

# Political Science 821: Mass Political Behavior

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University of Wisconsin  
Spring Semester 2020  
Tuesdays 3:30-5:25pm  
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Office hours: Wednesdays 9:30-11:00am (drop-in) and by appointment

This graduate seminar provides a scholarly examination of mass political behavior in the United States, with an emphasis on political participation, elections, and voting behavior. The goal is to survey what the best and most visible scholarship in the field has to say about why the American electorate behaves as it does. The purpose is to provide a foundation for students to conduct original research on mass political behavior. To define our inquiry, the syllabus mostly excludes students that are focused squarely on public opinion, political communication, political parties, and political psychology because those topics are addressed in other courses. The readings emphasize topics that are of interest to researchers today, so the material, drawn from both books and journal articles, tends to be contemporary rather than classic. The course is designed for Ph.D. students in political science and draws mainly on the scholarly literature, so other students should confirm that the course will be useful to them.

## Responsibilities

I expect that students will do all of the required reading and come to class prepared to discuss it in a thoughtful fashion. *Required* readings are posted on the course web site; *recommended* readings are provided for students who wish to explore topics further. The number of pages required each week is kept at manageable level for this reason. Careful reading and participation in class discussion are the keys to making the class productive for everyone involved.

You might not immediately understand everything in the readings. In particular, the methodologies and other technical material deployed in the readings will be difficult to grasp if you have not yet taken courses in research design and advanced statistics. That is fine. I ask that you give it a serious try and then bring your insights as well as your questions to class.

One half of the course grade is based on reaction papers and class participation. The other half of the grade is based on the final paper.

Each student will write four critical reaction papers during the semester for class meetings of your choosing. You do not need to inform me in advance of the weeks you will be writing. For each of the four weeks that you select, papers should be uploaded to the course web site on Canvas by **5pm on Monday**. The papers should offer a thoughtful response to the readings and may highlight their underappreciated contributions, oversights, alternative interpretations, and unanswered questions. They should touch on *all* of the week's readings on their terms, but may identify one theme,

shortcoming, or question to address as a way to connect them. Detached discussions and essays that are mostly personal opinion are not as helpful as meatier analyses that wrestle with the arguments and evidence in the readings. Each paper should be no longer than three double-spaced pages. You should be prepared to discuss the materials covered in each class, whether or not you wrote a reaction paper for that session.

Each student will write a longer paper to be submitted at the end the semester. The paper should take one of two forms. One form is a focused literature review and research design of 15-20 pages. The other form is an original empirical paper that actually reports research and will run longer than 20 pages. In most cases these papers will rely on secondary data such as the ANES, CCES, aggregate election results, or replication datasets. Replicating and extending an existing study using publicly available data is acceptable and can be a valuable way to learn about the research process and stimulate new ideas. Be aware of the IRB requirements that will require you to start earlier if you decide to collect original data. If you are a Ph.D. student in Political Science in at least the second year of the program, I strongly recommend writing an original research paper. With my permission you may co-author the research paper (but not the literature review and research design) with a fellow student.

Be thinking about the paper from the beginning of the semester. You might want to read ahead on the syllabus if you intend to write on a topic that is addressed later in the semester. Please feel free to be in touch with me to get feedback your ideas and advice on related readings and useful resources. In most cases we should discuss your paper idea in person or by email in the first half of the semester. A prospectus for the paper of about two pages double-spaced should be uploaded to the course web site by **Friday, April 10**. The **final paper** is due in **hard copy** by **Friday, May 8** (pending an agreement between the Registrar and the College on grading deadlines).

## Readings

Most of the course readings are from journal articles. They will be posted on the course web site. Two books are required:

Achen and Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists* (Princeton University Press)

Verba, Schlozman, and Brady. 1995. *Voice and Equality* (Harvard University Press)

The books are on reserve at the library but should be purchased if possible. You might also decide to purchase other books even if the assigned chapters are posted online. Please bring required readings to class meetings as we will be referring to them during our discussion.

## Other Considerations

Your success in this class is important to me. All students are strongly encouraged to visit office hours if only to introduce yourself and let me know how the course is working for you.

If you have a disability or circumstance that could affect your performance, please contact me early in the semester so that we can consider accommodations. The McBurney Center for Disability Services can provide official documentation of disabilities.

If you must miss class due to illness or another valid conflict, please contact me in advance.

I reserve the right to modify the syllabus timeline or specific readings as needed.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. This includes using someone else's words or ideas without proper attribution. I will report any cases of academic dishonesty to the appropriate dean's office.

