

Political Science 150 | Introduction to Biology, Psychology, and Politics

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Fall Semester 2021 | Section 001

MWF 10:30-11:20am | Oldfather Hall (OLDH) 308

Instructor:	Dr. Ingrid Haas (Dr. Haas or Professor Haas; she/her)
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Website:	http://polisci.unl.edu/ingrid-haas
Student office hours:	MW 1-2pm / TR 1-3pm on Zoom (schedule an appointment at https://calendly.com/ingridjhaas/pols-150-office-hours)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS**Course Description**

This course provides an introduction to the central theories, methods, and findings in the application of psychological and biological techniques to politics. New approaches to political science have incorporated ideas about human behavior from a variety of other fields, including (but not limited to) psychology, biology, and neuroscience. The goal of this work is to improve our understanding of how people think about politics, make political decisions, and the extent to which they engage in a variety of political behaviors (e.g., voting, protest). To understand these questions, political scientists and psychologists have drawn on research in a variety of domains, including the study of emotion, personality, and group processes, just to name a few. This course will provide an overview of the interdisciplinary study of politics at the intersection of these fields, focusing on how a basic understanding of human psychology, biology, and neuroscience can inform our thinking about politics.

This is the first course in the Biology, Psychology, and Politics area in the Department of Political Science. It is designed to introduce you to a wide array of research topics at the intersection of psychology, biology, neuroscience, and political science. If you enjoy this class and want to learn more about the intersection of biology, psychology, and politics, you might consider taking the other courses in the sequence (POLS 250, 350, 450).

Course Format and COVID Guidelines

This course is scheduled to meet in person and **face coverings are required in the classroom** (see Face Covering Policy in Course Policies). Students should *not* attend in person classes if sick/symptomatic or advised to quarantine/isolate due to COVID exposure or positive test (see Attendance Policy in Course Policies).

You are encouraged to take advantage of (free) COVID testing opportunities on campus through the Safer Community app (<https://covid19.unl.edu/saliva-testing>), consider joining the Voluntary COVID-19 Vaccine Registry (<https://covid19.unl.edu/voluntary-covid-19-vaccine-registry>), and explore opportunities for vaccination (<https://covid19.unl.edu/vaccination-information>). All positive tests should be reported to the university for contact tracing (see <https://covid19.unl.edu/positive-test-reporting>). You should follow UNL recommended guidelines for quarantine if exposed to COVID (<https://covid19.unl.edu/quarantine-information>) and/or isolation if you test positive (<https://covid19.unl.edu/isolation-guide-students>).

Class meetings will be a mix of lecture and class discussion, and we will utilize the Yellowdig discussion platform to engage with each other about the course material outside of class meetings. All

assignments and exams will be completed or submitted through Canvas and can be completed remotely. In general, the class will follow a weekly format such that I'll send announcements on Mondays, lectures will be on Monday/Wednesday, weekly assignments due Wednesday night, class discussion on Fridays, and discussion posts due by Friday night. Given the unique circumstances surrounding the pandemic you should feel free to reach out to me if you are having trouble sticking to the weekly schedule. In addition to class meetings, I plan to be available through Canvas, email, and virtual student office hours (see above for details), and will be present in Yellowdig Discussions on a regular basis (you can also @ me on Yellowdig if you want to make sure I see a post or respond to your question). Any changes to course format due to changing COVID guidelines, illness, childcare (or lack thereof), etc., will be announced in class and through Canvas.

Course Goals

In successfully completing this course, students will:

1. Gain an understanding of how interdisciplinary research is conducted in the social sciences.
2. Understand situational influences on human behavior and implications for political behavior.
3. Understand human psychology, biology, and neuroscience and implications for political behavior.
4. Analyze important problems in political behavior through the lens of human psychology.

ACE Program Requirements

By passing this course, you will fulfill ACE Learning Outcome 6: "Use knowledge, theories, methods, and historical perspectives appropriate to the social sciences to understand and evaluate human behavior." Through this course, you will have several opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve the ACE Learning Outcome(s). Your work will be evaluated by the instructor according to the assessments described in this course syllabus. Your work will be collected through Canvas for ACE assessment.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Textbook

Houghton, D. P. (2015). *Political Psychology: Situations, Individuals, and Cases* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Electronic textbooks (e-textbooks) for the course will be made available through the UNL Library Course Reserves when possible.

In addition to the textbook, you are encouraged to read the politics section of at least one major national newspaper (e.g., *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*) on a daily basis. Many major newspapers offer student discounts (search for "academic rate" or "student rate").

Additional readings will be available on Canvas.

