This course will cover research on American voting behavior and elections. While the various strands of political behavior research—e.g., political communication, political psychology, and public opinion—are all related, we will primarily emphasize research that directly examines some political act as the dependent variable. This will naturally require us to scrutinize the antecedents of such behavior as well. While our unit of analysis will chiefly be individuals, we will take a “bird’s eye view” of the entire electorate at times. We will address both the dominant threads of research as well as some topics that might be worthy of more attention from scholars. In doing so, we will focus on both the foundational works and recent developments in the field. While much progress has been made over the last 65 years of empirical research, there nevertheless remains much to be achieved. Accordingly, a goal of this course is, hopefully, to highlight those areas where there exist opportunities for you to contribute to the literature while starting you on your way to having the necessary background to do so.

My expectation is that students will be active participants. Consequently, students must keep up with the required readings. On that note, while I do not require students read the recommended material each week, it is in one’s best interest to do so as soon as possible, especially if your area of research will be American politics or political behavior. And remember: this syllabus does not constitute the entirety of the field—it is your job to continue to examine both older and more recent research.

The course grade is based on three components: participation (30%); memos discussing the readings (20%); and, a final exam or research paper (50%). Second and third year PhD students must submit either a research design or, ideally, an empirical examination of a hypothesis or a set of hypotheses related to the field of political behavior.

**Week 1: Partisanship**


**Week 2: Partisanship**


**Recommended:**


Theodoridis, Alexander. 2017. “Me, Myself, and (I), (D) or (R)? Partisan Intensity through the Lens of Implicit Identity.” Journal of Politics.


**Week 3: Ideology**


**Week 4: Ideology**


Recommended:


**Week 5: Economic Voting**


**Recommended:**


**Week 6: Issues and Vote Choice**


**Recommended:**


**Week 7: Heuristics**


**Recommended:**


**Week 8: Social Influences**


**Recommended:**


**Week 9: Campaigns**


**Week 10: Campaigns**


Recommended:


**Week 11: Parties, Representation, and Realignments**


**Recommended:**


Week 12: Turnout


**Recommended:**


**Week 13: Socialization**


**Recommended:**


Week 14: Gender and Race


**Recommended:**


