

POLS 5040-02 Special Topics: Decision-Making in Politics

Spring 2026

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Fatih Erol

Class Hours: MWF 11:30 AM – 12:20 PM

Class Location: Administration Building, Room 227

Office Hours: Mondays 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Office Location: 334 Administration Building

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Course Description

This graduate seminar examines the psychological foundations of political decision-making at both elite and mass levels. We explore how cognitive processes, emotions, personality traits, biological factors, and social identities shape political attitudes, judgment, and behavior. The course covers core topics including ideology, authoritarianism, social dominance, group identity, information processing, motivated reasoning, emotions, morality, polarization, and the psychology of foreign policy and conflict. Students will engage critically with cutting-edge research in political psychology while developing advanced research skills to design, analyze, and report empirical studies examining political phenomena through a psychological lens. Emphasis is placed on producing publication-quality research that adheres to standards of replicability, transparency, and methodological rigor.

Course Objectives

This course provides graduate students with advanced theoretical understanding and professional research skills in political psychology. Through seminars, discussions, and intensive hands-on research assignments, students will develop competencies in understanding how psychological factors shape political decision-making at elite and mass levels, critically evaluating and synthesizing political psychology research, designing and executing rigorous empirical research projects, conducting statistical analyses with attention to robustness and replicability, and communicating research findings through professional academic writing suitable for publication.

Expected Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- synthesize and critically evaluate theoretical perspectives on political cognition, emotion, and decision-making,
- develop sophisticated, original research questions that advance political psychology scholarship,
- design rigorous empirical research using both observational and experimental approaches,
- operationalize theoretical concepts into measurable variables with attention to validity and reliability,
- conduct statistical analyses using R with emphasis on replicability and transparency,
- interpret regression models and experimental results with appropriate caution and nuance,
- design experimental interventions that test causal hypotheses,
- communicate research findings through professional academic writing that meets publication standards,
- produce transparent, replicable research documentation including code, data, and analysis scripts, and
- engage constructively with peer feedback to improve research quality.

Grading

Your final grade will be determined by in-class participation and a multi-stage research paper. There are a total of 100 points possible over the course of the semester.

- In-Class Attendance and Participation: **10** points
- Draft 1 (Introduction, Research Question, and Literature Review): **15** points
- Draft 2 (Theory, Hypotheses, and Operationalization): **15** points
- Draft 3 (Data Analysis and Experimental Design): **15** points
- Draft 4 (Complete Research Paper): **45** points

Total Possible Points: 100

The grading scale is as follows:

- A 90–100
- B 80–89.9
- C 70–79.9
- D 60–69.9
- F Below 60

Required Materials

All required readings are available on a Dropbox folder (click [here](#)). There is no required textbook to purchase. Graduate students are expected to complete both the core readings and additional graduate-level readings each week.

Software: Students will use [R](#) and [RStudio](#) for statistical analysis. Both are free and open-source. While I will provide guidance and sample code for getting descriptive statistics, regression modeling, and reporting outputs, students are expected to be concurrently enrolled in or have completed coursework in research design and quantitative methods.

Course Policies

Weekly Readings

Graduate students are expected to complete all assigned readings (including graduate-level supplementary readings) before class and come prepared to discuss them in depth.

Attendance and Participation

The classes rely on active discussion and intellectual exchange. Attendance and substantive participation are essential. You are allowed to have 3 absences without penalty. After 3 absences, each additional meeting missed will result in a 2-point deduction from your participation grade. If you miss 6 or more classes, you will automatically fail the course.

Substantive participation means:

- Contributing thoughtful questions and comments during discussion
- Engaging constructively with peers' ideas
- Connecting readings across weeks and topics
- Bringing outside examples or recent research to enrich discussion

Late Submission Policy for Written Assignments

For Drafts 1–4, late submissions will be penalized at 2 points per day. After day 5, the assignment automatically receives a score of 0.

Exceptions will be made only for medically documented, officially signed excuses. Please reach out to me with the documentation **first** before the deadline; do not submit late work and then provide documentation afterward.

Classroom Courtesy

Professional conduct is expected at all times. This includes punctuality, minimizing distractions, and engaging respectfully with diverse viewpoints. Personal attacks or dismissive language will not be tolerated.

