

Term Information

Effective Term Autumn 2022

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Political Science
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Political Science - D0755
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences
Level/Career Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog 3160
Course Title Political Polarization & the Culture War
Transcript Abbreviation Polit Polarization
Course Description Course examines causes and implications of political polarization in the United States..
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week, 12 Week, 8 Week, 7 Week, 6 Week, 4 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No
Grading Basis Letter Grade
Repeatable No
Course Components Lecture
Grade Roster Component Lecture
Credit Available by Exam No
Admission Condition Course No
Off Campus Never
Campus of Offering Columbus

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites
Exclusions
Electronically Enforced Yes

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 45.1001
Subsidy Level Baccalaureate Course
Intended Rank Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

Requirement/Elective Designation

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- Students will be able to describe and distinguish major theories of polarization, including definitions, potential causes, and the evidence for/against them.
- Students will be able to describe how some or all of the above theories of polarization play out in current events.
- Students will recognize the role that normative values, subjective criteria, and political philosophy play in shaping views about contemporary political controversies and appreciate the unavoidable conflicts and tradeoffs that these issues engender.
- Student will be introduced to the scientific study of politics and learn how to read scientific publications about political phenomena.

Content Topic List

- Polarization through US history
- Legislative Polarization
- Mass Ideological Polarization
- Alternative definitions of polarization
- Polarization as a Psychological Phenomenon
- Partisan Bias and Social Media
- Polarization of Traditional Media and Culture
- Inter-partisan Hostility
- Polarization and Public Support for Democratic Norms
- Mass Polarization and Democratic Institutions

Sought Concurrence

No

Attachments

- 3160 Political Polarization syllabus.pdf: POLITSC 3160 syllabus
(Syllabus. Owner: Smith, Charles William)
- Curriculum Map BA Political Science.pdf: Curriculum Map BA Poli Sci
(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Smith, Charles William)
- Curriculum Map BA World Politics.pdf: Curriculum Map BA World Politics
(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Smith, Charles William)
- Curriculum Map BS Political Science.pdf: Curriculum Map BS Poli Sci
(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Smith, Charles William)

Comments

COURSE REQUEST
3160 - Status: PENDING

Last Updated: Vankeerbergen, Bernadette
Chantal
02/08/2022

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Smith, Charles William	02/01/2022 04:19 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Caldeira, Gregory Anthony	02/01/2022 10:19 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal	02/08/2022 04:41 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Cody, Emily Kathryn Jenkins, Mary Ellen Bigler Hanlin, Deborah Kay Hilty, Michael Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal Steele, Rachel Lea	02/08/2022 04:41 PM	ASCCAO Approval

Political Science 3160

Red vs. Blue:

Political Polarization & the Culture War

Tuesday & Thursday: 12:45-2:05pm

Location TBD

Autumn 2022

Instructor: Dom Scarlett

Office: Derby 2043

Office Hours: TBD

Email: scarlett.14@osu.edu

Top Hat Course URL: TBD

Top Hat Course Join Code: TBD

Course description:

Congress is gridlocked, elections swing from party-to-party, politicians break decades-old norms, rhetoric is heated, seemingly mundane issues have become politicized, and partisans seem to dislike even just talking to each other. Most observers agree we're in the midst of political polarization that is unprecedented in recent decades (although we'll learn about some scholars who disagree). We'll look at how we got here, what it means for politics, and what "polarization" even is in the first place.

Not everything will be about academic theories, though. Students are encouraged to apply class concepts to current events in a civil discussion. I will also push students to examine their own assumptions about political events and I hope to learn from students as well.

Course Goals and Expected Learning Outcomes (ELOs):

Goal 1: Students will be introduced to the state of the literature on political polarization.

ELO 1: Students will be able to describe and distinguish major theories of polarization, including definitions, potential causes, and the evidence for/against them.

Goal 2: Students' perspectives on ongoing polarization will be broadened and enriched.

ELO 2a: Students will be able to describe how some or all of the above theories of polarization play out in current events.

ELO 2b: Recognize the role that normative values, subjective criteria, and political philosophy play in shaping views about contemporary political controversies and appreciate the unavoidable conflicts and tradeoffs that these issues engender.

Goal 3: Students will gain familiarity with political science publications including journals and blogs.

ELO 3a: Student will be introduced to the scientific study of politics and learn how to read scientific publications about political phenomena.

ELO 3b: Students interested in keeping up with political science research will know where to find the latest publications.

Course Materials:

1. All required course readings include a link in the syllabus or are otherwise posted on Carmen. If a link is not working, please let me know ASAP and I will post the reading to Carmen if possible.

