

# Political Science 390: The Politics of Trump

## Online Course, Winter Session

**Instructor:** Professor Elizabeth C. Connors

**Email:** elizabeth.connors@stonybrook.edu

### Course Description

How did Trump capture the Republican nomination? How did he win in the general election? How will he work with Democrats and Republicans in Congress? And how will public opinion evolve over his presidency? Gain potential answers to these questions as well as a broader perspective of the current presidential administration by enrolling in a new online special topics course, The Politics of Trump.

### Learning Objectives

This course applies well-established research in political science to current events regarding Trump's presidential campaign and the Trump administration. Its goal is to help illuminate the success of the Trump campaign, utilizing a broad array of research in political science and political psychology. Course requirements involve reading, writing, and online discussions, with the expectation that students apply readings to the Trump campaign and/or administration and can discuss the politics of Trump with an open and eager mind.

### Required Texts

No required texts—all readings will be accessible online or through Blackboard.

### Grading

The setup for this course is likely different from what you typically experience in a political science course. This is for two reasons: it is a 3-week online class, and it is heavily focused on current events. In light of these unique circumstances, I attempted to design this course to be just as unique. The class is essentially made up of five parts: 1) in-depth reading of relevant scholarly articles, 2) reading of relevant journal articles, 3) 12 discussion posts (2 per topic/session—each with a max of 250 words), 4) at least 12 discussion comments (at least 2 per topic/session, but more will improve your grade), and 5) 6 session quizzes (to make sure you have read).

For each session, I have designated a topic and relevant scholarly and journalistic articles. The readings aim to improve your critical thinking (for both life and the discussion), and so these should be read *before* making your first post. These posts are meant to integrate the readings and evoke a thoughtful discussion. For that reason, in every discussion post, you must reference the specific articles as well as to the Trump campaign or presidency—the more references to these concrete items, the better. **If even one of these is missing (e.g., you talk about the Trump presidency with no reference to the week's readings), the post will be graded as zero.**

**These posts cannot be longer than 250 words.** This is because the class' success (as well as your success in the class) is dependent on dense discussion—and this will be curtailed by long or rambling thoughts. This exercise—of translating your ideas into clear and succinct posts—is also helpful for your general success in life. The ability to translate your own ideas into clear and interesting thoughts on paper (or in person) is vital in today's complex and busy world. Learning

to be efficient, clear, and thought-provoking with your words, as well as to keep an open mind to alternative perspectives, is an immensely desirable ability.

**For these reasons, the required post comments also have a very strict 50-word limit.** Again, this is not only to help keep your ideas clear and succinct, but also to aid in discussion. Lengthy posts with lengthy comments discourage a fruitful discussion, and that would undermine the course's objectives.

In sum, you are required to answer a quiz each section, make 2 discussion posts per session (on *different* ideas—both integrating the reading *and* current events), as well as *at least* 2 discussion comments per session (the more comments the better—simply meeting the minimum will not help your grade). The goal of these posts is to *think* and *discuss*, not to argue. **If I sense animosity or an unfruitful discussion, I will redirect the topic and require all current discussion ceased.** The more I see you integrating readings and others' comments, the better your grade will be, so please put great thought into your posts and comments (simply writing something is worth very little—it needs to be interesting and thoughtful).

That said, the grade will be comprised of: 48% for discussion posts (i.e., 8% a session), and 24% for discussion comments to others (i.e., 4% a session), and 28% for weekly quizzes (i.e., ~4.5% a session).

### **Final Grading Scheme:**

93.5 – 100%	A
89.5 – 93.4	A-
86.5 – 89.4	B+
83.5 – 86.4	B
79.5 – 83.4	B-
76.5 – 79.4	C+
73.5 – 76.4	C
69.5 – 73.4	C-
66.5 – 69.4	D+
59.5 – 66.4	D
0 - 59.4	F

## **Course Requirements**

This is an online course and therefore there will be no face-to-face class sessions. All assignments and course interactions will utilize internet technologies. Therefore, this course requires you to have access to a computer that can access the internet. You are responsible for having both a reliable computer and reliable internet connection throughout the course. You will need to have access to, and be able to use, the following software packages:

- A web browser (e.g., Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Safari)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (free)

### **Email and Internet**

You also must have an active Stony Brook University email account. *All instructor correspondence will be sent to your SBU email account.* Please plan on checking your SBU email account regularly for course related messages. This course also uses Blackboard for the facilitation of communications between faculty and students, submission of assignments, and posting of grades. The Blackboard course site can be accessed at <https://blackboard.stonybrook.edu>.

