

PSC 511 - Public Opinion

Spring 2021

Instructor: Dr. Nick Davis

Class meetings: Wednesdays 1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Location: Ten Hoor Hall 252

Office hours: Virtual, by appointment only

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1 Course overview

Public opinion involves the study of what people think. Frequently, it combines a method (polling) with various substantive areas of study (e.g. democracy, climate change, etc.).¹ It is also an interdisciplinary area of academic scholarship. The study of public opinion, for example, requires not only understanding the basics of sampling, survey design, and various computational tools used to analyze survey data, but knowing something about human psychology, sociology, anthropology, and the institutional context within which you are interested.

The result, of course, is a diverse and rich field of research in which there is (perhaps frustratingly) little “canon.” There are some areas that usually show up on public opinion syllabi (e.g. ideology, partisanship, polarization, etc.) and some “classic” work that tends to accompany those areas. In this class, I’ve tried to balance a set of readings that both cover the topics conventionally associated with academic public opinion research against topics that might be useful to those of you who take the path to the world of professional social science. While the resulting syllabus includes a broad set of assigned readings, you should find that the articles and book chapters you read each week exist in conversation with each other. And, hopefully, over the course of the term you will come to realize how deeply interconnected many of these topics are to each other.

Holding class during a pandemic. The university is hellbent on us holding in-person classes. There is more to say about university protocol below in their “COVID19 Statement,” but I would only note the following: always err on the side of caution regarding your and others’ health. I will *always* be accommodating when it comes to class attendance and due dates – keep open lines of communication so we can work out alternative arrangements, if need be.

¹Although, to be clear, we don’t only rely on polling for public opinion!

2 Course objectives

This course will:

- Prepare students for field exams in American Politics
- Require students to conduct original research in public opinion

3 Student learning outcomes

By the end of the term, students will:

- Sharpen skills associated with reading and analyzing public opinion research (presentations)
- Understand the major debates involved in the study of public opinion (readings)
- Develop an original research design or empirical analysis (research project)
- Refine their ability to offer and take constructive feedback in preparation for reviewing academic research (peer review)

4 Assignments and grading

Over the course of this term, your grade is composed of several different elements. They are as follows:

| Assignment | Weight |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Participation | 10.0% |
| Presentations | 30.0% |
| Research paper | 60.0% |
| Total | 100.0% |

Reading and participation

Each week you will be responsible for doing a total of five (5) readings. I have tried to keep the amount of assigned reading to a reasonable level – I know you are taking multiple classes and juggling many responsibilities. Because we have a lot of material to get through this semester, you would do well to develop a method of reading for clarity that balances pace with thoroughness. You don't need to read every last footnote in every article. But: you should come to class prepared to discuss the material. The quality of our class interactions hinges on whether or not you carefully attend to the assigned reading, which presents something of a collective action problem: you can probably

shirk on some weeks and “get by” relying on others to engage the work. However, this behavior hurts both your development as a scholar and, frankly, your peers – your perspectives are valuable and each of you adds something different to class discussions. Please don’t shortchange yourself or your colleagues; you’re here, so put in the work.

Each week, I’ll keep a simple tally of who participates. When 75% of class members participate, everyone will be rewarded full participation points. If less than 75% of class participates, then no one will receive participation points for that week.

Presentations

Over the course of the term, you will be responsible for four (4) short presentations of an article or book chapter. Based on the class roster, I have already assigned readings to you over the term. While I would prefer for you to have some agency in selecting work you find interesting, the reality is that this predetermination is far more efficient for everyone involved.

Your speaking time should clock in between 10 and 15 minutes. The point of this exercise is two-fold: (1) improve your ability to distill academic research into actionable talking points, and (2) refine your public-speaking skills. Both of these things are necessary skills for presenting work at academic conferences, working with stakeholders in public spaces, and collaborating with social scientists. After each presentation, we will open the floor for a collaborative discussion about the work. However, expect that these presentations are also somewhat free-flowing and fluid – discussion or debate may occur on points you raise. Presentations are not monologues but opportunities for conversation.

There are no hard formatting requirements for these presentations, but you should, at minimum, prepare a short PowerPoint that covers the following pieces of information. These slides do not need to be aesthetically beautiful or ground-breaking in their content – they simply need to “get the job done.” They are only there to guide the discussion about the text as a way of orienting how we talk about the research.

