SOC422H1S - Advanced Studies in Political Sociology
Topic: Publics and Partisans in Liberal Democracies
University of Toronto
Class hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 4-6 p.m. EST (online)

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Office Hours: By appointment, held online via BB Collaborate.
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Course Description

To explore key themes and debates in political sociology, this course proposes to consider a specific topic: publics and partisans in liberal democracies. Liberal democracy, broadly defined, refers to a political system that both protects individual rights and translates popular views into public policy. We will collectively consider and discuss readings on three core themes: 1) diverging perspectives on liberal democracy; 2) debates related to trends of partisanship; and 3) views on experiences in the public sphere.

Course set-up and material
This course will be taught entirely synchronously. All lectures will be held live via BB Collaborate. All reading materials will be available to download on Quercus prior to the first lecture.

Evaluations - Individual Learning Plan

Every student has their own learning style, set of interests, and schedule. To reflect this fact, this course offers a variety of options from which students can choose to build their own individual learning plan. 50% of your final grade will come from ongoing participation and a final paper, but you get to choose where the other 50% will come from.

Mandatory evaluative components

Final Paper (30%)

8 to 10 pages research paper due for session 12 (August 17).

Ongoing participation (20%)

Every week, to facilitate synchronous discussion, students will be assigned questions to consider while doing the readings. In the first half of each lecture, every student will be expected to offer some reflections based on the assigned questions. In the second half, I will introduce the readings and the questions for the next session. Students will be evaluated based on their overall contributions to our discussions during the term.

Optional evaluative components
After the first lecture, every student needs to email the instructor their preferred option.

Option A. *Discussion posts and summative reflection* (total 50%)
During the term, students who pick this option must submit 5 discussion posts on assigned readings. Students have to submit their posts before we discuss the readings during the live lecture and all five need to be submitted for July 29 (meaning you can skip only one of the 6 sessions). Each post will be 1 page in length and is worth 5% for a total of 25%.

Students must also provide a summative reflection (2 pages in length) and present during session 9 (worth 25% in total).

Option B. *Position papers* (total 50%)
Students who pick this option must write two position papers of 3 pages in length (each paper worth 25%). For each paper, you have to bring into conversation one reading from two separate sessions and forward your own argument. The first position paper is due for session 5 (July 20) and the second is due for session 9 (August 5).

Option C. *Presentations and write-ups* (total 50%)
Students who pick this option have to do two presentations with write-ups (each presentation and write-up together are worth 25%). Each presentation has to be 5-10 minutes and the write-ups have to be 1-1 ½ page in length. Students have to present live with a PowerPoint.

For the first presentation on session 5 (July 20), students must argue in favor of one the accounts discussed in the first part of the course (i.e., optimistic, pessimistic, and perennial).

The second presentation will be during session 9 (August 5) where students will discuss a reading and contemporary issue not covered during the sessions (to be approved by the instructor, must be related to one of the themes of the course). During the presentation, students must argue in favor of the inclusion of the reading and issue into a future iteration of the syllabus.

Late and Missed Test Policies

Handing in assignments
All assignments must be submitted electronically via Quercus (except for the discussion posts, which can be submitted via email).

Deadlines
The assignments are due by 4:00 p.m. for the stated date. Please refer to the Due Date stated on page 1 and 2 of the Syllabus. Late work will not be accepted without proper documentation (the Declaration of Absence on ACORN).

Accessibility
If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit

http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility as soon as possible.

If you miss a test or a paper deadline, do not contact the instructor or a TA unless you have followed the steps described here.

In case of illness, you must supply a completed the Declaration of Absence on ACORN. If you are registered with Accessibility Services, your counselor will need to send an email message on your behalf (a one-week extension being the norm).

Student Responsibilities and Expectations

This class is completely online. All lectures will be provided to students via Quercus' BB Collaborate function asynchronously, so you can download lectures at your convenience.

Email Policy

I will respond to your email within two business days (48 hours, except weekends and holidays). In an email exchanges, you must use your official University of Toronto email. Please also include the course code (e.g. SOC422) in the subject line and your full name and student number in your message. Please do not send a repeat email (e.g., "did you get my email?").

In general, please treat emails as you would any other professional communication. You should be respectful in the way you address the instructor and the TA. Email is most suitable for questions that are clear, concise, and easily answerable. If you need help on course material, I strongly encourage you to attend office hours or make an appointment. For all general inquiries, please refer to the course syllabus.