Please only use electronic devices in class for referencing course materials, taking notes, and occasionally tracking down online items that are necessary for our discussions. Everything else should be quieted and stowed away for later use.

## **January 21: Introduction**

## **January 28: Voting as a Unique Form of Participation**

### Required

1. Verba, Scholzman, and Brady. *Voice and Equality*. (chapters 2, 3, 7-14, & 16)
2. Claggett, William, and Philip H. Pollock III. 2006. "The Modes of Participation Revisited." *PRQ* 59:593-600.

### Recommended

1. Burden, Barry C., et al. 2017. "How Different Forms of Health Matter to Political Participation." *JOP* 79:166-178.
2. Heaney, Michael T., and Fabio Rojas. 2015. *Party in the Street*. Cambridge University Press.
3. Lee, Taeku. 2002. *Mobilizing Public Opinion*. University of Chicago Press.
4. Magleby, David B., Jay Goodliffe, and Joseph Olsen. 2018. *Who Donates in Campaigns? The Importance of Message*. Cambridge University Press.
5. Mondak, Jeffrey J., et al. 2010. "Personality and Civic Engagement: An Integrative Framework for the Study of Trait Effects on Political Behavior." *APSR* 104:85-110.
6. Oser, Jennifer, Marc Hooghe, and Sofie Marien. 2013. "Is Online Participation Distinct from Offline Participation? A Latent Class Analysis of Participation Types and Their Stratification." *PRQ* 66:91-101.
7. Putnam, Robert D. 2000. *Bowling Alone*. Simon and Schuster.

## **February 4: Voter Turnout**

### Required

1. Beck, Paul A. and Eric D. Heidemann. 2014. "Changing Strategies in Grassroots Canvassing 1956-2012." *Party Politics* 20:261-74.
2. Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and Christopher W. Larimer. 2008. "Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment." *APSR* 102:33-48.
3. Plutzer, Eric. 2002. "Becoming a Habitual Voter: Inertia, Resources, and Growth in Young Adulthood." *APSR* 96:41-56.
4. Fowler, James H., Laura A. Baker, and Christopher T. Dawes. 2008. "Genetic Variation in Political Participation." *APSR* 102:233-48.

### Recommended

1. Aldrich, John H. 1993. "Rational Choice and Turnout." *AJPS* 37:246-78.
2. Anzia, Sarah F. 2014. *Timing and Turnout*. University of Chicago Press.
3. Campbell, David E. 2006. *Why We Vote*. Princeton University Press.
4. Green, Donald P., and Alan S. Gerber. 2015. *Get Out the Vote* (3rd ed.). Brookings Institution Press.
5. Gruszczynski, Michael W., et al. 2013. "The Physiology of Political Participation." *Political Behavior* 35:135-52.
6. Leighley, Jan E., and Jonathan Nagler. 2014. *Who Votes Now?* Princeton University Press.
7. Rosenstone, Steven, and John Mark Hansen. 1993. *Mobilization and Participation in America*. MacMillan.
8. Stoker, Laura, and M. Kent Jennings. 1995. "Life-Cycle Transitions and Political Participation: The Case of Marriage." *APSR* 89:421-33.

### **February 11: Emotion in Political Participation**

#### Required

1. Brader, Ted. 2005. "Striking a Responsive Chord: How Political Ads Motivate and Persuade Voters by Appealing to Emotions." *AJPS* 49:388-405.
2. Healy, Andrew J., Neil Malhotra, and Cecilia Hyunjung Mo. 2010. "Irrelevant Events Affects Voters' Evaluations of Government Performance." *PNAS* 107:12804-9.
3. Marcus, George E., and Michael B. MacKuen. 1993. "Anxiety, Enthusiasm, and the Vote: The Emotional Underpinnings of Learning and Involvement During Presidential Campaigns." *APSR* 87:672-85.
4. Valentino, Nicholas A., et al. 2011. "Election Night's Alright for Fighting: The Role of Emotions in Political Participation." *JOP* 73:156-70.

#### Recommended

1. Goren, Paul. 1997. "Gut-Level Emotions and the Presidential Vote." *APR* 25:203-29.
2. Marcus, George E., W. Russell Neuman, and Michael B. MacKuen. 2000. *Affective Intelligence and Political Judgment*. University of Chicago Press.
3. Merolla, Jennifer L., and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister. 2009. *Democracy at Risk*. University of Chicago Press.
4. Smith, Kevin B., et al. 2011. "Disgust Sensitivity and the Neurophysiology of Left-Right Political Orientations." *PLoS One* 6.

