Spring 2018 – POLS BC3621: Colloquium on Political Behavior  
Mondays, 2:10 - 4 – Altschul Hall, Room 805

Dr. Audrey Neville  
Pronouns: she/her/hers  
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Office Hours: Tuesday, 11:30 – 1

Scholars of political behavior seek to explain why people – citizens and elites alike – navigate their political worlds in the ways that they do. This course serves as an introduction to this scholarship, both in terms of thinking about how this scholarship is conducted, as well as the sorts of questions that this scholarship seeks to answer. We begin with an introduction to reading academic articles, to provide you with the foundation of understanding the readings later on in the course. Next, we discuss common research design in this scholarship. Third, we examine topics in political behavior, applying our knowledge of academic articles and research design to this discussion. We conclude with a final paper project.

I. Course Objectives  
By the end of this course, you will be able to:

• read academic articles in the behavioral sciences, and explain the main points of the article  
• compare and contrast different research designs, explaining the respective strengths and weaknesses  
• write essays that connect topics of American political behavior, and comment on broader themes in the scholarship

II. E-mail Policy  
If you have any questions or concerns about the class, e-mail is the best way to get in touch with me. I will always respond within 24 hours, unless I have told you in advance that I will be away from e-mail. As a general rule, e-mails sent after 10pm will be answered the following morning. I expect that you will check your Barnard / Columbia e-mail regularly, and once a day at least. If you want to use a different e-mail address, you should set up forwarding from your Barnard / Columbia e-mail address.

E-mails must demonstrate university-level communication skills. Please include a salutation (“Good morning Dr. Neville”), a clear explanation of your question or comment, and a signature (“Best, Teresa”). Make sure that your tone is professional. Because Barnard College is a place that develops these professional communication skills, I will let you know if the style and/or tone of your e-mails do not reflect university-level communication skills.¹

III. Availability  
I will be available to chat with students in 237 LeFrak on Tuesdays from 11:30am – 1pm. I am happy to set up a meeting with you – either in person, over the phone, or over Skype – if your schedule prevents you from being able to come talk to me at this time.

¹ I have stories.
IV. ADA Policy Statement
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. This legislation requires that all students with disabilities be provided with a learning environment that has reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodations, you must visit the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for assistance. Students requesting eligible accommodations in their courses will need to first meet with an ODS staff member for an intake meeting. Once registered, students are required to visit ODS each semester to set up new accommodations and learn how to notify faculty.

Accommodations are not retroactive, so it is best to register with ODS early each semester to access your accommodations. If you are registered with ODS, please see me to schedule a meeting outside of class in which you can bring me your faculty notification letter and we can discuss your accommodations for this course. Students are not eligible to use their accommodations in this course until they have met with me. ODS is located in Milbank Hall, Room 008.

V. Student Needs
Students can and do face challenges that interfere with their academic performance. Such challenges include, but are not limited to accessing enough food to eat every day, or having a safe place to live. If you are facing such challenges, I urge you to contact the Dean of Studies at (212) 854-2024. You are under no obligation to tell me about these challenges; however, you may do so if you wish, and I will put you in contact with any additional resources that I may know about.

It is important for undergraduates to recognize and identify the different pressures, burdens, and stressors you may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. We as a community urge you to make yourself–your own health, sanity, and wellness–your priority throughout this term and your career here. Sleep, exercise, and eating well can all be a part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you in several sectors of your life, and we encourage you to make use of them. Should you have any questions about navigating these resources, please visit these sites:

- http://barnard.edu/primarycare
- http://barnard.edu/counseling
- http://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about

VI. Rules for Colloquium
My classroom is a place of mutual respect. I will respect you by assigning readings that will maximize your learning experience, by returning grades in the promised amount of time, and by leading a thoughtful, civil discussion of the topics. I ask that you respect me by communicating with me promptly about any issues that come up, by being punctual, by doing the readings, and by participating
consistently and thoughtfully. I ask that we all respect each other by conducting ourselves in a professional manner. I will let you know if you are doing something unprofessional.²

**Use of Electronics**
I do not allow electronics in class, unless you have a well-documented need for an electronic device. If you have this need, then it is your responsibility to let me know over e-mail or in office hours; moreover, it is your responsibility to use the electronic device for class-related tasks. Using technology inappropriately will negatively impact your participation grade.

**Food Allergies**
I understand if you need a snack to get you through to your next meal. Make good choices about the type of food you bring in to the classroom. If you have a severe allergy that prevents you from being in close quarters with a particular type of food, please let me know, and I can make a general announcement.

**Readings**
I expect that you will complete the week’s readings, in advance of class, that you will bring the readings with you to class, and that you will be ready to talk about them. You can access all of the readings through Google Scholar and through Oxford Handbooks Online (this requires that you sign in using your Columbia username and password).