2. Students need to create a free Top Hat account Top Hat is a mobile audience response system that is used campus-wide at OSU. It is free and we will use Top Hat extensively throughout the course for both reading quizzes and class discussion. You can access the system via the URL on the front page of the syllabus or use the Top Hat app on your iOS or Android device.

3. All students must bring a device capable of accessing the internet to every class session. Ideally, this is a laptop or tablet, but a smartphone may work, if necessary. If you do not own a suitable device, please reach out to me prior to the first class period and we can attempt to make an arrangement. All assignments will be submitted and graded digitally.

Distribution of Credit:

Reading Quizzes: 25%

In-Class Participation (including TopHat activities and miscellaneous assignments): 20%

Exams: 25% (2 total)

Reflection Papers (3 total): 15% (5% each)

Final Paper: 15%

In-class Conduct

Discussing controversial political topics and our own beliefs about them can be awkward at best and hostile at worst, so many instructors shy away from it in their courses. I hope that this course can be different. I want all of you to feel comfortable sharing your own stances on the issues we discuss, even if you suspect not all your peers will agree with them. For this to be possible, I ask a few things of all of you:

- a) Treat your peers with the same level of respect you expect from them. Avoid personal accusations, overgeneralizations about groups of people, hostile language or tone, or anything else that may make another student feel disrespected for who they are or what they believe. If I believe you have run afoul of this rule, I will notify you during discussion. Please take this seriously as repeat offenses will result in lost participation points or more serious action.
- b) Understand that while we can discuss our reasons for disagreements, this is not a debate class. We will not “solve” these issues and our discussions will not have a “winner.” If a discussion gets off-topic or unconstructive—or simply takes too much time—I may redirect or end it. This is not me taking a side or picking a winner. While we may discuss controversial issues or current events, the ultimate purpose of this class is to learn about the phenomenon of polarization, of which these issues are only a small part.
- c) During course discussion, I may ask you to defend your position or question the assumptions upon which it is based. Please understand that this is not an attempt to discredit your position or to assert my own position over yours. In fact, I may take any number of contradictory positions in discussion for the purposes of stimulating reflection.

Solicitation for Constructive Input/Feedback

I am a person with my own beliefs and feelings, and I will do my best to control their influence over how I moderate discussions, but I know that I may not always do so effectively. If you feel I have been unfair to you or your classmates during discussion or allowed another student to be, please let me know and we can discuss how I can do better.

Political polarization is an extremely broad phenomenon that can affect myriad issues. We will not be able to touch on every relevant topic over the course of the semester. However, if you have a suggestion for something you believe really ought to be discussed, please bring it to my attention, either via email so I can consider preparing a lecture on it, in class for us to discuss informally, or write about it in one or your written assignments. You’ll most likely never take this class again, so for your own sake, please don’t wait until writing your teacher evaluation to suggest how I can do a better job.

What are Office Hours For?

When I started undergrad, I didn’t really know what office hours were. In high school, I had gotten accustomed to the idea that if you had to talk to your instructor outside of class time it was because you had done something wrong or something had gone wrong, so you should avoid it if you could. If you were not already aware, this is not the case in university.

Office hours are for far more than inquiring about grades or asking for clarification of minor details of content (although these are fair topics). Office hours are your best chance to form a relationship with your instructors, which can be one of the most valuable things that your tuition dollars buy you. One of the most important conversations of my life was in office hours with one of my undergraduate professors. I was a senior majoring in biology, uncertain about my planned career in healthcare. I told him that I wanted to study political psychology in grad school, but worried it was too late to change my career. He corrected me that it was not too late, he encouraged me to pursue it, sent me a detailed letter about what to expect in grad school, and wrote me a glowing letter of recommendation that I credit with getting me accepted to OSU in the first place.

The point is, please don't hesitate to come to office hours for any reason. I am free if you want to informally discuss class content in a way that we didn't cover in class, follow up on a loose end from discussion, or ask for more resources about a topic that you found interesting. I am also free to talk about non-content-related topics, like graduate school and pursuing a career in academia.

Description of Assignments

Attendance policy: You will not get credit strictly for attendance. However, if you regularly fail to attend class, it will have a deleterious effect on your participation grade. Attendance will be taken each day via TopHat for recordkeeping purposes only. If you cannot attend class but are otherwise unoccupied, you can login to TopHat remotely to take the reading quiz. If this is not possible, you will receive a zero for the quiz, but that can be one of the 5 lowest quiz grades that will be dropped from your final grade.

