

Political Science 242: Political Behavior

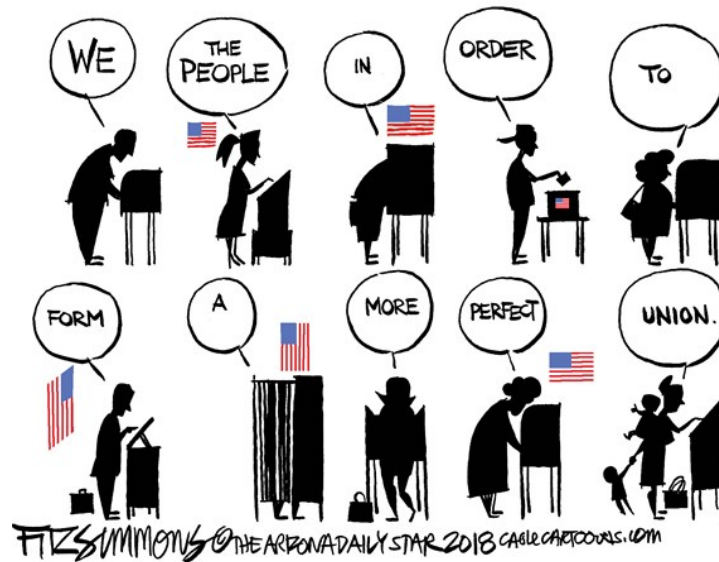
Dickinson College, Fall 2021
Monday & Thursday, 3:00-4:15
Denny 204

Professor Sarah Niebler

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Office Hours: Monday 10:00-11:30; Tuesday 1:30-3:00; and by appointment



Course Description

Who participates in politics, when, where, why, and how? This course examines the ways in which everyday people living in the U.S. can participate in the political process. In the first part of the course, we consider how scholars study political behavior and how people become politically active (or not); in doing so, we pay special attention to the act of voting. The second part of the course examines the history of voting rights in the U.S. from the colonial period through the present day. Next, we investigate how various groups of individuals – specifically groups related to geography, age, income and education, religion, gender, and race – interact with the American political process. We will end the semester by discussing intersectionality as well as the changing face of political participation in the United States.

This class fulfills the college distribution requirement of Writing in the Discipline (WiD) and as such we will focus heavily on writing throughout the semester. You will write several short analytical response papers as well as one longer “literature review” paper exploring existing scholarly work related to a question of your own choosing.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to...

- Understand the history of voting rights in the U.S., different schools of thought related to voting, and appreciate how different demographic groups participate in the American political process differently

- Summarize and analyze scholarly literature about political behavior in the U.S.
- Identify relevant scholarly literature, synthesize that literature, and identify gaps as potential avenues for future research

Course Materials

There is one required book for the course (available at the bookstore):

- LaVaque-Manty, Mika and Danielle LaVaque-Manty. 2015. *Writing in Political Science: A Brief Guide*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

The full schedule and complement of readings should be available on Moodle or linked to from Moodle. If you cannot find something you are supposed to prepare for class, please let me know!

Finally, as a student of American politics, you should keep up with the news. In addition to following reputable news sources such as (but not limited to) *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist*, and NPR, there are several blogs edited by, and/or contributed to by political scientists that you will likely find interesting and relevant to course content:

- “The Monkey Cage” hosted by *The Washington Post* (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/>)
- “Mischiefs of Faction” hosted by *Vox.com* (<https://www.vox.com/mischiefs-of-faction>)
- “Politics” hosted by *Fivethirtyeight.com* (<https://fivethirtyeight.com/politics/>)

Requirements and Grading

Since this is a WiD (Writing in the Discipline) course, it is small and therefore will largely be run as a seminar. I expect students to answer questions that are posed, ask questions about concepts that are not clear, engage viewpoints that are presented, and think critically. While it is my hope that students will attend in-person class meetings, please know that **I would prefer that you NOT to attend class if you are feeling sick**. It is incumbent upon all of us to keep one another healthy. The best thing to do if you miss class is to talk with a classmate about what you missed and get notes from them. If you miss multiple class meetings in a row, please get in touch with me so we can figure out the best path forward and make sure you do not fall too far behind.