Classroom Learning Civility

We will be discussing sensitive political topics in this course. I expect all students to engage respectfully with diverse viewpoints. Disagreement is encouraged and welcome, but it must be expressed in a manner that is constructive and respectful of others.

Recording Rules and Disclaimer

Students are not allowed to take any kind of recording (audio or audiovisual) of the classroom without explicit written permission from the instructor.

Safety and Well-being

Safety on Campus and in the Classroom:

We will strive to create a learning environment where you feel safe to engage, share opinions, and take intellectual risks. If you ever feel unsafe in our classroom, please let me know immediately. Your well-being is a priority.

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, please contact the University Counseling & Testing Center at 208-885-6716, or the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline for 24/7 support. For physical safety emergencies on campus, contact the University of Idaho Police Department at 208-885-7054.

Academic Honesty

All students are expected to uphold the University of Idaho's [Student Code of Conduct](#). Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and other infractions outlined in the Student Code will not be tolerated.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as "borrowing or using someone else's written statements or ideas without giving written acknowledgement to the author". Graduate students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All sources must be properly cited using APA 7th edition style.

Intentional plagiarism includes knowingly using someone else's work as your own, purchasing papers, or copying from other students. This will result in an automatic F for the course and a report to the Dean of Students and the Graduate School.

Accidental plagiarism occurs when students fail to properly cite sources or inadequately paraphrase source material. Even unintentional plagiarism is a serious academic violation at the graduate level and will result in significant grade penalties.

AI Policy

Using generative AI models (e.g., ChatGPT) to complete assignments is considered academic dishonesty and will be treated as plagiarism. AI-detection tools will be used to screen submissions.

However, AI tools may be used for legitimate purposes such as brainstorming, debugging code, or checking grammar, provided you maintain **complete transparency**. If you use AI in any capacity, you must:

- Include a screenshot of the entire prompt and response
- Clearly describe how you used the AI output
- Verify all factual claims with credible sources

When unsure, ask for permission in advance. Other faculty may have different policies, so always check with each instructor.

Written Assignments: Multi-Stage Research Paper

The major assignment for this course is a publication-quality research paper developed across four drafts. This paper must meet professional standards for empirical political science research, with particular emphasis on:

- **Replicability:** All data, code, and analysis materials must be documented transparently
- **Robustness:** Findings must be subjected to appropriate robustness checks
- **Proper citation:** In-text citations and bibliography are essential for replicability and giving credit to prior work
- **Methodological rigor:** Research design must be carefully justified and executed
- **Experimental thinking:** Even observational analyses should be complemented by experimental designs that could test causal claims

All written assignments must be formatted in APA 7th edition style, 12-point font, single-spaced. Use citation management software such as [Zotero](#) or equivalent. For APA 7th edition guidelines, consult [the official APA Style website](#).

Important Note on Feedback: I will provide detailed, personalized feedback on Drafts 1–3. You are expected to implement **all** suggested revisions in subsequent drafts. Failure to address feedback will result in significant point deductions.

Suggestion: For examples of observational and experimental research designs, you can also check out my 2024 Electoral Studies paper (observational) and my working paper with Florian (experimental) in the class Dropbox folder under “Research Paper Examples.”

Draft 1: Introduction, Research Question, and Literature Review (15 points)

Due: Sunday, February 1, 2026 at 11:59 PM

Length: Approximately 1,000 words (roughly 3–4 pages)

Components:

- **Introduction (approximately 400 words):**
 - Hook that motivates the reader to care about your topic
 - Clear statement of your research question
 - Explanation of why this question matters theoretically and/or substantively
 - Identification of a gap in existing scholarship or an unresolved puzzle
 - Preview of your argument and main contribution
- **Literature Review (approximately 600 words):**
 - Concise synthesis of recent, relevant research (focus on work from the past 10 years, with selective inclusion of foundational earlier work)
 - Organization around theoretical themes or debates, **not** a chronological list
 - Clear identification of what we know, what we don’t know, and what remains contested
 - Explicit statement of how your research will advance or challenge existing knowledge
 - Proper in-text citations in APA 7th edition format

Evaluation Criteria:

- Clarity and specificity of research question
- Theoretical and substantive motivation
- Quality of literature synthesis (not just summary)
- Identification of meaningful gap or contribution
- Writing quality and APA formatting
- Proper citation practices

