

Psychology 407/507: POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY seminar

10:00 - 11:50 am, Wednesdays, 330 CON

Professor: Gerard Saucier, Ph.D.

Office: 312 Straub

E-mail: gsaucier@uoregon.edu

Phone: 346-4927 with voice mail

Office Hours: 2-3 pm Tuesdays, 11 am – noon Thursdays

Required text: Cottam, M., Dietz-Uhler, B., Mastors, E. M., Preston, T. (2010). *Introduction to political psychology* (2nd ed.). New York: Psychology Press.

Other readings (see page following seminar schedule) **will be made available via blackboard during the term.**

Course Objectives (or, what's the purpose of this course?)

This is a specialized seminar course on political psychology. While it provides a survey of political psychology, there are some additional emphases this term on topics related to personality, culture, religion, and the sources of sociopolitical violence. We will take a somewhat unconventional and wide-ranging approach to the subject matter, with the aim of developing uncommon insights and one or more integrative models for understanding the material. For example, the seminar first examines the extent of human tendencies toward dictatorship and oligarchy, before delving into the conventional political psychology of behavior in democracies.

Many of the readings will from a brief (relatively speaking) textbook on political psychology, the remainder being from diverse other sources. The grading is based mainly on written papers and essays rather than multiple-choice-style testing.

Each session will have its own set of assigned readings. Seminar participants are expected to read everything that is assigned. Class time will be spent mainly in presentation and discussion of issues arising in the readings. Much of the discussion will be initiated by the instructor, but some will be derived from student papers. Seminar participants enrolled in Psychology 507, i.e., as graduate students, will have several (approximately three) additional readings and one or more additional meetings during the term. The instructor will contact 507 students by e-mail during the first few weeks of the term to make these arrangements.

Assignments and Grading

Participants' **final course grade** is based on the following:

- 20% ...turning in and presenting two ICQ papers on assigned dates (10% each)
- 10% ...turning in one further ICQ paper on date of participant's choosing
- 10%....grade on "exploratory analysis" paper due January 30
- 3% ...turning in list of ideas for term paper by Feb. 27 (in week 8 of term)
- 2%....sufficient participation credit
- 25% ...grade on term paper
- 30% ...score on final exam

What follows in this section is more detail on each of these components.

ICQ papers – ICQ papers are brief, and “identify crucial questions” with regard to the readings (or something in the readings) for the date on which they are due. An ICQ paper need do only one of three alternative things. (a) You might identify a crucial question that the research (or scholarly work) described in the reading is trying to answer, discussing why this is an important question, and briefly summarizing how it is best answered. (b) You might identify a crucial question about the quality of any of the information presented, such as identifying limitations or necessary caveats on the research (or scholarly work) described in the reading, not only describing the limitation/caveat but also explaining why this limitation or caveat is an important one. (c) You might identify some kind of example that is anomalous

and does not fit with (cannot be accounted for by) a particular point of view described in the work, this example perhaps being one that itself identifies a crucial question about the work. ICQ papers are graded on a P/NP basis. ICQ papers should be approximately 1 page in length (double-spaced) with a maximum of 2 pages (double-spaced). ICQ papers, to count for credit, must be brought into class in hard-copy form, and read or summarized when requested (although you still get credit for it if you bring it to class on time but for some reason we never get to it in class). Generally, ICQ papers will be shared and discussed around the middle of the class session, but they could be called for other points during the session based on what fits in with plan for the session. **Two of the ICQ papers must be turned in on certain assigned class days, which are different for each seminar participant.** The purpose of this system is to assure that there is always at least one ICQ (and preferably three or four) prepared for any class session, to stimulate discussion. ICQ papers for assigned dates will be read (or paraphrased or summarized) in class by the participant (doing so is part of the credit for that ICQ). At the beginning of the term, each participant is randomly assigned a letter (A through T) and is to present when their assigned letter comes up on the schedule (see end of syllabus). **There is also one ICQ paper on an additional date of the seminar participants' choosing,** thus allowing participants to write on an additional topic that particularly engages them during the course of the term.

A full allotment of **sufficient participation** credit is assigned to everyone who, by evidence available to the instructor, attends a majority of the class sessions.

