

Psychology, Gender, and Politics

Lecturer: Emily J. Hanson, Ph.D.

Course Description:

The course begins with an introduction to the main concepts from political psychology, and the latter portion of the course applies these concepts to the study of anti-gender ideologies and populism. Political psychology examines how psychology informs politics, including how we build political identities, why people engage in political behaviors, and the mutually constitutive relationship between people and institutions. The course will primarily focus on research from social/political psychology, but we will also look to broader literatures, including cognitive and personality psychology, sociology, political science, and international relations. Although much of the research in this field is conducted with a focus on the “global north” and the United States in particular, in this course, we will take a global perspective and will discuss whether the types of conclusions and methods used elsewhere generalize to broader settings.

We will cover topics such as ideology, political personality, partisanship, intergroup relationships, conflict, conspiracies, and prejudice/stigma. In the latter part of the course, we will then use these concepts to engage in a study of the recent rise of anti-gender ideologies and right-wing populism.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes:

1. Explain the foundational concepts and theories of political psychology and describe how psychological processes influence political attitudes, identities, and behaviors.
2. Analyze the relationship between individuals and political institutions, including how social, cultural, and political environments shape beliefs and behaviors.
3. Analyze gender, politics, and power through a psychological lens, including the role of gender norms, social roles, and institutions.
4. Develop skills in reading, interpreting, and critically evaluating empirical research in political psychology and related fields.

5. Design a theoretically informed research proposal, including using the literature to ground an idea, develop hypotheses, identify variables, and select appropriate methods.

Course Requirements:

1. Reflections

For the assignment, students are required to pick a recent event or news story and analyze it using one or more topics discussed in class. For example, they might analyze how collective memory is used in a campaign speech. A total of three reflections will be required from each student, each 500-words long.

2. In-Class Activities

At three points during the course, we will have in-class activities (e.g., tutorials, group analysis of a scientific study, debate, etc.). In each case, there will be a written element due at the end of the class. This written element will be graded as a representation of the student's participation in the activity.

3. Final Paper Preparation Worksheet

In order to prepare for the final paper, students will complete a worksheet in which they specify elements of their hypothetical study, including their hypothesis, independent and dependent variables, and a summary (1-2 sentences) of the study procedure. This will allow the instructor to provide feedback prior to the completion of the final paper.

4. Final Paper

This final paper is an APA-style research paper for a hypothetical psychological study that includes a title page, abstract, introduction, and proposed methods, as well as references. In this paper, students will introduce a topic relevant to political psychology, pose a hypothesis, and propose a method for testing it. Students are not required to gather or analyze data. I will provide a template for this assignment. The final paper must be 2,000 words, excluding the bibliography. In-text citations are required; papers without them will not be graded.

5. Class Participation

Students are required to attend class and engage in class discussions. Students should arrive prepared with comments and questions on the assigned topic and readings.

Assessment and Final Grade:

1. Three reflections, 3x5%, 15%
2. Three In-Class Activities, 3x5%, 15%
3. Final Assignment Preparation Worksheet, 10%
4. Final Paper, 30%
5. Class participation, 30%

Grading Policy:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description
A+	97-100	Excellent Work
A	93-97	Outstanding Work
A-	90-92	
B+	87-89	Good work
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	
C+	77-79	Acceptable Work
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	
D+	67-69	Work that is significantly below average
D	63-66	
D-	60-62	
F	0-59	Work that does not meet the minimum standards for passing the course

Mandatory Completion Policy

Note that all mandatory assignments and exams must be completed to the best of your ability in order for your final grade to be issued. Failure to complete a mandatory assignment or exam may result in a failing grade.

AEP Academic Integrity Policy

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are not tolerated. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the development of knowledge and learning is encouraged at many stages of the learning process. While we value technology for educational purposes, we also value originality and the retainment of knowledge, and thus using AI for assignments and examinations, even if rephrased, is strictly prohibited and considered an academic integrity violation, unless the instructor explicitly allows for it in the context of evaluated work

AEP Non-Discrimination/Harassment Policy

The AEP program in Prague promotes a diverse learning environment where the dignity, worth, and differences of each individual are valued and respected. Discrimination and harassment, whether based on a person's race, gender, sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or other legally protected characteristics, are repugnant and completely inconsistent with our objectives. Retaliation against individuals for raising good faith claims of harassment and/or discrimination is prohibited.

