

PSC 407Z

Special Topic: Comparative Political Psychology

Dr. Austin Horng-En Wang

Spring 2019

W 4:00PM-6:45PM

Classroom: BEH 119

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Office: WRI – A210

Office Hour: W 9:00AM – 11:59 AM and by appointment

Office Phone Number: 702-895-3355

Teaching Assistant: Eter Mjavanadze, M. A., mjavanad@unlv.nevada.edu

Course Description and Learning Goals

As a rapid-growing subfield, political psychology aims at exploring and examining the linkage between motivation and political behavior. *Why* do people agree or disagree with some policies, and make choices in certain ways? *How* do we systematically and scientifically test these hypotheses, and apply what we learned into the real politics? Do the psychological mechanisms researchers found in the U.S. generalizable? From the presidential candidates' campaigning team to Uber and Facebook, political psychologists not only revealed the psychological mechanism behind what did people do (and did not do) but also tried to influence what people will do.

In this class, the semester is composed of three parts. First, we explore how the brain works – how the world outside becomes the picture in our head. Second, we discuss how the external and internal factors – the culture of a country and the gene of an individual – influence the way our brain functions. The interaction between our brain and the two factors then help us explain the politics across the countries – the pursuit of power, vote choice, polarization, fake news, populism, and racism. You will be exposed to the important theories in this field, and the cutting-edge research methods that are used to test those theories.

What you will learn in this class may challenge your belief, philosophy, assumptions of human nature, and the perceived foundations of the democracy. That is the reason I offer this class.

Required Textbooks

Introduction to Political Psychology, 3rd edition by Martha L. Cottam, Beth Dietz-Uhler, Elena Mastors, and Thomas Preston (Routledge, 2016). ISBN: 978-1848726727 (**CDM hereafter**)

Please make sure that you purchase the *third* edition of this textbook

Predisposed: Liberals, Conservatives, and the Biology of Political Differences by John R. Hibbing, Kevin B. Smith, John R. Alford (Routledge, 2013). ISBN: 978-0415535878 (**HSA hereafter**)

All other required readings can be found on WebCampus.

You will read a lot in this class – about 60 pages per week. You might not be able to understand all statistics or experimental design in the articles, and that is ok. But keep in mind: (1) What are the hypotheses? (2) Who are the participants? (3) What are the treatments? Do they make sense?

These three questions can help you go through most of the articles in the reading list. Since this class is a lecture, I will cover all of the readings and add many relevant researches in each week. All the relevant works will also be uploaded to WebCampus.

Grades and Exams

Your grade is based on the quality of your performance on 3 or 4 dimensions:

- **Challenge the Reading: 2% * 10 = 20%**

Before each lecture, you should submit either a question or a comment based on the readings of that week. Please submit the question/critic to the TA, Eter Mjavanadze, M. A., mjavanad@unlv.nevada.edu before 11:59 p.m. of the Tuesday before each lecture.

1% is for the question/comment

1% is for the reference – please indicate where (on what page) do you find the question/weakness.

You can get at most 20% in this section.

- **Midterm Exam, March 13, 2019: 40%**
An in-class, hour-long, open-book examination which you will succinctly demonstrate what you have learned. Yes, You can bring your textbooks and (printed) class notes as your references. However, all electronic sources (laptops, cell-phones, etc.) are strictly prohibited in this exam. The exam will include multiple-choice/true-or-false questions and short answers. The questions will be drawn from the lectures and required readings.
- **Final Exam, TBA, 2019: 40%**

An in-class, hour-long, open-book examination which you will succinctly demonstrate what you have learned. Yes, You can bring your textbooks and (printed) class notes as your references. However, all electronic sources (laptops, cell-phones, etc.) are strictly prohibited in this exam. The exam will include multiple-choice/true-or-false questions and short answers. The questions will be drawn from the lectures and required readings after the midterm exam.

