

**DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR:**

**US Credits: 3/0/3**

**HSE 2224 Hot Politics: The Psychology and Neuroscience of Politics and Power**

(Same as HSS 2224)

(Spring 2023)

**PREREQUISITES:**

WP 1010 Introduction to Academic Writing  
WP 1111 Academic Writing with Ethics

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

The course combines perspectives from political science, social psychology and cognitive neuroscience in examining the way in which emotions are connected to perceptions of political content and decision-making.

**RATIONALE:**

Politics is 'hot' because it is governed by emotions, polarizing views and cognitive biases. The course aims to introduce students to the psychological processes associated with reactions to politics, political behaviour and ideology, thereby contributing to their sense of civic duty and power, and encouraging them to reflect on their own political reasoning. Drawing on concepts from political psychology, cognitive neuroscience and sociobiology, the course focuses on how emotions and motivated cognition influence our understanding of contemporary political issues such as social divides, populism and polarization.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of the connection between individual-level factors and broader socio-political phenomena.
2. Explain the role of emotional and cognitive processes in politics, political behaviour and ideology.
3. Apply concepts from political psychology in discussing contemporary socio-political topics.

**METHOD OF TEACHING AND LEARNING:**

In congruence with the teaching and learning strategy of the college, the seminar will employ the following tools:

- Classroom meetings: active student-centred approach involving group discussions, workshop-style pair work, experiential learning activities, textual analysis, discussion of selected videos, podcasts and other teaching materials, individual student presentations and/or response papers in preparation for class debates.
- Office hours: students are encouraged to make full use of the office hours of their lecturer, where they can address issues pertinent to the course material and ask questions.
- Use of a Blackboard site, where the instructor will post lecture notes, assignment instructions, announcements, as well as additional learning resources.

<p><b>ASSESSMENT:</b></p>	<p>Summative:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="539 259 1385 450"> <tr> <td><b>First assessment: creative project</b> (including in-class oral presentation)</td> <td><b>40%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Second assessment: reflective essay</b> (1,500-1,800 words)</td> <td><b>40%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Third assessment: classroom participation</b></td> <td><b>20%</b></td> </tr> </table> <p>Formative:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="539 517 1385 640"> <tr> <td>Formative tasks such as brief homework or classroom assignments will contribute to the students' preparation for summative tasks.</td> <td><b>0%</b></td> </tr> </table> <p>The 1<sup>st</sup> summative assessment assesses Learning Outcomes 1 and 3. The 2<sup>nd</sup> summative assessment assesses Learning Outcomes 2 and 3. The 3<sup>rd</sup> summative assessment component addresses LOs 1, 2 and 3.</p> <p><i>Grade averaging does not apply to this course. Students must pass all assessments. As this is a non-validated course, there is no resit opportunity for failed assessments.</i></p>	<b>First assessment: creative project</b> (including in-class oral presentation)	<b>40%</b>	<b>Second assessment: reflective essay</b> (1,500-1,800 words)	<b>40%</b>	<b>Third assessment: classroom participation</b>	<b>20%</b>	Formative tasks such as brief homework or classroom assignments will contribute to the students' preparation for summative tasks.	<b>0%</b>
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<p><b>INDICATIVE READING:</b></p>	<p><b>Required material</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Huddy, L., Sears, D. O., &amp; Levy, J. S. (Eds.). (2013). The Oxford handbook of political psychology. Oxford University Press.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aichholzer, J., &amp; Willmann, J. (2020). Desired personality traits in politicians: Similar to me but more of a leader. <i>Journal of Research in Personality</i>, 88, 103990.</li> <li>• Bakker, B. N., Schumacher, G., Gothreau, C., &amp; Arceneaux, K. (2020). Conservatives and liberals have similar physiological responses to threats. <i>Nature Human Behaviour</i>.</li> <li>• Bakker, B. N., Schumacher, G., &amp; Rooduijn, M. (2020). Hot Politics? Affective Responses to Political Rhetoric. <i>American Political Science Review</i>, 115(1), 150-164</li> <li>• Boston, J., Homola, J., Sinclair, B., Torres, M., &amp; Tucker, P. D. (2018). The dynamic relationship between personality stability and political attitudes. <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i>, 82(S1), 843-865.</li> <li>• Druckman, J. N., Klar, S., Krupnikov, Y., Levendusky, M., &amp; Ryan, J. B. (2020). How affective polarization shapes Americans' political beliefs: A study of response to the COVID-19 pandemic. <i>Journal of Experimental Political Science</i>.</li> <li>• Enders, A. M., Uscinski, J. E., Klofstad, C. A., Seelig, M. I., Wuchty, S., Murthi, M. N., ... &amp; Funchion, J. R. (2021). Do Conspiracy Beliefs Form a Belief System? Examining the Structure and Organization of Conspiracy Beliefs. <i>Journal of Social and Political Psychology</i>, 9(1), 255-271.</li> <li>• Guay, B., &amp; Johnston, C. D. (2021). Ideological asymmetries and the determinants of politically motivated reasoning. <i>American Journal of Political Science</i>, 66(2), 285-301.</li> <li>• Iyengar, S., Lelkes, Y., Levendusky, M., Malhotra, N., &amp; Westwood, S. J. (2019). The origins and consequences of affective polarization in the United States. <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i>, 22(1), 129-146.</li> </ul>								

