Course Description: This course examines the psychology behind political attitudes and behaviors. By using insights from psychology and (often, but not always) experimental methods, political psychology offers a unique way of understanding politics. We will address questions such as:

- How do people acquire their political beliefs?
- What types of campaign advertisements are effective?
- Do people approach politics in a rational way, or are they more emotional?
- What are the causes of intolerance and racism? What are the prospects for change?
- How does identity affect political choices?

Prerequisites: None

Professor:
Bethany Albertson
Office: Batts 4.124
Office Hours: Wednesday 1:30 – 4:30
balberts@austin.utexas.edu

Grading Policy:
2 in class exams (25% each)
1 paper proposal (10%)
1 paper (10-15 pages) (25%)
Class Participation (15%)

This will be a small, discussion-based class and I expect you to come to class prepared! Also, there will be an original research component to the course, and students will be expected to design surveys for their class papers. There is no formal attendance requirement for this class, but keep in mind that participation will be factored into your grade.

Exams: Will consist of short answer, identifications and essay questions.
Paper: You are going to write an original research paper during this class, meaning you will develop a question and a hypothesis, design a study, collect data, and write up your results. This is should be a challenging, rewarding aspect of the class, and it will be important to keep up with each step and ask questions along the way.
Class Policies:

**Review Sheets:** I'll post a review sheet prior to exams on Canvas. These are meant to help you focus your studies on the most important topics -- **WARNING** simply memorizing a short definition for each of the terms WILL NOT leave you prepared for the exam.

**Disability Accommodations:** Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, [http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/). If you require accommodation, it is your responsibility to bring your note to me EARLY in the semester so we can work out our arrangements.

**Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism, cheating, and other academic misconduct are serious violations of your contract as a student. Plagiarism is using someone else’s language without quotations and attribution or using someone else’s idea (even in different language) without attribution. I expect that you will know and follow the University's policies on cheating and plagiarism. If you are unsure about the standards of academic integrity, it is your responsibility to ask the professor. Any suspected cases of academic misconduct will be handled according to University regulations. A copy of the University's Honor Code can be found here: [http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html](http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html).

**Make-up Policy:** Full credit make-up exams will only be allowed for (1) University sanctioned events (verification required) (2) extraordinary circumstances (verification -- e.g., physician's note -- required) or (3) religious observances. Make-up exams are any exams taken before or after the scheduled exam time. Make-up exams requested for any other reason will be decided on a case by case basis, and will be subject to a 10% grade penalty. I do not approve make-up exams under any circumstances for vacations or early departure for breaks. Make-up exams will be given within one week of the exam and will be offered at only one time. If you know you are going to miss an exam, notify me as soon as possible BEFORE the exam – no later than 14 days prior to the exam date. Students who miss exams without prior notification will face a 20% grade penalty, and will be given the chance to participate in the make-up ONLY if they contact me before the make-up administration.

**Emergency Evacuation Policy:** In the event of a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon the activation of a fire alarm or the announcement of an emergency in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without instruction to do so from the Austin Fire Department, University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office. Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university, and should remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same as the way they typically enter buildings. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class. Faculty members must then provide this information to the Fire Prevention Services office by fax (512-232-2759), with "Attn. Mr. Roosevelt Easley" written in the subject line.
Frequently asked questions:

1. **Q:** What should I call you?
   **A:** Please call me Professor Albertson. I go by my first name with graduate students and undergrads who have become research assistance, and use professor with all other undergraduates. I mention this because I’ve learned that many undergrads find titles confusing, and default to “hey” – when in doubt, use a title or ask!

2. **Q:** What are your pet peeves?
   **A:** Cheating on exams & papers, talking in class. I encourage discussion, but side conversations are distracting.

**Texts:**
Readings will be made available on-line and in a reader. Some readings are subject to change and all changes will be posted on Canvas and announced in class.

**Course Schedule:**

**Week 1:** January 13, 15, 17

**Introduction**


**Week 2:** January 22, 24 (No class on January 20th, MLK Day)

**Political Socialization**


Week 3: January 27, 29, 31
Belief Systems


Week 4: February 3, 5, 7
Knowledge & Heuristics


Week 5: February 10, 12, 14
Emotion

Westen, Drew. The Political Brain. The Role of Emotion in Deciding the Fate of a Nation. Chapter 1-3.

February 10: Workshop research proposals in class
February 14: Research Proposal Due

Week 6: February 17, 19, 21
Emotion II


Gadarian, Shana Kushner and Bethany Albertson. 2013. Anxiety, Immigration and the Search for Information. Political Psychology.

Week 7: February 24, 26, 28
Media Effects


Week 8: March 3, 5, 7
Media Effects II


March 5: Review Session
March 7: Exam 1

Spring Break

Week 9: March 17, 19, 21
Implicit (?) Attitudes


**Week 10: March 24, 26, 28**

**Groups**


**Week 11: March 31, April 2** (Professor out of town April 4)

**Research & Paper Writing**

There is no original reading this week. I’ve set this time aside for us to workshop drafts of your papers, get feedback from me and from your peers. This week will also include a statistics tutorial in order to prepare you for working with your survey data.

**Week 12: April 7, 9, 11**

**Racial Attitudes & Political Campaigns**


**Week 13: April 14, 16, 18**

**Tolerance**


**April 18: Paper Due**

**Week 14: April 21, 23, 25**

**Social Influence, Obedience and Conformity**


**Week 15: April 28, 30, May 2**

**Student Choice!** Is there something you’d like to learn more about, that’s missing from this syllabus? I’ll poll the class in week 13, and choose some readings based on your feedback.

**April 30: Review Session**

**May 2: Exam 2**