Draft 2: Theory, Hypotheses, and Operationalization (15 points)

Due: Sunday, March 8, 2026 at 11:59 PM

Length: Approximately 1,000 words (roughly 3–4 pages), **in addition to revised Draft 1**

Components:

- **Theoretical Framework (approximately 700 words):**
 - Clear articulation of your theoretical argument
 - Specification of causal mechanism(s) linking your independent variable(s) to your dependent variable
 - Justification for why your theory is plausible and distinct from alternatives
 - Discussion of scope conditions (when/where your theory should apply)
- **Hypotheses (approximately 300 words):**
 - 1–2 clearly stated, falsifiable hypotheses derived logically from your theory
 - Precise specification of expected relationships (direction, magnitude if possible)
 - Brief justification for each hypothesis

Evaluation Criteria:

- Logical coherence of theoretical argument
- Clear specification of causal mechanism
- Testability and precision of hypotheses
- Validity and reliability of proposed measures
- Incorporation of feedback from Draft 1
- Writing quality and APA formatting

Draft 3: Data Analysis and Experimental Design (15 points)

Due: Sunday, April 5, 2026 at 11:59 PM

Length: Approximately 1,500–2,000 words (roughly 5–7 pages), **in addition to revised Drafts 1–2**

This draft has two main components: an observational analysis demonstrating covariation between your IV and DV, and a proposed experimental design to test causality.

Part A: Observational Analysis (approximately 800–1,000 words)

Components:

- **Data Source:**

- Identify an existing dataset containing your variables:
 - * [American National Election Studies \(ANES\)](#)
 - * [General Social Survey \(GSS\)](#)
 - * [Cooperative Election Study \(CCES\)](#)
 - * Other appropriate data
- Justify why this dataset is appropriate for your research question
- Describe the sample (N , year(s), population)

- **Variable Construction:**

- Explain how your IV, DV, and key controls are operationalized in the data
- Provide exact question wording and response scales
- Describe any recoding or transformation you performed
- Justify inclusion of specific control variables

- **Descriptive Statistics:**

- Present a well-formatted table of summary statistics (mean, SD, min, max, N for each variable)
- Use professional table formatting (see examples in top journals, i.e., [American Journal of Political Science](#), [American Political Science Review](#), [Journal of Politics](#))

- **Regression Analysis:**

- Conduct multivariate regression analysis (OLS, logistic, or ordered logit or some others as appropriate)
- Present results in a professional regression table or coefficient plot
- Interpret substantive significance of key coefficients (not just statistical significance)
- Discuss whether findings provide initial support for your hypothesis
- Acknowledge limitations of observational inference

- **Purpose of This Analysis:**

- This observational analysis serves to establish that there is covariation between your IV and DV in real-world data
- Results will inform statistical power calculations for your proposed experiment and so effect sizes from this analysis help determine necessary sample size for experimental detection

Part B: Experimental Design (approximately 700–1,000 words)

Components:

- **Experimental Design Overview:**

- Design a simple 2-arm or multi-arm between-subjects experiment
- Clearly state your experimental hypothesis
- Explain why an experiment is necessary to test causality

- **Manipulation:**

- Describe your treatment condition(s) in detail
- Explain your control condition
- Provide exact wording of experimental stimulus/stimuli
- Justify why your manipulation should affect the IV as intended
- Discuss potential manipulation checks

- **Measurement:**

- Describe how you will measure your DV in the experiment
- Specify exact survey items (including response scales)
- Explain any secondary outcomes you would measure

- **Procedure:**

- Walk through the experimental protocol step-by-step
- Random assignment procedure
- Instructions to participants
- Timing and order of measures
- Debriefing

- **Sample and Power:**

- Proposed sample size and recruitment method (e.g., Prolific, MTurk, student sample)
- Statistical power analysis: based on effect sizes from your observational analysis, what N is needed to detect a meaningful effect with 80% power?
- Discussion of external validity considerations

- The end result will substantially be the backbone of a Open Science Framework (OSF) Preregistration

Technical Requirements:

- All analyses must be conducted in *R*
- Submit your *R* script (.R or .Rmd file) along with your paper
- Code must be well-commented and reproducible
- I will provide template code and guidance for:

- Loading and cleaning data
- Generating descriptive statistics
- Running and reporting regression models
- Creating publication-quality tables
- You are expected to adapt these templates to your specific analysis

Evaluation Criteria:

- Appropriateness of data source and variables
- Quality and interpretation of descriptive statistics
- Correct specification and interpretation of regression models
- Clarity and detail of experimental design
- Feasibility and rigor of proposed experiment
- Attention to statistical power and sample size
- Quality of *R* code (readability, reproducibility)
- Integration of observational and experimental approaches
- Incorporation of feedback from Drafts 1–2
- Writing quality and APA formatting

Draft 4: Complete Research Paper (45 points)

Due: Sunday, May 11, 2026 at 11:59 PM

Length: 4,000-5,000 words (approximately 15–20 pages with standard formatting), **excluding references, tables, and figures**

This is your final, publication-quality research draft paper. It should synthesize and refine all previous components, fully incorporate instructor feedback, and meet professional standards for empirical political science research.

Complete Paper Structure:

1. **Introduction (approximately 400 words)**
 - Polished version incorporating all feedback from Draft 1
 - Clear research question and motivation
 - Preview of argument and findings
2. **Literature Review (approximately 600 words)**

- Concise, thematic synthesis of relevant scholarship
 - Clear identification of gap or contribution
 - Refined based on Draft 1 feedback
- 3. Theory and Hypotheses (approximately 1000 words)**
- Theoretical framework and causal mechanism
 - Clear, testable hypotheses
 - Refined based on Draft 2 feedback
- 4. Data and Methods (approximately 800 words)**
- Description of observational data source
 - Variable operationalization
 - Analytical approach (regression specifications)
 - Justification of modeling choices
- 5. Results (approximately 600 words)**
- Presentation of descriptive statistics
 - Regression results with proper interpretation
 - Discussion of substantive vs. statistical significance
 - Robustness checks (if applicable)
 - Professional tables and figures
- 6. Experimental Design (approximately 600 words)**
- Detailed experimental protocol
 - Justification for experimental approach
 - Power analysis and sample size calculation
 - Expected findings and implications
 - Refined based on Draft 3 feedback
- 7. Discussion and Conclusion (approximately 900 words)**
- Interpretation of observational findings in light of theoretical expectations
 - Critical assessment of how proposed experimental design would strengthen causal inference beyond observational analysis
 - Theoretical implications: what your findings reveal about the psychological mechanisms underlying political behavior
 - Contribution to existing literature: how your research advances, challenges, or refines current understanding
 - Limitations and alternative explanations: acknowledgment of potential confounds, measurement issues, and rival hypotheses

- Boundary conditions: when, where, and for whom your findings should (and should not) generalize
- Broader implications for political psychology and democratic politics
- Concrete directions for future research that build on your findings

8. References

- Complete bibliography in APA 7th edition format
- All in-text citations must appear in references and vice versa
- Properly formatted (hanging indent, correct capitalization, etc.)

9. Tables and Figures

- Professional formatting following APA or journal standards
- Clear, informative titles and notes
- Readable font sizes and appropriate rounding

10. Online Appendix (optional)

- If needed, include supplementary materials in a separate document
- Additional robustness checks, extended literature review, full survey instruments, etc.

Replication Materials (REQUIRED):

You must submit a complete replication package alongside your paper:

- **Data file:** The dataset used in your analysis (or clear instructions for obtaining it if publicly available)
- **Codebook:** Documentation of all variables used
- **R script:** Complete, well-commented code that reproduces all analyses, tables, and figures
- **README file:** Brief guide explaining how to reproduce your results

Your *R* script should:

- Run from start to finish without errors
- Be clearly organized with section headers
- Include comments explaining each analytical step
- Generate the exact tables and figures in your paper
- Follow good coding practices (clear variable names, proper indentation)

Critical Expectations:

- **Implementation of All Feedback:** You must address every piece of feedback provided on Drafts 1–3. Failure to do so will result in substantial point deductions. If you disagree with a suggestion, you must explain your reasoning in a cover memo.
- **Replicability:** An independent researcher should be able to reproduce your exact results using your replication materials. This is not optional.
- **Citation Integrity:** Every factual claim, theoretical idea, or empirical finding drawn from prior work must be properly cited. This includes in-text citations and a complete, correctly formatted bibliography.
- **Robustness:** While you don't need to conduct extensive robustness checks, you should acknowledge alternative specifications and discuss how they might affect your conclusions.
- **Substantive Interpretation:** Don't just report statistical significance. Explain what your findings mean in substantive, real-world terms.
- **Causal Humility:** Be appropriately cautious about causal claims from observational data. Explain how your proposed experiment would address these limitations.
- **Professional Quality:** This paper should be indistinguishable in quality from work submitted to academic journals. Aim for publication-ready standards.

