

**PSC 213-301: Political Socialization**  
**DePaul University**  
**Spring 2016**

Professor Molly W. Andolina  
Office Hours: Thursdays 1:30 – 3:30  
& by appointment

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**Course Description**

In the world of politics and government, pundits spend a lot of time discussing fluctuations in public opinion, the habits and ideas of key groups, or the escapades of political personalities. There is much less time devoted to how such political attitudes, behaviors or beings were developed, inculcated or shaped. In this class, we are going to rectify this omission by looking at the process by which we become who we are – political or apolitical, liberal or conservative, activist or bystander, and everything in between.

We will begin the class with an overview of how political scientists have framed the study of political socialization, including the lessons they have learned (borrowing heavily from other disciplines) and the problems and assumptions associated with socialization research. We will then move to a discussion of the aging process and examine how individuals change and grow (or stay the same) over time, including a look at what encourages growth and what reinforces preexisting habits. Next, we will move to the heart of the study, tracing some of the traditional “agents” of socialization – the family, schools and peers – and spending some time with additional influences of class, gender and immigrant status. We will finish up with a look at the role of American culture and the unique conditions that create activists and radicals.

This course will combine two different approaches to studying political socialization. First, we will focus on the level of a single individual, beginning with yourself. Throughout this course, and in a particular assignment, you will reflect on your own experiences to date. In addition, we will look at various individuals and their personal stories. However, a key component of this class is to move beyond single cases to an understanding of larger trends. Thus, the second approach is to focus on generalizations. This means that you will learn about what we know about general patterns in political socialization influences, processes and outcomes. We will discuss and evaluate various research methodologies, comparing quantitative and qualitative techniques for their strengths and weaknesses. You are not required to accept these studies whole-heartedly, but you are required to know the key conclusions so that you can critique them.

This course satisfies the Social, Cultural and Behavioral Inquiry (SCBI) domain requirement for the Liberal Studies core. As such, it is designed to require you to think about the relationship between individuals and broader society, to evaluate the differential power accorded various individuals (or groups), to contemplate the role of culture in shaping our political socialization, and to discuss the variety of ways in which our diversity affects our political outlooks and behavior. You will be required to think critically about these key constructs, which includes evaluating the data used as evidence and critiquing the methods used to collect such data. Finally, you will personally reflect, in writing, about your own political socialization.

## Readings:

There is one book in the bookstore, as well as a **significant** number of readings available via D2L and the library's e-reserve. **To access the E-reserves at the library, use the password "PSC213."** All of these are **required**. The book may also be available from various websites, including amazon.com, where you can probably find them used (and significantly less expensive).

Levinson, Meira. 2012. *No Citizen Left Behind*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

A copy of the book will also be available in five hour time slots at the Reserve Desk in the Library.

## Course Requirements:

Grades will be based on the following:

- 10% Participation
- 25% Term Paper (due May 12<sup>th</sup> in class)
- 30% Pop Quizzes (average across the quarter with lowest score dropped)
- 35% Take Home Final Exam (due June 7<sup>th</sup> at noon)

### ***Participation***

Participation is a key element of this class. Participation does not simply mean showing up, although in order to discuss reading assignments, you have to actually attend class. Simply showing up regularly earns a "C" – to earn a higher grade, you need to actively and meaningfully participate in the discussion. I will note when your participation is substantively grounded in the readings and when it is not.

If you miss a class, you are responsible for the material covered, including any changes to the schedule. You are allowed two absences, excused or unexcused. I do not want to know why you missed or evaluate the worthiness of your absence. You simply get two missed appearances for free. After that, all absences will have a negative impact on your grade.

**You will be expected to discuss reading assignments in class.** The only way to do so, of course, is to actually read the assignment and attend each class meeting.

While there is a lot of reading in this class, much of it is enjoyable. (Some would describe it as fascinating!) Moreover, it is a manageable load, *if you stay on schedule*. There is a reading assigned for almost every day (except the day your paper is due). Some readings are short, but dense. Others are longer, but more accessible. Plan accordingly. If you fall behind, you will fail the quizzes and it will be very difficult to prepare for the final exam. If you stay on top of the reading and are an active member of the class, the quizzes will be easy and the final will be quite manageable.

