POSC 2812 Political Socialization

Fall 2011
Monday/Thursday, 11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.
Freeman Hall 101

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Office Hours: Monday, 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. or by appointment

Course Description

Political socialization refers to processes through which individuals acquire politically relevant values, beliefs, and attitudes. How do young people learn about politics? What is the impact of the educational system on our political beliefs? Is television to blame for high levels of distrust in government? 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, the mass media, and religious institutions in shaping political attitudes. The second part of the course (November-December) examines effects of age, gender, and migration on the political outlook of individuals.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

• define major concepts in political socialization literature;
• apply qualitative research methods to the study of politics;
• learn ethical regulations in human subjects research;
• strengthen one’s communication skills.

Required Readings

There is no general “textbook” for this course. The 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>Research Design</td>
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<td>Literature Review</td>
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<td>Final Research Paper</td>
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**Participation**
Evaluation of student participation will be based on the completion of assigned readings and meaningful contribution to classroom discussions. Students are expected to do the assigned readings prior to the class and think about questions for discussion.

**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.

**Research Design**
This assignment is designed to prepare you for writing the final research paper. Submit a one-page single-spaced summary of the proposed research project. State clearly your research question and describe your methodology.

**Literature Review**
The purpose of the literature review is to provide a critical overview of existing literature on the topic related to your research project. The literature review should be five-page long, excluding a list of references at the end of the text.

**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 17 – Research Design due
November 21 – Literature Review due
December 1/5 – Student Presentations
December 8 – 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 the class will be considered late. The late penalty is 10 percent of your assignment grade per business day.

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 1. Introduction (no readings)

Sept 7. Children and Politics


Sept 8. Adolescence and Politics


Sept 12. Family


Sept 15. Schools

Sept 19. Peers


Sept 22. Mass Media


Sept 26. Religious Institutions


Sept 29. Quantitative Research Methods in the Study of Political Socialization


Oct 3. Qualitative Research Methods in the Study of Political Socialization


Oct 6. Research Design in Social Science Research


Note: Bring a draft of the short assignment to the class
Oct 17. Life-Cycle Theory and Age Norms
Note: A one-page summary of the research design is due at the beginning of the class.


Oct 20. Generations and Politics


Oct 24. The Significance of Social Change


Oct 27. Gender and Politics


Oct 31. Neighborhood Effects


Nov 3. Immigration


Nov 7. Political Socialization in Non-Democracies


Nov 10. Writing a Literature Review
Nov 14. Using Library Resources

Nov 17. No class

Nov 21. How to Make a Research Presentation
Note: The literature review is due at the beginning of the class.

Nov 28. Writing a Research Paper in Political Science

Dec 1. Student Presentations

Dec 5. Student Presentations

Dec 8. Wrap-Up Discussion