Evaluation Criteria (45 points total):

- Research question and motivation (4 points)
- Literature review quality and synthesis (4 points)
- Theoretical framework and hypotheses (4 points)
- Data and operationalization (4 points)
- Analytical approach and execution (4 points)
- Results presentation and interpretation (4 points)
- Experimental design quality (5 points)
- Discussion and implications (3 points)
- Implementation of all prior feedback (3 points)
- Replication materials (code, documentation) (4 points)
- Writing quality, clarity, and APA formatting (3 points)
- Citation integrity and bibliography (3 points)

Course Structure

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Note: Graduate students must complete all core readings plus the additional graduate-level readings listed each week.

Week 1: No Class (SPSA Conference)

January 14 & 16, 2026: No Class (SPSA Conference)

Week 2: Introduction, History and Objectivity

January 19, 2026: No Class (Martin Luther King Jr. / Human Rights Day)

January 21, 2026: Introduction to the Class, Going Over the Syllabus

January 23, 2026: History and Objectivity

- Jost, J. T., & Sidanius, J. (2004). Political psychology: An introduction. In J. T. Jost & J. Sidanius (Eds.), *Political psychology: Key readings* (pp. 1–3). Psychology Press/Taylor & Francis.
- Huddy, L., Sears, D. O., Levy, J. S., & Jerit, J. (2023). Introduction: Theoretical foundations of political psychology. In *The Oxford handbook of political psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 1–17). Oxford University Press.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Brady, H. E. (2011). Causation and explanation in social science. In J. M. Box-Steffensmeier, H. E. Brady, & D. Collier (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of political methodology* (pp. 217–266). Oxford University Press.

Week 3: Structure of Political Ideology, Personality and Motivation

January 26 & 28, 2026: Structure of Political Ideology

- Jost, J. T., Federico, C. M., & Napier, J. L. (2009). Political ideology: Its structure, functions, and elective affinities. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60, 307–337. **Only pages 307–315** (the sections on structure).

January 30, 2026: Personality and Motivation

- Carney, D. R., Jost, J. T., Gosling, S. D., & Potter, J. (2008). The secret lives of liberals and conservatives: Personality profiles, interaction styles, and the things they leave behind. *Political Psychology*, 29, 807–840.
- Nai, A., & Maier, J. (2021). Can anyone be objective about Donald Trump? Assessing the personality of political figures. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion, and Parties*, 31(3), 283–308.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Kteily, N. S., & Brandt, M. J. (2025). Ideology: Psychological similarities and differences across the ideological spectrum reexamined. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 76(1), 501–529.

Week 4: Determinants of Political Ideology, Populism

DRAFT 1 DUE Sunday, February 1, 2026 at 11:59 PM

February 2, 2026: Determinants of Political Ideology

- Feldman, S., & Johnston, C. (2014). Understanding the determinants of political ideology: Implications of structural complexity. *Political Psychology*, 35, 337–358.

February 4 & 6, 2026: Populism

- Kefford, G., Moffitt, B., & Werner, A. (2022). Populist attitudes: Bringing together ideational and communicative approaches. *Political Studies*, 70(4), 1131–1152.
- Katsambekis, G. (2022). Constructing ‘the people’ of populism: A critique of the ideational approach from a discursive perspective. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 27(1), 53–74.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Hawkins, K. A., Carlin, R. E., Littvay, L., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (Eds.). (2019). *The ideational approach to populism: Concept, theory, and analysis* (pp. 1–24). Routledge.
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Week 5: Biology and Political Psychology, Neuropolitics

February 9 & 11, 2026: Biology and Political Psychology

- Ksiazkiewicz, A., & Jung, S. (2020). The biology of political decision making. In D. Redlawsk (Ed.), *The handbook of political decision making*. Oxford University Press.

