Political Science 850 | Core Seminar in Psychology, Biology, and Politics
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Spring Semester 2022
Wednesdays 2:00-4:50pm | Oldfather Hall 538

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor:</th>
<th>Dr. Ingrid Haas (Dr. Haas or Professor Haas; she/her)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ihaas2@unl.edu">ihaas2@unl.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website:</td>
<td><a href="http://polisci.unl.edu/ingrid-haas">http://polisci.unl.edu/ingrid-haas</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student office hours:</td>
<td>Tuesday/Thursday 2-4pm on Zoom/phone (schedule an appointment at <a href="https://calendly.com/ingridjhaas/pols-850-office-hours">https://calendly.com/ingridjhaas/pols-850-office-hours</a>)</td>
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

Course Description

This graduate-level core seminar course will examine classic and contemporary research on political behavior from an interdisciplinary perspective, drawing primarily on literatures in political psychology, biopolitics, and political neuroscience. We will consider the implications of human psychology, biology, genetics, physiology, neuroscience, and evolution for understanding political attitudes, beliefs, ideology, identity, and behavior. We’ll focus on understanding individual political decision making, as well as how political behavior is influenced by social identity and broader social context.

Course Format

The format of the course will be weekly discussion sessions of assigned readings with occasional short introductory lectures. Readings are assigned for each class meeting, and are to be read prior to the class with which they are associated. All readings will be made available on Canvas at least one week prior to class. Course requirements are intended to facilitate discussion and integration of the reading material. This includes weekly reaction papers (due the Monday before class) and peer reviews of reaction papers (due Tuesday).

This course is scheduled to meet in person. 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). 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). Any changes to course format due to changing COVID guidelines, illness, childcare (or lack thereof), etc., will be announced through Canvas.

You are encouraged to take advantage of (free) COVID testing opportunities on campus through the Safer Community app (https://covid19.unl.edu/about-our-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).
REQUIRED MATERIALS

Textbook


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

Additional readings will be available on Canvas.

Technical Requirements

UNL email account (@huskers.unl.edu)
Canvas (recommended browsers are Firefox or Google Chrome)
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, Zoom).

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Assessments

**Weekly Reaction Papers and Peer Review (~36%).** Weekly reaction papers will be due before 11:59pm CST on the Monday preceding each class session. These papers should be ~2 pages (double spaced), focus on that week’s readings, and be submitted through Canvas Discussions (so they are visible to your classmates). Reaction papers should include at least two questions for class discussion. These questions should not be superficial, but genuinely thoughtful and intriguing questions about ideas, methods, results, or implications of the theory and/or empirical findings presented in the readings. Students will also complete peer reviews of 2 reaction papers each week, due the Tuesday before class. These peer reviews can be brief (1-2 paragraphs) and should comment on anything you found interesting in the response, as well as suggestions for improvement. There are 9 opportunities to submit reaction papers and 8 will be graded, so it’s fine to miss 1 submission (or submit all 9 and Canvas will drop the lowest score).

**Attendance and Participation (~18%).** Each student will be expected to attend weekly class meetings and participate in discussion of the readings. Excused absences (see attendance policy) will not have any negative impact on your course grade.
**Final Presentation (9%).** At the end of the semester (weeks 14 and 15), students will give final presentations focused on the contents of their final research papers. These presentations will be ~15-20 minutes in length, using visual aids (e.g., PowerPoint), and delivered during our class meetings during those weeks.

**Final Research Paper (~36%).** A final research paper will be due on Tuesday, May 10, before 11:59pm CST and must be submitted electronically through Canvas. The paper will be a review of some specific topic or research issue, grounded in and directly tied to (at least) one of the topics and associated references in the supplemental bibliography for this course. Following a conceptual review of previous research on the selected topic, the paper should present a proposal for future research addressing some specific research question and hypothesis arising from the literature review (specifying the research question and purpose of the study, followed by research design and general method). The final paper must be unique to this course (e.g., you cannot re-use a paper submitted in a previous course, either at UNL or a different institution). During week 13 (4/13), each student should meet with the course instructor to present and discuss their proposed paper topic. The papers should be approximately 12-15 pages in length (excluding references) and should be 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins, in APA format. Additional guidelines for the paper will be available on Canvas.

**Grades**

Final grades for this course will be calculated based on a possible 550 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekly Reaction Papers</th>
<th>200</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Research Paper</td>
<td>200</td>
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Total 550

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%

updated 2022-03-22
COURSE POLICIES

Instructional Continuity

If in-person classes are canceled, you will be notified of the instructional continuity plan for this class through Canvas.

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/about-our-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 without a valid excuse. Should you miss any 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 to request an extension. If you foresee being unable to turn in a paper 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 850” 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 Student Office Hours on Zoom/phone (make an appointment at https://calendly.com/ingridjhaas/pols-850-office-hours) or email me with your availability to meet if my regular meeting times (TR 2-4pm) don’t work for you.