These slides should be emailed to me before your assigned class period. Bear in mind that the research chosen for a given week often exists in context with the other, assigned pieces. There may be overlap in the literature review sections of each piece – give us what we need to know, but don’t get lost on the backdrop. We want to know about the study to which you’ve been assigned, so don’t lose the forest for the trees. In that spirit, you should answer the following questions in the span of your presentation:

- What is the research question?
- Where does the article fit within the literature it speaks to?
- Where applicable:
- What theory does the article offer to explain its hypotheses?
- What data / research design does the article use? How are key variables measured? What are your impressions of the measurement strategy?

- What are the findings?
- What are the conclusions?

Again, just to be very clear: these presentations should be casual. You're not dressing up in a suit to present the material to a boardroom. Instead, think of this as a way of standardizing how we lead guided discussions about the material.

The readings have been distributed as follows. Each student is assigned a number between 1 and 5. This number corresponds to the numbered reading during a given week. Weeks in which you present rotate in order to give you one week "on" and two weeks "off." We then repeat this cycle until the semester concludes.

- Weeks 2, 5, 8, and 12

- 1 - Drew Cagle
- 2 - Jack Corso
- 3 - Kendall Criswell
- 4 - Ann Durand
- 5 - Kim Jacks

- Weeks 3, 6, 10, 13

- 1 - Jegal Daehon
- 2 - Fortune Jose
- 3 - Dalis Lampkins
- 4 - Alexander Lindenfelser
- 5 - Claudia Mitchell

- Weeks 4, 7, 11, 14

- 1 - Mackenzie Quick
- 2 - Ashley Spiller
- 3 - Drew St. Charles
- 4 - Marci Turner
- 5 - Emily Williamson

Research paper

Each student will conduct original research this semester. Your research papers will take one of two forms: (1) a research proposal, or, (2) an empirical research paper.

Research proposal. The research proposal involves designing your own experimental research design. You will not actually collect data and conduct analysis, but you will supply all of the pieces necessary for you to further pursue your research question if you had the resources to do so.

Empirical paper. An empirical research paper involves writing a paper that is paired with analysis of secondary data (from the ANES, GSS, etc.).

Details about fulfilling the requirements associated with these assignments, along with a significant amount of information about how to write academic papers more generally, can be found in the accompanying supplement “A short guide to writing a research paper.” However, regardless of which route you choose, your final paper should be between 5,000 and 7,000 (inclusive references) and will be graded according to the matrix in the forthcoming section under “Written work grading matrix.” Please pay special attention to the following due dates that are associated with the components of this assignment.

| Assignment | Minimum word count | Due date | Percentage of overall course grade |
|----------------------------|--------------------|----------|------------------------------------|
| Research question proposal | None | 02/10/21 | 2.5% |
| Bibliography | None | 02/24/21 | 2.5% |
| Literature review | 2,000+ words | 03/10/21 | 7.5% |
| Theoretical expectations | 750+ words | 03/24/21 | 7.5% |
| Final paper submission | 5,000+ words | 04/28/21 | 40.0% |

5 Written work grading matrix

The rubric that I use to grade written assignments is appended here. You will be graded on a combination of the following things: (1) Understanding, (2) Organization, and (3) Quality of Writing.

| Criteria | A (9-10 points) | B (8-8.9 points) | C and below (<7.9) |
|--------------------|--|--|---|
| Understanding | Demonstrates a deep understanding of the assignment and the relationship among concepts | Demonstrates acceptable understanding of the material, where some connections between concepts are weak or missing | Demonstrates limited understanding of material and the relationship among concepts; shows poor grasp of ideas |
| Organization | Clear, logical organization of material; submission flows from a well-developed introduction, to body, to conclusion | Some organization, but the logical flow is flawed or not totally clear | Lacks structure and organization; perhaps missing a formal introduction or other structural deficiencies |
| Quality of writing | Excellent grammar, vocabulary, and word choice | Some errors or imprecision; room for improvement in writing | Awkward word choice, imprecise, even sloppy |

6 Course outline

The reading assigned for each week is significant, but not extreme. I've tried to keep each week manageable. You may skim certain readings and dig into others. At minimum, however, you should be conversational about any of the pieces assigned for a given week.

Week 1 - 01/13 - Syllabus Day

- Review Syllabus
- Explain expectations, assignments

Week 2 - 01/20 - What is public opinion?

