

The Changing American Electorate, 1960-2021

Political Science 1202 (NEW)
Political Science 234 (OLD)
Syllabus 0.3
[September 7th, 2022]

Fall 2022
Place: McNeil 285
Lecture Times: Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:15 am – 11:44 am

Professor's Office Hours:
Fridays, 10 am – 12 noon
and by appointment, PCPSE 440 or
on Zoom: <https://upenn.zoom.us/j/9144204790>
* No office hours 9/16 or 10/7

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Professor's On-Campus Mailbox: among the faculty mailboxes in the Department of Political Science, 133 S. 36th Street, Philadelphia, PA, 1st floor, southeast corner of the building

COURSE BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES: In 1960, a Democratic candidate won a very narrow Presidential victory with just 100,000 votes; in 2016, the Democratic candidate lost but received nearly 3 million more votes than her opponent. Still, contemporary scholars and journalists have made a variety of arguments about just how much the American political landscape changed in the intervening 56 years, often calling recent decades a "transformation."

This course explores and critically evaluates those arguments. Key questions include: how, if at all, have Americans' political attitudes and ideologies changed? How have their connections to politics changed? What has this meant for the fortunes and strategies of the two parties? How have the parties' base voters and swing voters changed? What changes in American society have advantaged some political messages and parties at the expense of others? Focusing primarily on mass-level politics, we consider a wide range of potential causes, including the changing role of race in American politics, suburbanization, economic transformations, the evolving constellation and structure of interest groups, declining social capital, the changing role of religion, immigration, and the actions of parties and political elites. For three weeks in the semester, we will take a break from considering broader trends to look at specific elections in some depth.

To answer those questions, we will draw on a broad range of tools. We will read speeches from select elections to understand what issues were most central. We will also analyze election returns and polling

data to understand the changes in American political geography. And we will turn to current academic articles and books, learning important statistical and historical tools along the way. Consistently throughout the course, we will ask a critical question: which methods are most appropriate for which research questions?

DATA ANALYSIS: One tool will play a particular role in our inquiry: *quantitative analysis of survey and election data*. America is a nation with more than 300 million people, more than 100 million of whom cast ballots in high-profile races for president. No one individual can know even a small fraction of all American voters, meaning that tools for the systematic analysis of public opinion and voting are essential. This class will devote some time to understanding basic data-analytic techniques. On three weeks, it will ask students to submit short data analysis assignments; on other weeks, it will instead ask for short blog posts to the class website. The final papers will also present an analysis of survey data, election data, or other public opinion data.

GOALS: At the end of this course, students should be able to make convincing arguments about the shifting ground of American mass politics and introduce the appropriate evidence to support their views. Students emerging from this course will further be able to discuss presidential elections between 1960 and 2016 in detail. They should be able to express and critique these arguments cogently in writing or in oral presentation. They should be able to make and evaluate basic arguments about common political data sets.

BACKGROUND: Students should have taken at least one course in political or social science as well as one course in statistics/data analysis at the level of PSCI 1800 (formerly 107). Some knowledge of post-war American politics will be helpful. Knowledge of statistics or political history is *not* required, but a willingness to learn the basic tools is. Before any article requiring statistical background, we will briefly review the necessary tools to interpret the key findings.

INCLUSION: Among my central goals as an educator—and among the University of Pennsylvania’s central goals as a school—is to foster an inclusive, supportive, inquisitive environment in which all our students can be, explore, question, and express their authentic selves, irrespective of their specific backgrounds or identities. We are tremendously fortunate to live in a society and a university that is diverse across many dimensions, and to have the opportunity to learn from each other across lines of age, class, ethnicity, gender, language, nativity, nationality, politics, race, religion, and many others. In particular, we all live and study together in West Philadelphia, a predominantly Black community, and should always be asking ourselves how we can be better neighbors.