**Please note that you are responsible for accessing the readings from the library or D2L.**

While all the links should work, occasionally electronic technology is not reliable. There is a word document that contains a list of all readings for the class posted on D2L. This document has a full bibliographic citation for each assignment, which means that if you have trouble accessing the material via the hyperlinks, you will have enough information to find the material through alternative routes. ***I expect you to always complete the reading before arriving in class.***

Class discussion—and opinions in general—are a vital part of the learning experience of this course. Questions are welcomed. Students are expected to come to class prepared to share their questions, comments, criticisms, and insights with others. We will all gain more from the class if there is a wide breadth of opinion that is shared. Please do so.

***Pop Quizzes (throughout the quarter)***

Although the readings are compelling and important and worthwhile, even the most well-meaning student can let an “untested” assignment fall by the wayside of the many obligations that you have on your time. To help you stay on task, I will randomly quiz you about the readings. These pop quizzes are not designed to punish you, but are created as opportunities for you to illustrate your understanding of the readings and your attention to the assignments. They are **open note**, which means that if you take notes on the readings, you will be well prepared for the quizzes. And, there is the added bonus of having a great set of materials to help you prepare for and complete the final exam.

***Research Paper: Political Autobiography; Due May 12<sup>th</sup>***

***No electronic submissions; hard copies only.***

Young people today are often described as lacking political ideas and political convictions. Yet, much of my own research suggests that this is not the case; many of today’s youth feel strongly about particular issues, even if they aren’t overtly political. Your assignment is twofold: Describe your own political outlook and ideology as well as your level of activism and explain how you came to be who you are. Place this discussion in the larger framework of the scholarly literature on political socialization.

In order to describe your own political outlook, you will need to place your opinions and behavior in some sort of framework (probably revolving around key questions or values) for evaluating questions facing us as a society. This should be more than the simple “Democrat” or “Republican” label. Think about how the general values that you hold can be applied to questions of public policy.

The second component should describe and evaluate what influences have contributed to these key values and the related opinions. These may fall within the traditional three agents of family, school and peers (and you should describe any and all influences here), but you should also move beyond this to religious leaders or teachings, a book you read, a political event, a personal experience, the broader American culture, or your personal ethnic heritage, to name a few examples. The crucial element is to develop the causal connection—how these influences have created your outlook.

Good writing will be concrete and illustrative. Do not write, “I am against the death penalty because I was raised as a Catholic.” Talk about going to mass as a child and listening to the homilies, or discussions that you had in parochial school classrooms, or the ways in which your parents talked about religion and politics around the dinner table. As guidance, think about the individuals we have studied and the research we have reviewed. These works can provide a broader framework for understanding and describing your own experiences.

***The papers will be evaluated in large part for how well students document and explain connections between their socialization processes and their current ideologies. The best papers will make these connections clear and will use the course readings to illustrate key points.***

The paper should be 10-12 double-spaced pages, with standard one inch margins and 12 point font.

If you are having trouble with the assignment (because you don't have a sense of what your ideology is, or you can't seem to trace the influences, or you are unsure about how to describe the process), or if you just want to talk about it, please come see me.

**Remember: Papers lose ONE LETTER GRADE for every day that they are late!**

### ***Final Exam***

The final exam will consist of essay assignments and will cover material from readings, movies, class discussions, and lectures. They will test both your mastery of important concepts and your ability to think analytically.

### ***Grading Criteria – READ THIS BEFORE YOU WRITE!***

You will be graded on the structure, style and substance of your argument. If you have any questions about the assignment, or about these criteria, do not hesitate to come to me.