I expect that some of you may struggle to understand the methods sections of the papers, particularly if you have never taken a research design course, or if you have never taken statistics. You may struggle even if you have taken these classes before. I recommend that you focus on the written portion of the paper first, then circle back around and try to make sense of the statistical portion of the paper. Feel free to e-mail me if you ever have any questions about the readings.

**Academic Honesty**
Academic dishonesty has no place at Barnard College, as evidenced by our honor code. Approved by the student body in 1912 and updated in 2016, the Code states:

> We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.

If after reading the code you are left with questions about what constitutes academic honesty, please let me know and I will clarify. But it is your responsibility for understanding what constitutes academic

² Again, I have stories.
dishonesty. Even if you did not realize that what you were doing was academically dishonest, you will still face the consequences of your actions.

If I find that you have violated the Honor Code on an assignment, you will receive a zero on the assignment. And, depending on the nature and gravity of the violation, you may face more serious punishment from the administration, such as being suspended or expelled. This is to say nothing of how this violation will influence my willingness to write you a letter of recommendation, or recommend you for any awards.

In my experience, students are more likely to cheat when they are feeling overwhelmed, or feel painted into a corner. They mistakenly feel like they have no other options, and make a bad choice. I want to make it clear to you that you do have other options. If you are feeling stuck or overwhelmed, let me know, and we will work together to find a solution.

VII. Grades
Your final grade in my course be determined by your in-class participation, your weekly response papers, and your final paper project. I do not offer extra credit on an individual-level basis. All assignments will be submitted over CourseWorks. Submitted files must include the student’s first and last name, both in the document title and in the document itself.

Weekly Questions
You will submit discussion questions to me by 5 pm each Sunday. I expect for each question to be a thoughtful, thorough critique of one or more of the readings. Thoughtful critiques include questions about things the scholar did not thoroughly explain or account for, or critiques of the data, methodology, and/or conclusions. Thoughtful critiques also include a discussion of how two separate readings speak to, or past, each other. A thoughtful critique extends beyond “The subject pool had only Anglo men,” and explains why we should expect different outcomes, if the scholars had used a more nationally-representative subject pool.

While there is no page requirement for these weekly discussion questions, I expect for these weekly responses to be at least a page long (single-spaced) They usually end up being between one and two pages long. I will hand back your weekly questions in the next class – with your grade and with comments – and will use your questions to structure our discussion.

In-Class Participation
Because this is a small seminar, I expect that each student to complete all of the readings in advance of class, and to come ready to participate. You are ready to participate when you can provide a summary of each of the readings, offer up thoughtful critiques, and describe how the readings relate to one another.

You are all important parts of this seminar course. If you choose to distract yourself by playing on your phone during class, you are not only cheating yourself out of an opportunity to learn, but you are also cheating your classmates out of an opportunity to hear your thoughts and to learn from you. If you choose to do this, your participation grade will reflect this choice.
Final Paper

The centerpiece of this course is a major research paper, at least 25 pages long (not including the cover page, bibliography, or any tables), in which you will make an original contribution to the study of American political behavior. Separately, this assignment will help you develop a writing sample, which you will almost certainly need in the very near future.

There are two different options for this final paper. Your first option is to write an empirical paper, which uses data analysis to test hypotheses. If you have any training in statistical packages (R, Stata, SPSS), I strongly encourage you to use your background to take on the empirical track, particularly if you have aspirations for graduate school. I will not require statistics more complicated than a regression.\(^3\) You are, of course, free to use more complicated statistics if you wish.

If you are interested in writing an empirical paper, you must a) take a short quiz on statistics, and b) perform satisfactorily on this quiz. Students who do well may write an empirical paper. Students who do poorly will not be permitted to write an empirical paper.

Your second option is to write a case study, in which you select a political phenomenon in American political behavior, which you then analyze using the literature from this course. You will evaluate the ability of the existing literature to explain the mechanisms and the outcomes of this phenomenon. If you are interested in this case study, I strongly recommend that we meet within the first week or two of class to talk through your ideas, to make sure that the topic of interest is feasible for you.

Nota Bene: The department has a hard floor of 25 pages of substantive content for the final paper. This does not include the cover page, bibliography, or any tables or figures. If you do not write 25 full pages of substantive content for your final paper, you will automatically receive an F in the class.

Deadline #1 (February 2nd, 11:59 pm) – Topic Selection – Ungraded But Required
- Empirical Track: You must select a research question. I expect that you will have picked a dependent variable of interest, and that you will have a research question (usually starts with “why” or “how”).
- Case Study Track: You must select a phenomenon in American political behavior that you will analyze using the literature from this course.