Building supportive, inquisitive, respectful communities amidst diversity and disadvantage cannot be a passive process—it requires an active, often strenuous effort to listen to one another, to understand one another, and to respect one another. I ask that all students approach this course in a spirit of good faith and forbearance. We are members of a single intellectual community, here to grow and learn from each other. Comments, opinions, and behaviors that may be common or condoned in some communities may be concerning or offensive in others. I try to be quick to listen and slow to judge; I ask the same of my students.

With respect to gender, students are very welcome but not obligated to share their pronouns with me and/or their classmates as they feel comfortable. Some students appreciate the recognition and opportunity to self-identify; other students may be questioning their relationship to these categories and may prefer not to. As always, I ask that students be respectful of one another.

LOGISTICS AND ASSIGNMENTS: The class meetings will be on Mondays and Wednesdays. *Students should arrive at each Wednesday class ready to discuss that week’s readings.*

The instructor will **ask for data analyses or blog posts related to the week's topic prior** to several class meetings. These assignments, along with attendance, preparation, and participation in discussions, will account for 30% of the term grade, and *will be due on Tuesdays at midnight unless otherwise announced*.

If you have trouble with the course blog, accessing readings via Canvas, or any other technological issues, please let the instructor.

By 4 pm on Friday, September 30th, 2022, students will turn in the first written assignment, which will be 5-7 pages, and will present an interview of a friend or family member who is at least 50 years old to probe how, if at all, that person's political views have changed over the period in question (15% of term grade).

Students are required to submit a 1-2 page prospectus and outline of their final paper on Friday, November 18th (5% of term grade). It should include an annotated list of key references. The professor will propose several viable topics, but topics proposed by students are fine *after consultation with either the professor or the teaching assistant*.

On Monday, December 12th, by 4 pm, all students will turn in a 8-10 page research paper, which will involve the analysis of real-world political data and which will focus on a specific trend, election, jurisdiction, issue, or other theme in the course (20% of term grade).

The final examination for this course is currently scheduled for [UNIVERSITY HAS NOT RELEASED THE EXAM SCHEDULE; BETWEEN DEC. 15-22] (30% of term grade). No make-up examination will be given.

CLASS, CELL PHONES, AND COMPUTERS: Students are required to refrain from using the Internet, email, IM, Facebook, SnapChat, Twitter, Pokemon Go, or other programs not related to taking notes. The only way to do this is to ask that people turn off their computers and remain off their phones in class. In return, all lecture slides will be made available, and *recordings of the lectures will be made available if technology permits*. All cell phones must be off throughout the class. Also, with the permission of the class, the instructors may choose to post audio recordings of the class publicly.

COMMUNICATION: The instructor will establish a Slack channel for communication in the course. The instructor will reply to direct messages and/or emails within 24 hours on weekdays. Please do not expect a reply to a late-night message.

LATE PAPERS AND GRADING/ASSESSMENT: Those who anticipate a scheduling conflict should contact the professor weeks prior to any deadline. Except in extraordinary circumstances, *no extensions will be granted within 48 hours of a deadline*. Late papers will be penalized one third of a grade (e.g. A- to B+) for every day. If an extension is sought due to overlapping deadlines, please request an extension from the other relevant professor as well. No more than one extension will be granted in a term without a formal request by the student's Dean.

To the extent possible, all grading will be done blindly. To facilitate this, please refrain from writing your name on written assignments and please instead include your Penn ID number. Anyone wishing to appeal a grade must do so in writing within one week of receiving the graded assignment. On appeal, the professor reserves the right to raise the grade, to lower it, or to leave it unchanged.

Students in this course are expected to uphold academic honesty in all aspects of their academic work and course preparation. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic honesty, please clarify them with the professor prior to starting any assignment.

All assignments will be turned in electronically via Canvas.

OFFICE HOURS: The Professor will hold separate weekly office hours to address any follow-up questions, to suggest further reading, to discuss assignments, and to cover other topics.

DRAFTS AND PAPERS: The Professor will review drafts during office hours, but not at other times. Those who wish to discuss draft papers in more detail should make use of the Marks Family Writing Center or other such resources.

