information, Values, and Opinion." *American Political Science Review* 85:1215-1237. (on JSTOR)
- Cobb, Michael D., and James H. Kuklinski. 1997. "Changing Minds: Political Arguments and Political Persuasion." *American Journal of Political Science* 41:88-121. (on JSTOR)

### 13. Media effects

**Tuesday, April 12 and Thursday, April 14**

- Iyengar, Shanto, Mark D. Peters, and Donald R. Kinder. 1982. "Experimental Demonstrations of the 'Not-So-Minimal' Consequences of Television News Programs." *American Political Science Review* 81:848-58. (in Jost and Sidanius)
- Krosnick, Jon A., and Donald R. Kinder. 1990. "Altering the Foundations of Support for the President through Priming." *American Political Science Review* 84:497-512. (in Jost and Sidanius)
- Nelson, Thomas E., Rosalee A. Clawson, and Zoe M. Oxley. 1997. "Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Case and Its Effects on Tolerance." *American Political Science Review* 91:567-84. (on JSTOR)
- Baum, Matthew A. 2002. "Sex, Lies, and War: How Soft News Brings Foreign Policy to the Inattentive Public." *American Political Science Review* 96:91-109. (online journal)

## Political psychology within groups

### 14. Group identity

**Tuesday, April 19 and Thursday, April 21**

- Conover, Pamela Johnston. 1988. "The Role of Social Groups in Political Thinking." *British Journal of Political Science* 18:51-75. (on JSTOR)
- Tajfel, Henri, and John C. Turner. 1986. "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior." in Stephen Worchel and William G. Austin, eds. *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole. (in Jost and Sidanius)
- Sidanius, Jim, and Felicia Pratto. 2001. "Social Dominance Theory: A New Synthesis." in *Social Dominance: An Intergroup Theory of Social Hierarchy and Oppression*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (in Jost and Sidanius)
- Pratto, Felicia, Debora G. Tatar, and Sahr Conway-Lanz. 1999. "Who Gets What and Why: Determinants of Social Allocations." *Political Psychology* 20:127-150. (online journal)

### 15. Race

**Tuesday, April 26 and Thursday, April 28**

- Devine, Patricia G. 1989. "Stereotypes and Prejudice: Their Automatic and Controlled Components." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 56:5-18. (online journal)
- Terkildsen, Nayda. 1993. "When White Voters Evaluate Black Candidates: The Processing Implications of Candidate Skin Color, Prejudice, and Self-Monitoring." *American Journal of Political Science* 37:1032-1053. (on JSTOR)
- Bobo, Lawrence. 1988. "Group Conflict, Prejudice, and the Paradox of Contemporary Racial Attitudes." In Phyllis A. Katz and Dalmas A. Taylor, eds., *Eliminating Racism: Profiles in Controversy*. New York: Plenum. (in Jost and Sidanius)
- Sears, David O., Colette Van Laar, Mary Carrillo, and Rick Kosterman. 1997. "Is It Really Racism? The Origins of White Americans' Opposition to Race-Targeted Policies." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 61:16-53. (in Jost and Sidanius)

**Final exam** Saturday, April 30 (7:30 a.m. - 10 a.m.)