### **Campus Network or Blackboard Outage**

When access to Blackboard is not available for an extended period of time (greater than one entire evening—6pm until 11pm) you can reasonably expect that the due date for assignments will be changed to the next day (with the assignments still due at midnight).

### **Attendance/Participation**

Preparation for class means reading the assigned readings and reviewing all information required for each class session. Attendance in an online course means logging into Blackboard on a regular basis and participating in all discussion sessions.

### **Studying and Preparation Time**

This course requires you to spend time preparing and completing assignments. A three-credit course typically requires 135 hours of student work, which amounts to **46 hours per week** in the winter session. While the exact number of hours might not be necessary for everyone, you should expect to spend a significant amount of time working on the material and actively participating throughout the course.

### **Submitting Assignments**

All assignments **MUST** be submitted via Blackboard. Each assignment will have a designated place to submit the assignment.

### **Drop and Add Dates**

If you feel it is necessary to withdraw from the course, please see <http://www.stonybrook.edu/registrar/calendar-academic.shtml> for full details.

### **Subject to Change Notice**

All material, assignments, and due dates are subject to change (with prior notice of course). It is your responsibility to review the course site regularly to stay up to date on any potential changes.

### **Disability Support Services (DSS) Statement**

If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services (631) 632-6748 or <http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/dss/>. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential. Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information go to the following website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/ehs/fire/disabilities/asp>.

**Academic Integrity Statement**

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instance of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/>

**Critical Incident Statement**

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, and/or inhibits students' ability to learn.

## Schedule

### Session 1: January 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>

#### **How does the U.S. voting structure—voting rights, the electoral college, and third-party candidates—influence who turns out to vote? What about in 2016?**

- Thom File, “Who Votes? Congressional Elections and the Electorate: 1978–2014,” US Census Bureau (July 2015).
- Hans Noel, “Why Can’t the G.O.P Stop Trump?” *New York Times*, March 1, 2016.
- Eric Maskin and Amartya Sen, “The Rules of the Game: A New Electoral System,” *New York Review of Books*, January 29, 2017.
- Jonah Engel Bromwich, “How Does the Electoral College Work?” *New York Times*. November 8, 2016.
- Suevon Lee and Sarah Smith “Everything You’ve Ever Wanted to Know about Voter ID Laws,” Pro Publica, March 9, 2016.
- Marjorie Randon Hershey. 2009. “What We Know about Voter-ID Laws, Registration, and Turnout,” *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 42(1): 87–91. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Amanda Skuldt, “Could a Third-Party Candidate Win the US Presidency? That’s Very Unlikely,” *Washington Post*, August 2, 2016.
- Paul R. Abramson, John H. Aldrich, Phil Paolino, and David W. Rohde, “Third-Party and Independent Candidates in American Politics: Wallace, Anderson, and Perot,” *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 110, no. 3 (1995): 349–367. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Christopher J. Devine and Kyle C. Kopko. “5 Things You Need to Know About How Third-Party Candidates did in 2016,” *Washington Post*, November 15, 2016.
- Thomas B. Edsall, “The Democratic Coalition’s Epic Fail,” *New York Times*, November 10, 2016.
- Gabriel Sanchez and Matt A. Barreto, “In Record Numbers, Latinos Voted Overwhelmingly against Trump: We Did the Research,” *Washington Post*. November 11, 2016.
- Mike Davis, “Not a Revolution—Yet,” Verso Books blog, November 15, 2016.