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE: The University of Pennsylvania is a research university, and has various resources for conducting research, many of which aren't used as extensively as they should. For example, librarians are available and eager to assist with papers and projects.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Academic accommodations will be granted only to those who provide certification.

ATTENDANCE: The general expectation is that students will attend all classes, as it is essential for your learning that you attend, participate, and interact with classmates.

If you are symptomatic for COVID 19 or another illness, please let the instructor know, and please do **not** attend class. I will try to record all classes via Panopto and post the recordings to Canvas.

Now, other responsibilities or challenges may come up during the semester, and students may contract COVID. Thus all students will be granted two "inadvertences"—that is, two class sessions during which they will not be expected to participate in class. However, to be excused, any additional absences beyond the inadvertence require written approval from the student's Dean. ***Also, students are asked to notify the professor prior to missing any class or using an inadvertence.***

GRADE DETERMINATION:

Attendance, Participation, Blog Posts, Data Analyses, Exit poll (30%)
First paper (15%)
Second Paper Outline (5%)
Second Paper (20%)
Final Examination (30%)

OBTAINING THE READINGS

Most readings will be available via the course's Canvas website. I work to keep the number of books students may be asked to purchase short. Students are encouraged to purchase these books (all are available at the Penn bookstore). The financial aid office and Penn First Plus provide support for some students to purchase books:

Carmines and Stimson. 1989. *Issue Evolution*. ISBN 978-0691023311
Fiorina et al. 2010. (3rd Edition.) *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*. ISBN 978-0205779888
Sides, John, Lynn Vavreck, and Michael Tesler. 2018. *Identity Crisis*. ISBN 978-0691174198
Du Mez, Kristin Kobes. *Jesus and John Wayne*. ISBN 978-1631499050.
Lynn Vavreck. 2009. *The Message Matters*. ISBN 978-0691139630

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

1. Introduction: Trends in American Presidential Politics (Wednesday, August 31st)

Assigned reading for Wednesday, August 31st: please read the syllabus thoroughly.

2. Theorizing Voters (Wednesday, September 7th)

Charles Lave and James March. 1975. *An Introduction to Models in the Social Sciences*, pages 1-84 (Canvas)

Samuel Popkin, 1994. *The Reasoning Voter*, Chapters 3-4 (Canvas)

Blog Post Assignment #1: By midnight on Tuesday, September 6th, please post on Canvas one potential model explaining changing patterns of Presidential voting in the U.S. from 1960 to 2016. The model should be succinct (e.g. no more than a few sentences) and lean toward being creative rather than accurate.

3. Economic Models of Voting (September 12th – September 14th)

Lynn Vavreck. 2009. *The Message Matters*, Chapters 1-3, 7 (Canvas)

Monday's class on September 12th will begin with a discussion of the first paper assignment.

Data Assignment #1 due Friday, September 16th at 6 pm ET via Canvas. Assignment will ask students to explore demographic correlations in 1960 survey data.

Wednesday's class September 14th will be an asynchronous lecture posted to Canvas. There is no class on September 14th, as I will be attending the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association.

4. Race and Southern Realignment (September 19th – 21st)

Carmines and Stimson. 1989. *Issue Evolution*, Pgs. 3-58, 82-4, 115-137 (Canvas/purchase)

Dawson, Michael. 1994. *Behind the Mule*. Pgs. 1-14.

Suggested reading:

Donald Green, Bradley Palmquist, and Eric Schickler. 2002. *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 140-163

Tesler, Michael. 2012. The Spillover of Racialization into Health Care. *American Journal of Political Science*

Thomas Edsall. 1991. *Chain Reaction*

Blog Post Assignment #2: By midnight on Tuesday September 20th, please post on the class blog a discussion of an issue/cleavage/dimension that could be the source of a current or future issue evolution.

5. Ideology (September 26th – 28th)

Ellis, Christopher and James A. Stimson. 2012. *Ideology in America*. Chapters TBA (Canvas)

Klein, Ezra. "No One's Less Moderate than Moderates" <http://www.vox.com/2014/7/8/5878293/lets-stop-using-the-word-moderate>

Suggested reading:

Hans Noel. 2016. "Ideological Factions in the Republican and Democratic Parties." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*

Hans Noel. 2012. "Listening to the Coalition Merchants: Measuring the Intellectual Influence of Academic Scribblers."