*Please note that absences early in the semester must be reported to the university and could factor into important financial aid, athletic eligibility, or other decisions. If you cannot attend an early-semester class session but do not plan on dropping the course, please let me know.

Daily Readings: For you to get the most out of lecture and to be a productive participant in discussion, it is important that you complete the assigned reading prior to each class and comprehend the concepts presented. After each set of readings on the syllabus, you will see a few reading questions. Please keep these in mind while doing the readings and be sure that you can answer them thoroughly and confidently by the time you are done reading.

Most other upper level political science courses at OSU assign 3-5 full academic journal articles and/or book chapters per class day. However, I have made an effort to (wherever possible) substitute articles from popular publications (e.g. newspapers, blogs, etc.) that summarize the methods and key takeaways of studies in the place of studies themselves. This *not* because I think you're stupid and you won't comprehend journal articles; this is because I am aware that the demands placed on undergraduate students' time and attention can make efficiently reading complicated texts (in addition to your other classes' assignments and extracurricular obligations) unfeasible and thus many students skim or skip readings. ***This being said, I do hope that assigning shorter, less-dense readings means you will be willing and able to thoroughly and completely* read all of the assigned readings.*** You will get much more out of this class if you do so.

*However, some of the texts will still be articles from academic journals that present a piece of original research. Articles like these include a (usually clearly demarcated) section in which they explain in detail the method of the research. These methods can often be very complicated and difficult for even trained researchers to understand. While they may be of interest to you if you are considering a career as a researcher, I would not recommend that you devote much time to attempting to understand them. The main takeaways from these articles will typically be contained in the "theory" section at the beginning, the results, and the discussion, all of which you should read carefully.

Reading Quizzes: To give you credit for the work you put into reading, there will be a 3-question reading quiz administered via TopHat at the beginning of each class session.

Most of the quiz questions will be similar to the reading questions on the syllabus, so it behooves you to be able to answer them. While you are permitted to consult classmates about your respective answers to reading questions prior to a quiz, it is in your best interest to do the reading yourself. Reading quiz questions may reappear on exams, so I suggest that you continuously review them.

Participation: This grade will be primarily based on active, constructive participation in class discussion. There will also be intermittent TopHat activities that will be graded for completion only and they will factor into your participation grade.

Exams: The format will be 25-50 multiple choice questions and 2-3 essays. All exams will be administered on Carmen (so be sure to bring your computer to class). Some exam questions may be similar to reading quiz questions.

Papers: *Reflection Papers:* Think of these as a diary, not a book report. These are an opportunity for you to express and scrutinize your opinions that you might not have felt comfortable sharing with the class or were unable to articulate verbally. While you are encouraged to apply class themes/concepts to your thoughts, you should not simply regurgitate content from the lecture although sometimes reflection papers will be an exercise to call to mind subjects that we have yet to discuss in lecture. Reflection papers should be 3 pages each of *original thoughts*. The main criteria that I will use to grade them is whether you have fully thought through your opinions, explained why you believe you have them, and considered opposing viewpoints.

Final Paper: The prompt for the paper is TBD but will be somewhat open-ended. It will be 8-10 pages and ask you to compare and critique class concepts and apply them to real world scenarios. You are encouraged to discuss your intended topic with me outside of class if you are unsure that it meets expectations.

The primary purpose of writing assignments in this course is for you to demonstrate your ability apply the concepts learned in class and to think deeper about them. This will require you to coherently present your thoughts. However, it is not my desire for this to be a writing class. When grading your papers, I will not reduce your grade for spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc. unless a) it is difficult to ascertain the message you are trying to convey or b) it is so excessive that it appears you were careless. Please proofread your work (out loud is best) prior to submitting it. If you have struggled with conveying your thoughts in writing in the past and you anticipate that the writing requirements in this class may be burdensome or you are worried about losing credit for non-content errors, I highly recommend you make use of the services of the **University Writing Center**. <https://osu.mywconline.com/> Even if you believe you are an above-average writer, having outside help can make the writing process easier and result in a better finished product, so the Writing Center can be for you, too.

The minimum required lengths for the papers in this class are somewhat shorter than other political science classes. This is because I do not want you to feel like you need to write “filler” to meet the minimum requirements. The page minimum is there to encourage you to examine your thoughts beneath the surface level. This means that the contents of your papers should primarily be your own original ideas or interpretations of

other's ideas. *Portions that do not have an original component will not be counted towards the length requirement.* See below for tips on how to avoid running afoul of this expectation.

