

# POLS 4790: Political Polarization

MWF, 1:25-2:15 PM, Baldwin 305

Christopher Hare  
chare@uga.edu  
[http://chare.myweb.uga.edu/polarization\\_fall113.html](http://chare.myweb.uga.edu/polarization_fall113.html)  
Office Location: Baldwin 101C  
Office Hours: 10 AM-12 PM, Mondays

**Course Description:** Polarization is perhaps the defining characteristic of contemporary American politics. It pervades all other political arenas: the legislative process, executive authority, judicial politics, elections, voting behavior, political parties, mass political participation, and political-economic linkages. Since Keith T. Poole and Howard Rosenthal launched the academic study of contemporary political polarization with their 1984 article “The Polarization of American Politics”, polarization has continued to trend upward. This gives us the opportunity to study a phenomenon that has obvious relevance to our political system. This course will examine the nature, causes, and consequences of polarization and its impact on both elite political actors and the mass electorate.

## Required Texts:

1. Morris Fiorina, Samuel J. Abrams, and Jeremy C. Pope. *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*, 3rd ed. New York: Pearson Longman, 2011. ISBN: 978-0-205-77988-8
2. Matthew Levendusky. *The Partisan Sort: How Liberals Became Democrats and Conservatives Became Republicans*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-226-47365-9
3. Morgan Marietta. *A Citizen's Guide to American Ideology: Conservatism and Liberalism in Contemporary Politics*. New York: Routledge, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-415-89900-0

## Grade Components:

First Exam	25%
Second Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%
Attendance and Participation	25%

## Grading System:

≥ 93	A	77 - 79	C+
90 - 92	A-	73 - 76	C
87 - 89	B+	70 - 72	C-
83 - 86	B	60 - 69	D
80 - 82	B-	< 60	F

**Class Attendance:** I consider college students fully capable of making appropriate decisions with respect to class attendance and equally capable of living with the consequences of those decisions. Make-up exams will not be administered without a legitimate reason for being absent, such as a

serious medical or family emergency, a religious holiday, or excused school function. You should make arrangements with me as soon as possible if you know that you will be absent for one of the exams.

**Academic Honesty:** I strictly adhere to the University of Georgia’s standards with respect to academic honesty. All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty” (<http://ovpi.uga.edu/about-ovpi/ovpi-units/academic-honesty>), and students are required to familiarize themselves with these policies.

**Disabilities:**

Students with special needs that require accommodation should notify me and the Disability Resource Center (114 Clark Howell Hall; 706.542.8719 (voice); 706.542.8778 (tty); <http://drc.uga.edu/>) as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

**Tentative Schedule:**

This schedule is subject to change:

Week	Topic	Readings
Week 1 August 12 - 16	Thinking about Polarization	
Week 2 August 19 - 23	Measuring Polarization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Culture War?</i>, Chapters 1-2</li> <li>• Ellenberg, “Mapping Congress’ Growing Polarization”: <a href="http://slate.me/16SbMxS">http://slate.me/16SbMxS</a></li> <li>• Hare, McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal, “Polarization is Real (and Assymetric)”: <a href="http://bit.ly/KtuUcR">http://bit.ly/KtuUcR</a></li> </ul>
Week 3 August 26 - 30	Redistricting, Gerrymandering, and Geographic Sorting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Culture War?</i>, Chapter 3</li> <li>• Sides, “Gerrymandering is Not What’s Wrong with American Politics”: <a href="http://wapo.st/Y3f00f">http://wapo.st/Y3f00f</a></li> </ul>
Week 4 September 4 - 6 <b>Labor Day: September 2</b>	Redistricting, Gerrymandering, and Geographic Sorting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• McDonald, “Migration and Sorting in the American Electorate,” <i>American Politics Research</i> 39: 512-533.</li> <li>• Silver, “Geography, Not Voting Rights Act, Accounts for Most Majority-Minority Districts”: <a href="http://nyti.ms/14vuhat">http://nyti.ms/14vuhat</a></li> </ul>
Week 5 September 9 - 13	Campaign Contributors and Party Activists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gimpel, Lee, and Pearson-Merkowitz “The Check Is in the Mail,” <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 52: 373-394.</li> <li>• Bowman and Rugg, “AEI Special Report: Delegates at National Conventions: 1968-2008”: <a href="http://bit.ly/NX5zYF">http://bit.ly/NX5zYF</a></li> </ul>
Week 6 September 16 - 20 <b>First Exam: September 20</b>	Income Inequality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal, <i>Polarized America</i>, Chapter 1: <a href="http://bit.ly/14TecJN">http://bit.ly/14TecJN</a></li> </ul>