February 13, 2026: Neuropolitics

- Zmigrod, L. (2021). A neurocognitive model of ideological thinking. *Politics and the Life Sciences*, 40(2), 224–238.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Petersen, M. B. (2023). The evolutionary approach to political psychology. In *The Oxford handbook of political psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 248–279). Oxford University Press.
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Week 6: Authoritarianism, Social Dominance Orientation

February 16, 2026: No Class (Presidents' Day)

February 18, 2026: Authoritarianism

- Duckitt, J., Bizumic, B., Krauss, S. W., & Heled, E. (2010). A tripartite approach to right-wing authoritarianism: The authoritarianism-conservatism-traditionalism model. *Political Psychology*, 31(5), 685–715.

February 20, 2026: Social Dominance Orientation

- 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). Psychology Press.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Osborne, D., Costello, T. H., Duckitt, J., & Sibley, C. G. (2023). The psychological causes and societal consequences of authoritarianism. *Nature Reviews Psychology*, 2(4), 220–232.
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Week 7: Social Identity and Group Connection, Political Violence

February 23 & 25, 2026: Social Identity and Group Connection

- Mason, L. (2023). Political identities. In *The Oxford handbook of political psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 886–917). Oxford University Press.

February 27, 2026: Political Violence

- Khalil, J. (2014). Radical beliefs and violent actions are not synonymous: How to place the key disjuncture between attitudes and behaviors at the heart of our research into political violence. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 37, 198–211.
- Armaly, M. T., & Enders, A. M. (2024). Who supports political violence? *Perspectives on Politics*, 22(2), 427–444.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Gervais, B. T., Dye, C., Acevedo, G., Ellison, C. G., & Kelley, M. S. (2025). Do authoritarians support political violence? *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 1–7.
-

Week 8: Information Processing and Decision-Making, Heuristics and Motivated Reasoning

March 2 & 4, 2026: Information Processing and Decision-Making

- Lau, R. R., & Redlawsk, D. P. (2023). Introduction: Preferences, inferences, judgements, and decisions. In *The Oxford handbook of political psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 150–190). Oxford University Press.

March 6, 2026: Heuristics and Motivated Reasoning

- Celniker, J. B., & Ditto, P. H. (2024). Of preferences and priors: Motivated reasoning in partisans' evaluations of scientific evidence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 127(5), 986–1011.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Ditto, P. H., Celniker, J. B., Siddiqi, S. S., Güngör, M., & Relihan, D. P. (2025). Partisan bias in political judgment. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 76.
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Week 9: Conspiratorial Thinking, Political Misinformation

DRAFT 2 DUE Sunday, March 8, 2026 at 11:59 PM

March 9 & 11, 2026: Conspiratorial Thinking

- Douglas, K. M., Uscinski, J. E., Sutton, R. M., Cichocka, A., Nefes, T., Ang, C. S., & Deravi, F. (2019). Understanding conspiracy theories. *Political Psychology*, 40, 3–35.
- Miller, J. M., Saunders, K. L., & Farhart, C. E. (2016). Conspiracy endorsement as motivated reasoning: The moderating roles of political knowledge and trust. *American Journal of Political Science*, 60(4), 824–844.

March 13, 2026: Political Misinformation

- Pantazi, M., Hale, S., & Klein, O. (2021). Social and cognitive aspects of the vulnerability to political misinformation. *Political Psychology*, 42, 267–304.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Ecker, U. K., Lewandowsky, S., Cook, J., Schmid, P., Fazio, L. K., Brashier, N., ... & Amazeen, M. A. (2022). The psychological drivers of misinformation belief and its resistance to correction. *Nature Reviews Psychology*, 1(1), 13–29.
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Week 10: No Class (Spring Recess)

Week 11: Emotions, Dual Process Models

March 23 & 25, 2026: Emotions

- Gadarian, S. K., & Brader, T. (2023). Emotions and political psychology. In *The Oxford handbook of political psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 191–247). Oxford University Press.