Some standard essay requirements are part of the “hidden curriculum” of higher education (i.e. things you're expected to learn but no one's designated to teach you). These apply in this class, and you should assume that they apply in every other class you take unless otherwise specified by the instructor. They include (but are not limited to):

- 1 “page” is 12-pt font, double-spaced (with no extra space between paragraphs), with 1-inch margins, and is fully filled by original writing. This means:
 - Cover pages, works cited, and headers that take up several lines **do not** count towards length requirements.
 - The final page of a minimum-length paper should not include significant blank space at the bottom.
 - Long quotes (that fill 3 lines or longer) do not contribute to the length requirement.
 - Long passages of explaining class content without expanding upon it does not contribute to the length requirement. (Rule of Thumb: Assume that the person grading your paper has at least an intermediate understanding of the topic you're discussing and therefore elementary concepts don't need to be explained. Basically, anybody reading a paper on nuclear physics already knows what an atom is.)
- Use of a quote should be limited to cases in which a more succinct paraphrasing would not be an appropriate substitute.
- Quotes need to be fully explained and incorporated into the paper, not pasted in without clear reason for their inclusion.
- In-text citations should be short (i.e. if you can't find an author's name and the title is long, then shorten the title in your citation).
- In-text citations should not be used in consecutive sentences (e.g. if 2 or more straight sentences cite the same source, only put the citation after the last one.)
- There is a distinction between “reputable” sources and “academic” sources. Typically, any college paper will at least require you to cite reputable sources. These sometimes include (but are not limited to): government websites, thinktank reports, academic blogs or research summaries, and articles from media outlets that have high standards of journalistic integrity (e.g. not tabloids or extreme partisan outlets). Notably, this excludes sites that can be edited by members of the public, like Wikipedia. Sometimes, though, college papers will require you to cite “academic” sources. This is a more exclusive categorization and is limited largely to articles published in peer-reviewed academic journals or books published by peer-reviewed academic presses.

Academic Integrity:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with

examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the university or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the university's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

Permissible forms of study aids and collaboration will vary between assignments, but you will be informed of them prior to completing the assignment. Please reach out to me if you are unsure of whether something constitutes an integrity violation. Also, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have a reasonable suspicion that another student has engaged in an academic integrity violation in this course. Your identity will not be revealed. You owe it to yourself and your classmates to ensure that no one has an unfair advantage in their academic performance.

Students are required to upload their written exams and papers to Carmen, which utilizes Turnitin.com for plagiarism detection. This online service analyzes student submissions for plagiarism from published or online sources and compares their work to submissions made by other students (including students who have taken the course in previous semesters). To avoid plagiarism charges, students must cite all sources from which they get their information and use quotation marks when quoting directly from these sources, including the readings and cases assigned for class. Students may use any standard citation format but are responsible for knowing how to correctly cite their sources; ignorance about proper citation standards will not be accepted by COAM as an excuse for plagiarism. Students who excessively use properly-cited quotes to complete an assignment *will lose credit for unsatisfactory completion*, but will not be considered to have plagiarized.

Disability Services:

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. If you have already registered, please email me your accommodation letter as soon as possible, so I can make arrangements. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

In addition to registered accommodations to which you are legally entitled, I will keep an open mind to granting requests for reasonable accommodations that you find helpful to your ability to learn (not simply your ability to get a good grade). You do not need to have a disability and certainly **do not** need to disclose the nature of your disability to me if you make such a request.

Mental Health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766). CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on call counselor when CCS is closed at [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766) and 24 hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at titleix@osu.edu

Diversity Statement

The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

Student Advocacy

If you feel that you have been treated unfairly in this course or that school procedure has not been properly followed and it has affected your education deleteriously, you are entitled to file a complaint with the Student Advocacy Center. They are there to help you state your best case and procure whatever recompense you are entitled to. You can visit their website to submit a request form here: <https://advocacy.osu.edu/>, call them at: 614-292-1111, or email them at: advocacy@osu.edu

Student Advocacy can also help you if your ability to receive an education is being threatened by a source outside of the Ohio State and or your control, such as a financial emergency.

Course Overview & Schedule

Week 1: Intro/Historical Context

August 23:

Read: Syllabus

Due: Introduction assignment

Lecture: Discuss syllabus.

August 25:

Read: Brady and Han, “Polarization Then and Now: A Historical Perspective”
<http://bit.ly/2IFhyDp>

Lecture: Polarization through US history

Discuss: Ideas for topics of discussions and assignments.