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 AND RESOURCES

All students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln should be aware of the following university-wide course policies and resources (see https://go.unl.edu/coursepolicies):

- Attendance Policy
- Academic Honesty Policy
- Services for Students with Disabilities
- Mental Health and Well-Being Resources
- Final Exam Schedule (15th Week Policy)
- Emergency Procedures (On Campus)
- Diversity & Inclusiveness
- Title IX Policy

Academic Flexibility for COVID-19

Students who have medical documentation of a health risk that cannot be mitigated through vaccination should submit a COVID-19 Academic Flexibility Request. Those with a disability and/or chronic health condition that makes them high risk for the virus should seek support via Services for Students with Disabilities. International students should contact the International Student and Scholar Office to discuss their options.

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](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](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](http://unl.edu/writing).

**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.

**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.
POLS 850: Core Seminar in Psychology, Biology, and Politics  
(Tentative) Course Schedule and Reading List

Overview
Week 1 (1/19): Course Introduction
Week 2 (1/26): Political Cognition and Decision Making
Week 3 (2/2): Political Attitudes
Week 4 (2/9): Emotion and Politics

Week 5 (2/16): NO CLASS (SPSP Conference)
Week 6 (2/23): Political Ideology and Individual Differences
Week 7 (3/2): Political Identity and Social Influence
Week 8 (3/9): Prejudice, Discrimination, and Intergroup Conflict

Week 9 (3/16): NO CLASS (Spring Break)
Week 10 (3/23): International Relations
Week 11 (3/30): Evolution, Genetics, and Biopolitics
Week 12 (4/6): Political Neuroscience
Week 13 (4/13): Research Proposal Consultations (no class meeting)
Week 14 (4/20): Research Presentations
Week 15 (4/27): Research Presentations

Week 16 (5/4): NO CLASS (SANS Conference)
Final Papers due: Tuesday, May 10, 11:59pm CST


Week 1 (1/19): Course Introduction

Introduction to Political Psychology

OHPP Ch. 1: Theoretical Foundations of Political Psychology (Huddy, Sears, & Levy)


Background Reading in Experimental Design


Optional, but recommended:


**Week 2 (1/26): Political Cognition and Decision Making**

OHPP Ch. 5: Behavioral Decision Making (Redlawsk & Lau)

OHPP Ch. 17: Political Information Processing (Taber & Young)


**Week 3 (2/2): Political Attitudes**


**Week 4 (2/9): Emotion and Politics**

OHPP Ch. 6: Emotion and Political Psychology (Brader & Marcus)


**Week 5 (2/16): NO CLASS (SPSP Conference)**

**Week 6 (2/23): Political Ideology and Individual Differences**

**Political Ideology**

OHPP Ch. 19: Political Ideology (Feldman)


**Individual Differences**

OHPP Ch. 2: Personality Approaches to Political Behavior (Caprara & Vecchione)


**(Optional) Additional Reading:**


updated 2022-03-22


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**Week 7 (3/2): Political Identity and Social Influence**

**Political Identity**

OHPP Ch. 23: From Group Identity to Political Cohesion and Commitment (Huddy)


**Social Influence**

OHPP Ch. 21: Networks, Interdependence, and Social Influence in Politics (Huckfeldt et al.)


Week 8 (3/9): Prejudice, Discrimination, and Intergroup Conflict

OHPP Ch. 25: Prejudice and Politics (Kinder)

OHPP Ch. 27: Discrimination: Conditions, Consequences, and “Cures” (Al Ramiah & Hewstone)

OHPP Ch. 28: The Psychology of Intractable Conflicts: Eruption, Escalation, and Peacemaking (Bar-Tal & Halperin)


(Optional) Additional Reading:


Week 9 (3/16): NO CLASS (Spring Break)

Week 10 (3/23): International Relations

OHPP Ch. 10: Psychology and Foreign Policy Decision-Making (Levy)

OHPP Ch. 11: Perceptions and Image Theory in International Relations (Herrmann)
OHPP Ch. 16: Conflict Analysis and Resolution (Fhser, Kelman, & Nan)


(Optional) Additional Reading:
OHPP Ch. 12: Threat Perception in International Relations (Stein)
OHPP Ch. 14: Personality Profiles of Political Elites (Winter)

updated 2022-03-22
Week 11 (3/30): Evolution, Genetics, and Biopolitics

Evolution

OHPP Ch. 7: Toward an Evolutionarily Informed Political Psychology (Sidanius & Kurzban)


Genetics

OHPP Ch. 8: Genetic Foundations of Political Behavior


Biopolitics


(Optional) Additional Reading:


updated 2022-03-22


**Week 12 (4/6): Political Neuroscience**


(Optional) Additional Reading:


**Week 13 (4/13): Research Proposal Consultations (no class meeting)**

Sign up for an appointment during class time (2-5pm) on 4/13 via Calendly: [https://calendly.com/ingridjhaas/pols-850-office-hours](https://calendly.com/ingridjhaas/pols-850-office-hours)

**Week 14 (4/20): Research Presentations**

**Week 15 (4/27): Research Presentations**

**Week 16 (5/4): NO CLASS (SANS Conference)**

**Final Papers due: Tuesday, May 10, 11:59pm CST**

updated 2022-03-22