### Session 2: January 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>

#### **Who votes for whom? What about in 2016? Where did Trump and Clinton succeed and fail?**

- Bartels, Larry. “Your Genes Influence Your Political Views. So What?” *Washington Post*. November 12, 2013.
- Conover, Pamela Johnston, and Stanley Feldman. 1981. “The origins and meaning of liberal/conservative self-identifications.” *American Journal of Political Science* 25 (4): 617–645. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Jost, John T., Jack Glaser, Arie W. Kruglanski, and Frank J. Sulloway. 2003. “Political conservatism as motivated social cognition.” *Psychological bulletin* 129 (3): 339-375. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Lazaro Gamio, “Urban and Rural America Are Becoming Increasingly Polarized,” *Washington Post*, November 17, 2017.

- Carol Graham, “Unhappiness in America,” Brookings Institute, May 27, 2016.
- “The Geography of Recession,” *New York Times*, March 3, 2009.
- Jens Krogstad, Jeffrey Passel, and D’Vera Cohn. “5 Facts about Illegal Immigration in the US,” Pew Research Center, November 3, 2016.
- Eric Knowles and Linda Tropp, “Donald Trump and the Rise of White Identity in Politics,” *The Conversation*, October 20, 2016.
- John Sides
- and Michael Tesler, “How Political Science Helps Explain the Rise of Trump: The Role of White Identity and Grievances,” *Washington Post*, March 3, 2016.
- “Where Trump and Clinton Won,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 21, 2016.
- Josh Katz, “‘Duck Dynasty’ vs. ‘Modern Family’: 50 Maps of the U.S. Cultural Divide,” *New York Times*, December 27, 2016.

### **Session 3: January 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>**

**How does the public reason through politics? Are they knowledgeable, emotional, easily manipulatable by rhetoric, motivated reasoners?**

- Somin, Ilya. “What No One Talks About During Election Season: Voter Ignorance.” *Forbes*, November 3, 2014.
- Gass, Nick. “Americans Bomb Pew Test of Basic Political Knowledge.” *Politico*, April 28, 2015.
- Mooney, Chris. “Inside the Political Brain.” *The Atlantic*, May 1, 2012.
- Saletan, William. “Implicit Bias Is Real. Don't Be So Defensive.” *Slate*, October 5, 2016.
- Lupia, Arthur. 1994. “Shortcuts Versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California Insurance Reform Elections.” *American Political Science Review* 88 (1): 63-76. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Mondak, Jeffery J, and Mary R Anderson. 2004. “The knowledge gap: A reexamination of gender-based differences in political knowledge.” *Journal of Politics* 66 (2): 492–512. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Marcus, George E., and Michael B. MacKuen. 1993. “Anxiety, enthusiasm, and the vote: The emotional underpinnings of learning and involvement during presidential campaigns.” *American Political Science Review* 87 (3): 672–685. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Brader, Ted. 2005. “Striking a responsive chord: How political ads motivate and persuade voters by appealing to emotions.” *American Journal of Political Science* 49 (2): 388–405. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Chong, Dennis, and James N. Druckman. 2007. “Framing theory.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 10: 103–126. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Turner, Joel. 2007. “The messenger overwhelming the message: Ideological cues and perceptions of bias in television news.” *Political Behavior* 29 (4): 441–464. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Taber, Charles S., and Milton Lodge. 2006. “Motivated skepticism in the evaluation of political beliefs.” *American Journal of Political Science* 50 (3): 755–769. [read only introduction and conclusion].

### **Session 4: January 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>**

## **How do certain environments and personalities alter the success of presidential candidates?**

- Amanda Taub, “The Rise of American Authoritarianism,” *Vox*, March 1, 2016.
- Alan Wolfe, “‘The Authoritarian Personality’ Revisited,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, October 7, 2005.
- MacWilliams, Matthew. “The One Weird Trait That Predicts Whether You're a Trump Supporter.” *Politico*, January 17, 2016.
- Oliver, Eric J., and Wendy M. Rahn. 2016. “Rise of the *Trumpenvolk*: Populism in the 2016 Election.” *The Annals of the American Academy* 667.
- John Sides and Michael Tesler, “How Political Science Helps Explain the Rise of Trump: It’s the Economy, Stupid,” *Washington Post*, March 4, 2016.
- Kilibarda, Konstantin and Daria Roithmayr. “The Myth of the Rust Belt Revolt.” *Slate*, December 1, 2016.
- Cherlin, Andrew J. “The Downwardly Mobile for Trump.” *New York Times*, August 25, 2016.
- Tesler, Michael. “Views About Race Mattered More in Electing Trump Than in Electing Obama.” *The Washington Post*, November 22, 2016.
- “The Real Reason Trump Won: White Fright.” *The Conversation*, November 17, 2016.
- Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman, Charles Taber, and Gallya Lahav. 2005. “Threat, anxiety, and support of antiterrorism policies.” *American Journal of Political Science* 49 (3): 593–608. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Dunwoody, Philip T., and Sam G. McFarland. 2017. “Support for Anti-Muslim Policies: The Role of Political Traits and Threat Perception.” *Political Psychology*, forthcoming. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Rahn, Wendy and Eric Oliver. “Trump's Voters Aren't Authoritarians, New Research Says. So What Are They?” *Washington Post*, March 9, 2016.
- Adam Enders and Steven Smallpage, “Racial Prejudice, not Populism or Authoritarianism, Predicts Support for Trump over Clinton,” *Washington Post*, May 26, 2016.