### **February 18: The Basic Vote Choice**

#### Required

1. Achen and Bartels. *Democracy for Realists*. (chapter 2)
2. Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Harper and Row. (chapters 3, 7, & 8)
3. Petrocik, John R. 1996. "Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a 1980 Case Study." *AJPS* 40:825-50.
4. Zingher, Joshua N. 2014. "An Analysis of the Changing Social Bases of America's Political Parties, 1952-2008." *Electoral Studies* 35:272-82.

### Recommended

1. Campbell, Angus. 1960. *The American Voter*. Wiley.
2. Fiorina, Morris. 1981. *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections* Yale University Press.
3. Lewis-Beck, Michael S., et al. 2008. *The American Voter Revisited*. University of Michigan Press.

## **February 25: Party Identification**

### Required

1. Achen and Bartels. *Democracy for Realists*. (chapters 9-11)
2. Bafumi, Joseph, and Robert Y. Shapiro. 2009. "A New Partisan Voter." *JOP* 71:1-24.
3. Dinas, Elias. 2014. "Does Choice Bring Loyalty? Electoral Participation and the Development of Party Identification." *AJPS* 58:449-65.
4. Klar, Samara, and Yanna Krupnikov. 2016. *Independent Politics*. Cambridge University Press. (chapters 6 & 7)

### Recommended

1. Bartels, Larry M. 2000. "Partisanship and Voting Behavior, 1952-1996." *AJPS* 44:35-50.
2. Egan, Patrick J. Forthcoming. "Identity as Dependent Variable: How Americans Shift Their Identities to Align with Their Politics." *AJPS*.
3. Fiorina, Morris. 1981. *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*. Yale University Press.
4. Green, Donald, Bradley Palmquist, and Eric Schickler. 2002. *Partisan Hearts and Minds*. Yale University Press.
5. Hajnal, Zoltan, and Taeku Lee. 2011. *Why Americans Don't Join The Party*. Princeton University Press.
6. Sniderman, Paul M., and Edward H. Stiglitz. 2012. *The Reputational Premium*. Princeton University Press.

## **March 3: Partisan Polarization**

### Required

1. Ahler, Douglas J. 2014. "Self-Fulfilling Misperceptions of Public Polarization." *JOP* 76:607-20.
2. Iyengar, Shanto, Gaurav Sood, and Yphtach Lelkes. 2012. "Affect, Not Ideology: A Social Identity Perspective on Polarization." *POQ* 76:405-31.
3. Layman, Geoffrey C., and Thomas M. Carsey. 2002. "Party Polarization and 'Conflict Extension' in the American Electorate." *AJPS* 46:786-802.
4. Stoker, Laura, and M. Kent Jennings. 2008. "Of Time and the Development of Partisan Polarization." *AJPS* 52:619-635.

### Recommended

1. Abramowitz, Alan I. and Kyle L. Saunders. 1998. "Ideological Realignment in the US Electorate." *JOP* 60:634-52.
2. Baldassarri, Delia, and Andrew Gelman. 2008. "Partisans without Constraint: Political Polarization and Trends in American Public Opinion." *American Journal of Sociology* 114:408-46.
3. Carmines, Edward G., and James A. Stimson. 1989. *Issue Evolution*. Princeton University Press.
4. Levendusky, Matthew. 2009. *The Partisan Sort*. University of Chicago Press.
5. Levendusky, Matthew, and Neil Malhotra. 2016. "Does Media Coverage of Partisan Polarization Affect Political Attitudes?" *Political Communication* 33:283-301.

## March 10: Interests and Choices

### Required

1. Gelman, Andrew, et al. 2007. "Rich State, Poor State, Red State, Blue State: What's the Matter with Connecticut?" *QJPS* 2:345-67.
2. McCarty, Nolan, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. 2008. *Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches*. MIT Press. (chapters 1 & 3)
3. Piston, Spencer. 2010. "How Explicit Racial Prejudice Hurt Obama in the 2008 Election." *Political Behavior* 32:431-51.

### Recommended

1. Barreto, Matt A., Gary M. Segura, and Nathan D. Woods. 2004. "The Mobilizing Effects of Majority-Minority Districts on Latino Turnout." *APSR* 98:65-75.
2. Clarke, Harold D., et al. 2011. "Yes We Can! Valence Politics and Electoral Choices in America, 2008." *Electoral Studies* 30:450-61.
3. Hersh, Eitan, and Clayton Nall. 2016. "The Primacy of Race in the Geography of Income-Based Voting: New Evidence from Public Voting Records." *AJPS* 60:289-303.
4. Kaufmann, Karen M., and John R. Petrocik. 1999. "The Changing Politics of American Men: Understanding the Sources of the Gender Gap." *AJPS* 43:864-87.
5. Sanbonmatsu, Kira. 2002. "Gender Stereotypes and Vote Choice." *AJPS* 46:20-34.
6. Shafer, Byron E., and Richard Johnston. 2006. *The End of Southern Exceptionalism*. Harvard University Press.

