

POLS 413
Race, Ethnicity, and Politics: The Political Psychology of Identity
SPRING 2024

Instructor Information

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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays,
2:00pm-3:30pm or by appointment.

Course Information

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:45am-11:00am

Learning Outcomes

Identity is a hotly contested, but often discussed topic in American politics. According to the media and most scholars, our identities in many ways determine our experience of and engagement in the political sphere. As one of the most diverse countries in the world, identity has been woven into America's politics from the moment European colonists first instigated conflict with indigenous peoples. Today, our identities shape how we understand political debates, events, and movements. But, what is identity? When do our identities matter in our political behavior and how? What forces lead to solidarity and fractionalization of social groups? And ultimately, what does conflict or unity between complex social groups mean for American democracy?

This course will examine the role that social identities play and have played in American politics primarily through the lens of research in political science and psychology, but also borrowing from history, sociology, and economics. The course begins by defining identity and exploring the psychological processes by which we form social identities and how we become conscious of those social groups to which we do and do not belong. We then will examine the more directly political consequences of this consciousness of social group identity: participation, conflict, and solidarity. We finish the course by investigating complex and intersectional identities, the policy and partisan implications of politicized social identities, and the role of the media in framing how we understand the political role of certain social identities.

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

- Understand and debate how social identities are connected to and structure American political institutions and behavior.
- Synthesize historical, sociological, economic, psychological, and political scientific theories and data on the role of various identities on American politics depending on certain contextual features.
- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of contemporary theoretical and methodological approaches to the social scientific study of social identity and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of these different approaches.
- Develop critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. In particular, developing the ability to integrate both theoretical arguments and empirical evidence.

Course Readings

All course materials will be provided on the course website so there is no need to purchase any additional books or materials for this course.

Course Requirements and Grade Distribution

(1) Seminar Participation (30% total): This course is a seminar class, meaning that instead of the instructor lecturing, we will spend class time discussing the readings. In particular, their strengths and weaknesses, how they relate to each other, and what they mean for American politics and democracy. You must all be active participants in these discussions, and that entails careful and thoughtful reading of each week's assignment. As you prepare for each class, you should think about three things:

(a) Criticisms of particular readings: are there weaknesses in the types of data or methods the authors used to test their hypotheses, in the theoretical assumptions or development of the study, or in the conclusions that the authors reach based on the evidence?

(b) How the readings relate to each other and what they tell us about American politics: How do the readings for a given week fit together (or not) and how are they related to earlier readings or current events? Taken together, what do the readings tell us about the role of race, ethnicity, and other identities in American politics and democracy?

(c) Lines of future research: What questions do these readings leave unanswered? Do they point to new directions for future research? What theories, data, or methods are needed to address these new directions/questions?

You should come to class prepared to discuss all three of these things about the readings for the week—about both the reading in general and particular articles/chapters.

(2) Class Assignments (30% total): Identity politics involves topics that are deeply important in American politics and society, but Americans are often unequipped to engage deeply with such topics. As social scientists, we must think of creative and effective ways to fill this need. This project requires you to develop these skills to communicate various important theories/policies/findings to a wider audience outside academia. The point of these assignments is to critically engage with a way that identity impacts American politics and inform a broader audience about this and why it matters for democracy. The specifics of each of these five assignments are below in the course outline.

(3) Discussion Leader (10%): Each student will be assigned as the discussion leader for a class session. As discussion leader, you will be required to read the assigned readings extra closely and come up with 3-5 questions to motivate and guide class discussion of the materials. You will submit these questions to me by email at least 2 hours before class time.

(4) Final Project (30%): You will each be required to submit a final project as a culmination of your work in the course, but I am flexible about the form this project takes. Each student will meet with me by no later than week four of the course to discuss your initial plans for the project. The project can be a traditional research seminar paper, it could be a popular essay in the style of an article in a magazine such as *The Atlantic*, it can be a podcast episode, a YouTube video, a

public lecture, a short skit or play, a cartoon series, etc. All students, regardless of the type of project will give a presentation to the class in the final week of the course. I will provide a rubric for this assignment in the coming weeks, and we will adjust the rubric to match the type of project you have decided to do.