Technical Requirements

UNL email account (@huskers.unl.edu)
 Canvas (recommended browsers are Firefox or Google Chrome)
 Yellowdig Engage (available through Canvas)
 VidGrid (<https://its.unl.edu/services/unl-academic-video/>)

Zoom (<http://unl.zoom.us>)
 Word processor (e.g., Microsoft Word, Pages)
 PDF reader (e.g., Adobe, Preview)
 Personal computer (desktop or laptop)
 High-speed Internet connection (recommended)
 Webcam (recommended)

For more information on technology resources available to UNL students, check out UNL IT resources: <https://its.unl.edu/>. You can also contact them at support@nebraska.edu with problems/questions regarding any UNL-supported software (this includes UNL email, Canvas, Yellowdig, VidGrid, Zoom).

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Assessments

Exams (40%). Exams in this course will consist primarily of multiple choice questions, but will also include some short answer and essay questions. Exams will cover material from the readings, lectures, and discussions, and each exam will cover only that section of the course. Exams will be completed remotely through Canvas and will not be proctored (no webcam or special software required). Each exam will be available for a limited period of time and will be timed such that you will need to complete the exam in one session. Exams are open-book/open-notes, so you can use your own course materials, but must be completed individually. There will be three exams available this semester, but only two exam grades will be counted toward the final grade. This means you can safely miss an exam (e.g., take Exams 1 and 2 and skip Exam 3) or complete all three exams and drop the lowest grade.

Weekly Reflection Papers (20%). This assignment will be completed throughout the semester. Each entry should be 1-2 typed pages (double-spaced) and will focus on relating a course concept to a real-world political example or current event in American politics. These should be submitted on Canvas on a weekly basis, but there will be more opportunities to submit (15) than required submissions (10), meaning that it is fine to miss 5 weeks and still get full credit for this assignment. For each reflection paper, you should submit (1) a 1-2 page Word document or PDF file to the instructor through Canvas Assignments, and (2) a shorter, 1-paragraph summary of your paper on Yellowdig Discussions to share with your classmates. More detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas.

Final Research Paper (20%). The final research paper assignment will require you to use what you learn this semester about interdisciplinary research in biology, psychology, and politics and apply this information to the current political climate. More detailed instructions will be available on Canvas. The final product will be a paper that is approximately 3-5 double-spaced pages. Final papers will be due before Wednesday, December 8, 11:59pm CST, and should be submitted through Canvas.

Yellowdig Discussions (20%). Yellowdig is an online conversation platform for POLS 150. You receive points for participating in Yellowdig conversations, and the points you receive in Yellowdig factor into your final grade. Each week, you can earn up to 1250 points. To get an "A" in Yellowdig, you must have at least 14000 points by the end of the course. If you reach the weekly max by the end of each week, you are guaranteed to get an "A" in Yellowdig. The grading period for Yellowdig will begin on **Monday, August 23, 2021**, and end on **Friday, December 3, 2021**. Your Yellowdig grade is worth 20% of your final grade.

You receive points for interacting and engaging with your peers in the following ways:
 Writing a Post of at least 40 words (250 points)

- Writing a Comment of at least 20 words (200 points)
- Receiving a Comment on your Post (75 points)
- Receiving a Reaction on your Post or Comment (50 points)

You are encouraged to reward your peers for producing excellent content by commenting on and reacting to their Posts. To earn as many points as possible, you are strongly encouraged to contribute to our Yellowdig Community early and often. Just keep in mind that, once you reach the weekly max, you cannot earn additional points until the weekly reset deadline (**9:00pm on Friday**).

Yellowdig passes back your Yellowdig grade to Canvas as a *proportion* that represents your current *pace* toward getting an "A" in Yellowdig. Therefore, the points you see in Yellowdig might not match the points you see in Canvas. If any of this confuses you, just remember: *if you end every week with a Yellowdig grade of 100%, you are guaranteed to get an "A" in Yellowdig.*

Grades

Final grades for this course will be calculated based on a possible 500 points and using the distribution and percentages below. I don't round up or assign extra points at the end of the semester, so it is your responsibility to earn your desired grade. If you have any questions or concerns about your grade, you should always feel free to talk to me--the earlier in the semester the better! Final grades will be curved up for everyone in the class *only* if the overall class average is below a B- (< 80%). I will use Canvas throughout the semester to post grades so that you can keep track of your progress, and you can also calculate your grade using the point distribution below. Incompletes will be given only under extreme circumstances, and at the sole discretion of the instructor.