March 27, 2026: Dual Process Models

- Gawronski, B., Galdi, S., & Arcuri, L. (2015). What can political psychology learn from implicit measures? Empirical evidence and new directions. *Political Psychology*, 36, 1–17.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Brandt, M. J., & Bakker, B. N. (2022). The complicated but solvable threat-politics relationship. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 26(5), 368–370.
 - Osmundsen, M., Hendry, D. J., Laustsen, L., Smith, K. B., & Petersen, M. B. (2022). The psychophysiology of political ideology: Replications, reanalyses, and recommendations. *The Journal of Politics*, 84(1), 50–66.
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Week 12: Morality, Value Systems

March 30 & April 1, 2026: Morality

- Ben-Nun Bloom, P. (2023). Morality as the enduring basis of public opinion. In *The Oxford handbook of political psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 649–693). Oxford University Press.

April 3, 2026: Value Systems

- Jung, J. H., & Clifford, S. (2025). Varieties of values: Moral values are uniquely divisive. *American Political Science Review*, 119(1), 462–478.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- 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.
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Week 13: Polarization, Depolarization

DRAFT 3 DUE Sunday, April 5, 2026 at 11:59 PM

April 6 & 8, 2026: Polarization

- Jost, J. T., Baldassarri, D. S., & Druckman, J. N. (2022). Cognitive-motivational mechanisms of political polarization in social-communicative contexts. *Nature Reviews Psychology*, 1(10), 560–576.
- Iyengar, S., Lelkes, Y., Levendusky, M., Malhotra, N., & Westwood, S. J. (2019). The origins and consequences of affective polarization in the United States. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 22(1), 129–146.

April 10, 2026: Depolarization

- Holliday, D. E., Lelkes, Y., & Westwood, S. J. (2025). Why depolarization is hard: Evaluating attempts to decrease partisan animosity in America. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 122(39), e2508827122.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Settle, J. E. (2025). The promise and peril of interpersonal political communication. *Political Psychology*, 46, 167–212.

Week 14: Political Psychology of Foreign Policy Decision-Making, Group Decision-Making

April 13 & 15, 2026: Political Psychology of Foreign Policy Decision-Making

- Levy, J. S. (2023). Foreign policy decision-making. In *The Oxford handbook of political psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 349–391). Oxford University Press.

April 17, 2026: Group Decision-Making

- Jost, T., Kertzer, J. D., Min, E., & Schub, R. (2024). Advisers and aggregation in foreign policy decision making. *International Organization*, 78(1), 1–37.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Kertzer, J. D., & Tingley, D. (2018). Political psychology in international relations: Beyond the paradigms. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 21(1), 319–339.

Week 15: Political Psychology of Public Opinion on Foreign Policy

April 20, 2026: Political Psychology of Public Opinion on Foreign Policy

- Kertzer, J. D. (2023). Public opinion about foreign policy. In *The Oxford handbook of political psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 447–485). Oxford University Press.

April 22 & 24, 2026: No Class (MPSA Conference)

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Carnegie, A., Kertzer, J. D., & Yarhi-Milo, K. (2023). Democratic peace and covert military force: An experimental test. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 67(2–3), 235–265.
 - Kertzer, J. D., Brutger, R., & Quek, K. (2024). Perspective-taking and security dilemma thinking: Experimental evidence from China and the United States. *World Politics*, 76(2), 334–378.
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Week 16: Conflicts, Leadership Formidability

April 27 & 29, 2026: Conflicts

- McDermott, R. (2025). An evolutionary perspective on the current wars. *Politics and the Life Sciences*, 44(2), 280–294.
- Cikara, M. (2015). Intergroup schadenfreude: Motivating participation in collective violence. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 3, 12–17.

May 1, 2026: Leadership Formidability

- Murray, G. R., & Schmitz, J. D. (2011). Caveman politics: Evolutionary leadership preferences and physical stature. *Social Science Quarterly*, 92(5), 1215–1235.

Graduate Students Additional Reading:

- Littman, R., & Paluck, E. L. (2015). The cycle of violence: Understanding individual participation in collective violence. *Political Psychology*, 36, 79–99.
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Week 17: Wrap-Up

May 4, 2026: Wrap-Up

May 6 & 8, 2026: No Classes

Week 18: Final Exams Week

May 11, 13, & 15, 2026: No Class (Finals Week)

DRAFT 4 DUE Sunday, May 11, 2026 at 11:59 PM