Grade Appeals

The instructor and teaching assistants do their best to mark work fairly, consistently, and accurately. Nevertheless, one of us may unintentionally err in our marking duties. For basic mathematical errors, simply alert the TA of the error. In the case of more substantive appeals, you must wait at least 24 hours after receiving your mark. If you wish to appeal, please submit a thorough written explanation to your Instructor of why you think your mark should be altered. If your appeal is deemed appropriate, the entirety of your test/assignment will be re-graded. Please note that upon re-grade your mark may go down, stay the same, or go up. You have 14 days after receiving a mark to appeal it.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules.

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the Code. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus resources like the U of T Writing Website. If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please speak to me or seek the advice of your college registrar.

Course schedule

Session 1 (July 6). *Course introductions*

Part 1: Diverging perspectives

Session 2 (July 8). *Optimists*

Readings (selected excerpts from):
1. Dalton, Russell J., and Christian Welzel (2014). *The Civic Culture Transformed: From allegiant to assertive citizens.*

2. Putnam, Robert D., Robert (1993). *Making Democracy Work.*

3. Neblo, Michael A., Kevin M. Esterling, and David MJ Lazer (2018). *Politics with the people: Building a directly representative democracy.*

Session 3 (July 13). *Pessimists*

Readings (selected excerpts from):
1. Mounk, Yascha (2018). *The People vs. Democracy: Why our freedom is in danger and how to save it.*

2. Norris, Pippa, and Ronald Inglehart (2019). *Cultural Backlash: Trump, Brexit, and authoritarian populism.*

3. Achen, Christopher H., and Larry M. Bartels (2017). *Democracy for Realists: Why elections do not produce responsive government.*

Session 4 (July 15). *Perennialists*

Readings (selected excerpts from):
1. Alexis de Tocqueville (1835-1840). *Democracy in America.*

2. Verba, Sidney, and Gabriel Almond (1963). *The Civic Culture: Political attitudes and Democracy in five nations*.

3. MacPherson, C.B. (1977). The *Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*.

Session 5 (July 20). *Presentations and check-in*

Part 2: Partisans

Session 6 (July 22). *Party Disaffiliation and Ideological Polarization*

Readings (selected excerpts from):
1. Levendusky, Matthew (2010). *The Partisan Sort: How Liberals became Democrats and Conservatives became Republicans*.

2. Dassonneville, Ruth, and Marc Hooghe (2018) "Indifference and Alienation: Diverging dimensions of electoral dealignment in Europe."

3. DellaPosta, Daniel. (2020). "Pluralistic Collapse: The "Oil Spill" Model of Mass Opinion Polarization."

Session 7 (July 27). *Class and Culture Wars*

Readings (selected excerpts from):
1. Evans, Geoffrey. (2000). "The continued significance of class voting."

2. DellaPosta, Daniel, Yongren Shi, and Michael Macy. (2015) "Why do liberals drink lattes?"

3. Baldassarri, Delia, and Barum Park (2020). "Was there a Culture War? Partisan Polarization and Secular Trends in US Public Opinion."

Session 8 (July 29). *Politicization, Responsiveness, and Legitimacy*

Readings (selected excerpts from):
1. Gauchat, Gordon (2012). "Politicization of Science in the Public Sphere: A study of public trust in the United States, 1974 to 2010."

2. Kriesi, Hanspeter, and Julia Schulte-Cloos (2020). "Support for radical parties in Western Europe: Structural conflicts and political dynamics."

3. van Ham, Carolien, Jacques JA Thomassen, Kees Aarts, and Rudy B. Andeweg, eds. (2017) *Myth and reality of the legitimacy crisis: Explaining trends and cross-national differences in established democracies*

Session 9 (August 5). *Presentations and check-in*

Part 3: Publics

Session 10 (August 10). *Engaged and disengaged publics*

Readings (selected excerpts from):
1. Han, Hahrie (2016). "The organizational roots of political activism: Field experiments on creating a relational context."

2. Grasso, Maria. T. (2016). *Generations, political participation and social change in Western Europe*.

3. Giugni, Marco (2020) "Talking about youth: The depoliticization of young people in the public domain."

Session 11 (August 12). *Deliberative and participatory publics*

Readings (selected excerpts from):
1. Fung, Archon, and Erik Olin Wright (2001). "Deepening democracy: Innovations in empowered participatory governance."

2. Fournier, Patrick, Henk Van der Kolk, R. Kenneth Carty, André Blais, and Jonathan Rose (2011). *When citizens decide: Lessons from citizen assemblies on electoral reform*.

3. Fishkin, James S (2018). *Democracy when the people are thinking*.

Session 12 (August 17). *Local public cultures: Communication and Connections*

Readings (selected excerpts from):
1. Mische, Ann (2008). *Partisan publics: Communication and contention across Brazilian youth activist networks*.

2. Diani, Mario (2015). *The Cement of Civil Society*

3. Luhtakallio, Eeva (2012). *Practicing democracy: Local activism and politics in France and Finland*.