Exams	200 (2 * 100 points each)
Weekly Reflection Papers	100 (10 * 10 points each)
Final Paper	100
Yellowdig Discussions	100

Total	500

- A+ = 97-100%
- A = 93-96.9%
- 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 = < 59.9%

COURSE POLICIES

Face Covering Policy (approved 08.17.2021)

An individual in this course has a documented need for face coverings to be required in this course. Without divulging personal or identifying information, such a documented need might be that a member of their household is unable to be vaccinated or has a health condition that makes vaccines less effective for them. As a result, the College of Arts and Sciences has determined that *face coverings will be required in this course*. If you are unwilling to comply with this requirement, please visit with your advisor about different sections or possible alternative courses that you might take in lieu of this one.

Attendance and Engagement

Students are expected to attend all classes and engage with the course on a regular basis. Absences will be excused for illness, injury, hospitalization, military orders, university-sponsored activities, religious observation, and/or personal tragedy. Students should notify the instructor in advance of the absence (when possible), and students are responsible for material and content covered in the missed class(es).

Students who are sick or who are engaging in self-quarantine in accordance with guidance from the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department or their health care professional should not physically attend in-person classes. They must notify the instructor of their absence and must still meet the stated engagement expectations of the course, and they must adhere to the usual codes of conduct and rules of academic integrity that remain in place.

You are encouraged to take advantage of (free) COVID testing opportunities on campus through the Safer Community app (<https://covid19.unl.edu/saliva-testing>), consider joining the Voluntary COVID-19 Vaccine Registry (<https://covid19.unl.edu/voluntary-covid-19-vaccine-registry>), and explore opportunities for vaccination (<https://covid19.unl.edu/vaccination-information>). All positive tests should be reported to the university for contact tracing (see <https://covid19.unl.edu/positive-test-reporting>). You should follow UNL recommended guidelines for quarantine if exposed to COVID (<https://covid19.unl.edu/quarantine-information>) and/or isolation if you test positive (<https://covid19.unl.edu/isolation-guide-students>).

Deadlines and Completion of Coursework

Regular engagement in the course is expected. In general, I do not accept late assignments or give make-up exams without a valid excuse. Should you miss any exam or assignment without approval from me, you will receive a zero grade for that exercise. That said, an exception may be granted to a student who contacts the instructor prior to the assignment due date or exam dates to request an extension. If you foresee being unable to turn in a paper or take an exam on the assigned dates, please contact me through Canvas or email and I will work with you. I realize these are complicated times and students may be dealing with additional constraints on their time and resources, in addition to health concerns, so I would just encourage you to reach out to me if you find you are having trouble keeping up with the course for whatever reason. Your health and safety (and that of the surrounding community) should be the top priority in the midst of a pandemic.

Communication

I will communicate with students through Canvas, so please make sure that you check Canvas on a regular basis and set up your Canvas notifications to receive emails about any course announcements

or updates. You should plan to use your official @huskers.unl.edu email address for class. In general, I will plan to send weekly announcements on Monday mornings, so as not to flood your inbox with updates. But, you should feel free to contact me anytime with questions. The best way to contact me is by sending a message through Canvas, or email me directly with “POLS 150” in the subject line. I will do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours Monday-Friday. You are also welcome to stop by my virtual Student Office Hours on Zoom (make an appointment at <https://calendly.com/ingridjhaas/pols-150-office-hours>) or email me with your availability to meet if my regular meeting times (MW 1-2pm / TR 1-3pm) don't work for you. I will also be present on Yellowdig Discussions, but may not read every single message that gets posted, so feel free to @ me if you want to draw my attention to a specific post or have a question you'd like me to answer.

Plagiarism-Checking Software

Writing assignments in this course will be submitted online through Canvas and run through plagiarism-checking software (Turnitin). This software compares your work against previous papers and Internet sources to detect text copied from other authors. Further information about Turnitin can be found at <https://its.unl.edu/services/turnitin/> or www.turnitin.com.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Face Covering Policy (updated 08.25.2021)

<https://covid19.unl.edu/face-covering-policy>

In compliance with Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department's Directed Health Measures (https://covid19.unl.edu/docs/LLCHD_DHM_current.pdf), all University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) faculty, staff, students, and visitors (including contractors, service providers, and others) are required to use a facial covering at all times when indoors on the UNL campuses, with the following exceptions:

- In office settings when 6 feet of separation from others can be maintained at all times.
- When seated to eat or drink, or while immediately consuming food or beverages.
- When alone in a room or not in the same workspace of any other individual.
- When giving a speech, lecture or broadcast to an audience so long as six (6) feet of distancing from other individuals is maintained and only while said speech, lecture or broadcast is being delivered.
- When an alternative is necessary as indicated by a medical professional during patient care.
- When actively participating in a supervised group exercise class, showering, using the swimming pool or using a piece of cardio equipment in a campus recreation facility.
- When exercising and not at rest.
- When in one's assigned apartment or residence hall room.
- When the task requires the use of a NIOSH-approved respirator.
- When pertaining to children under the age of 2 years.
- Cannot wear a face covering because of a medical condition, a mental health condition, or a disability that prevents the wearing of a face covering.