AEP Diversity Policy

AEP is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming community that values diversity in all its forms. We believe that one of the most meaningful lessons of studying abroad is learning to navigate and appreciate differences with curiosity and an open mind. While engaging across differences can sometimes be challenging or uncomfortable, these moments are essential for growth and learning. We recognize that every member of our community, even with the best intentions, may occasionally make missteps. Our commitment is to provide a supportive environment where respectful and honest dialogue helps us learn from these experiences, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to thrive and broaden their perspective.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

CEE Introductory Lecture Series

AEP Introductory Lecture Series

Week 2

Political Identity

Readings

- **Required:**

- Brewer, M. B. (2001). The many faces of social identity: Implications for political psychology. *Political Psychology*, 22(1), 115-125.

- **Optional:**

- Berezin, M. (2001). Emotions and political identity: Mobilizing affection for the polity. *Passionate politics: Emotions and social movements*, 83-98.

Week 3

Political Ideology, Attitudes, and Beliefs

**Reflection 1

Readings:

- **Required:**

- Jost, J. T., Nosek, B. A., & Gosling, S. D. (2008). Ideology: Its resurgence in social, personality, and political psychology. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 3(2), 126-136.

- **Optional:**

- Seeberg, H. B. (2017). How stable is political parties' issue ownership? A cross-time, cross-national analysis. *Political Studies*, 65(2), 475-492.

Week 4

Values, Morality, and Justice Beliefs

Readings:

- **Required:**
 - Jost, J. T., & Kay, A. C. (2010). Social Justice. *THE PRAEGER HANDBOOK OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND PSYCHOLOGY*.
- **Optional:**
 - Schein, C., & Gray, K. (2018). The theory of dyadic morality: Reinventing moral judgment by redefining harm. *Personality and social psychology review*, 22(1), 32-70.

Week 5

Political Emotions

Readings:

- **Required:**
 - Ahmed, S. (2013). The cultural politics of emotion. Routledge. Chapter 2-3: The Organization of Hate and The Affective Politics of Fear
- **Optional:**
 - Vik, A., Galvez-Pol, A., Park, S., & Tsakiris, M. (2026). Politics embodied: How politics shapes and is shaped by the bodily experience of emotions. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 123(20), e2534895123.

Week 6

Political Personality and Authoritarianism

****Reflection 2**

Readings:

- **Required:**
 - Osborne, D., Costello, T.H., Duckitt, J. *et al.* The psychological causes and societal consequences of authoritarianism. *Nat Rev Psychol* 2, 220–232 (2023).

- **Optional:**

- Nilsson, A. (2024). Antidemocratic tendencies on the left, the right, and beyond: A critical review of the theory and measurement of left-wing authoritarianism. *Political Psychology*, 45, 693–708.

Week 7

Collective Memory and Political Narratives

Readings:

- **Required:**

- Burnell, R., Umanath, S., & Garry, M. (2023). Collective memories serve similar functions to autobiographical memories. *Memory*, 31(3), 316–327.
- Abel, M., Umanath, S., Fairfield, B., Takahashi, M., Roediger III, H. L., & Wertsch, J. V. (2019). Collective memories across 11 nations for World War II: Similarities and differences regarding the most important events. *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition*, 8(2), 178-188.

- **Optional:**

- Yamashiro, J. K., Van Engen, A., & Roediger III, H. L. (2022). American origins: Political and religious divides in US collective memory. *Memory Studies*, 15(1), 84-101.

Week 8

Creating Enemies and Allies: Prejudice, Stereotypes, and Discrimination

Readings:

- **Required:**

- Verkuyten, M., Adelman, L., & Yogeeswaran, K. (2020). The psychology of intolerance: Unpacking diverse understandings of intolerance. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 29(5), 467-472.

- **Optional:**

- Balmas, M., Harel, T. O., & Halperin, E. (2022). I hate you when I am anxious: Anxiety during the COVID-19 epidemic and ideological hostility. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 52(11), 1081-1093.
- van Baar, J. M., Halpern, D. J., & FeldmanHall, O. (2021). Intolerance of uncertainty modulates brain-to-brain synchrony during politically polarized perception. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 118(20), e2022491118.
- Kossowska, M., Czernatowicz-Kukuczka, A. and Sekerdej, M. (2017), Many faces of dogmatism: Prejudice as a way of protecting certainty against value violators among dogmatic believers and atheists. *Br J Psychol*, 108: 127-147.