Hinich and Munger. 1996. *Ideology and the Theory of Political Choice*.

Stephen Jessee. 2012. *Ideology and Spatial Voting in American Elections*.

Broockman, David. 2016. "Approaches to Studying Policy Representation." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*

Friday, September 30th: First paper assignment (5-7 pages) due at 4 pm

6. Survey Research and the Contours of Public Opinion (October 3rd and 5th)

Cantril, Albert. 1991. *The Opinion Connection: Polling, Politics and the Press*, Chapter 3 (Canvas)

Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro. 1992. *The Rational Public*, Chapters 3-4 (Canvas)

Schuessler, Alexander. 2000. *A Logic of Expressive Choice*. Chapter 2.

Sample survey questions to be circulated and discussed

Suggested reading:

Squire, Peverill. 1988. "Why the Literary Digest Poll Failed." (Canvas)

Blog Post Assignment #3: By midnight, Tuesday, October 4th, please draft several survey questions on a political topic of interest to you. Pre-test them on your friends, roommates, etc., and then post three on the class blog.

7. The Election of 1968 (October 10th and 12th)

Michael Kazin. 1995. *The Populist Persuasion*, Chapter 9, "Stand Up for the Working Man: George Wallace and the Making of a New Right" (Canvas)

E.J. Dionne. 1991. "Freedom Now: The New Left and the Assault on Liberalism," in *Why Americans Hate Politics* (Canvas)

Richard Nixon, Address to the 1968 Republican National Convention (to be handed out)

Hubert Humphrey, Address to the 1968 Democratic National Convention (to be handed out)

George Wallace, 1963 inaugural address (to be handed out)

Suggested reading:

Kevin Phillips. 1969. *The Emerging Republican Majority*, 25-42, 184-186, 286-298, 407-411 (Canvas)

Data Analysis Assignment #2 due midnight, Tuesday, October 11th

8. Social Capital and Civic Engagement (October 17th and 19th)

Theda Skocpol. 1999. "Advocates without Members," *Civic Engagement in American Democracy* (Canvas/coursepack)

Robert D. Putnam. 2000. *Bowling Alone*, Chapters 2 (Canvas)

Recommended:

John Aldrich. 1995. "The Critical Era of the 1960s," in *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America* (Canvas)

Wednesday's class (October 19th) will begin with a discussion of the second paper assignment. All students should have cleared their topic with the professor or the teaching assistant after class or during office hours by Friday, October 28th.

9. Dealignment, Independents, and Distrust (October 24th and 26th)

Mark Hetherington. 2005. *Why Trust Matters: Declining Political Trust and the Demise of American Liberalism*, Chapters 1, 3, and 5 (Canvas)

Daniel Hopkins. 2014. "Americans' Faith in Government Shapes How They Feel about Obamacare—Trust Me." <http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/americans-faith-in-government-shapes-how-they-feel-about-obamacare-trust-me/>

Suggested reading:

Carmines, et al. "Unrealized Partisanship: A Theory of Dealignment," *Journal of Politics*

Bruce Keith et al. 1992. *The Myth of the Independent Voter*, pages to be announced (Canvas)

Blog post assignment 4: due Tuesday October 25th at midnight

10. Suburbs and Space (October 31st and November 2nd)

McGirr, Lisa. 2001. *Suburban Warriors*, Chapters 1-2, 5-6 (purchase)

11. The Election of 1980 and the Religious Right (November 7th)

E.J. Dionne. 1991. "The Lost Opportunity: Jimmy Carter and the Not-So-Vital Center," in *Why Americans Hate Politics* (Canvas)

Michael Kazin. 1995. "Conservative Capture: From Nixon to Reagan," in *The Populist Persuasion* (Canvas)

Kristin Jobes du Mez, *Jesus and John Wayne*

Ronald Reagan, 1980 Address to the Republican National Convention (handout)