Grading is based on the following distribution:

Participation	30%
Class Assignments	30%
Discussion Leader	10%
Presentation of Final Project	5%
Final Project	25%

The following scale will determine your final grade:

93% +	A
90-92%	A-
87-89%	B+
83-86%	B
80-82%	B-
77-79%	C+
73-76%	C
70-72%	C-
60-69%	D

Course Policies

(1) No extensions or make-ups: There will be no extensions on assignments except in the cases of serious illness, deaths in the family, or university-sponsored activities (with a note from the particular university organization). My policy is one of honesty. If you are going to be late on an assignment because of some other reason, including that you are just having trouble managing your time, be honest with me about this. I will be understanding when students are upfront with me about what is going on and show an honest effort to prioritize the assignments for this class, within reason. If you need an extension, please contact me 24 hours before the due date so we can talk about an alternative timeline.

If you are having trouble managing your time and worry you will not complete assignments on time, please come talk to me or seek resources from your academic advisor.

(2) Be a good class citizen: Good citizenship in the classroom calls for everyone to devote their full attention to the lectures and ensuing discussion. That means silencing your cell phones, no texting, and no surfing the web. I understand that many students use their laptops or tablets for taking notes, but many also use them to tweet, snapchat, surf the web, etc. This is both sort of rude and distracting to other students. If you are using a laptop or tablet, you must sit in the first two rows of the room and you are only to use it for note-taking and review of course materials.

(3) Respect: We do not know what anyone else’s experience is or has been, listen and be kind.

(4) Be prepared: Read the material and be prepared to discuss beyond the surface-level meaning. Before class, begin analyzing the material in context.

(5) Privacy Statement: Course materials (videos, assignments, lecture, readings, etc.) are for use in this course only. You may not upload them to external sites, share with another person, or post them for public commentary without my written permission and the written permission of any classmates also in the materials.

We may record class meetings to support remote students. These recordings will be available for review upon request. The University strictly prohibits anyone from duplicating, downloading, or sharing live class recordings with anyone outside of this course, for any reason.

If you need to join the class remotely via Zoom, please check surroundings first and use headphones to maintain the privacy of the course.

Academic Integrity

All rules concerning academic honesty as set out in the current edition of *Hilltopics* will be enforced. Particular attention should be paid to the section on plagiarism. Students are reminded of their obligation to abide by the UTK Honor Code: “An essential feature of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.”

Disabilities that Constrain Learning

Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 865-974-6087 in 2227 Dunford Hall to document their eligibility for services. ODS will work with students and faculty to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

The Student’s Role in Improving Teaching and Learning through Course Assessment

At UT, it is our collective responsibility to improve the state of teaching and learning. During the semester, you may be requested to assess aspects of this course either during class or at the completion of the class. You are encouraged to respond to these various forms of assessment as a means of continuing to improve the quality of the UT learning experience.

Key Campus Resources for Students:

- ❑ [Center for Career Development and Academic Exploration](#) (Career counseling and resources; Handshake job search system)
- ❑ [Course Catalogs](#) (Listing of academic programs, courses, and policies)
- ❑ [Hilltopics](#) (Campus and academic policies, procedures and standards of conduct)
- ❑ [OIT HelpDesk](#) (865) 974-9900

- [Schedule of Classes/Timetable](#)
- [Student Health Center](#) (visit the site for a list of services)
- [Academic Success Center](#) (Academic support resources)
- [Undergraduate Academic Advising](#) (Advising resources, course requirements, and major guides)
- [University Libraries](#) (Access to library resources, databases, course reserves, and services)

Alteration of this Syllabus

The instructor reserves the right to revise, alter and/or amend this syllabus, as necessary. Students will be notified by email and/or CANVAS of any such revisions, alterations and/or amendments.

