POSC 2812 Political Socialization

Fall 2010
Monday/Thursday, 10:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.
Faculty Memorial Hall 212

Instructor: Olena Nikolayenko
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Office Location: Faber Hall, Rm. 677
Office Hours: Monday, 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Course Description

This course provides a broad overview of concepts, theories, and issues in the field of political socialization. Analyzing processes through which individuals acquire politically relevant values, beliefs, and attitudes lies at the core of political socialization research. Where do young people learn about politics? What is the impact of the educational system on citizens’ beliefs about the government? Is television to blame for high levels of political cynicism? The course will address these issues from a comparative perspective by drawing upon the extant empirical research in the United States and beyond.

The course is divided into two parts. The first part of the course (September-October) focuses on the role of family, schools, and the mass media in shaping political attitudes. The second part of the course (November-December) examines effects of age, gender, religion, and migration on the political outlook of individuals.

Required Readings

There is no general “textbook” for this course. There is no reading course pack either. The assigned course readings are available via the Blackboard. Students are expected to download the assigned readings from the course web site and read them prior to the class.

Course Requirements

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<th>Requirement</th>
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<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Presentation</td>
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<td>Quiz</td>
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<td>Short Assignment</td>
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<td>Final Research Paper</td>
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Participation
Student participation is essential. You are expected to attend the class and read the assigned readings prior to the class to be prepared to discuss them.

Presentation
At the end of the semester, each student will make a short presentation based upon his or her research project.

Quiz
There will be one quiz administered in class to test students’ knowledge of key concepts. The quiz will be composed of ten multiple-choice questions.

Short Assignment
This assignment is designed to prepare you for writing the final research paper. Submit a one-page summary of the proposed research project. State clearly what issue you intend to explore and how you intend to proceed.

Final Research Paper
Each student is expected to write a 15-page paper (double-space, 12-point font, Times New Roman) that applies political socialization theory to a topic of his or her interest and involves original empirical research. The paper should include an introduction, a brief literature review, methodology, the findings, and the conclusion. More details will follow.

Important Dates
October 14 – Bring a draft of the Short Assignment to the class
October 18 – Short Assignment due
December 2/6 – Student Presentations
December 9 – Final Paper due

Late Penalty
You are responsible for submitting a hard copy of each assignment at the beginning of the class on due date. Assignments handed in after that point will be considered late. The late penalty is 10 percent of your assignment grade per business day.

No Electronic Devices
Please do not use laptops, cell phones, iPods, or other electronic devices in the classroom. Make sure that you turn off your cell phone before the start of the class.
Academic Integrity

Failure to properly acknowledge the intellectual contribution of others constitutes plagiarism and is a very serious academic offence. Please consult the Fordham University Undergraduate Policy on Academic Integrity to get familiar with the standards of academic integrity.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Sept 2. Introduction (no readings)

Sept 9. Political Socialization: An Overview


Sept 13. Early Political Socialization Research: Focus on Children


Sept 16. Adolescence and Politics


Sept 20. Family


Sept 23. Schools


Sept 27. Mass Media


Sept 30. The Internet


Oct 4. Quantitative Research Methods in the Study of Political Socialization


Oct 7. Qualitative Research Methods in the Study of Political Socialization


Oct 12. Research Design in Political Socialization Research


*Note: Bring a draft of the Short Assignment to the class*

Oct 18. The Concept of Age in Life-Cycle Theory

*Note: The Short Assignment is due at the beginning of the class*


Oct 25. The Significance of Social Change


Oct 28. Gender and Politics


Nov 1. The Role of Religion


Nov 4. Neighborhood Effects


Nov 8. Immigration and Transnational Childhoods


Nov 11. Political Socialization in the United States


**Nov 15. Political Socialization in New Democracies**


**Nov 18. Political Socialization in Repressive Political Regimes**


**Nov 22. Using Library Resources**

**Nov 29. Writing a Research Paper in Political Science**

**Dec 2. Student Presentations**

**Dec 6. Student Presentations**

**Dec 9. Wrap-Up Discussion**