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kalmoe, N. P., &amp; Johnson, M. (2021). Genes, Ideology, and Sophistication. <i>Journal of Experimental Political Science</i>.</li> <li>• Ksiazkiewicz, A., Ludeke, S., &amp; Krueger, R. (2016). The role of cognitive style in the link between genes and political ideology. <i>Political Psychology</i>, 37(6), 761-776.</li> <li>• Marcus, G. E. (2013). <i>Political psychology: Neuroscience, genetics, and politics</i>. Oxford University Press.</li> <li>• Nam, H. H. (2020). Neuroscientific approaches to the study of system justification. <i>Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences</i>, 34, 205-210.</li> <li>• Nam, H. H., Jost, J. T., Meager, M. R., &amp; Van Bavel, J. J. (2021). Toward a neuropsychology of political orientation: exploring ideology in patients with frontal and midbrain lesions. <i>Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B</i>, 376(1822), 20200137.</li> <li>• Schreiber, D., Fonzo, G., Simmons, A. N., Dawes, C. T., Flagan, T., Fowler, J. H., &amp; Paulus, M. P. (2013). Red brain, blue brain: Evaluative processes differ in Democrats and Republicans. <i>PLoS one</i>, 8(2), e52970.</li> <li>• Tetlock, P. E. (1983). Cognitive style and political ideology. <i>Journal of Personality and social Psychology</i>, 45(1), 118.</li> <li>• Tsakiris, M., Vehar, N., &amp; Tucciarelli, R. (2021). Visceral politics: a theoretical and empirical proof of concept. <i>Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B</i>, 376(1822), 20200142.</li> <li>• Westen, D., Blagov, P. S., Harenski, K., Kilts, C., &amp; Hamann, S. (2006). Neural bases of motivated reasoning: An fMRI study of emotional constraints on partisan political judgment in the 2004 US presidential election. <i>Journal of cognitive neuroscience</i>, 18(11), 1947-1958.</li> <li>• Yang, S. E., Wilson, J. D., Lu, Z. L., &amp; Cranmer, S. (2022). Functional connectivity signatures of political ideology. <i>PNAS nexus</i>, 1(3), pgac066.</li> <li>• Zmigrod, L. (2020). The role of cognitive rigidity in political ideologies: theory, evidence, and future directions. <i>Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences</i>, 34, 34-39.</li> </ul>
<p><b>INDICATIVE MATERIAL:</b> (e.g. audiovisual, digital material, etc.)</p>	<p><b>Podcasts &amp; online presentations (selections)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCg8cj8FXhjc9sSCwLEme6ZQ/videos">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCg8cj8FXhjc9sSCwLEme6ZQ/videos</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://ispp.org/news/podcasts/">https://ispp.org/news/podcasts/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://play.acast.com/s/5c3e9132e75126f0794f4b81/5cb4fcdafe324a2e6bebb544">https://play.acast.com/s/5c3e9132e75126f0794f4b81/5cb4fcdafe324a2e6bebb544</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://mindofstate.com/">https://mindofstate.com/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.learnoutloud.com/podcaststream/listen.php?url=http://podcast.ucsd.edu/podcasts/rss.aspx?podcastId=1240&amp;persand_in_urlv=0&amp;all=1&amp;title=43728">https://www.learnoutloud.com/podcaststream/listen.php?url=http://podcast.ucsd.edu/podcasts/rss.aspx?podcastId=1240&amp;persand_in_urlv=0&amp;all=1&amp;title=43728</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:</b></p>	<p>All written work must be word-processed on Word and adhere to MLA guidelines for manuscript format and documentation.</p>
<p><b>SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:</b></p>	<p>Microsoft Office, Blackboard</p>

<b>WWW RESOURCES:</b>	<p>Indicative resources that will be made available through Blackboard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.hotpolitics.eu">www.hotpolitics.eu</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.obhilab.com/culture">https://www.obhilab.com/culture</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.politics-of-feelings.com/">https://www.politics-of-feelings.com/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://help.osf.io/article/145-preregistration">https://help.osf.io/article/145-preregistration</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.psychologie.hhu.de/arbeitsgruppen/allgemeine-psychologie-und-arbeitspsychologie/gpower">https://www.psychologie.hhu.de/arbeitsgruppen/allgemeine-psychologie-und-arbeitspsychologie/gpower</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.rstudio.com/products/rstudio/download/">https://www.rstudio.com/products/rstudio/download/</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://www.med.harvard.edu/aanlib/cases/caseNA/pb9.htm">http://www.med.harvard.edu/aanlib/cases/caseNA/pb9.htm</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://jjmedinaariza.github.io/modelling_book/a-first-lesson-about-r.html">https://jjmedinaariza.github.io/modelling_book/a-first-lesson-about-r.html</a></li> </ul> <p><a href="https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/science-isnt-broken/#part1">https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/science-isnt-broken/#part1</a></p>
<b>INDICATIVE CONTENT:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The biology &amp; cognitive neuroscience of politics and power</li> <li>• Development of political cognition</li> <li>• Personality, ideology &amp; identity</li> <li>• Deliberation &amp; participation</li> <li>• Motivated reasoning &amp; system justification</li> <li>• Emotional appeals &amp; affective polarization</li> <li>• Political information processing</li> <li>• Conservatism, dogmatism and rigidity</li> </ul>