OPTIONAL Deadline #2 (March 30th, 11:59 pm) – First Draft of the Final Paper
You have the opportunity turn in a first complete draft of your final paper. If you do so, I will a) tell you what grade you would have gotten, if it were the final paper, and b) provide comments for revisions. If you are not satisfied with the grade you would have gotten if it were the final paper, then you have until the final paper deadline (May 4\(^{th}\) at 11:59 pm) to make my suggested revisions to elevate your grade. If

\(^3\)If you have a general understanding of the equation for slope of a line, you will be able to understand a regression.

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you are satisfied with the grade you would have gotten, then I will make that grade your final paper grade.

Deadline #3 (April 23rd and April 30th) – Research Presentation
During the last two classes of the semester, you will present your research to the class. You will sign up for slots well in advance; if you want to switch to a different date, you will have to orchestrate that with a fellow student. I will provide more information on the format of the presentation and on the required length ahead of time. You are not required to dress up for your presentations, though I find that many students enjoy doing so.

Deadline #4 (May 4th, 11:59 pm) – Final Draft of the Final Paper
For those who turned in the first draft: again, if you were satisfied with the “grade” you got on your first draft, you do not have to turn in anything additional. But if you were unsatisfied, then this is your chance to turn in an edited version of the paper.

Senior Capstone Requirements
If you are a senior who has designated this course as the colloquium to fulfill your Senior Capstone requirements, you must also complete the following:

1. Provide constructive criticism and feedback to your designated peer partner(s). You and your partner should hold meetings, in consultation with me, to discuss your assignments, e.g. research proposals, research methods, rough drafts.
2. Attend at least one of the Senior overviews of the library and online resources hosted by me, or by another member of the Political Science Department.
3. Generate a poster that summarizes your research. The poster should accompany your class presentation, and will be displayed at the Senior end-of-year Departmental Party in May 2018. The poster will not be graded, but is required to receive a “pass” for your senior requirement and will factor into Departmental considerations for Senior Project Distinction.

Style
For this course, you need to use a standard, 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1” margins. Use whatever citation style you like, but be consistent. Footnotes are fine, but end notes are not.

No editing trickery, please. Editing trickery includes: making the punctuation a larger font size than the other characters, playing around with letter-spacing, increasing the space between paragraphs, having a header six lines long, etc. If you are resorting to such tactics to meet a page limit, then you do not have enough substance in your paper, and your time would be better-spent fleshing out your arguments. Furthermore, the department has a hard requirement of a minimum of 25 pages of substance for your

4 Yes, I have seen all of these. Yes, it is incredibly obvious.
final paper. If I find that you engaged in editing trickery, without which you would not have met your 25 page requirement, then that is academic dishonesty. Read about the repercussions of academic dishonesty below.

Grading Schema and Grade Appeals

A papers will provide a strongly argued, very interesting, and highly sophisticated critiques, and will make non-summary arguments. A papers will be overwhelmingly free from grammatical errors, with A+ and A papers being completely free from such errors, and A- papers making very few small errors. The writing will be polished and refined.

B papers are sound papers that are not written as well as A papers. They may lack strongly argued, very interesting, or highly sophisticated critiques, though they may not lack all three. They may offer more summary than is absolutely necessary to make a critique. They may also be somewhat lacking in content, with B+ papers providing a more thorough exploration than B papers and B- papers (in that order). B papers may have some grammatical errors, but nothing grievous. The writing, while not as polished as the writing found in A papers, will still meet university standards of good writing.

C papers will exhibit flaws that call into question whether the student understood the course material. They may suffer from some of the same faults of B papers, but to a stronger or more severe degree. C papers are often lacking in content, or are somewhat faulty attempts at summary. The paper may exhibit structural or grammatical flaws that may interfere with my ability to understand you. The paper may contain incorrect facts. The writing will probably not meet university standards of good writing.

D papers will exhibit major flaws that call into question the understanding of course materials, and perhaps of behavioral science more broadly. They may also suffer from the same faults of C papers, but to an even stronger or more severe degree. Their attempts at critique will be very shallow. Such papers may contain incorrect facts; these incorrect facts are often numerous or grievous in nature. The writing may fall far below university standards of good writing, making it difficult for me to understand you.

F papers will exhibit many major flaws that demonstrate a lack of understanding of course materials and of behavioral science. They may contain many incorrect facts; these incorrect facts may be numerous or grievous in nature. They may not follow instructions, and may be plagued by numerous grammatical, structural, or spelling errors that make it very difficult for me to understand you.

If you think that you should have earned more points than you did on an assignment, you must submit a written appeal, explaining why the grading standard was misapplied to you. “I put a lot of effort into this” is not enough. You must wait 48 hours after I hand back a grade to submit your grade appeal. You must submit this written appeal within a week of receiving your grade. You may not be present when I read your written appeal. I will re-grade your work, and whatever grade you receive – higher or lower – will be your final grade on the assignment.