This policy shall remain in effect until further guidance is provided from the Office of the Chancellor.

Recording of Class-Related Activity

I invite all of you to join me in actively creating and contributing to a positive, productive, and respectful classroom culture. Each student contributes to an environment that shapes the learning process. Any

work and/or communication that you are privy to as a member of this course should be treated as the intellectual property of the speaker/creator, and is not to be shared outside the context of this course.

Students may not make or distribute screen captures, audio/video recordings of, or livestream, any class-related activity, including lectures and presentations, without express prior written consent from me or an approved accommodation from Services for Students with Disabilities. If you have (or think you may have) a disability such that you need to record or tape class-related activities, you should contact Services for Students with Disabilities. If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Failure to follow this policy on recording or distributing class-related activities may subject you to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct.

Academic Honesty Policy

Academic honesty is essential to the existence and integrity of an academic institution. The responsibility for maintaining that integrity is shared by all members of the academic community. The University's Student Code of Conduct (<https://studentconduct.unl.edu/student-code-conduct>) addresses academic dishonesty. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action and are granted due process and the right to appeal any decision.

Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation.

Trespass Policy (Regents' Policy 6.4.7)

The areas of University academic, research, public service, and administrative buildings of the University used for classrooms, laboratories, faculty and staff offices, and the areas of University student residence buildings used for student living quarters are not open to the general public. Any person not authorized to be or remain in any such building area will be deemed to be trespassing on University property and may be cited and subject to prosecution for criminal trespass in violation of Neb. Rev. Stat., § 28-520 or § 28-521.

SUPPORT SERVICES

COVID-Related Accommodations and Academic Flexibility Requests

Please visit <https://studentaffairs.unl.edu/covid-19-academic-flexibility-requests> for current information on COVID-related accommodations available to students.

Students can also request masks be required in classes via an alternate mechanism described in the Chancellor's email dated 08.18.2021 (see <https://www.unl.edu/chancellor/campus-covid-19-updates>). In this case, you can contact the course instructor directly to request they submit the approval form to the college. (Note: This has already been approved for this section of POLS 150, but this policy is course specific.)

Services for Students with Disabilities (<https://www.unl.edu/ssd/home>)

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options privately. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). If you are eligible for services and register with their office, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so they can be implemented in a timely manner. SSD contact information: 117 Louise Pound Hall; 402-472-3787.

Writing Center (<https://www.unl.edu/writing/home>)

The Writing Center can provide you with meaningful support as you write for this class as well as every course in which you enroll. Trained undergraduate and graduate peer consultants are available to talk with you about all forms of communication. You are welcome to bring in everything from lab reports, presentations, and research papers to cover letters, application essays, and graduate theses and dissertations. Writing Center Consultants can work with you at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming and organizing your ideas through polishing a final draft.

In 2021-22, there are three ways you can connect with a Consultant: Online (a real-time, video conversation), eTutoring (email feedback), and in person. To learn more about online options and view video tutorials, visit <https://www.unl.edu/writing/online-writing-center-services>. For information about the Writing Center's COVID-19 policies, visit <https://www.unl.edu/writing/covid-19-policies>.

Sign up for an appointment any time by visiting unl.mywconline.com. For other information about the Writing Center, please visit unl.edu/writing.

Academic Support Services

You can schedule free appointments for individual academic coaching with First-Year Experience and Transition Program staff through MyPLAN. You can also take advantage of study stops--which provide individual and group study with learning consultants in a variety of disciplines--and free group workshops on topics such as time management, goal setting, test preparation, and reading strategies. See success.unl.edu for schedules and more information.

Counseling and Psychological Services

UNL offers a variety of options to students to aid them in dealing with stress and adversity. Counseling and Psychological & Services (CAPS; <https://caps.unl.edu>) is a multidisciplinary team of psychologists and counselors that works collaboratively with Nebraska students to help them explore their feelings and thoughts and learn helpful ways to improve their mental, psychological and emotional well-being when issues arise. CAPS can be reached by calling 402-472-7450. Big Red Resilience & Well-Being (BRRWB; <https://resilience.unl.edu/home>) provides one-on-one well-being coaching to any student who wants to enhance their well-being. Trained well-being coaches help students create and be grateful for positive experiences, practice resilience and self-compassion, and find support as they need it. BRRWB can be reached by calling 402-472-8770.