Week 2: Legislative Polarization/Intro to Ideology

August 30:

Read: DeSilver, D. “The Polarized Congress of Today Has Its Roots in the 1970s” Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/06/12/polarized-politics-in-congress-began-in-the-1970s-and-has-been-getting-worse-ever-since/>

Shor, B. “How U.S. state legislatures are polarized and getting more polarized (in 2 graphs)” <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/01/14/how-u-s-state-legislatures-are-polarized-and-getting-more-polarized-in-2-graphs/>

“State Legislative Policymaking in an Age of Political Polarization” National Conference of State Legislatures. 2018. (pg. 7-20 as marked in the document)
https://www.ncsl.org/Portals/1/Documents/About_State_Legislatures/Partisanship_030818.pdf

Lecture: Potential causes of legislative polarization. How it is measured (are there better alternatives?). Is there more to polarization?

September 1:

Read: Converse “The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics” 1964. (Sec. I-III only, although you’re free to read more)
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/08913810608443650>

Feldman & Johnston “Understanding the Determinants of Political Ideology” 2014
https://stanleyfeldman.site44.com/Feldman,%20Johnston_Structural%20Complexity.pdf

Lecture: What is ideology?

Week 3: Mass Ideological Polarization

September 6:

Read: Abramowitz, A. & Saunders, K. “Is Polarization a Myth?” 2008

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/10.1017/s0022381608080493.pdf>

Stoker & Jennings 2008. “Of Time and the Development of Partisan Polarization” 2008.

[https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/25193837.pdf?casa_token=S-](https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/25193837.pdf?casa_token=S-HIgtACs4AAAAAA:W66mQFlnFq3BX25o4C-s6OimpkdUpemTQfJMd9XSGIlzK9MuSdiipRPEPoBOWGp0pKocTRd6xjBpxhKjp46OOKW8RDjxmZczh9seb7YNfqMBtd--YMh7)

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[Kjp46OOKW8RDjxmZczh9seb7YNfqMBtd--YMh7](https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/25193837.pdf?casa_token=S-HIgtACs4AAAAAA:W66mQFlnFq3BX25o4C-s6OimpkdUpemTQfJMd9XSGIlzK9MuSdiipRPEPoBOWGp0pKocTRd6xjBpxhKjp46OOKW8RDjxmZczh9seb7YNfqMBtd--YMh7)

Lecture: Evidence for ideological polarization in the mass public

September 8:

Read: Hill & Tausanovitch “No, Americans have not become more ideologically

polarized” 2015. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/10/13/no-americans-have-not-become-more-ideologically-polarized/)

[cage/wp/2015/10/13/no-americans-have-not-become-more-ideologically-](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/10/13/no-americans-have-not-become-more-ideologically-polarized/)

[polarized/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/10/13/no-americans-have-not-become-more-ideologically-polarized/)

Fiorina. “Americans have not become more politically polarized” 2014.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/06/23/americans-](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/06/23/americans-have-not-become-more-politically-polarized/)

[have-not-become-more-politically-polarized/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/06/23/americans-have-not-become-more-politically-polarized/)

Lecture: Evidence against ideological polarization in the mass public

Week 4: Alternative definitions of polarization/Survey of public opinion

September 13:

Read: Noel, H. “Polarization is about more than just sorting, but sorting is polarization anyway”

<http://mischiefsoffaction.blogspot.com/2014/06/polarization-is-about-more-than-just.html>

“Statistics and Historical Comparison: Bills by Status”

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/statistics>

Bump, P. “2020 saw the least split-ticket House voting in decades” 2021.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/02/19/2020-saw-least-split-ticket-](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/02/19/2020-saw-least-split-ticket-house-voting-decades/)

[house-voting-decades/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/02/19/2020-saw-least-split-ticket-house-voting-decades/)

Hillman, N. “Party control in Congress and State Legislatures (1978-2016)”

[https://web.education.wisc.edu/nwhillman/index.php/2017/02/01/party-control-in-](https://web.education.wisc.edu/nwhillman/index.php/2017/02/01/party-control-in-congress-and-state-legislatures/)

[congress-and-state-legislatures/](https://web.education.wisc.edu/nwhillman/index.php/2017/02/01/party-control-in-congress-and-state-legislatures/)

O’Connor, P. “House Districts Keep Getting Safer” 2013.

[https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB100014241278873241700045786342703138761](https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887324170004578634270313876136)

[36](https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887324170004578634270313876136)

Lecture: Are there forms of polarization that we’re missing?

September 15:

DUE: Reflection Paper 1: Write about a *debated or controversial* (i.e. one that could realistically be changed sometime this century) government policy that has directly affected you or your loved ones. Describe how it has affected your politics. If you cannot think of such a policy, describe the policy that is most important to shaping your personal political beliefs and why.