If you think that I have made a mathematical error in adding up your grade, let me know over e-mail and we can adjudicate the error in office hours.

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Final Grade Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>% of final grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Questions (10 in total)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic Selection</td>
<td>Ungraded, but required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Draft</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mysterious Extra Credit Opportunity</td>
<td>Potential for +1% added to your final grade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Late Work

I do not accept late work. If you are having a medical or personal crisis that makes it impossible for you to meet a deadline, I will need to see evidence of this event before the deadline, after which I will decide if I am willing to grant you an extension.5 If I receive the evidence and decide to grant you an extension, I will give you an appropriate extension. If you miss the agreed-upon extension, I will no longer accept your work, and you will receive a zero for the assignment.

Curving, “Rounding Up,” and Extra Credit

I do not grade on a curve (e.g. 10% will get A’s, 30% will get Bs, etc.). If everybody in the class earns an A, then everybody gets an A. If everybody gets an F, then everybody gets an F.

I do not “round up.” Grade inflation cheapens the value – monetary or otherwise – of a Barnard College education. Thus, the thresholds for final letter grades are concrete. A final grade of 89.99999999% is a very, very good B+, but a B+ nonetheless.6 I strongly encourage you to monitor the status of your final grade throughout the semester, to avoid unpleasant surprises at the end.

I will administer one point of extra credit, added on to your final grade, to students who read the syllabus carefully, in its entirety, by February 5th.7 I do not offer any additional extra credit beyond this one mysterious opportunity

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5 Falsifying documents to get an extension is a violation of the Barnard Honor Code. Yes, I have caught students doing this.

6 I know, I know; this makes me the cruelest, most unfeeling woman to have ever lived. I am at peace with this.

7 “But how will Dr. Neville know if I have read the syllabus carefully?”, you may be asking yourself. Oh, I’ll know.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numeric Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>96.6 - 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93.3 - 96.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90.0 - 93.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>86.6 - 89.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83.3 - 86.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80.0 - 83.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>76.6 - 79.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73.3 - 76.59</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70.0 - 73.29</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>66.6 - 69.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63.3 - 66.59</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60.0 - 63.29</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0 - 59.9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

VIII. Schedule

Syllabus Changes

I may make changes to adjust the schedule, correct errors, or to account for other issues. Changes will be announced in class, and I will update the official syllabus on CourseWorks. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they are using the most current copy of the syllabus.

Monday, January 22nd, 2018 – Introduction

Note: No weekly questions due this week. Frolic while you may.

Monday, January 29th, 2018 - Introduction to Political Behavior and Behavioral Research


OPTIONAL READINGS


(3) Chapters 47 of the Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior “Research Resources in Comparative Political Behavior”
Monday, February 5th, 2018 – Belief Systems and Political Knowledge


Optional Readings:

Monday, February 12th, 2018 – Heuristics and Motivated Reasoning


**OPTIONAL READINGS:**

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**Monday, February 19th, 2018 – Attitudes and Misinformation**


**OPTIONAL READINGS:**


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**Monday, February 26th, 2018 - Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration**

Programs: Principles or Prejudice?. *American Journal of Political Science, 49*(1), 168-183

**OPTIONAL READINGS:**

(3) Chapter 26 of *Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, “Race and Political Behavior.”

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**Monday, March 5th, 2018 – Social Networks, Deliberation, and Disagreement**


**OPTIONAL READINGS:**

University Press.

**Monday, March 19th, 2018 – Political Tolerance and Political Trust**


**OPTIONAL READINGS:**

(2) Chapter 16 of the *Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, “Political Psychology and Choice.”
(3) Chapters 17 and 18 of *Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, “Political Intolerance in the Context of Democratic Theory” and “Social and Political Trust.”

**Monday, March 26th, 2018 – Political Participation**


**OPTIONAL READINGS:**

Monday April 2nd, 2018 – Campaigns and Elections


Optional Readings:


(2) Chapter 40, 44, 45, and 46 of Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior, “New Modes of Campaigning,” “Political Elites,” “Political Representation and Democracy,” and “Perspectives on Representation: Asking the Right Questions and Getting the Right Answers.”


**Monday, April 9th, 2018 – Partisanship**

(4) Chapter 29 of *Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, “Partisanship Reconsidered.”

**OPTIONAL READINGS:**

(2) Chapters 11 of the *Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, “Left-Right Orientations.”

**Monday, April 16th, 2018 – Political Communication**


**OPTIONAL READINGS:**

(4) Chapter 8 of the *Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, “Perspectives on Mass Belief Systems and Communication.”

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**Monday, April 23**<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 – Final Presentations

**Monday, April 30**<sup>th</sup>, 2018 – Final Presentations