## **Session 5: January 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>**

### **Today’s Polarized America—Did Social Factors Influence Trump’s Success?**

- Huddy, Leonie, Lilliana Mason, and Lene Aarøe. 2015. “Expressive Partisanship: Campaign Involvement, Political Emotion, and Partisan Identity.” *American Political Science Review* 109 (01): 1–17. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Taub, Amanda. “Why Americans Vote 'Against Their Interest': Partisanship.” *New York Times*, April 12, 2017.
- Sides, John and Michael Tesler. “How Political Science Helps Explain The Rise of Trump: Most Voters Aren't Ideologues.” *Washington Post*, March 2, 2016.
- Iyengar, Shanto, and Sean J Westwood. 2015. “Fear and Loathing Across Party Lines: New Evidence on Group Polarization.” *American Journal of Political Science* 59(3): 690–707. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Mason, Lilliana. 2015. “I Disrespectfully Agree: The Differential Effects of Partisan Sorting on Social and Issue Polarization.” *American Journal of Political Science* 59(1): 128-145. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Roberts, David. “Partisan Polarization on Climate Change is Worse Than Ever.” *Vox*,

September 7, 2016.

- Klar, Samara. 2014. "Partisanship in a social setting." *American Journal of Political Science* 58(3): 687–704. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Connors, Elizabeth, Samara Klar, and Yanna Krupnikov. "There May Have Been Shy Trump Supporters After All." *Washington Post*, November 12, 2016.
- Klar, Samara, and Yanna Krupnikov. *Independent Politics*, [chapter TBD].

### **Session 6: January 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Today's Political Landscape—The Media & The President, Political Misinformation, Fake News, and The World Order**

- Ladd, Jonathan. 2012. *Why Americans Hate the Media and How it Matters*. Princeton University Press, chapters 1, 3, 4.
- James H. Kuklinski, Paul J. Quirk, Jennifer Jerit, David Schwieder, and Robert F. Rich, "Misinformation and the Currency of Democratic Citizenship," *Journal of Politics*, vol. 62, no. 3 (2000), pp. 790–816. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Pew Research, "Many Americans Believe Fake News Is Sowing Confusion," December 15, 2016.
- Anson, Ian. "Why Republicans and Democrats Can't Agree on Basic Economic Facts." *New Republic*, August 29, 2016.
- Mooney, Chris. "The Science of Why We Don't Believe Science." *Mother Jones*, May/June 2011.
- Soll, Jacob. "The Long and Brutal History of Fake News." *Politico*, December 18, 2016.
- Flynn, D.J., Brendan Nyhan, and Jason Reifler. 2017. "The Nature of Origins of Misperceptions: Understanding False and Unsupported Beliefs About Politics." *Advances in Political Psychology* 38(1): 127-150. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Brendan Nyhan and Jason Reifler, "When Corrections Fail: The Persistence of Political Misperceptions," *Political Behavior*, vol. 32, no. 2 (2010), pp. 303–30. [read only introduction and conclusion].
- Maheshwari, Sapna. "How Fake News Goes Viral: A Case Study." *New York Times*.
- Adelman, Jeremy. "Donald Trump is Declaring Bankruptcy on the Post-War World Order." *Foreign Policy*, November 20, 2016.