Course Outline

Date	Topic	Readings (before Class)
WEEK 1		
	Course Introduction and Defining Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fukuyama, “Against Identity Politics” 2. Abrams, “Identity Politics Strengthens Democracy” 3. Fearon, “What is Identity (as we now use the word?)” <p>Assignment: Imagine you are gathered with loved ones and they say “identity politics is ruining America.” Based on the readings from this week, write a brief essay (~500 words) about how you would respond to this statement.</p>
WEEK 2		
	The Social Self	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tajfel and Turner, “The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior” 2. Brewer, “The social self” 3. Hogg and Turner, “Intergroup Behaviour, Self-Stereotyping and the Salience of Social Categories” 4. Wilkins and Rieck, “Detecting Racial Identification: The Role of Phenotypic Prototypicality” 5. Huddy, “From Social to Political Identity”
WEEK 3		
	Group Consciousness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Multiple Authors. 2019. “Dialogue: Linked Fate and the Politics of Groups and Identities” <i>Politics, Groups, and Identities</i> 7(3): 610-694. (read any three of these pieces) 2. Gay, Claudine, Jennifer Hochschild, and Ariel White. 2016. “Americans’ Belief in Linked Fate: Does the Measure Capture the Concept?” <i>Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics</i> 1(1): 117-144.

WEEK 4		
Reading Social Science Research	Social Science Writing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Berry, William D. Berry and Mitchell S. Sanders. 2000. <i>Understanding Multivariate Research</i>, pp. 1-39, 45-49. 2. Long, Abby. 2015. "10 Things to Know About Reading a Regression Table." <p>1. Bring two one-page excerpts of two previous analytical writing assignments to class. These can be from any subject, though social science is preferred. One that you are proud of and one that you believe you could improve upon.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Gerring, John. "General Advice on Social Science Writing." 3. Büthe, Tim. "Planning and writing an Analytical Empirical Paper in Political Science."
WEEK 5		
Dominant and Superordinate Group Identities		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jardina, "In-Group Love and Out-Group Hate: White Racial Attitudes in Contemporary U.S. Elections" 2. Nelsen and Petsko, "Race and White Rural Consciousness" 3. Schildkraut, "Boundaries of American Identity" <p>Assignment: Write a brief response (~500 words) to the papers on white identity and its political importance. What is convincing, what do you find lacking? What would you test next in this area of study?</p>
WEEK 6		
The Political Consequences of Group Identification		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. McClain et al., "Group Membership, Group Identity, and Group Consciousness: Measures of Racial Identity in American Politics." 2. White, Laird, and Allen, "Selling Out?: The Politics of Navigating Conflicts Between Racial Group Interest and Self-Interest." 3. Egan, "Group Cohesion without Group Mobilization: The Case of Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals." 4. Listen to the podcast: "From Stonewall to the Present, Fifty Years of L.G.B.T.Q. Rights" From the New Yorker Radio Hour
WEEK 7		
Group Mobilization		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nelsen, Matthew D. 2021. "Cultivating Youth Engagement: Race and the Behavioral Effects of Critical Pedagogy." <i>Political Behavior</i> (43): 751-784. 2. Ramírez, Ricardo, Romelia Solano, and Bryan Wilcox-Archuleta. 2018. "Selective Recruitment or Voter Neglect? Race, Place, and Voter Mobilization in