1. Donsbach, W. and Traugott, M.W. eds. 2008. *The SAGE handbook of public opinion research*. Sage. (Chapters 1,5,9,13 – these are all very short)
 2. Marres, N., 2005. [Issues spark a public into being: A key but often forgotten point of the Lippmann-Dewey debate](#). *Making things public: Atmospheres of democracy*, 208-217.
 3. Sanders, Lynn M. 1999. Democratic Politics and Survey Research. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 29, 248-280
 4. Blumer, Herbert. 1948. Public Opinion and Public Opinion Polling. *American Sociological Review*, 13, 542-554.
 5. Berinsky, A.J. 2017. Measuring public opinion with surveys. *Annual review of political science*, 20, pp.309-329.
- NOT ASSIGNED BUT YOU SHOULD READ AT SOME POINT: Walter Lippmann's classic *Public Opinion*

Week 3 - 01/27 - The meanings of ideology

1. Azevedo, F., Jost, J. T., Rothmund, T., and Sterling, J. (2019). Neoliberal ideology and the justification of inequality in capitalist societies: Why social and economic dimensions of ideology are intertwined. *Journal of Social Issues*, 75(1), 49-88.
2. Conover, P.J. and Feldman, S. 1981. The origins and meaning of liberal/conservative self-identifications. *American Journal of Political Science*, 617-645.
3. Goren, P., Motta, M. and Smith, B. 2020. The Ideational Foundations of Symbolic Ideology. *Political Psychology*, 41, 75-94.
4. Jefferson, Hakeem. N.d. The Curious Case of Black Conservatives: Construct Validity and the 7-point Liberal-Conservative Scale <https://tinyurl.com/curious-case-black-ideology>
5. Barber, M. and Pope, J.C. 2019. Does Party Trump Ideology? Disentangling Party and Ideology in America. *American Political Science Review*, 113(1), 38-54.

Week 4 - 02/03 - Ideology: Constrained or idiosyncratic?

1. Park, B. 2018. How are we apart? Continuity and change in the structure of ideological disagreement in the American public, 1980–2012. *Social Forces*, 96(4), 1757-1784.
2. Converse, P. 2000. Assessing the Capacity of Mass Electorates. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 3, 331-353.
3. Achen, C.H. 1975. Mass Political Attitudes and the Survey Response. *American Political Science Review*, 69, 1218-1231.
4. Kalmoe, N.P. 2020. Uses and abuses of ideology in political psychology. *Political Psychology*, 41(4), 771-793.
5. Fishman, N. and Davis, N.T. Forthcoming. Change we can believe in: Structural and content dynamics within belief networks. *American Journal of Political Science*. URL: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/i34iuqdm3un67v/belief-dynamics-ajps-final.pdf?dl=0>

Week 5 - 02/10 - Race and racial attitudes

1. Wilson, D.C. and Davis, D.W. 2011. Reexamining racial resentment: Conceptualization and content. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 634(1), 117-133.
2. Hopkins, D.J. and Washington, S. 2020. The rise of Trump, the fall of prejudice? Tracking white Americans' racial attitudes via a panel survey, 2008–2018. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 84(1), 119-140.
3. Carney, R.K. and Enos, R.D. n.d. Conservatism and fairness in contemporary politics: Unpacking the psychological underpinnings of modern racism. URL: <https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/renos/files/carneyenos.pdf>
4. Sanchez, G.R. 2006. The role of group consciousness in Latino public opinion. *Political Research Quarterly*, 59(3), 435-446.
5. Cole, G. 2020. Types of White Identification and Attitudes About Black Lives Matter. *Social Science Quarterly*, 101(4), 1627-1633.

Week 6 - 02/17 - Sex and gender

1. Schaffner, B.F. N.d. How political scientists should measure sexist attitudes. URL: https://www.dropbox.com/s/vh1kvj10vrf4cli/schaffner_psa2020.pdf?dl=0
2. Barnes, T and Cassese, EC. 2017. American Party Women: A Look at the Gender Gap within Parties. *Political Research Quarterly*, 70(1), 127-141. 3.
3. Bittner, A. and Goodyear-Grant, E. 2017. Sex isn't Gender: Reforming Concepts and Measurements in the Study of Public Opinion. *Political Behavior*, 39(4), 1019-1041.
4. Bauer, N.M. 2020. Shifting Standards: How Voters Evaluate the Qualifications of Female and Male Candidates. *The Journal of Politics*, 82(1), 1-12. 5.
5. Valentino, N.A., Wayne, C., and Oceno, M. 2018. Mobilizing Sexism: The Interaction of Emotion and Gender Attitudes in the 2016 US Presidential Election. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 82(S1), 213-235.