Read: Feldman & Zaller. “The Political Culture of Ambivalence: Ideological Responses to the Welfare State” 1992.

https://www.uvm.edu/~dguber/POLS234/articles/feldman_zaller.pdf

Illing, S. “Two eminent political scientists: The problem with democracy is voters” Vox. 2017. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/6/1/15515820/donald-trump-democracy-brexite-2016-election-europe>

Theiss-Morse & Hibbing. “A surprising number of Americans dislike how messy democracy is. They like Trump.” 2016.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/05/02/a-surprising-number-of-americans-dislike-how-messy-democracy-is-they-like-trump/>

Lecture: How do members of the public make up their minds about politics (without ideology)?

Week 5: Polarization as a Psychological Phenomenon

September 20:

Read: Huddy, L. & Bankert, A. “Partisanship as a Social Identity” 2017.

https://calgara.github.io/Pol157_Spring2019/Huddy%20&%20Bankert%202017.pdf

Taub, A. “Why Americans Vote ‘Against Their Interest’: Partisanship” New York Times. 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/12/upshot/why-americans-vote-against-their-interest-partisanship.html>

Martinovich, M. “Americans’ partisan identities are stronger than race and ethnicity, Stanford scholar finds” <https://news.stanford.edu/2017/08/31/political-party-identities-stronger-race-religion/>

Bacon, P. “Americans Are Shifting The Rest Of Their Identity To Match Their Politics.” Fivethirtyeight. 2018. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/americans-are-shifting-the-rest-of-their-identity-to-match-their-politics/>

Lecture: Intro to social identity theory. How does party/ideological identity fit in?

September 22:

Read: Iyengar, Leikes, Levendusky, Malhotra, & Westwood. “The Origins and Consequences of Affective Polarization” 2019.

<https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051117-073034>

Mason, L. “I Disrespectfully Agree” 2015.

https://calgara.github.io/PolS5310_Spring2021/Mason%20-%202015%20-%20I%20Disrespectfully%20Agree%20The%20Differential%20Effects%20of%20Partisan%20Sorting%20on%20Social%20and%20Issue%20Polarization.pdf

Lecture: Is affective/social polarization more widespread than ideological?

Week 6: Other conceptualizations of psychological polarization

September 27:

Watch: Jonathan Haidt “The Moral Roots of Liberalism and Conservatism” TED Talk. 2008.

https://www.ted.com/talks/jonathan_haidt_the_moral_roots_of_liberals_and_conservatives?language=en#t-443532

Read: Walter, A. & Redlawsk, D. “Voters’ Partisan Responses to Politicians’ Immoral Behavior” 2019.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/pops.12582>

Saad, L. “Stable U.S. Moral Ratings Obscure Big Partisan Shifts” 2021.

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/351140/stable-moral-ratings-obscure-big-partisan-shifts.aspx>

Lecture: Moral polarization.

September 29:

Read: Denworth, L. “Conservative and Liberal Brains Might Have Some Real Differences” Scientific American. 2020.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/conservative-and-liberal-brains-might-have-some-real-differences/>

McAuliffe, K. “Liberals and Conservatives React In Wildly Different Ways To Repulsive Pictures” The Atlantic. 2019.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/03/the-yuck-factor/580465/>

Carney, Jost, Gosling, & Potter. “The Secret Lives of Liberals and Conservatives: Personality Profiles, Interaction Styles, and the Things They Leave Behind” 2008.

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.224.1720&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

Lecture: The neurological underpinnings of ideology.

Week 7: First Unit Wrap Up

October 4:

Read: TBD

Lecture: In-class activity

October 6:

Before class: Review your notes. Come with clarifying questions.

Lecture: Review for midterm.

Week 8: Exam and Break

October 11:

Midterm Exam

October 13:

NO CLASS-Fall Break

Week 9: Partisan Bias and Social Media

October 18:

Read: Taber & Lodge “Motivated Skepticism in the Evaluation of Political Beliefs” 2006. <https://fbaum.unc.edu/teaching/articles/AJPS-2006-Taber.pdf>

Pronin, Lin, & Ross. “The Bias Blind Spot: Perceptions of Bias in Self Versus Others.” 2002. (Reading posted on Carmen)

Lecture: Political identity as a psychological motivator. Why partisan bias is unavoidable and ubiquitous.

October 20:

DUE: Reflection Paper 2: Read a piece of political op-ed or commentary from each side (from list provided in class) and write about what you saw/how you feel.