We will talk about all graded assignments in-depth on the first day of class and throughout the semester. Guidelines for all assignments can also be found on the course Moodle page. The relative weight and due date of each component is as follows:

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------------|--|
| Participation and Engagement | | 15% | |
| Analysis Paper #1 | | 10% | September 24 |
| Analysis Paper #2 | | 10% | October 8 |
| Analysis Paper Revision | | 5% | October 22 |
| Discussion Questions | | <u>2 @ 5% each</u> 10% | October 4 – November 22 |
| Final Paper | Proposal/Topic | 5% | October 1 |
| | Individual Meeting with Professor or Writing Center | 2.5% | Before Fall Pause |
| | List/Annotation of 5 Sources | 5% | November 5 |
| | Peer Review Draft and Comments | 7.5% | December 2 |
| | Final Draft, including Revision Memo | 30% | (Friday) December 17 @ 12:00 p.m. (noon) |

Final letter grades will be assigned in the following way:

| | | |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| A = 93-100 | B- = 80-82 | D = 60-69 |
| A- = 90-92 | C+ = 77-79 | F = 0-59 |
| B+ = 87-89 | C = 73-76 | |
| B = 83-86 | C- = 70-72 | |

*A note on due dates...*As you can see, there are a couple smaller writing assignments and one larger paper. The larger paper is broken down into several pieces to make it more manageable and so we can focus on different aspects at different times. While the deadline for peer review is hard and fast, I am willing to be flexible with most other due dates **provided you talk with me** ahead of time.

The Writing Center

Dickinson College supports writers by helping them understand the goals of academic writing across the disciplines. You should make an appointment with an English writing tutor if you want assistance with the following:

- understanding and interpreting the requirements of an assignment;
- brainstorming, developing, or clarifying ideas;
- shaping effective thesis statements;
- engaging in critical analysis;
- creating organizational plans and focusing an argument;
- making strong claims, providing supporting evidence, and addressing the “So what?”;
- recognizing and correcting grammatical and mechanical errors.

While you can drop by the Eberly Writing Center any time during business hours to meet with a tutor, it is strongly recommended that you make an appointment. You can do so by visiting <https://dickinson.mywconline.com/>. The Writing Center is located on the Main Floor of the Waidner-Spahr Library. For more information or if you have any questions, please visit the Writing Center website at:

https://www.dickinson.edu/info/20158/writing_program/2829/the_norman_m_eberly_multilingual_writing_center

This semester, appointments will be conducted in person and on zoom.

Academic Integrity

From Dickinson College's Community Standards... "Respect for ideas—our own and others'—is a hallmark of academic integrity. We show respect for ideas by acknowledging when we have used another's words or ideas in our work. We expect others to acknowledge when they use our ideas or words in their work." (https://www.dickinson.edu/download/downloads/id/963/community_standards.pdf)

Students must complete their own work. You may discuss your ideas with your colleagues, but the work you hand in must be your own. In everything you write in this course, you must properly cite all your sources. I prefer for you to use Chicago style with in-text citations (as opposed to footnotes). If you do not know how to do this, please consult the library's research guides and/or the library liaison for political science, Ian Boucher (boucheri@dickinson.edu). If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please ask sooner rather than later.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Dickinson values diverse types of learners and is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded equitable access to participate in all learning experiences. If you have (or think you may have) a learning difference or a disability – including a mental health, medical, or physical impairment – that would hinder your access to learning or demonstrating knowledge in this class, please contact Access and Disability Services (ADS). They will confidentially explain the accommodation request process and the type of documentation that Dean and Director Marni Jones will need to determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. To learn more about available supports, go to www.dickinson.edu/ADS, email access@dickinson.edu, call (717) 245-1734, or go to the ADS office in Room 005 of Old West, Lower Level (aka "the OWLL").