- **“Optional” term paper, due May 15, 2019: 20%**

You may choose to write a term paper, in addition to meeting the obligations above. The paper must answer an analytical question and support an original argument with scholarly sources. It must not exceed 4,000 words, with word count put on the first page and about 10 to 20 references. If you choose this option, it reduced by 10 percent the weight of each examination. But the topic of your term paper must be approved by me before April 11, 2019, or it will not be counted.

Make-up exams will not be given except in the case of extreme circumstances. The student must be able to provide documentation that the absence is for a reason recognized by the university (e.g., illness, death in the family, observance of a religious holiday) and make arrangements with me **prior** to the scheduled exam date. If it is absolutely impossible to make prior arrangements with me, students must contact me as soon as possible about the situation. Students who represent UNLV at any official extracurricular activity shall also have the opportunity to make up assignments, but the student must provide an official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es). **Please notify me of any planned absences for religious holidays by Feb 1, 2019.**

Bonus Credits

Study group is essential for your college life and your grades. In this course, you can earn 1 extra credit for forming your study group. The ideal number of group member is 3-5. You need to submit the names of your group by the end of week 3.

Two study groups with the highest average grades in the midterm and final examine will get 1 more point for everyone in the group. Overall, you could get up to 3 points by forming your study group and cooperate with your members.

Grading policy:

The grade will be rounding to one decimal place. No additional rounding will be executed.

A = 93- A- = 90-92.9

B+ = 87-89.9 B = 83-86.9 B- = 80-82.9

C+ = 77-79.9 C = 73-76.9 C- = 70-72.9

D+ = 67-69.9 D = 63-66.9 D- = 60-62.9

F = Below 60

Subject to Change

I reserve the right to modify the course syllabus. Students will be responsible for knowing any changes made to the syllabus during class time whether they were in attendance or not.

Course Schedule and Required Reading

Week 1

1/23 Course overview
CDM Chp. 1

Week 2

1/30 **How the brain works: Cognition**
CDM Chp. 3
Cassino, D., Taber, C. S., & Lodge, M. (2007). Information processing and public opinion. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, 48(2), 205-220.
Take <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/> at least one time

Week 3

2/6 **How the brain works: Motivated-Reasoning**
Redlawsk, D. P. (2002). Hot cognition or cool consideration? Testing the effects of motivated reasoning on political decision making. *The Journal of Politics*, 64(4), 1021-1044.
Taber, C. S., & Lodge, M. (2006). Motivated skepticism in the evaluation of political beliefs. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(3), 755-769.

Week 4

2/13 **The External Factor: Haidt and the Moral Foundation**
Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2013). Moral foundations theory: The pragmatic validity of moral pluralism. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 47, pp. 55-130). Academic Press.

Week 5

2/20 **The External Factor: Inglehart and Schwartz**
Inglehart, R. 2007. "Postmaterialist Values and the Shift from Survival to Self-Expression Values" in Russell J. Dalton and Hans-Dieter Klingemann. Editors. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Schwartz, S. H., & Rubel-Lifschitz, T. (2009). Cross-national variation in the size of sex differences in values: Effects of gender equality. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 97(1), 171.

Week 6

2/27

The Internal Factor: Big-Five Personality

CDM Chp. 2

Gerber, A. S., Huber, G. A., Doherty, D., Dowling, C. M., & Ha, S. E. (2010). Personality and political attitudes: Relationships across issue domains and political contexts. *American Political Science Review*, 104(1), 111-133.

Please visit this website <https://www.psychologytoday.com/tests/personality/big-five-personality-test> “Big Five Personality Test” Take the test (about 25 minutes) before the class.

Week 7

3/6

No Class –

Read HAS Chp. 1

HAS Chp. 2

HAS Chp. 3 (A very good review of what we have learned)

Week 8

3/13

Midterm Exam

Week 9

3/20

No Class – Spring Break Recess

Week 10

3/27

The Internal Factor – Gene, Physiology, and Polarization

HAS Chp. 4

HAS Chp. 5

HAS Chp. 6

HAS Chp. 7

Week 11

4/3

The *Homo Economicus* Hypothesis

Kahneman, Daniel, and Amos Tversky. 1984. “Choices, Values, and Frames.” *Science*

Crandall, C. S., Eidelman, S., Skitka, L. J., & Morgan, G. S. (2009). Status Quo Framing increases Support for Torture. *Social Influence*, 4(1), 1-10.