## March 17: No class due to Spring Recess

## March 24: Economic Voting

### Required

1. Achen and Bartels. *Democracy for Realists*. (chapters 3-7)
2. Hetherington, Marc J. 1996. "The Media's Role in Forming Voters' National Economic Evaluations in 1992." *AJPS* 40:372-95.
3. Wright, John R. 2012. "Unemployment and the Democratic Electoral Advantage." *APSR* 106:685-702.

### Recommended

1. Erikson, Robert S., Michael B. MacKuen, and James A. Stimson. 2002. *The Macro Polity*. Cambridge University Press.
2. Healy, Andrew, and Gabriel S. Lenz. 2014. "Substituting the End for the Whole: Why Voters Respond Primarily to the Election-Year Economy." *AJPS* 58:31-47.
3. Malhotra, Neil, and Yotam Margalit. 2014. "Expectation Setting and Retrospective Voting." *JOP* 76:1000-16.
4. Kramer, Gerald H. 1983. "The Ecological Fallacy Revisited: Aggregate- versus Individual-level Findings on Economics and Elections, and Sociotropic Voting." *APSR* 77:92-111.
5. Rudolph, Thomas J. 2003. "Who's Responsible for the Economy? The Formation and Consequences of Responsibility Attributions." *AJPS* 47:698-713.

## March 31: Political Information

### Required

1. Jerit, Jennifer, Jason Barabas, and Toby Bolsen. 2006. "Citizens, Knowledge, and the Information Environment." *AJPS* 50:266-82.
2. Lau, Richard P., and David P. Redlawsk. 2001. "Advantages and Disadvantages of Cognitive Heuristics in Political Decision Making." *AJPS* 45:951-71.
3. Lenz, Gabriel S. 2009. "Learning and Opinion Change, Not Priming: Reconsidering the Priming Hypothesis." *AJPS* 53:821-37.
4. Lodge, Milton, Marco R. Steenbergen, and Shawn Brau. 1995. "The Responsive Voter: Campaign Information and the Dynamics of Candidate Evaluation." *APSR* 89:309-26.

### Recommended

1. Kuklinski, James H., and Norman L. Hurley. 1994. "On Hearing and Interpreting Political Messages: A Cautionary Tale of Citizen Cue-Taking." *JOP* 56:729-51.
2. Lau, Richard P., and David P. Redlawsk. 2006. *How Voters Decide*. Cambridge University Press.
3. Lodge, Milton, and Charles S. Taber. 2013. *The Rationalizing Voter*. Cambridge University Press.
4. Rahn, Wendy M. 1993. "The Role of Partisan Stereotypes in Information Processing about Political Candidates." *AJPS* 37:472-96.
5. Zaller, John R. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge University Press.

## April 7: Social Networks

### Required

1. Bond, Robert M., et al. 2012. "A 61-million-person Experiment in Social Influence and Political Mobilization." *Nature* 489:295-8.
2. Mutz, Diana C. 2002. "The Consequences of Cross-Cutting Networks for Political Participation." *AJPS* 46:838-55.
3. Oliver, J. Eric. 2000. "City Size and Civic Involvement in Metropolitan America." *APSR* 94:361-73.
4. Rolfe, Meredith. 2012. *Voter Turnout*. Cambridge University Press (chapter 6)

### Recommended

1. Nickerson, David. 2008. "Is Voting Contagious? Evidence from Two Field Experiments." *APSR* 102:49-57.
2. Sinclair, Betsy. 2012. *The Social Citizen*. University of Chicago Press.
3. Sokhey, Anand Edward, and Scott D. McClurg. 2012. "Social Networks and Correct Voting." *JOP* 74:751-64.

## April 10: Prospectus Due

## April 14: Campaign Effects

### Required

1. Darr, Joshua P. Forthcoming. "Abandoning the Ground Game? Field Organization in the 2016 Election." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*.
2. Gelman, Andrew, and Gary King. 1993. "Why Are American Presidential Election Campaign Polls So Variable When Votes are So Predictable?" *BJPS* 23:409-51.
3. Huber, Gregory A, and Kevin Arceneaux. 2007. "Identifying the Persuasive Effects of Presidential Advertising." *AJPS* 51:957-77.
4. Wlezien, Christopher, and Robert S. Erikson. 2002. "The Timeline of Presidential Election Campaigns." *JOP* 64:969-93.