If you've already been granted accommodations at Dickinson, please follow the guidance at www.dickinson.edu/AccessPlan for disclosing the accommodations for which you are eligible and scheduling a meeting with me as soon as possible so that we can discuss your accommodations and finalize your Access Plan. If test proctoring will be needed from ADS, remember that we will need to complete your Access Plan in time to give them at least one week's advance notice.

Please know that I am committed to working with all students so they can succeed in this course. I encourage you to contact me via email or come to office hours if you have any questions or concerns.

Covid-19 and the Fall 2021 Semester

While it is my sincere hope that we will be able to conduct this entire semester in person, we all now know how quickly things can change. First and foremost, please know that I value your health and well-being and am happy to work with you if unexpected things arise throughout the semester. I do ask you to communicate with me when possible. I do not expect you to disclose particular circumstances of any challenges you are facing (although I am happy to try to recommend resources as I am able) but I cannot work with you if we are not in touch.

Outline of the Course

Unit I: Studying Political Behavior & Schools of Thought About Voting

August 30 – Introductions and Course Expectations

- No Reading

September 2 – Studying Political Behavior

- Davenport, Tiffany C., Alan S. Gerber, and Donald P. Green. 2010. "Field Experiments and the Study of Political Behavior." In *The Oxford Handbook of American Elections and Political Behavior*, edited by Jan E. Leighley, 69-88. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Atkeson, Lonna Rae. 2010. "The State of Survey Research as a Research Tool in American Politics." In *The Oxford Handbook of American Elections and Political Behavior*, edited by Jan E. Leighley, 9-26. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

September 6 – Role of Family Socialization on Political Behavior

- Jennings, M. Kent, Laura Stoker, and Jake Bowers. 2009. "Politics Across Generations: Family Transmission Reexamined." *The Journal of Politics* 71(3): 782-799.
- Writing in Political Science, Chapter 1, pages 1-21.

September 9 – Role of Education on Political Behavior

- Kahne, Joseph, David Crow, and Nam-Jin Lee. 2013. "Different Pedagogy, Different Politics: High School Learning Opportunities and Youth Political Engagement." *Political Psychology* 34(3): 419-441.
- Writing in Political Science, Chapter 2, pages 22-30.

September 13 – Role of Genetics on Political Behavior

- Fowler, James H., Laura A. Baker, and Christopher T. Dawes. 2008. "Genetic Variation in Political Participation." *The American Political Science Review* 102(2): 233-248.

September 16 – Is it Rational to Vote?

- Downs, Anthony. 1957. "An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy." *Journal of Political Economy* 65(2): 135-150.
- Writing in Political Science, Chapter 5, pages 110-122.

September 20 – Economic Voting

- Lewis-Beck, Michael S. and Mary Stegmaier. 2000. "Economic Determinants of Electoral Outcomes." *Annual Review of Political Science* 3: 183-219.
- Writing in Political Science, Chapter 6, pages 123-145.

September 23 – Issue Voting

- Carmines, Edward G. and James Stimson. 1980. "The Two Faces of Issue Voting." *The American Political Science Review* 74(1): 78-91.
- Campbell, Eryn, John Kotcher, Edward Maibach, Seth Rosenthal, and Anthony Leiserowitz. 2021. "Predicting the Importance of Global Warming as a Voting Issue Among Registered Voters in the United States." *Ecological and Social Psychology* 2: 1-9.
- **Analysis Paper #1 Due by Friday, September 24 at 11:59 p.m.**

September 27 – Strategic Voting

- Burden, Barry C. and Philip Edward Jones. 2009. "Strategic Voting in the USA." In *Duverger's Law of Plurality Voting: The Logic of Party Competition in Canada, India, the United Kingdom and the United States*, edited by Bernard Grofman Andre Blais and Shaun Bowler, 47-64. New York, NY: Springer.
- Writing in Political Science, Chapter 3, pages 31-72.

