

Identification	Subject	PSIR 401 Political Psychology 6 ECTS
	Department	Political Science and Philosophy
	Program	Undergraduate
	Term	Fall, 2026
	Instructor	Basdi Shamiyeva
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	Phone:	
	Classroom/hours	
	Office hours	By appointment
Prerequisites	Consent of instructor	
Language	English	
Compulsory/Elective	Required	
Required textbooks and course materials	Core textbook: 1. Core Textbook: Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016. (PDF format is available). 2. Osborne D., Sibley G., Ch. 2022. The Cambridge Handbook of Political Psychology (PDF format is available). Supplementary sources: 3. David O. Sears & Leonie Huddy & Robert Jervis. Oxford Handbook of political psychology, 2003. 4. David Patrick Houghton. Political Psychology. New York, 2009. 5. Jeonie H., David O.S., Jack S.L., and Jennifer J. 2023. Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology (Third Edition) (PDF format is available).	
Course outline	This course provides a comprehensive introduction to political psychology at the undergraduate level. Its principal objectives are as follows: a) developing understanding of major divisive forces within psychological research that influence political behavior: the contexts in which individuals operate, alongside their internal psychological characteristics—including beliefs, values, and related factors; b) applying central explanatory mechanisms such as behaviorism, obedience, personality, groupthink, cognition, affect, emotion, and neuroscience to examine issues extending from voting behavior and racism to terrorism and international relations. Ultimately, this course will equip students with the conceptual framework necessary to understand the rapidly evolving and increasingly significant field of political psychology.	
Course objectives	Objectives • This course aims to introduce students to the fundamental concepts and theories of political psychology, enhance their understanding of the psychological factors influencing political attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making, and develop skills in analyzing political perceptions and behavior. Students will learn to apply theoretical approaches to real-world political cases and evaluate the role of identity, emotions, beliefs, and group dynamics in shaping political processes and outcomes. Specific Objectives of the Course	

	• To become more knowledgeable about the impact of political, social and cultural situations along with personality traits, social attitudes, cultural memories, beliefs and dispositions on political behavior and decision making. • To become familiar with the various psychological and political theories describing political leadership and mass movements. • To explore the political psychology of race and ethnicity. • To examine the impact of political psychology as it related to broader international concerns such as nationalism, political extremism, terrorism and war		
Learning outcomes	By the end of the course the students should be able: • To demonstrate understanding of major theories and research in political psychology and how political psychology ties into and extends upon insights from other subfields of psychology. To explain nature, causes, types, and functions of social, interpersonal, and international conflicts • To produce a paper, formatted according to the conventions of the field, conveying a novel analysis of existing intergroup/interstate conflicts as related to political situations, political attitudes and/or behavior. To identify stages and dynamics of conflict escalation and de-escalation		
Teaching methods	Lecture		x
	Group discussion		x
	Experiential exercise		
	Role play		x
	Case analysis		x
	Course paper		x
	Others		
Evaluation	Methods	Date/deadlines	Percentage (%)
	Midterm Exam	To be determined by the Dean's Office	25
	Attendance	During the semester	5
	Role play	During the semester	10
	Essay	15 October – 31 November	10
	Group Discussion	During the semester	10
	Final Exam	To be determined by the Dean's Office	40
	Total		100
Policy	Preparation for class The structure of this course makes your individual study and preparation outside the class extremely important. The lecture material will focus on the major points introduced in the text. Reading the assigned chapters and having some familiarity with them before class will greatly assist your understanding		

of the lecture. After the lecture, you should study your notes and work relevant problems from the end of the chapter and sample exam questions.

Cheating/plagiarism

Cheating or other plagiarism during the Mid-term and Final Examinations will lead to paper cancellation. In this case, the student will automatically get zero (0), without any consideration.

AI use policy

In the light of AI policy of Khazar University, GAI tools may be used only in the following cases: (1) during the stage of developing the project structure, (2) for checking the syntax of program code, (3) for grammatical editing of the text, etc. The content of the written report, the analysis of data, and the interpretation of results must be prepared independently by the student in full. The use of GAI in the preparation of presentations is not permitted. The measures to be applied in cases of violation of the rules governing the use of GAI:

- Issuing an oral or written warning;
- Requiring the resubmission of the assignment;
- Reducing the grade for the assignment or assigning a zero (0).

Essay

We appreciate the ability of students to prepare a good essay. The essay should be

- Original research of the students.
- Written according to international standards with introduction, internal parts, conclusion, and used special literature.
- Limited in size (10 -12 pages/Times New Roman - 12).
- Printed in computer and has a cover page.

As soon as it is possible, we will offer you a list of themes for essays. Every student can choose for the essay a theme with the consent of instructor. Students will write two essays, with a maximum of 5 points per essay.

Essay requirements/standards are available in DPSIR.

Role play and Group discussion

Students' activity during classes will be evaluated on the basis of their participation in discussions on various topics during the lesson. The instructor will make notes after each discussion and will evaluate students' activities before the final exam. Students may earn up to 2 points for each activity. Five activities will be assessed for Role Play and five for Group Discussion. Students may obtain full points in both components for the same activity.

Professional behavior guidelines

		The students shall behave in the way to create favorable academic and professional environment during the class hours. Unauthorized discussions and unethical behavior are strictly prohibited.	
Tentative Schedule			
Week	Date/Day (tentative)	Topics	Textbook/Assignments

1	19.09.2026	Political Psychology: Introduction and Overview	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 1, pp. 1-19
2	26.09.2026	Personality and Politics	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 2, pp. 16-48
3	03.10.2026	Cognition, Social Identity, Emotions, and Attitudes	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 3, pp. 48-82

4	10.10.2026	The Political Psychology of Groups	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 4, pp. 82-123
5	17.10.2026	The Study of Political Leaders	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 5, pp. 123-168
6	24.10.2026	The Political Psychology of Mass Politics: How Do People Decide for Whom to Vote?	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 6, pp. 168-217
7	31.10.2026	Midterm Exam	
8	07.11.2026	The Political Psychology of the Media in Politics	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 7, pp. 217-236

9	14.11.2026	The Political Psychology of Race	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 8, pp. 236-280
10	21.11.2026	From Ethnic Conflict to Genocide	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 9, pp. 280-322
11	28.11.2026	The Political Psychology of Nationalism	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 10, pp. 322-362
12	05.12.2026	The Political Psychology of Social Movements	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 11, pp. 362-398
13	12.12.2026	The Political Psychology of Terrorism	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 12, pp. 398-432

14	19.12.2026	The Political Psychology of International Security and Conflict	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 13, pp. 432-460
15	26.12.2026	Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation	Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, Beth Dietz. Introduction to Political Psychology. New York and London, 2016, Chapter 14, pp. 460-479
16	TBA (Date to be decided by the Dean's Office)	Final Exam	

This syllabus is a guide for the course and any modifications to it will be announced in advance.