“Exploratory analysis” paper. In current American political culture, pundits (columnists, ‘talking heads’) who analyze political situations and events have considerable influence; the purpose of this assignment is to analyze (initiate some critical examination of) punditry. You are asked to use concepts (and any other concepts that might reasonably apply) from the first three weeks of the course to identify and describe what you consider the most important differences and similarities between two political pundits, particularly in their implicit assumption or explicitly stated beliefs or values. You can choose any two off a list to be provided by the instructor (and posted to blackboard). If you wish to choose a pundit for this assignment that is not on the list, check with the instructor to get approval (and perhaps extra suggestions) first; it is important that the pundit’s columns appear in print (blogs or transcripts can count as columns) and not only on audio/video. It is recommended that for each of the pundits you read at least 10 columns (in order to get at the pundit’s ‘disposition across a good number of situations’), and that for each pundit you read some columns occurring both before and after a major event (e.g., the 6 November 2012 presidential election, or Sandy Hook School assaults 13 December 2012, or Benghazi consulate attack 11 September 2012). This can be many columns before and just a few after, that is fine. In your paper be clear about which major event you are using as an anchor point, and which columns (dates and titles of columns) you consulted. For this assignment, you can use any method you like to infer similarities and differences, including intuition. It is recommended however that you put more emphasis on recurrent (appearing more than once) themes than on themes idiosyncratic to just one column (again, to get at pundit ‘disposition’).

List of ideas for term paper - By week 8 of the term (i.e., by Feb. 27) you should turn in to the instructor a list of idea for a term paper. Format for list is up to you. The instructor will review and give feedback on these ideas by week 9. If you wish to get an earlier start on the term paper (recommended only if you develop some clear ideas about the term paper prior to week 8), you are welcome to submit the list of ideas earlier in order to get feedback earlier.

Term paper – The term paper is due by the end of week 10 (Friday, March 15, 10 am). The final version of this paper must be at least five full double-spaced pages in length (filling a third page completely, no fonts over 12 point), not counting your reference list. At a maximum, it should not exceed ten full double-spaced pages in length, not counting reference list. There should be a minimum of three references (not including the course readings) consulted; for most topics it is helpful to consult far more than three references. At least two references must be from journals or else be chapters in edited books: Such references are distinguishable because they will be cited with a page number range (e.g., pp. 419-434) in on-line indexes. *Internet sites* (except for on-line journals) do not make very reliable sources and do not count toward these minimum three references. The paper should be typed, readable, free of gross spelling and typographic errors, well-organized and focused. It helps your paper if you avoid

overgeneralizing and oversimplifying, and consider that research evidence can have alternative interpretations.

Generally, term papers should be either critical reviews of articles or proposals of new hypotheses. Specifically, this means either (a) reviews of the degree to which an idea is or is not supported by research evidence (and/or by rational considerations) or (b) a gathering together of evidence (or arguments) to support a new hypothesis for future research (or perhaps a real-life application that might be tried or 'field-tested'). Thus, the kernel of a good term paper will generally be an idea (or set of ideas) identified by you as being worth some extra attention. You may have in mind a term paper that does not seem to fit these descriptions, and this may be fine, but it's advisable to discuss this first with instructor.

Final exam – This will be a mostly-essay exam involving two “big questions” related to the seminar content. These two questions will be drawn from a list of four “big questions” made available by the instructor at least two weeks prior to the final exam. About 1/5 of the exam content/credit will be questions requiring short answers, based on specific content in readings during the term (designed to reward your conscientiously reading all or most of what is assigned).

The **final grade** in the course will be based on the total of your points from all sources (ICQ papers, term paper, final exam, etc.). **A** range is 90% or better, **B** range is 80% to 90%, **C** range 70% to 80%, **D** range 60% to 70%, **Fs** are less than 60%. ‘+’ and ‘-’ are added to grades if they fall in the top 1/3 or bottom 1/3, respectively, of A, B, C, and D range.

Academic Integrity

The instructor takes academic integrity seriously. Insuring the "validity" of grades requires seeing that they reflect honest work and learning rather than cheating. **Cheating** is defined as providing or accepting information on an exam, plagiarism or copying anyone's written work. Students caught cheating will be given an "**F**" for the course, and UO's student conduct coordinator will be informed. The instructor retains the right to assign seats for tests, to change individual's seating for test security purposes, to require and check ID for admission to tests. "**Plagiarism**" is basically a form of theft: putting your name on work that is (in any part) not yours, where you have not fully identified the source from which you borrowed. Even taking someone else's ideas or paraphrasing their expression, without acknowledgment, is plagiarism. "Your responsibility, when you put your name on a piece of work, is simply to distinguish between what is yours and what is not, and to credit those who in any way have contributed" (quote is from Nancy Cotton of Wake Forest U.).