September 30 – Partisanship and Polarization

- Mason, Lilliana. 2018. "Identity-Based Democracy" and "Partisan Prejudice" in *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity*, 1-16 and 45-60.
- **Final paper Topic Due by Friday, October 1 at 11:59 p.m.**

Unit II: History of Voting Rights in the U.S.

October 4 – The Colonial Period

- Glenn, Richard A. and Kyle L. Kreider. 2020. "Background and History" In *Voting Rights in American: A Reference Handbook*, 1-33. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.
- Writing in Political Science, Chapter 6, pages 123-145. (Revisit in light of Analysis Paper #1 comments and Analysis Paper #2 deadline.)

October 7 – Civil War Amendments and Reconstruction

- Glenn, Richard A. and Kyle L. Kreider. 2020. "Background and History" In *Voting Rights in American: A Reference Handbook*, 33-50. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.
- **Analysis Paper #2 Due by Friday, October 8 at 11:59 p.m.**

October 11 – Women's Suffrage

- Keyssar, Alexander. 2009. "Women's Suffrage" In *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States*, 139-178. New York, NY: Basic Books.

October 14 – Voting Rights of Native Americans

- McCool, Daniel, Susan M. Olson, Jennifer L. Robinson. 2007. "From Vanishing American to Voter: The Enfranchisement of American Indians" In *Native Vote: American Indians, the Voting Rights Act, and the Right to Vote*, 1-20. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Writing in Political Science, Appendix A, pages 183-189.

October 18 – **Fall Pause, No Class**

October 21 – The Voting Rights Act of 1965 and Voting Rights Today

- Rhodes, Jesse H. 2017. "Liberal Ascendance and Enactment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965" In *Ballot Blocked: The Political Erosion of the Voting Rights Act*, 24-57. Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Remnick, David. Will the Most Important Voting-Rights Bill Since 1965 Die in the Senate? *The New Yorker Radio Hour*. Podcast audio. 2021.
<https://www.newyorker.com/podcast/political-scene/will-the-most-important-voting-rights-bill-since-1965-die-in-the-senate>
- Writing in Political Science, Chapter 7, pages 146-182.
- **Analysis Paper Revision Due by Friday, October 22 at 11:59 p.m.**

October 25 – Library Session

- **Library Session**

Unit III: Political Behavior of Groups

October 28 – Geography

- Igielnick, Ruth, Scott Keeter, and Hannah Hartig. 2021. "Behind Biden's 2020 Victory." *Pew Research Center*. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/06/30/behind-bidens-2020-victory/>
- Cramer Walsh, Katherine. 2012. "Putting Inequality in Its Place: Rural Consciousness and the Power of Perspective." *American Political Science Review* 106(3): 516-532.

November 1 – Age

- Niemi, Richard G. and Michael J. Hanmer. 2010. "Voter Turnout Among College Students: New Data and a Rethinking of Traditional Theories." *Social Science Quarterly* 91(2): 301-323.
- Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. 2020. "Election Week 2020: Young People Increase Turnout, Lead Biden to Victory" *Tufts, Tisch College*. Available at: <https://circle.tufts.edu/latest-research/election-week-2020>.
- Noah, Timothy. 2020. "America is Run by Geezers." *The New Republic*. Available at: <https://newrepublic.com/article/160380/2020-election-exit-polls-elderly-turnout-senior-vote>.

November 2 – **Election Day, Vote if you are eligible to do so!**

November 4 – Income and Education

- Hartley, Robert Paul. 2020. "Unleashing the Power of Poor and Low-Income Americans." *The Poor People's Campaign*. Available at: <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/PPC-Voter-Research-Brief-18.pdf> (pages 10-19)
- Hillygus, D. Sunshine. 2009. "The Missing Link: Exploring the Relationship Between Higher Education and Political Engagement." *Political Behavior* 27(1): 25-47.
- **Annotation of (at least) Five Sources Due by Friday, November 5 at 11:59 p.m.**

November 8 – Religion

- Hecllo, Hugh. 2007. "Is America a Christian Nation?" *Political Science Quarterly* 122(1): 59-87.
- Jamal, Amaney. 2005. "Political Participation and Engagement of Muslim Americans: Mosque Involvement and Group Consciousness." *American Politics Research* 33(4): 521-544.