Week 9

Gender, Politics, and the State

**** Final Assignment Preparation Worksheet Due**

Readings:

- **Required:**

- Schneider, M. C., & Bos, A. L. (2019). The application of social role theory to the study of gender in politics. *Political Psychology*, 40, 173-213.
- Young, I. M. (2003) The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State

- **Optional:**

- Markéta Kos Mottlová & Veronika Šprincová (2025) "CZECH WOMEN MPS AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE"
- Discredited and Disgraced: Gender-based Violence against Women Politicians and Journalists in Slovakia. (2026). *Czech Journal of International Relations*.

Week 10

Right-Wing Populism and Anti-Gender Movements

Readings:

- **Required:**

- Chapter 1 - Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2017). *Populism: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press

- **Optional:**

- Urbanska, K., and Guimond, S. (2018). Swaying to the Extreme: Group Relative Deprivation Predicts Voting for an Extreme Right Party in the French Presidential Election.
- Kováts, E., & Pöim, M. (2015). Gender as symbolic glue. The Position and Role of Conservative and Far Right Parties in the Anti-Gender Mobilizations in Europe.

Week 11

Political Violence, the Manosphere, and Incels

****Reflection 3**

Readings:

- **Required:**

- Piazza, J. A. (2025). Incel beliefs and support for political violence among US males: The mediating effects of masculinity stress, aggression, outgroup hate, and illiberalism. *Crime & Delinquency*, 00111287241310820.
- Carian, E. K., DiBranco, A., & Kelly, M. (2024). Intervening in problematic research approaches to incel violence. *Men and Masculinities*, 27(5), 533-542.

- **Optional:**

- De Volo, L. B. (2016) Unmanned? Gender Recalibrations and the Rise of Drone Warfare

Week 12

Conspiracy Theories and Intolerance of Uncertainty: Case Studies Sex Trafficking and Anti-Trans Panic

Readings:

- **Required:**

- Uscinski, J., Enders, A., Diekmann, A., Funchion, J., Klofstad, C., Kuebler, S., ... & Wuchty, S. (2022). The psychological and political correlates of conspiracy theory beliefs. *Scientific reports*, 12(1), 21672.
- Douglas, K. M., Sutton, R. M., & Cichocka, A. (2017). The Psychology of Conspiracy Theories. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 26(6), 538-542.

- **Optional:**

- Jolley D, Meleady R, Douglas KM. Exposure to intergroup conspiracy theories promotes prejudice which spreads across groups. *Br J Psychol*. 2020 Feb;111(1):17-35. doi: 10.1111/bjop.12385. Epub 2019 Mar 13. PMID: 30868563; PMCID: PMC7004178.
- Marie, A., & Petersen, M. B. (2022). Political conspiracy theories as tools for mobilization and signaling. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 48, 101440.
- Imhoff, R., Zimmer, F., Klein, O., António, J. H., Babinska, M., Bangerter, A., ... & Van Prooijen, J. W. (2022). Conspiracy mentality and political orientation across 26 countries. *Nature human behaviour*, 6(3), 392-403.

Week 13

Reproduction and the State

Class Description

Readings:

- **Required:**

- Osborne, D., Huang, Y., Overall, N. C., Sutton, R. M., Petterson, A., Douglas, K. M., ... & Sibley, C. G. (2022). Abortion attitudes: An overview of demographic and ideological differences. *Political Psychology*, 43, 29-76.

- Optional:
 - Fikslin, R. A. (2021). Toward an intersectional psychological science of reproductive norms: Generating research across the natalism spectrum. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 45(3), 308-324.
 - Rousaki, A. (2025). Reproductive labour, abortion bans, and techno-feudalism: A call for a Marxist feminist approach in psychology. *Theory & Psychology*, 09593543251397600.

Professor's profile:

Emily J. Hanson, PhD

Nationality: American

Academic degrees:

B.S. University of Florida

M.A. Wake Forest University

M.A., Ph.D. Washington University in St. Louis

Research interests: Political Psychology, Social Identity, Emotion, Inequality, Anti-gender Radicalism, Public Policy, Feminist Security Studies, and Collective Climate Action