Understanding how individual dispositions impact political participation has important implications for the health of democracies. If the conflictual and risky nature of politics pushes some citizens (e.g., women and under-represented groups) out of the public sphere, then the promise of governance by the people is not met. Though there are clear historical and structural roots to this participation gap, the white, masculine and competitive nature of political engagement continues to discourage women from participating – from small acts like discussions to running for office. This alienation can be exacerbated for those from under-represented groups, disrupting the benefits of full citizen participation in solving collective problems. How deep are these roots of dispositions and orientations toward politics? What are the foundations of dispositions and political behaviors, particularly as they relate to social identities? How can we best measure and model these effects with a combination of individual differences and context?

Course objectives:

1. Understand the history and current state of women’s involvement in political processes in democracies and the associated impact on public policy, especially as it relates to representation and interest.
2. Understand the effects and intersections of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and citizenship status on access to power and resources as well as political attitudes and engagement.
3. Use psychological theories and methods to better understand gender identity and group differences.
4. Critically evaluate scholarly research as well as pose research puzzles, offer testable hypotheses, and gather evidence to analyze.

Course Materials: All class readings and course materials are available on our OWL site.

Course Requirements:

Discussion Questions (10 points): Students will write 7-10 discussion questions for their assigned day of readings, dedicating at least 1-2 questions per reading and including any questions that might address the overall theme of the class period. These will be submitted to the entire class through Owl by 9 p.m. the evening before the class period so classmates have a chance to think through answers as they complete the reading. Questions should go beyond “what was this article about?” or “What was the key variable?” to ask broad questions about theory and method. Or to inquire about implications of the findings for advancing science or applying to understanding political behavior and events. Dr. Friesen will help facilitate the class discussion with the assigned student.
Participation (10 points): This is a graduate-level seminar so group discussion is an important component of the learning environment. Students are not required to speak in every discussion but rather should demonstrate a pattern of being engaged, asking questions, and offering comments on a regular basis.

The following assignments should be submitted on Owl in 12-point font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins. More assignment details and examples are located on Owl.

Short Papers (20 points total) – Students will write two, two-page papers addressing a day’s readings. Papers are due on the day of the reading assignment. The paper should include no more than one paragraph of summary but then move on to discuss the strength of the argument or research design, offer further research questions and pose hypotheses to questions raised, and a proposed research design to test the hypotheses. Students may also raise implications for public policy or politics in a democracy. Because you may choose any of the days’ readings on which to write, NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED. If you run out of time, simply choose to write a paper another day.

Final Paper (60 points) – Students will write a research paper that poses an empirical question related to gender and politics. These papers should be modeled after a journal article or scholarly book chapter in that the extant literature is reviewed to build a case for the student’s hypotheses regarding the chosen research question, data is gathered to test the hypotheses, and a discussion is provided to explain limitations, findings, next steps and implications for politics and policy. The data may include interviews, surveys, newspaper content analysis, etc. There are numerous free data sources (Canadian Election Study, Pew Forum, General Social Survey, American National Election Study, Eurobarometer, World Values Survey, WomenStats.org) where students may extract variables to test their claims.

For MA students: Statistical analysis need not be complex or sophisticated – cross-tabs, summary statistics, frequencies are perfectly acceptable. Students may also use qualitative evidence (e.g., newspaper content analysis, interviews, archival research, theoretical argument) to explore their research question.

For PhD students: More complex models are expected – think of applying what you have learned in your methods sequence to this paper.

Papers should be 15-20 pages long and include at least 20 sources (properly cited) in addition to any course materials used.

Jan. 12 - Introduction


Jan. 19 – Intersectionality, Dispositions & Mechanisms
Hancock Ange-Marie. (2007). When multiplication doesn’t equal quick addition: examining intersectionality as a research paradigm. *Perspectives on Politics* 5, 63–79.


**Jan. 26 – Men and Masculinities**

Stanaland, Adam, Sarah Gaither, and Anna Gassman-Pines. 2022. When is masculinity “fragile”? An expectancy-discrepancy-threat model of masculine identity. Accepted for publication at Personality and Social Psychology Review. Pre-print here: [https://psyarxiv.com/fgbk9/](https://psyarxiv.com/fgbk9/)

Blog post. [https://datepsychology.com/the-testosterone-blackpill/](https://datepsychology.com/the-testosterone-blackpill/)


**Gender and the Political Process**
Feb. 2 – Gender and Participation


Feb. 9 – Ideology, Partisanship and Public Opinion


Feb. 16 – Political Ambition and Running for Office


Feb. 23 – No Class, Reading Week

March 2 – When Women Govern


**March 9 - Gender, Culture, Society and Politics**


**Gender and Public Policy**

**March 16 – Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity: Participation and Rights**


**March 23 – Sexuality, Reproductive Rights, and Policy**


**March 30 – Gender, Disability and Health Outcomes**


**April 6 – Parenthood and Politics**