November 11 – Race

- White, Ismail K. and Cheryl N. Laird. "Norms of Black Political Behavior." In *Steadfast Democrats: How Social Forces Shape Black Political Behavior*, 56-85. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Barreto, Matt and Gary M. Segura. 2014. "Unity and Diversity" In *Latino America: How America's Most Dynamic Population is Poised to Transform the Politics of the Nation*, 13-31. New York, NY: Perseus Books.

November 15 – Race, cont.

- Wong, Janelle, S. Karthick Ramakrishnan, Taeku Lee, and Jane Junn. 2011. "Democrat, Republican, or Non of the Above?" In *Asian American Political Participation: Emerging Constituents and Their Political Identities*, 120-151. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Dubb, Steve. 2020. "Native Vote 2020 Effort Pays Off with Record Native Congressional Delegation." *Nonprofit Quarterly*. Available at: https://nonprofitquarterly.org/native-vote-2020-effort-pays-off-with-record-native-congressional-delegation/?bbeml=tp-pck9Q6QNPEiuBt3JmyTokQ.j_A449GHRZU6gsiXEwkkqjw.rhpa3D81Jck2FHErD8XV8wQ.lxHXi5STsUkGc7vb48T5lQw
- Sanchez, Gabriel R., Laura Evans, and Raymond Foxworth. 2020. "Native Americans Overcom Major Obstacles; Part of Voting Coalition That Led Biden to Victory." *Latino Decisions*. Available at: https://latinodecisions.com/blog/native-americans-overcome-major-obstacles-part-of-voting-coalition-that-led-biden-to-victory/?bbeml=tp-pck9Q6QNPEiuBt3JmyTokQ.j_A449GHRZU6gsiXEwkkqjw.rhpa3D81Jck2FHErD8XV8wQ.lg1JCUelqaUSmOhlMiJYQXw

November 18 – Gender

- Dolan, Kathleen. 2014. "Gender Stereotypes, Candidate Evaluations, and Voting for Women Candidates: What Really Matters?" *Political Research Quarterly* 67(1): 96-107.
- Morehouse Mendez, Jeanette and Tracy Osborn. 2009. "Gender and the Perception of Knowledge in Political Discussion." *Political Research Quarterly* 63(2): 269-279.

November 22 – Gender, cont.

- Junn, Jane and Natalie Masouka. 2020. "The Gender Gap Is a Race Gap: Women Voters in US Presidential Elections." *Perspectives on Politics* 18(4): 1135-1145.
- Center for American Women in Politics. 2021. "Gender Gap in Voting." Available at: https://cawp.rutgers.edu/facts/voters/gender_gap

November 25 – **Thanksgiving Break, No Class**

Unit IV: Intersectionality and the Future of Political Behavior in the U.S.

November 29 – Intersectionality

- Collins, Patricia Hill. 1993. "Toward a New Vision: race, Class, and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection." *Race, Sex & Class* 1(1): 25-45.

December 2 – Peer Review (exact format TBD)

- **Final Paper Drafts Due During Class**

December 6 – Political Hobbyism

- Hersh, Eitan. 2020. *Politics is for Power: How to Move Beyond Political Hobbyism, Take Action, and Make Real Change*, 15-45. New York, NY: Scribner.

December 9 – Political Hobbyism, cont.

- Hersh, Eitan. 2020. *Politics is for Power: How to Move Beyond Political Hobbyism, Take Action, and Make Real Change*, 46-83. New York, NY: Scribner.

(Friday) December 17 at 12:00 p.m. (noon)

- **Final Papers Due**