

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**  
**Department of Political Science**  
**POSC 422: Political Attitudes and Behavior**  
**Fall 2024**  
**Monday & Wednesday 8:30 - 9:50 am, DMC 105**

Professor Jane Junn (junn@usc.edu)

Office hours: Monday 10 am – noon & by appointment in VKC 233

This course examines the political attitudes and behavior of people in the United States and the relationship of these phenomena to U.S. politics. The learning goals for this course include factual mastery of the material, effective oral and written communication, and enhanced critical thinking and analytical reasoning.

I. Required readings

There are 2 required books available for purchase at the USC bookstore. Additional readings will be provided electronically or posted on Brightspace.

Haidt, Jonathan. 2012. *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion* (Pantheon Press) ISBN-13: 978-0307377906.

Keyssar, Alexander. 2009. *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States*, revised edition (NY: Basic Books) ISBN-13: 978-0465005024.

II. Course Requirements

Final grades will be computed on the basis of the following distribution:

class participation	15%
paper	25%
examination #1	30%
examination #2	30%

Students are expected to complete the required reading for each class meeting and be ready to discuss the material. Class attendance counts toward the participation grade. No unexcused make-ups for examinations will be given. Late assignments will not be accepted. Class meetings will be conducted in person with occasional remote sessions. Lecture highlights will be posted on Brightspace the day of each class. Do not use AI for writing content. There are 2 in-class examinations for which the department will provide blue books.

Students with academic accommodations should register with USC Disability Services and Programs (DSP) and provide a letter of verification.

Academic policies set forth by the university as per the student guidebook apply to this course: ([https://policy.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/USC\\_StudentCode\\_August2022.pdf](https://policy.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/USC_StudentCode_August2022.pdf)). See also the USC Dornsife statement on academic conduct and support systems (<https://dornsife.usc.edu/info-for-students/>).

### III. COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Day	Date	Class topic	Reading	Assignment
M	8/26	Introduction to the course		
W	8/28	The right to vote	Keyssar intro, ch 1	
M	9/2	<b>University holiday – Labor Day</b>		
W	9/4	Voting in federal elections	Keyssar ch 2	
M	9/9	Justifying exclusion from voting	Keyssar ch 3	
W	9/11	Expanding the franchise	Keyssar ch 4, 5	
M	9/16	Women’s suffrage	Keyssar ch 6	
W	9/18	<b>No class</b>		
M	9/23	Development of civil rights	Keyssar ch 7	
W	9/25	Voting rights	Keyssar ch 8	
M	9/30	Assessing the right to vote	Keyssar Ch 9, concl	
W	10/2	Voting and democracy	Review for exam #1	
M	10/7	Examination #1		
W	10/9	Partisanship and polarization	Articles TBA	
M	10/14	Rationality and politics	Haidt ch 1, 2	
W	10/16	Morality in politics	Haidt ch 3, 4	
M	10/21	Political conservatives	Haidt ch 4, 5	
W	10/23	Political liberals	Haidt ch 7, 8	
M	10/28	Independents and group behavior	Haidt ch 9, 10	
W	10/30	Culture war?	Haidt ch 11, 12	
M	11/4	Paper writing day (on your own)		
W	11/6	Election post-mortem	Articles TBA	
M	11/11	<b>University holiday – Veterans Day</b>		Papers due 5 pm
W	11/13	Public opinion polling	Articles TBA	
M	11/18	Racial attitudes	Articles TBA	
W	11/20	Gender and politics	Articles TBA	
M	11/25	Candidate evaluation	Articles TBA	
W	11/27	<b>University holiday – Thanksgiving</b>		
M	12/2	The state of U.S. democracy	Review for exam #2	
W	12/4	Examination #2		