- A A paper that earns an “A” is truly exceptional. There is a thesis paragraph that provides a road map for the rest of the paper, which ends with a meaningful conclusion. Statements are supported by evidence, which is judiciously assembled to make a case. The writing is clear and concise; the analysis is sophisticated and thoughtful. The argument (e.g., personal political outlook and the various influences) is logically developed and well organized. The various complexities associated with the process of political socialization are recognized and addressed. Supporting sources from the assigned readings are smoothly integrated into the body of the text. There is mature sentence variety and paragraph development. They address all elements of the assignment (moving beyond description to make clear causal connections, for example) and use appropriate citations. It is grammatically flawless; there are no spelling errors. “A minus” papers do much of this, but have some slight weaknesses.
- B B papers represent strong, solid work. They are well organized, comprehensive, and clear, but may have a few grammatical errors. A multi-faceted socialization process is described, with attention to various influences. Primary and secondary sources are incorporated, but not always paraphrased. There may be slightly less development of one's political ideology, or only a superficial discussion of the influences. Although reflective, it may not delve as deeply as would be required for a truly thoughtful look at one's socialization. There is adequate sentence variety and paragraph development. These B papers address all elements of the assignment, but are probably stronger on some parts than others. Low B papers attempt to do this, but fall quite short in one or more areas. In general, “B minus” papers make a fair attempt to fulfill the assignment, but are weakened by incoherent writing, incomplete analysis, or reducing complex issues to overly simplistic assessments.
- C C papers meet the minimum requirements, low Cs barely do. They are often poorly organized, which prevents a clear argument. They fail to make strong connections between their opinions and the different influences. They have grammatical and spelling errors and may provide only passing reference to supporting work. While they may have a thesis, it is not well developed and there is often no clear purpose or conclusion. They may fail to

address key elements of the assignment. There are organizational and argumentative weaknesses. Citations may be used, but inconsistently or incorrectly.

- D D papers fail to make an argument, or do so in such a confusing, disorganized way that the meaning is lost on the readers. They are replete with errors. The arguments provided are often ambiguous. There is usually only superficial discussion of the issues.

Finally, you **MUST** abide by DePaul's Academic Integrity Policy (<http://condor.depaul.edu/~handbook/code17.html>).

A key element of this policy is the requirement that that you **cite your sources** of information, which means including a bibliography. You must give attribution to any information, idea, assessment, or evaluation that you found either on the web or in another source, *even if you paraphrase the words*. Do not, under any circumstances, directly copy the writing of another individual unless you bracket the words with quotation marks.

There is nothing wrong with getting information from other sources, as long as you give appropriate credit; indeed, it is often a necessity of your assignments. The standard citation in political science is to put the citation in parentheses at the end of a sentence. First, list the name of the author, then the year of the publication and, if you have a direct quote, then the page number. It should look like this (Andolina 2000, 50). Note the punctuation! The period comes *after* the citation, not before it. If you have any questions about what should be cited or how to do so, I'd be happy to talk to you.

*If you do not uphold these standards, you will receive a failing grade on your assignment, and I will notify Academic Affairs of this transgression. If the violation is particularly egregious, you will also fail the course.*

### Class Schedule

**The reading assignment is due on the DAY it is listed.**

**If not otherwise noted as Library Reserves (LR), the assignment is on D2L.**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
March 29	Welcome, Introduction and Overview	
March 31	Political Socialization: The Question of Persistence	Sears
April 5	Development Theory & Political Socialization	McIntosh & Youniss
April 7	New Concepts: Emerging Adulthood	Setterson & Ray
April 12	Conceptions of "Political"	Flanagan & Gallyay

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
April 14	The Family – Personal Stories	Dworkin (LR) Roy Judis Noonan (LR)
April 19	The Family – Institutional Influences	Flanagan & Tucker McIntosh et al.
April 21	The Family – The Impact of Class	Lareau (LR)
April 26	School – Intentional Programs	Niemi et al. Youniss
April 28	School – Building Citizens	Westheimer & Kahne
May 3	School – Inequalities & Citizenship	Levison, Prologue & Chpts 1-2
May 5	School – Curriculum	Levinson, Chpts 3-4 Foran Friedersdorf
May 10	School – Action Civics	Levinson, Chpts 5-7, Epilogue
May 12	Gender	<b>Paper due</b>
May 17	Gender	Hooghe & Stolle
May 19	Peers	Klofstad McDevitt & Kiouisis
May 24	Ethnicity & Immigration	Stepick & Stepick Bloemraad & Trost
May 26	Culture & Community	Gladwell
May 31	Radicalism	Teske (LR) Ginges & Atran
June 2	Summary & Wrap Up	Handouts

**TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM DUE JUNE 7<sup>th</sup> in the PSC OFFICE at 12:00 noon.**