

POL 306: Political Participation in the United States

Fall 2018

Dr. Laura C. Bucci (Lbucci@sju.edu)

Tuesday & Thursday: 9:30:10:45 AM

Course Description:

Why do people participate in American politics and civic life? Why don't they? Why should they?

This course emphasizes the political science literature on political participation and civic engagement. We will begin by examining the factors that make participation more or less likely including partisanship and social connectedness. Demographic and social identities shape how easily and how often we wish to involve ourselves in democratic processes. From there, we will focus on forms of political participation. Who votes? Who donates money? Who protests? Throughout we will acknowledge the constraints that make forms of participation easier from some than others. Finally, we will address the consequences for political life if individuals opt out of politics. What does isolation and decline in civic life mean for the rise of political and economic inequality?

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define partisanship and assess how it influences political behavior
- Critically consume polling data
- Identify how identity (broadly defined) shapes political behavior
- Understand how power and resources shape who participates
- Apply theories of political behavior to current politics
- Think about oneself as a political actor

Required Materials: (These books are available at the SJU bookstore. Please use the correct ISBN if you buy online- linked below).

- Han, Hahrie. 2014. *How Organizations Develop Activists: Civic Associations and Leadership in the 21st Century*. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0199336777
- Mason, Lilliana. 2018. *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity*. University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 978-0-226-52454

Graded Components:

All of the below will be graded on a 100-point scale and then weighted according to the following percentages to determine the final course grade. Due dates are listed under the Schedule of Readings and Assignments section at the end of this syllabus:

- Attendance: 5%
- Participation and Preparation: 15%
- Reading Journal: 15% (three, each worth 5%)
- Writing Assignments: 30% (two, each worth 15%)
- Final Exam: 35%

—There's a policy section here in course syllabi —

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

ALL MATERIALS SHOULD BE READ *BEFORE* THE CLASS DATE INDICATED

Notes about the schedule:

1. The content and schedule may change from this outline to meet the needs of this group
2. All points of view—argued carefully and persuasively—are encouraged in all assignments and discussions.
3. We'll discuss partisanship a lot. I don't care what *yours* is, only that you can explain it using theories learned in class.

Week 1: Introduction

Tuesday, 8/28: Syllabus review, course policies

Thursday 8/30

No class today. I am attending the American Political Science Association's Annual Conference.

Section 1: Partisanship

Week 2: Partisanship is something you're raised in

How are partisans created? What social institution resembles partisanship? How can partisanship change?

Tuesday 9/4- *The American Voter*

- Campbell, Angus, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes (1964) *The American Voter* Chapters 3, 6, & 7.

Thursday 9/6: Can Partisanship Change?

- Carsey, Thomas & Layman, Geoffrey. (2006). Changing sides or changing minds? Party identification and policy preferences in the American electorate. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(2), 464-477.
- Erikson, Robert, & Stoker, Laura (2011). Caught in the draft: The effects of Vietnam draft lottery status on political attitudes. *American Political Science Review*, 105(2), 221-237.
- Stoker, Laura and M. Kent Jennings. 1995. Life-Cycle Transitions and Political Participation: The Case of Marriage, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 89, No. 2: 421-433.

Week 3: Partisanship is something you think about

How does policy influence partisanship? What happens to partisanship when individuals learn political information?

Tuesday 9/11: A Running Tally

- Retrospective Voting in American Elections, Fiorina Chapter 5

Thursday 9/13: Do Americans know anything?

- Converse (1964) "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics."
- Delli Carpini & Keeter (1996), What Americans Know About Politics.. Intro., Ch.1-2

Week 4: Partisanship is who you like

Can partisanship be a calculation and an identity? Where do organized groups fit in this theory?

Tuesday 9/18:

- Green et al. (2004) "Partisan Hearts & Minds." Chapters 1 & 2.

Thursday 9/20:

- Green et al. (2004) "Partisan Hearts & Minds." Chapter 8

Week 5: Partisanship is who you are

What happens when multiple identities push you in the same partisan direction?

Tuesday 9/25: Overlapping Identities

- Mason Ch. 1-4

Thursday 9/27:

- Mason, Ch 5
- Leighley, Jan and Arnold Vedlitz (1999) "Race, Ethnicity, and Political Participation: Competing Models and Contrasting Explanations", Journal of Politics, Vol. 61, No. 4: 1092-1114.

Week 6: Partisanship is who you hate

"I never voted for anybody. I always voted against" — comedian W.C. Fields.

Do individuals actually feel an attachment to their party as much as they really don't like the alternate party?

Submit first reading journal today

Tuesday 10/2: Consequences of strong identities

- Mason Ch.6-8

Thursday 10/4: Negative Partisanship & When you hate someone so much you can't think

~~Efforts to Study the Cognitive Basis of Political Information~~
"The Role of Anger in the Assimilation of Political Information" Political Psychology 2018

- Ahler, D. J., & Sood, G. (2018). The parties in our heads: Misperceptions about party composition and their consequences. *The Journal of Politics*, 80(3), 000-000.

Week 7: Partisanship and Ideology

Tuesday 10/9

- Samara Klar and Yanna Krupnikov. Independent Politics: How Americans Disdain for Parties Leads to Political Inaction. Chapter 4

- Christopher Ellis and James Stimson. Ideology in America Chs. 1 and 6.