	Identity and Intergroup Conflict	<p>2016.” <i>Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics</i> 3(1): 156-184.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Fraga, Bernard L., Eric Gonzalez Juenke, and Paru Shah. 2020. “One Run Leads to Another: Minority Incumbents and the Emergence of Lower Ticket Minority Candidates.” <i>Journal of Politics</i> 82(2): 771-775. 1. Kinder and Sanders, <i>Divided by Color</i> (Chapter 5) 2. Blumer, “Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position” 3. Mousa, “Building Social Cohesion between Christians and Muslims through Soccer in post-ISIS Iraq” 4. Watch YouTube Video on Robbers Cave Experiment (Sheriff and Sheriff 1961)
WEEK 8		
	<p>Conflict and Democracy</p> <p>Prosocial Emotions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bartels, “Ethnic Antagonism Erodes Republicans’ Commitment to Democracy” 2. Valentino and Neuner, “Why the Sky Didn’t Fall: Mobilizing Anger in Reaction to Voter ID Laws” 1. Chudy, Piston, Shipper, “Guilt by Association: White Collective Guilt in American Politics” 2. Chudy, “Racial Sympathy and Its Political Consequences” <p>Assignment: Write a blog post (~500 words) in which you explain to a public audience how intergroup conflict can threaten democracy and how prosocial emotions may or may not help strengthen democracy.</p>
WEEK 9		
	<p>Stigma</p> <p>Indigenous Identity Politics</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Major and O’Brien, “The Social Psychology of Stigma” 2. Jefferson, “Respectability and the Politics of Punishment among Black Americans” 1. Beauvais, “The Political Consequences of Indigenous Resentment” 2. Foxworth et al, “I Hope to Hell Nothing Goes Back to the Way It Was Before”: COVID-19, Marginalization, and Native Nations
WEEK 10		
	Intersectionality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hancock, “When Multiplication Doesn’t Equal Quick Addition: Examining Intersectionality as a Research Paradigm.”

	Fluid Identities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Roccas and Brewer, "Social Identity Complexity" 3. McKenzie, Brian D. and Stella M. Rouse. 2013. "Shades of Faith: Religious Foundations of Political Attitudes among African Americans, Latinos, and Whites." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 57(1): 218-235. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Davenport, "The Role of Gender, Class, and Religion in Biracial Americans' Racial Labeling Decisions" 2. Saperstein and Penner, "Racial Fluidity and Inequality in the United States" 3. Wong, Janelle. 2015. "The Role of Born-Again Identity on the Political Attitudes of White, Blacks, Latinos and Asian Americans." <i>Politics and Religion</i> 8 (4): 641-658.
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WEEK 11

	Media Matters in Identity Frames	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lajevardi, Nazita. 2021. "The Media Matters: Muslim American Portrayals and Effects on Mass Attitudes." <i>Journal of Politics</i>. 2. Pena-Vasquez and Kwakwa, "Barack Obama and Kamala Harris both identify as Black. The news media doesn't describe both that way."
	Identity and Inequality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color" 2. Jefferson, Neuner, and Pasek, "Seeing Blue in Black and White: Race and Reactions to Officer-Involved Shootings"

WEEK 12

	Representation in Policymaking	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hooijer, Gerda and Desmond King. 2021. "The Racialized Pandemic: Wave one of COVID-19 and the Reproduction of Global North Inequalities." <i>Perspectives on Politics</i>. 2. Minta, Michael D. and Nadia E. Brown. 2014. "Intersecting Interests: Gender, Race, and Congressional Attention to Women's Issues." <i>Du Bois Review</i> 11(2): 253-272.
	Partisan Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Egan, Patrick J. 2019. "Identity as the Dependent Variable: How Americans Shift their Identities to Align with their Politics." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i>. 2. Mason and Wronski, "One tribe to bind them all" 3. Margolis, "How Politics Affects Religion"

		Assignment: Make a TikTok, twitter thread (no more than five tweets), or an Instagram album post in which you explain how one type of identity (racial-ethnic, religious, class, etc.) is woven into American partisan politics and what that means for political outcomes.
WEEK 13		
	Final Project Presentations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare feedback for the paper you are discussing 2. Prepare your slides and 8-12 minute presentation
WEEK 14		
	Final Project Presentations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare feedback for the paper you are discussing 2. Prepare your slides and 8-12 minute presentation
FINAL PROJECT DUE—EXAM WEEK		