Jimmy Carter, 1980 Address to the Democratic National Convention (handout)

Suggested reading:

Meffert, Michael F., Helmut Norpoth, and Anirudh Ruhil. 2002. "Realignment and Macropartisanship," *American Political Science Review* (Canvas)

Robert Wuthnow, "Mobilizing Civic Engagement: The Changing Impact of Religious Involvement"

Robert D. Putnam. 2000. *Bowling Alone*, Chapter 4 (Canvas)

Greg D. Adam, 1997, "Abortion: Evidence of an Issue Evolution," *American Journal of Political Science* (Canvas)

12. Midterm Election and Exit Poll (November 9th)

Dan Hopkins. 2016. "The Party That Loses This Year Could Still Win a Big Consolation Prize."

<http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-party-that-loses-this-year-could-still-win-a-big-consolation-prize/>

On Tuesday, November 8th, the class will participate in a local exit poll of voters leaving polling stations here in Philadelphia. We will discuss this in more detail, but shifts will be 7 am – 9 pm, 5 pm – 7 pm, and data entry 7 pm – 10 pm.

13. Clinton and the Elections of 1992 and 1994 (November 14th and 16th)

Stanley Greenberg, *Middle Class Dreams*, Chapters 7-8 (Canvas)

Teixeira and Rogers, "Who Deserted the Democrats in 1994?" *Ticking Time Bombs*

Suggested reading:

Barry Burden and Dean Lacy, "The Vote-Stealing and Turnout Effects of Ross Perot in the 1992 U.S. Presidential Election."

Samuel Popkin. 1992. *The Reasoning Voter*, Chapter 11 (purchase)

Tuchfarber, Bennett, Smith, and Rademacher. 1995. "The Republican Tidal Wave of 1994"

George H. W. Bush, Address to the Republican National Convention, 1992 (handout)

Pat Buchanan, Address to the Republican National Convention, 1992 (handout)

William Jefferson Clinton, Address to the Democratic National Convention, 1992 (handout)

Data Analysis #4 is due Tuesday, November 15th by midnight

Friday, November 18th by 4 pm: Students submit a 1-2 page prospectus of their final paper

14. Partisanship and Polarization (November 21st - November 30th)

Morris Fiorina, Samuel Abrams, and Jeremy Pope. 2005. *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*. Chapters 1, 2, 6.

Suggested reading:

Glaeser, Edward. 2006. "Myths and Realities in American Political Geography," available online at: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w11857> (web)

Larry M. Bartels. 2006. "What's the Matter with 'What's the Matter with Kansas'?" (Canvas/coursepack)

Iyengar, Shanto, Gaurav Sood, and Yphtach Lelkes. "Affect, not ideology a social identity perspective on polarization." *Public opinion quarterly* 76.3 (2012): 405-431.

Klar, Samara and Yanna Krupnikov. *Independent Politics: How American Disdain for Parties Leads to Political Inaction*.

15. The Obama and Trump Eras (December 5th – 12th)

John Sides, Michael Tesler, and Lynn Vavreck. *Identity Crisis*. Select pages.

Ismail White and Chryl Laird. 2020. *Steadfast Democrats*. Select pages.

Walsh, Katherine J. Cramer. "How Rural Resentment helps explain the surprising victory of Donald Trump." *The Monkey Cage*, Washington Post.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/11/13/how-rural-resentment-helps-explain-the-surprising-victory-of-donald-trump/?utm_term=.8f84e702a046

Hopkins, Dan. 2016. "What Trump Supporters Were Doing Before Trump."

<http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/what-trump-supporters-were-doing-before-trump/>

Cohn, Nate. "There are More White Voters than People Think. That's Good News for Trump." *New York Times*.

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/10/upshot/there-are-more-white-voters-than-people-think-thats-good-news-for-trump.html?_r=0

Azari, Julia. 2016. "Weak parties and strong partisanship are a bad combination."