Section 2: Participation

Thursday 10/11

FIRST ESSAY DUE TODAY

- Han, Chapter 1

Week 8 Resources: Money and Time

Tuesday 10/16: No Class Fall Break

Thursday 10/18

- Leighley and Nagler Who Votes Now, Ch. 1
- Schlozman, K. L., Verba, S., & Brady, H. E. (2012). *The unheavenly chorus: Unequal political voice and the broken promise of American democracy*. Princeton University Press. Ch. 1, Chapters 5-6 (ebook)

Week 9: Resources: Social Networks

Tuesday 10/23

- Rolfe, M. (2012). *Voter turnout: A social theory of political participation*. Cambridge University Press. Ch.1-2 (SJU has ebook)

Thursday 10/25

- Mutz, Diana C., and Jeffery J. Mondak. "The workplace as a context for cross-cutting political discourse." *The Journal of Politics* 68.1 (2006): 140-155.
- Junn, Jane. 1999. "Participation in Liberal Democracy: The Political Assimilation of Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities in the United States", *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 42, No. 9, 1417-1438.

Week 10: Nonvoting

Tuesday 10/30

- Griffin, John and Brian Newman. 2005. Are Voters Better Represented? *JOP* 67:4 1206-1227
- Verba, Sidney. 2003. "Would the Dream of Political Equality Turn Out to Be a Nightmare?" *Perspectives on Politics* 1(4):663-680.

Thursday 11/1

Submit second reading journal today

- Schlozman, K. L., Verba, S., & Brady, H. E. (2012). *The unheavenly chorus: Unequal political voice and the broken promise of American democracy*. Princeton University Press. Ch. 10 (ebook)
- Skocpol, Theda. "Advocates Without Members: The Recent Transformation of American Civic Life." In *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*. Edited by Theda Skocpol, and Morris P. Fiorina. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press; New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 1999. ISBN: 0815728093. (ebook)

Week 11: Policies (or Elites) make Politics

Tuesday 11/6

- Mettler, S., & Soss, J. (2004). "The consequences of public policy for democratic citizenship: Bridging policy studies and mass politics". *Perspectives on politics*, 2(1), 55-73.
- Kalmoe, N. (2017). "Mobilizing Voters with Aggressive Metaphors". *Political Science Research and Methods*, 1-19. doi:10.1017/psrm.2017.36

Thursday 11/8

- Fredrick C. Harris. 1994. "Something Within: Religion as a Mobilizer of African American Political Activism", *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 56, No. 1: 42-68.
- Bobo, Lawrence and Franklin D. Gilliam. 1990. "Race, Sociopolitical Participation, and Black Empowerment." *American Political Science Review* 84(2):377-393.
- Gender and the Pathways to Participation: The Role of Resources Author(s): Kay Lehman Schlozman, Nancy Burns, Sidney Verba Source: *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 56, No. 4 (Nov., 1994), pp. 963-990
-

Section 3: Activism and Isolation

Week 12: Organizations

Tuesday 11/13

- Han, Ch. 2-4

Thursday 11/15

- [Who Protests: Self-Interest and White Opposition to Busing](#) Donald Philip Green and Jonathan A. Cowden. *The Journal of Politics* 1992 54:2, 471-496
- Chong, Dennis & Rogers, Reuel. "Racial Solidarity and Political Participation" *Political Behavior* (2005) 27: 347.

Week 13: Activism

Second Essay due today

Tuesday 11/19

Han, Ch. 5

Thursday 11/22 NO CLASS THANKSGIVING

Week 14: Protest

Tuesday 11/27

- Van Stekelenburg, Jacquelin, and Bert Klandermans. "The social psychology of protest." *Current Sociology* 61.5-6 (2013): 886-905.
- Schussman, Alan and Sarah A. Soule. 2005. "Process and Protest: Accounting for Individual Protest Participation." *Social Forces* 84(2):1083-1106.

Thursday 11/29

- McAdam, Doug and Ronnelle Paulsen. 1993. "Specifying the Relationship Between Social Ties and Activism" American Journal of Sociology 99:640-67.
- McClendon, Gwyneth H. "Social Esteem and Participation in Contentious Politics: A Field Experiment at an LGBT Pride Rally." American Journal of Political Science 58.2 (2014): 279-290.
- Chloe N. Thurston (2018) Black Lives Matter, American political development, and the politics of visibility, Politics, Groups, and Identities, 6:1, 162-170

Week 15: Isolation & Division

Submit final reading journal today

Tuesday 12/4 [Walsh, Katherine Cramer. 2012. Putting Inequality in Its Place: Rural Consciousness and the Power of Perspective. American Political Science Review 1-16.](#)

Thursday 12/6

Submit final reading journal today

Hollie Russell Gilman "For democracy to survive, it requires civic engagement" January 31, 2017. <https://www.vox.com/polyarchy/2017/1/31/14458966/democracy-requires-civic-engagement>

Kevin Mahnken "A growing achievement gap in civics education: What a new study reveals about social studies, class and race" , June 27, 2018

<http://laschoolreport.com/study-gaps-in-civics-performance-between-black-and-white-students-deepened-in-nclb-era/>

Final Exam: Due Exam Week TBD

Do not make plans to leave campus (e.g. buy plane tickets) prior to the announcement of the exam schedule.