Week 7 - 02/24 - Religion

1. Ksiazkiewicz, A. and Friesen, A., 2019. The higher power of religiosity over personality on political ideology. *Political Behavior*, 1-25.
2. Margolis, M.F. 2018. How politics affects religion: Partisanship, socialization, and religiosity in America. *The Journal of Politics*, 80(1), 30-43.
3. Davis, N.T. and Federico, C.M. 2019. Constructing images of the divine: Latent heterogeneity in Americans' impressions of God. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 58(1), 47-66.
4. Burge, R.P. 2020. Is Becoming Born-Again a Transformative Experience? Results from Three Sets of Panel Data. *Review of Religious Research*, 1-23.
5. Djupe, P.A. and Burge, R.P. 2020. The Prosperity Gospel of Coronavirus Response. *Politics and Religion*, 1-22.

Week 8 - 03/03 - Affective polarization

1. Klar, S., Krupnikov, Y. and Ryan, J.B. 2018. Affective polarization or partisan disdain? Untangling a dislike for the opposing party from a dislike of partisanship. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 82(2), 379-390.
2. Kingzette, J. N.d. In-party love, out-party hate, and the ideological roots of partisan animosity. URL: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/yilray02es8agkp/kingzette-jon-affective-polar.pdf?dl=0>
3. Webster, S.W., Glynn, A.N., and Motta, M.P. n.d. Partisan schadenfreude and the demand for candidate cruelty. URL: <http://stevenwebster.com/research/schad.pdf>
4. Iyengar, S, and Westwood, S.J. 2015. Fear and loathing across party lines: New evidence on group polarization. *American Journal of Political Science*, 59(3), 690-707.
5. Levendusky, M.S. 2018. Americans, Not Partisans: Can Priming American National Identity Reduce Affective Polarization? *The Journal of Politics*, 80(1), 59-70.

Week 9 - 03/10 - Fallow

Week 10 - 03/17 - Measuring what people know

1. Clifford, S., Kim, Y. and Sullivan, B.W. 2019. An Improved Question Format for Measuring Conspiracy Beliefs. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 83(4), 690-722.
2. Clifford, S. and Jerit, J. 2016. Cheating on political knowledge questions in online surveys: An assessment of the problem and solutions. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 80(4), 858-887.
3. Mondak, J.J. 2000. Reconsidering the measurement of political knowledge. *Political analysis*, 57-82.
4. Jennings, M.K. 1996. Political knowledge over time and across generations. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 60(2), pp.228-252.

5. Barabas, J., Jerit, J., Pollock, W. and Rainey, C. 2014. The question(s) of political knowledge. *American Political Science Review*, 840-855.

Week 11 - 03/24 - How people think: Cognition, emotion, and context

1. Gadarian, S.K. and Albertson, B. 2014. Anxiety, immigration, and the search for information. *Political Psychology*, 35(2), 133-164.
2. Lodge, M. and Taber, C.S. 2005. The automaticity of affect for political leaders, groups, and issues: An experimental test of the hot cognition hypothesis. *Political Psychology*, 26(3), 455-482.
3. Rahn, W.M. 1993. The role of partisan stereotypes in information processing about political candidates. *American Journal of Political Science*, 472-496.
4. Entman, R.M. 1989. How the media affect what people think: An information processing approach. *The Journal of Politics*, 51(2), 347-370.
5. Webster, S.W., Connors, E.C., and Sinclair, B. N.d. The social consequences of political anger. URL: <http://stevenwebster.com/research/social.pdf>

Week 12 - 03/31 - Persuasion

1. Kalla, Joshua L. and David E. Broockman. 2020. Reducing Exclusionary Attitudes through Interpersonal Conversation: Evidence from three field experiments. *American Political Science Review*, 114(2), 410-425
2. Broockman, D.E. and Butler, D.M., 2017. The Causal Effects of Elite Position-Taking on Voter Attitudes: Field Experiments with Elite Communication. *American Journal of Political Science*, 61(1), 208-221.
3. Merkley, E. and Stecula, D. N.d. Party cues in the news: Elite opinion leadership and climate skepticism. URL: <https://rubenson.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/merkley-stecula.pdf>
4. Koch, J.W., 1998. Political rhetoric and political persuasion: The changing structure of citizens' preferences on health insurance during policy debate. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 209-229.
5. Weeks, B.E., Ardèvol-Abreu, A. and Gil de Zúñiga, H., 2017. Online influence? Social media use, opinion leadership, and political persuasion. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 29(2), 214-239.