Wang, A. H. E. (2017). Patience as the Rational Foundation of Sociotropic Voting. *Electoral Studies*, 50, 15-25.

Week 12

4/10

How to Rig an Election?

CDM Chp. 6

CDM Chp. 7

Vosoughi, S., Roy, D., & Aral, S. (2018). The spread of true and false news online. *Science*, 359(6380), 1146-1151.

Week 13

4/17

Nationalism, Populism, and where to find them

CDM Chp. 10

Aslanidis, P. (2016). Is populism an ideology? A refutation and a new perspective. *Political Studies*, 64(1_suppl), 88-104.

Rooduijn, M. (2018). What unites the voter bases of populist parties? Comparing the electorates of 15 populist parties. *European Political Science Review*, 10(3), 351-368.

Week 14

4/24

Power and Group Thinking

CDM Chp. 4

Keltner, Dacher, Deborah H. Gruenfeld, and Cameron Anderson. 2003. "Power, Approach, and Inhibition." *Psychological Review* 110 (2): 265-284.

Week 15

5/1

Racism in Comparative Perspectives

CDM Chp. 8

CDM Chp. 9

Week 16

5/8

Review Session

Week 17

TBA

Final Exam – TBA

Classroom Conduct

Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn or of instructors to teach. Actually, there are scientific evidence showing that using laptop in the classroom will influence yourself and classmates nearby you (shown below). If your laptop content indicates a lack of attentiveness to lecture or your laptop usage disturb others, I will ask you to leave. Undoubtedly, electronic devices may not be used during exams. Finally, show respect for the range of views in the reading materials and of fellow students.

Sana, F., Weston, T., & Cepeda, N. J. (2013). Laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and nearby peers. *Computers & Education*, 62, 24-31.

Hembrooke, H., & Gay, G. (2003). The laptop and the lecture: The effects of multitasking in learning environments. *Journal of computing in higher education*, 15(1), 46-64.

As a father of two kids, I understand the childcare policy and the unstable schedule parents always face. If there are circumstances that you must bring your little ones to the classroom, please let me know and we can figure out what to do. Breastfeeding is allowed in the classroom.

Rebelmail

By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV's official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students' e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu.

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution.

An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. I reserve the right to have students' materials submitted electronically and assessed by plagiarism detection software. Plagiarism of any form will result in a failing grade for the course, and I will file a case with the Office of Student Conduct. See the Student Academic Misconduct Policy (approved December 9, 2005) located at:

<https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>

If you find this paragraph, it means that you really read this syllabus, as is assigned in the first class. To prove that you read this syllabus, you should send an email to my Rebelmail account with your Full name as the subject before 8:00 am, Jan 25, 2019. After I replied to your mail as a confirmation, you will receive extra 2 points to your final grade at the end of this semester. Hooray.

Copyright

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://provost.unlv.edu/copyright/statements.html>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) determines accommodations that are "reasonable" in promoting the equal access of a student reporting a disability to the general UNLV learning experience. In so doing, the DRC also balances instructor and departmental interests in maintaining curricular standards so as to best achieve a fair evaluation standard amongst students being assisted. In order for the DRC to be effective it must be considered in the dialog between the faculty and the student who is requesting accommodations. For this reason faculty should only provide students course adjustment after having received an "Academic Accommodation Plan." If faculty members have any questions regarding the DRC, they should call a DRC counselor.

UNLV complies with the provisions set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The DRC is located in the Student Services Complex (SSC-A), Room 143, phone (702) 895-0866, fax (702) 895-0651. For additional information, please visit: <http://drc.unlv.edu/>.

Religious Holidays Policy

Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor no later than the end of the first two weeks of classes, **Feb 1, 2019**, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. This policy shall not apply in the event that administering the test or examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the university which could have been avoided. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=164>.

Tutoring and Coaching

The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TBE second floor.

UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>