<http://www.vox.com/mischiefs-of-faction/2016/11/3/13512362/weak-parties-strong-partisanship-bad-combination>

Suggested readings:

Andrew Gelman and John Sides. 2009. "Stories and Stats."

http://bostonreview.net/archives/BR34.5/gelman_sides.php

Cohen, Marty, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller. 2016. "Party Versus Faction in the Reformed Presidential Nominating System." PS(October):701-708.

Stephen Ansolabehere and Charles Stewart. 2009. "Amazing Race." Available online at:

http://www.bostonreview.net/BR34.1/ansolabehere_stewart.php (web)

Final Paper Due: Monday, December 12th, by 4 pm via Canvas.

Final Exam: [AWAITING UNIVERSITY SCHEDULE.] No make-up or alternate examinations will be given.

OTHER SOURCES

To learn more about some of the topics above, or in thinking about term papers, the works below could be useful, and are provided as references:

General

Micklethwait and Wooldridge. 2004. *The Right Nation*

Key, V.O. 1966. *The Responsible Electorate*

Mayhew, David. 2002. *Electoral Realignment*

Theda Skocpol and Paul Pierson, *The Transformation of American Politics*

Fraser and Gerstle, eds., *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order*

Samuel Freedman, *The Inheritance: How Three Families and the American Political Majority Moved from Left to Right*

Thomas Schaller, *Whistling Past Dixie*

Thomas Frank, *What's the Matter with Kansas*

John Judis, *The Paradox of Democracy*

Public Opinion

John Zaller. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*

Gabriel Lenz. 2012. *Follow the Leader?*

Major Parties

Cohen, Karol, Noel, and Zaller. *The Party Decides*

Daniel Galvin. *Presidential Party Building*

Press

Thomas Patterson, *Out of Order*

Markus Prior, *Post-Broadcast Democracy*

Mutz, Diana. *In Your Face Politics*

Kevin Arceneaux and Martin Johnson. 2013. Changing Minds or Changing Channels?

Third Parties

Ronald Rapoport and Walter Stone. *Three's a Crowd*
Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus, *Third Parties in America*

Immigration

Ramakrishnan, *Democracy in Immigrant America*
Louis DeSipio, *Counting on the Latino Vote*

Labor

Nelson Lichtenstein, *State of the Union*
David J. Sousa. 1993. "Organized Labor in the Electorate, 1960-1988," *Political Research Quarterly* 46:4

Gender

Mansbridge, Jane. 1986. *Why We Lost the ERA*
Miroff, Bruce. 2007. "Movement Activists and Partisan Insurgents." *Studies in American Political Development* 92-109.

Abortion

Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*

Religion

Michael Lienesch, *Redeeming America*
Timothy Byrnes, *Catholic Bishops in American Politics*
Hugh Heclo, *Religion Returns to the Public Square*
William Martin, *With God on our Side*
Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*

Race

Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland*
Jonathan Reider, *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn Against Liberalism*
Tali Mendelberg, *The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality*
Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*
Michael Tesler and David O. Sears, *Obama's Race*
Michael Tesler. *Post-Racial or Most Racial?*

Place and Politics

Matthew Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*

Ideas

Jerome Himmelstein, *To the Right*
Geoffrey Hodgson, *The World Turned Right Side Up*
John Gerring. 1996. *Party Ideologies in America*,
Mark Smith. 2007. *The Right Talk*.

Biography

Robert Dallek, *Lyndon B. Johnson: Portrait of a President*
Bruce Miroff, *The Liberals' Moment*
Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm*
Rick Perlstein, *Nixonland*
Thurston Clarke. *The Last Campaign: Robert F. Kennedy and the 82 Days that Inspired America*
Nina J. Easton, *Gang of Five: Leaders at the Center of the Conservative Ascendancy*
Craig Shirley, *Rendezvous with Destiny* (on Reagan)

1992

Paul Abramson et al., *Continuity and Change in the 1992 elections*

Foreign Policy

John Mueller, *Policy and Opinion in the Gulf War*

John Mueller, *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion*

Matthew Baum, *Soft News Goes to War*

Adam Berinsky, *In Time of War*