Week 13 - 04/07 - Policy

1. Benegal, S.D. and Scruggs, L.A. 2018. Correcting misinformation about climate change: The impact of partisanship in an experimental setting. *Climatic change*, 148(1-2), pp.61-80.
2. Hopkins, D.J., Sides, J. and Citrin, J. 2019. The muted consequences of correct information about immigration. *The Journal of Politics*, 81(1), 315-320.

3. Roberts, M.L., Hite, P.A. and Bradley, C.F. 1994. Understanding attitudes toward progressive taxation. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 58(2), 165-190.
4. Nelson, T.E. and Kinder, D.R. 1996. Issue frames and group-centrism in American public opinion. *The Journal of Politics*, 58(4), 1055-1078.
5. Bell, E., 2019. Deserving to Whom? Investigating Heterogeneity in the Impact of Social Constructions of Target Populations on Support for Affirmative Action. *Policy Studies Journal*.

Week 14 - 04/14 - System support and democratic attitudes

1. Miller, S.V. and Davis, N.T. 2020. The Effect of White Social Prejudice on Support for American Democracy. *Journal of Race, Ethnicity and Politics*, pp.1-18.
2. Clayton, K., Davis, N.T., Nyhan, B., Porter, E., Ryan, T.J. and Wood, T.J. N.d. Does elite rhetoric undermine democratic norms?
URL: <https://www.dartmouth.edu/nyhan/democratic-norms.pdf>
3. Cutler, F., Nuesser, A. and Nyblade, B. 2020. Satisfaction with democracy: The impact of institutions, contexts, and attitudes. URL: https://www.authorea.com/users/290922/articles/417945-satisfaction-with-democracy-the-impact-of-institutions-contexts-and-attitudes?access_token=a6zxhGZMOaiN6sKFj6v21A
4. Graham, Matthew H. and Milman, W. Svoboda. 2020. Democracy in America? Partisanship, Polarization, and the Robustness of Support for Democracy in the United States. *American Political Science Review*, 114(2), 392-409.
5. Chong, Dennis. 1993. How People Think, Reason, and Feel about Rights and Liberties. *American Journal of Political Science*, 37, 867-99.

Week 15 - 04/21 - Peer review, wrap-up

7 Statements and sundries

COVID-19 and the University

Holding class during a pandemic is new territory for faculty, students, and administration. The university has released the following statement regarding the fall term:

All University faculty, staff, and students are expected to maintain a commitment to the health and safety of our campus community. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, specific health and safety standards are in place to minimize exposure and community spread on campus. All students must be familiar with and abide by the requirements outlined in the UA Return Plan / UA System Comprehensive Health and Safety Plan.

Students must (1) wear a mask or face covering at all times while participating in face-to-face class sessions; and (2) adhere to social distancing standards. More information on these requirements and UA Healthcheck system and screening can be found at healthinfo.ua.edu/returnplan. You are expected to visit the site and comply with all noted requirements related to in-person class attendance.

If I may add something to this: I understand that COVID-19 has upended your ability to live a “normal” college year. It is an unfair and cruel development, across several dimensions. And I am sorry.

You will hear a lot of talk this term about “personal responsibility” and how your actions directly contribute to the university and Tuscaloosa’s response to this pandemic. It is true that your actions matter; we should simultaneously acknowledge, however, the failed public leadership that has brought us to this point. You might follow the rules and things could still end poorly.

The resulting predicament is a classic collective action problem: in order for life to resume with some semblance of normalcy requires each of you to buy into acting in ways that are less “fun” than you would have imagined spending your time. If most people do the “right thing,” then it is possible for some of you to slide by and engage in behaviors that are higher risk. For the sake of your classmates, your professors, the staff who clean our buildings and keep them running, and the local folks who live here year-round, I would ask that you think carefully about how your actions affect others this fall. Living in community is about kindness. Be kind to each other by...following the rules. Boring advice, but vital nonetheless.

Attendance

Coming to class is beneficial for various reasons: 1) *someone is paying for you to be here*, and, 2) our discussions should help you better understand the material. That’s vital because questions involving this research may show up on your comprehensive exams!

However, I am aware that we are still in the middle of a pandemic – even if certain institutions are pretending otherwise. You have much latitude to participate remotely – especially if you have the sniffles, a hacking cough, or feel mildly ill. If you cannot come to class, then I will try and make sure that we have an audio-video feed for you to watch. Just bear in mind that the quality of that remote experience will not be the same as coming to class. Please, please, please use your best discretion and judgment here.