Week 7 September 23 - 27	Sorting in the Mass Electorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Culture War?</i>, Chapter 4</li> <li>• <i>The Partisan Sort</i>, Chapters 1-2</li> </ul>
Week 8 September 30 - October 4	Sorting in the Mass Electorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Partisan Sort</i>, Chapters 3-5</li> </ul>
Week 9 October 7 - 11	Ideological and Partisan Passion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shanto and Iyengar, "Affect, Not Ideology," <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 76: 405-431.</li> <li>• Bartels, "Beyond the Running Tally" <i>Political Behavior</i> 24: 117-150.</li> <li>• Graham, "Really, Would You Let Your Daughter Marry a Democrat?": <a href="http://bit.ly/STticz">http://bit.ly/STticz</a></li> </ul>
Week 10 October 14 - 18	Media Choice and the Role of Political Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior, "How Increasing Media Choice Widens Gaps in Political Knowledge and Turnout," <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 49: 577-592.</li> <li>• LaCour, "A Balanced News Diet After All?": <a href="http://bit.ly/16jCKyr">http://bit.ly/16jCKyr</a></li> <li>• Palfrey and Poole, "The Relationship Between Information, Ideology and Voting Behavior," <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 31: 511-530.</li> </ul>
Week 11 October 21 - 25	Culture Wars and Value Divides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Layman and Carmines, "Cultural Conflict in American Politics," <i>Journal of Politics</i> 59: 751-777.</li> <li>• <i>Culture War?</i>, Chapters 5-7.</li> </ul>
Week 12 October 28 - October 30 <b>UGA/Florida Weekend: November 1</b>	Culture Wars and Value Divides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jacoby, "Value Choices and American Public Opinion" <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 50: 706-723.</li> <li>• Pew Research Center, "Trends in American Values: 1987-2012": <a href="http://bit.ly/KFdxGx">http://bit.ly/KFdxGx</a></li> </ul>
Week 13 November 4 - 8 <b>Second Exam: November 4</b>	Political Ideology: Introduction and Conservatism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A Citizens' Guide to American Ideology</i>, Chapters 1-3</li> </ul>
Week 14 November 11 - November 15	Political Ideology: Conservatism and Liberalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A Citizens' Guide to American Ideology</i>, Chapters 4-5</li> <li>• <i>A Citizens' Guide to American Ideology</i>, Chapters 6-9</li> </ul> <p><b>Liberal and Conservative Takes on Income Inequality:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deum, "Plutocracy Now": <a href="http://bit.ly/fytYGt">http://bit.ly/fytYGt</a> (see also the accompanying infographics: <a href="http://bit.ly/fT95ye">http://bit.ly/fT95ye</a>)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Murray, "The New American Divide": <a href="http://bit.ly/KFdxGx">http://bit.ly/KFdxGx</a></li> </ul>
Week 15 November 18 - November 22	What Goes With What? Contemporary American Party Platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A Citizens' Guide to American Ideology</i>, Chapter 13</li> <li>• Layman and Carsey, "Party Polarization and 'Conflict Extension' in the American Electorate," <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 46: 786-802.</li> </ul>
Week 16 November 25 - November 29	<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>	
Week 17 December 2 - 3 ( <b>Friday Class Schedule</b> )	Consequences of Polarization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Levendusky, "Clearer Cues, More Consistent Voters," <i>Political Behavior</i> 32: 111-131.</li> </ul>
December 9 12 - 3 PM	<b>Final Exam</b>	