Read: De-Wit, Van Der Linden, & Brick. “Are Social Media Driving Political Polarization?” Greater Good Magazine. 2019.

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/is_social_media_driving_political_polarization

Barrett, Hendrix, & Sims. “How tech platforms fuel U.S. political polarization and what government can do about it.” Brookings Institute. 2021.

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/techtank/2021/09/27/how-tech-platforms-fuel-u-s-political-polarization-and-what-government-can-do-about-it/>

Newton, C. “People older than 65 share the most fake news, a new study finds.” The Verge. 2019. <https://www.theverge.com/2019/1/9/18174631/old-people-fake-news-facebook-share-nyu-princeton>

Lecture: Polarization on social media

Week 10: Polarization of Traditional Media and Culture

October 25:

Read: Hopkins, D. “All Politics is National Because All Media Is National” Fivethirtyeight. 2018. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/all-politics-is-national-because-all-media-is-national/>

Kahan, D. “Partisan Media Are Not Destroying America” Cultural Cognition Project. 2013. <http://www.culturalcognition.net/blog/2013/8/8/partisan-media-are-not-destroying-america.html>

Levendusky, M. “Are Fox and MSNBC Polarizing America?” Washington Post. 2014. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/02/03/are-fox-and-msnbc-polarizing-america/>

Lecture: The complicated relationship of traditional media and polarization.

October 27:

Read: Billman, J.C. “Ever Wonder Why Our Politics Seem Broken? Two UNC Professors Have an Answer. It’s Not Reassuring.” Indyweek. 2018. <https://indyweek.com/news/longform/hetherington-weiler-prius-or-pickup/>

Gelles, D. “Red Brands and Blue Brands: Is Hyper-Partisanship Coming for Corporate America?” New York Times. 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/23/business/dealbook/companies-politics-partisan.html>

Badger, Quealy, & Katz. “A Close-Up Picture of Partisan Segregation, Among 180 Voters.” <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/03/17/upshot/partisan-segregation-maps.html>

Pulliam Bailey, S. “Seeking power in Jesus’ name: Trump sparks a rise of Patriot Churches.” Washington Post. 2020. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/2020/10/26/trump-christian-nationalism-patriot-church/>

Lecture: How political polarization has leaked into cultural institutions that were previously apolitical.

Week 11: Inter-partisan Hostility

November 1:

Read: Ahler & Sood. “The Parties in Our Heads” 2018. http://www.dougahler.com/uploads/2/4/6/9/24697799/ahlersood_pioh_forthcoming_jop.pdf

Moore-Berg, Ankori-Karlinsky, Hameiri, & Bruneau. “Exaggerated Meta-perceptions Predict Intergroup Hostility Between American Political Partisans.” 2020. <https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/117/26/14864.full.pdf>

Lecture: Stereotypes and other misperceptions of the outgroup.

November 3:

Read: Cassese, E. “Partisan Dehumanization in American Politics.” 2019. (Reading posted to Carmen).

Webster, Glynn, & Motta. “Partisan Schadenfreude and the Demand for Candidate Cruelty.” 2021. <http://stevenwebster.com/research/schad.pdf>

Roth, Ellingson, & Thatcher. “Is political affiliation the new discrimination? Our research suggests 'yes'” The Hill. 2019. <https://thehill.com/opinion/technology/472200-political-affiliation-the-new-discrimination-our-research-suggests-yes>

Pajer, N. “Can Love Survive This Election?” New York Times. 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/fashion/weddings/can-love-relationships-survive-this-election.html>

Lecture: Hostile behavior and attitudes.

Week 12: Polarization and Public Support for Democratic Norms

November 8:

Read: McCoy, Simonovits, & Littvay. “Democratic hypocrisy: Polarized citizens support democracy-eroding behavior when their own party is in power” 2020. <https://preprints.apsanet.org/engage/api-gateway/apsa/assets/orp/resource/item/5f470ab12308c500122295a7/original/democratic-hypocrisy-polarized-citizens-support-democracy-eroding-behavior-when-their-own-party-is-in-power.pdf>

Clark, C. “Left-wing authoritarians share key psychological traits with far right, Emory study finds” https://news.emory.edu/stories/2021/09/esc_left_wing_authoritarians_psychology/campus.html

Peterson, E. “Presidential Power Surges” Harvard Law Bulletin. 2019. <https://today.law.harvard.edu/feature/presidential-power-surges/>

Lecture: What are democratic norms and why do they matter? What is authoritarianism? Are they compatible?