Grading Matrix

The full grading scale that UA uses can be found [here](#). As a general rule, an “A” conveys excellent and exceptional work, while a “B” suggests that your work is satisfactory.

| University of Alabama Alpha-numeric Grading | | |
|---|----------|------------|
| Grade | Numeric | GPA Points |
| A | 90 - 100 | 4.00 |
| B | 80 - 89 | 3.00 |
| C | 70 - 79 | 2.00 |
| D | 60 - 69 | 1.00 |
| F | 00 - 59 | 0.00 |

Office Hours and Communication

Due to COVID-19, office hours will be virtual and by appointment only. However, this does not mean that I don't want to see you! Office Hours are a time that your professors specifically designate to meet with you to answer questions about and clarify confusion involving course materials. I have set aside time to chat with you via Zoom, so do not hesitate to reach out and schedule a meeting.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you are struggling in this class. I will do my best to help figure out a plan and strategy for you to succeed. If I don't have any idea about the challenges you are facing – and, worse, you wait until the end of the term to reach out to me – then there just isn't much I can do for you at that late date. Be proactive!

Technology Policy

The academic research is mixed to negative about whether cellphones, computers, or tablets help or hinder your experience. It does seem to be the case that you'll retain more information if you take notes by hand, but your mileage may vary. That said, we will occasionally use computers in-class, and I do not forbid them. Use your technology wisely and respectfully.

Statement on the Academic Honor Code and Academic Misconduct

All students in attendance at The University of Alabama are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University of Alabama expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. Academic misconduct includes all acts of dishonesty in any academic or related matter and any knowing or intentional help, attempt to help, or conspiracy to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following acts, when performed in any type of academic or academically related matter, exercise, or activity:

- Cheating: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids, or computer-related information.
- Plagiarism: Representing the words, data, works, ideas, computer programs or output, or anything not generated in an authorized fashion, as one's own.
- Fabrication: Presenting as genuine, any invented or falsified citation or material.
- Misrepresentation: Falsifying, altering, or misstating the contents of documents or other materials related to academic matters, including schedules, prerequisites, and transcripts.

The protocol for establishing consequences for such activities are spelled out clearly in the [online handbook](#). Long story short: Don't do these things, and you'll avoid lots of painful consequences.

Statement on Disability Accommodations

If you are registered with the Office of Disability Services and have an accommodation, then please let me know as soon as possible. If you have a disability, but have not contacted the Office of Disability Services, then you can visit the [Disability Services website](#) to make arrangements.

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is the central contact point for UA students with academic disabilities. ODS works with faculty and other members of the University community to provide individualized academic accommodations and support services while promoting student responsibility and self-advocacy. It is the student's responsibility to make known a need for academic accommodations and services by (1) providing appropriate documentation of the disability to ODS, (2) formally requesting accommodations by meeting with an ODS accommodations specialist, and (3) meeting with each of his/her/their professors to present a formal ODS accommodation letter and to discuss the implementation of accommodations.

Severe Weather Protocol

The University wants to make sure you're safe during severe weather situations. Usually, it will directly communicate with you directly via email or text regarding closures of various kinds, as

well as information about what to do in an emergency. The official “Severe Weather Guidelines” is available [here](#).

UAct Statement

The University of Alabama is committed to providing an environment for employees, students and campus visitors that is free from illegal harassment based on genetic or family medical history information, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, age, disability, protected veteran status or any other legally protected basis.

The University will not tolerate and will take action against individuals who retaliate against individuals who, in good faith, report violations of this policy or participate in investigations related to such policy violations.

If you have an emergency, then you can reach UAPD at: 205-348-5454. If you need information about your options when faced with hazing, alarming behavior, harassment, or are seeking information about support, then please visit the: [UACT Information page](#).

Changes to the syllabus

Finally, some changes may occur to our syllabus. You will receive advance and fair warning of these changes to the best of my ability.

Acknowledgements

Portions of this syllabus were adapted or borrowed from the syllabi of other excellent researchers and scholars; other first-rate folks offered useful feedback. These folks include Kevin Banda, Tom Wood, Steve Utych, Meredith Conroy, Laura Bucci, Kevin Reuning, Jon Green, and George Hawley (and potentially several others for whom I am forgetting but am no less grateful for).