POLS 150 | (TENTATIVE) COURSE SCHEDULE

Topics, readings, and assessments are listed below on the course schedule. All due dates are in Central Standard Time (CST). In general, readings should be completed prior to class meetings. Please note that this schedule represents a tentative plan and is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Any changes will be announced in class and through Canvas and reflected in updates to the Syllabus and Course Schedule.

Note: All reading assignments for lecture come from the Houghton *Political Psychology* textbook unless otherwise noted. Any additional readings will be posted on Canvas.

WEEK	DATES	TOPIC	READING	ASSESSMENTS
1	8/23-8/27	Syllabus and Course Introduction Introduction to and History of Political Psychology	Syllabus and Course Schedule H Ch. 1-2 McGuire (1993)	Student Information Survey Introduce Yourself on Yellowdig (due W 8/25 11:59pm) Reflection Paper 1 (due W 8/25 11:59pm)
2	8/30-9/3	Research Methods in Political Psychology	Marcus (2012) Ch. 2	Reflection Paper 2 (due W 9/1 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 9/3 9pm)
SECTION 1: THE SITUATION				
3	9/6-9/10	Behaviorism and Free Will NO CLASS 9/6 (Labor Day) or 9/10	H Ch. 3 Cave (2016)	Reflection Paper 3 (due W 9/8 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 9/10 9pm)
4	9/13-9/17	Conformity, Compliance, and Obedience	H Ch. 4 Kelman & Hamilton (1989) Ch. 1,2,8,9	Reflection Paper 4 (due W 9/15 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 9/17 9pm)
5	9/20-9/24	The Power of the Situation NO CLASS 9/24 (Exam 1)	H Ch. 5 Zimbardo (2007) Ch. 10,14 Watch Documentary: Ghosts of Abu Ghraib	Reflection Paper 5 (due W 9/22 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 9/24 9pm) Exam 1 (available on 9/23-9/24)
SECTION 2: THE PERSON				
6	9/27-10/1	Personality and Political Ideology	H Ch. 7-8 Haidt (2012) Ch. 1,5,7	Reflection Paper 6 (due W 9/29 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 10/1 9pm)
7	10/4-10/8	Political Cognition	H Ch. 9 Taber & Young (2013)	Reflection Paper 7 (due W 10/6 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 10/8 9pm)

WEEK	DATES	TOPIC	READING	ASSESSMENTS
8	10/11-10/15	Attitudes and Emotion	Katz (1960) H Ch. 10 Westen (2007) Ch. 1-3	Reflection Paper 8 (due W 10/13 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 10/15 9pm)
9	10/18-10/22	Biopolitics NO CLASS 10/18 (Semester Break)	H Ch. 11 pp. 162-165, 175-184 Hibbing et al. (2014) Ch. 5,7	Reflection Paper 9 (due W 10/20 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 10/22 9pm)
10	10/25-10/29	Political Neuroscience NO CLASS 10/29 (Exam 2)	Ch. 11 pp. 165-175, 184-185 Haas (2016)	Reflection Paper 10 (due W 10/27 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 10/29 9pm) Exam 2 (available on 10/28-10/29)
SECTION 3: UNDERSTANDING POLITICS AS PEOPLE IN SITUATIONS				
11	11/1-11/5	Voting Behavior	H Ch. 12 Nickerson & Rogers (2010)	Reflection Paper 11 (due W 11/3 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 11/5 9pm)
12	11/8-11/12	Identity, Nationalism, and Conflict	H Ch. 14 Tajfel & Turner (1986)	Reflection Paper 12 (due W 11/10 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 11/12 9pm)
13	11/15-11/19	Race, Prejudice, & Political Tolerance	H Ch. 15 Sidanius & Pratto (1999) Ch. 2	Reflection Paper 13 (due W 11/17 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 11/19 9pm)
14	11/22-11/26	Political Communication NO CLASS 11/24-11/26 (Thanksgiving)	H Ch. 13	Reflection Paper 14 (due W 11/24 11:59pm) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 11/26 9pm)
15	11/29-12/3	Terrorism and International Security NO CLASS 12/3 (Exam 3)	H Ch. 16-17 Crenshaw (1986)	Reflection Paper 15 (due W 12/1 11:59pm) Exam 3 (available on 12/2-12/3) Yellowdig Discussions (due F 12/3 9pm)
16	12/6-12/10			Final Research Paper (due W 12/8 11:59pm)

References

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