PSYCHOLOGY 410/510 SCHEDULE: What's Happening When

January 9 – Syllabus; introduction to political psychology, to the course, and to “personality and politics”

Readings: Cottam et al. chapters 1-2; Winter (2003); Feldman (2003, pp. 41-52)

January 16 – Personality and politics, emphasizing authoritarianism

ICQ: A, B, C, D

Readings: Buena de Mesquita & Smith (2011); Winters (2011); Dubreuil (2010)

January 23 – Political elites, dynamics of dictatorship, oligarchies; hierarchy in social evolution

ICQ: E, F, G, H

Readings: Renshon (2002); Meloan (2000); Fuchs (2007)

January 30 – Political cultures of authoritarianism and democracy

ICQ: I, J, K, L

Readings: Cottam et al. chapter 6; Markus & MacKuen (2004); Westen (2007)

February 6 – Candidate perception in democracies, mass media, psychology of voting

ICQ: M, N, O, P

Readings: Converse (1964); Conover & Feldman (1981); Saucier (in press)

February 13 – Ideology and public opinion

ICQ: Q, R, S, T

Readings: Cottam et al. chapter 3; Tajfel & Turner (1986); Jost & Banaji (1994)

February 20 – National images, group categorization, stereotyping

ICQ: A, E, I, M, Q

Readings: Cottam et al. chapter 7; Sears et al. (1997); Sidanius & Pratto (2004)

February 27 – Psychology of prejudice, race, ethnicity, diversity; social dominance theory

ICQ: B, F, J, N, R

Readings: Cottam et al. chapters 8 and 10; Stanton (2004); Saucier et al. (2009)

March 6 – Psychology of democide (genocide, state terror, etc.), extremism

ICQ: C, G, K, O, S

Readings: Cottam et al. chapters 9 and 11; Atran, Axelrod, & Davis (2007); Eckstein (1980)

March 13 – Psychology of nationalism, conflict, war, international security

ICQ: D, H, L, P, T

March 18 (Monday) – final exam at 10:15 am

** ICQ stands for “identifying crucial question” papers (assigned dates) due at class on given day

Readings on blackboard are from the following sources:

Atran, S., Axelrod, R., & Davis, R. (2007). Sacred barriers to conflict resolution. *Science*, 317, 1039-1040.

Buena de Mesquita, B., & Smith, A. (2011). *The dictator's handbook: Why bad behavior is almost always good politics*. New York: Public Affairs. (pages 1-20 only)

Conover, P., & Feldman, S. (1981). The origins and meaning of the liberal-conservative self-identification. *American Journal of Political Science*, 25, 617-645.

Converse, P. E. (2004). The nature of belief systems in mass publics. In J. T. Jost & J. Sidanius (Eds.), *Political psychology: Key readings* (pp. 181-199). New York: Psychology Press. (Originally published in 1964)

Dubreuil, B. (2010). *Human evolution and the origins of hierarchies: The state of nature*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press. (pp. 1-9 and 84-93 only)

Eckstein, H. (1980). Theoretical approaches to explaining collective political violence. In T. R. Gurr (Ed.), *Handbook of political conflict: Theory and research* (pp. 135-166). New York: Free Press.

Feldman, S. (2003). Enforcing social conformity: A theory of authoritarianism. *Political Psychology*, 24, 41-74.

Fuchs, D. (2007). The political culture paradigm. In R. J. Dalton & H.-D. Klingemann (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of political behavior* (pp. 161-184). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Jost, J. T., & Banaji, M. R. (1994). The role of stereotyping in system-justification and the production of false consciousness. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 33, 1-27.

Marcus, G. E., & MacKuen, M. G. (2004). Anxiety, enthusiasm, and the vote: The emotional underpinnings of learning and involvement during presidential campaigns. In J. T. Jost & J. Sidanius (Eds.), *Political psychology: Key readings* (pp. 163-176). New York: Psychology Press. (Originally published in 1993)

Meloan, J. D. (2000). The political culture of state authoritarianism. In S. A. Renshon & J. Duckitt (Eds.), *Political psychology: Cultural and cross-cultural foundations* (pp. 108-127). New York: New York University Press.

Renshon, S. A. (2002). Lost in plain sight: The cultural foundations of political psychology. In K. R. Monroe (Ed.), *Political psychology* (pp. 121-139). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Saucier, G. (in press). Isms dimensions: Toward a more comprehensive and integrative model of belief-system components. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Saucier, G., Akers, L. G., Shen-Miller, S., Stankov, L., & Knezevic, G. (2009). Patterns of thinking in militant extremism. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4, 256-271.

Sears, D. O., van Laar, C., Carrillo, M., & Kosterman, R. (1997). Is it really racism? The origins of white Americans' opposition to race-targeted policies. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 61, 16-53.

Sidanius, J. & Pratto, F. (2004). Social dominance theory: A new synthesis. In J. T. Jost & J. Sidanius (Eds.), *Political psychology: Key readings* (pp. 315-332). New York: Psychology Press. (Originally published 1999)

Stanton, G. H. (2004). Could the Rwandan genocide have been prevented? *Journal of Genocide Research*, 6, 211-228.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 7-24). Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

Westen, D. (2007). *The political brain: The role of emotion in deciding the fate of the nation*. New York: Public Affairs.

Winter, D. G. (2003). Personality and political behavior. In D. O. Sears, L. Huddy, & R. Jervis (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of political psychology* (pp. 110-145). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Winters, J. A. (2011). *Oligarchy*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press. (pages 1-39 only)