### Recommended

1. Enos, Ryan D., and Eitan D. Hersh. 2015. "Party Activists as Campaign Advertisers: The Ground Campaign as a Principal-Agent Problem." *APSR* 109:252-278.
2. Gimpel, James G., Karen Kaufmann, and Shanna Pearson-Merkowitz. 2007. "Battleground States versus Blackout States: The Behavior Implications of Modern Presidential Campaigns." *JOP* 69:786-97.
3. Hillygus, D. Sunshine, and Simon Jackman. 2003. "Voter Decision Making in Election 2000: Campaign Effects, Partisan Activation, and the Clinton Legacy." *AJPS* 47:583-96.
4. Neiheisel, Jacob R., and Rich Horner. Forthcoming. "Voter Identification Requirements and Aggregate Turnout in the U.S.: How Campaigns Offset the Costs of Turning Out When Voting Is Made More Difficult." *Election Law Journal*.
5. McKenna, Elizabeth, and Hahrie Han. 2015. *Groundbreakers: How Obama's 2.2 Million Volunteers Transformed Campaigning in America*. Oxford University Press.
6. Ridout, Travis N., and Michael M. Franz. 2011. *The Persuasive Power of Campaign Advertising*. Temple University Press.
7. Shaw, Daron R. 2006. *The Race to 270*. University of Chicago Press.
8. Vavreck, Lynn. 2009. *The Message Matters*. Princeton University Press.

## April 21: Media Influence

### Required

1. Arceneaux, Kevin, Martin Johnson, and Chad Murphy. 2012. "Polarized Political Communication, Oppositional Media Hostility, and Selective Exposure." *JOP* 74:174-86.
2. Bartels, Larry M. 1993. "Messages Received: The Political Impact of Media Exposure." *APSR* 87:267-85.
3. Gerber, Alan S., Dean Karlan, and Daniel Bergan. 2009. "Does the Media Matter? A Field Experiment Measuring the Effects of Newspapers on Voting Behavior and Political Opinions." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 1:35-52.
4. Hayes, Danny, and Jennifer L. Lawless. 2015. "As Local News Goes, So Goes Citizen Engagement: Media, Knowledge, and Participation in U.S. House Elections." *JOP* 77:447-462.

### Recommended

1. Chiang, Chun-Fang, and Brian Knight. 2011. "Media Bias and Influence: Evidence from Newspaper Endorsements." *Review of Economic Studies* 78:795-820.
2. Druckman, James N., and Michael Parkin. 2005. "The Impact of Media Bias: How Editorial Slant Affects Voters." *JOP* 67:1030-49.



3. Mutz, Diana C., and Paul S. Martin. 2001. "Facilitating Communication across Lines of Political Difference: The Role of Mass Media." *APSR* 95:97-114.
4. Zaller, John. 1996. "The Myth of Massive Media Impact Discredited Idea." In *Political Persuasion and Attitude Change*, ed. Paul Sniderman and Richard A. Brody. p. 17-78.

### **April 28: Congressional Elections**

#### Required

1. Jacobson, Gary C. 1989. "Strategic Politicians and the Dynamics of U.S. House Elections, 1946-86." *APSR* 83:773-93.
2. Cox, Gary W., and Jonathan N. Katz. 1996. "Why Did the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections Grow?" *AJPS* 40:478-97.
3. Prior, Markus. 2006. "The Incumbent in the Living Room: The Rise of Television and the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections." *JOP* 68:657-73.
4. Erikson, Robert S. 1988. "The Puzzle of Midterm Loss." *JOP* 50:1011-29.

#### Recommended

1. Ansolabehere, Stephen, James M. Snyder, Jr., and Charles Stewart, III. 2000. "Old Voters, New Voters, and the Personal Vote: Using Redistricting to Measure the Incumbency Advantage." *AJPS* 44:17-34.
2. Jacobson, Gary C. 2015. "It's Nothing Personal: The Decline of the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections." *JOP* 77:861-873.
3. McGhee, Eric. 2008. "National Tides and Local Results in U.S. House Elections." *BJPS* 38:719-38.
4. Stone, Walter J., et al. 2010. "Incumbency Reconsidered: Prospects, Strategic Retirement, and Incumbent Quality in U.S. House Elections." *JOP* 72:178-90.

### **May 8: Paper Due (tentative date)**