November 10:

DUE: Reflection Paper 3: How do you personally define “democracy”? What are its tell-tale traits and what are some signs that a country is not a “democracy”? Do you believe most people share your views? What might be some common arguments against using your definition of democracy?

Read: Van Prooijen & Krouwel. “Extreme Political Beliefs Predict Dogmatic Intolerance” 2017. (Posted on Carmen)

Brookman, Kalla, Westwood. “Does Affective Polarization Undermine Democratic Norms or Accountability? Maybe Not” 2022. <https://osf.io/9btsq/>

Kamarck, E. “Did Trump Damage American Democracy?” Brookings Institute. 2021. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2021/07/09/did-trump-damage-american-democracy/>

Lecture: Does polarization threaten democracy?

Week 13: Mass Polarization and Democratic Institutions

November 15:

Read: Dews, F. “A primer on gerrymandering and political polarization.” Brookings Institution. 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brookings-now/2017/07/06/a-primer-on-gerrymandering-and-political-polarization/>

Prokop, A. “Does gerrymandering cause political polarization?” Vox. 2018. <https://www.vox.com/2014/8/5/17991982/gerrymandering-political-polarization-partisan>

Wasserman, D. “Hating Gerrymandering Is Easy. Fixing It Is Harder.” Fivethirtyeight. 2018. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/hating-gerrymandering-is-easy-fixing-it-is-harder/>

Skelley, G. “Abolishing The Electoral College Used To Be A Bipartisan Position. Not Anymore.” Fivethirtyeight. 2019. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/abolishing-the-electoral-college-used-to-be-bipartisan-position-not-anymore/>

Lecture: Elections and the meaning of “democracy.”

November 17:

Read: Binder, S. “The History of the Filibuster.” Brookings Institution. 2010. <https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/the-history-of-the-filibuster/>

Thomson-DeVeaux & Roeder. “Is The Supreme Court Facing A Legitimacy Crisis?” Fivethirtyeight. 2018. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/is-the-supreme-court-facing-a-legitimacy-crisis/>

Thomson-DeVeaux. “Can The Supreme Court Stay Above The Partisan Fray?” Fivethirtyeight. 2019. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/can-the-supreme-court-stay-above-the-partisan-fray/>

Listen: “The Senate Filibuster: Weapon of Obstruction or Shield Against Polarization?” The Purple Principle Podcast. 2021. <https://fluentknowledge.com/shows/the-purple-principle/the-senate-filibuster>

Lecture: The Senate and the Supreme Court.

Week 15: Pre-break Wrap-up

November 22:

DUE: Final Paper

Lecture: TBD by students in earlier discussion

November 24:

NO CLASS-Thanksgiving Day

Week 16:

November 29:

Read: Klar, S. “When Common Identities Decrease Trust: An Experimental Study of Partisan Women.” 2019. <https://www.mpsanet.org/when-common-identities-decrease-trust-an-experimental-study-of-partisan-women/>

Clark, C. “How We Empower Political Extremists” Psychology Today. 2021. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-antisocial-psychologist/202101/how-we-empower-political-extremists>

Cai, S. “Ohio Senate candidates attack ‘RINO’ gov in bid for Trump endorsement” Axios. 2022. <https://www.axios.com/ohio-senate-candidates-attack-rino-gov-in-bid-for-trump-endorsement-c36bc7f4-5ca0-47d1-97c0-bd9a3f132c29.html>

Lecture: Enforcing party homogeneity

December 1:

Read: Oliver & Wood. “Conspiracy Theories and the Paranoid Style(s) of Mass Opinion.” 2014.

Funk, C. “Key findings about Americans’ confidence in science and their views on scientists’ role in society” Pew Research Center. 2020.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/02/12/key-findings-about-americans-confidence-in-science-and-their-views-on-scientists-role-in-society/>

Lecture: Magical thinking/hostility to science

Week 17:

December 6:

Read: Levendusky, M. “Clearer Cues, More Consistent Voters: A Benefit of Elite Polarization” 2010. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11109-009-9094-0>

Hetherington, M. “Turned Off or Turned On? How Polarization Affects Political Engagement.” Chapter 2 from “Red and Blue Nation” (ed. Nivola, P. & Brady, D.) 2008. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/redandbluenationvolume2_chapter.pdf

Lecture: Is polarization actually a net negative? Does it have any benefits?

December 8:

DUE: Reflection Paper 3 (On Carmen)

NO CLASS-Study for final exam

Please let me know if you'd like me to hold an optional virtual review session.

Week 18:

FINAL EXAM DATE AND TIME WILL BE SCHEDULED BY THE REGISTRAR