

Syllabus: Social Networks, Political Geography, and the Context of Political Behavior

COURSE INFORMATION	<p><i>Term:</i> Spring 2023 <i>Level:</i> Advanced Seminar <i>Meet:</i> Wednesdays 12:30-3:20 <i>Room:</i> College Hall 214 <i>Syllabus Revision:</i> April 13, 2023</p>	<p><i>Instructor:</i> Jack Reilly <i>E-mail:</i> jreilly@ncf.edu <i>Office:</i> Social Sciences 205 <i>Office Hours:</i> T 12-2 (Office), W 10-11 (Zoom) <i>Appointments:</i> jackreilly.com/appointments</p>
DESCRIPTION	<p>This advanced seminar examines the relationship between social context and political behavior, with a particular emphasis on the role of social networks and political geography. Topics to be addressed include voting, communication, social influence, comparative political contexts, the inclusion of geographic, network, and contextual-level variables in the analysis of political behavior, and the role of social space in the political activity of citizens, legislators, and policymakers.</p>	
PREREQUISITES	<p><i>Required:</i> an introductory course in political science (preferably American Politics or Comparative Politics), intermediate coursework in political science, geography, or social psychology, or permission of the instructor.</p> <p><i>Co-requisite:</i> (1) a course on research design in the social sciences, to be completed before or alongside this course or (2) a course on introductory statistics, to be completed before or alongside this course. Both preferred.</p> <p><i>Recommended:</i> A second-level statistics course (such as <i>Quantitative Analysis of Political Data</i>, <i>Advanced Statistics for Psychology</i>, <i>Dealing with Data II</i>, <i>Econometrics</i>, etc) is useful for those wishing to take the research paper option, but not required.</p>	
A NOTE ON COURSE READING	<p>This is a syllabus for a (by design) course covering a variety of classic and very contemporary research. (We may be reading things with a publication date of 2023, for instance.) Students will also have a role in collectively deciding readings for the class. As such, while core course requirements will not change, readings will be assigned each week for the week ahead.</p>	

Materials

BOOKS	<p>Our reading for the course will be scholarly articles available electronically directly from journals. Accordingly, you should budget \$30 for printing articles over the course of the semester. (This is easily less than the cost of additional readers.) We will occasionally engage in close reading of articles and you will need to be able to reference them in class.</p>
SOFTWARE	<p>While this is not a course on statistics, computational social science, or programming, we will introduce formal social network analysis (SNA), including and describing and visualizing social networks using statistical software. Primarily, we will use R, a free open-source statistics environment, and Statnet, a free suite of R packages for network analysis. No prior knowledge of R is required.</p>

Course Requirements

OVERVIEW

Satisfactory completion of the course requires completion of the following:

1. Daily Preparation
 - (a) Reading
 - (b) Participation
 - (c) Discussion Questions
2. Class Contributions
 - (a) Discussion Leadership
 - (b) Reaction paper
 - (c) Enrichment Reading Selection (Optional)
 - (d) Article Presentation
3. Assignments
 - (a) Literature Search Assignment
 - (b) Quantitative Assignment
4. Final Project
 - (a) "Pre-Registration" Assignment
 - (b) Final Presentation
 - (c) Final Research Paper

DAILY PREPARATION

Daily Participation and Reading. This is an advanced seminar taught at a graduate level. Informed class participation is expected and required each week.

Discussion Questions. Submit discussion questions or points (broadly construed) to the class by 9 AM on the day of class. Make sure to send emails to the course email list, and title your e-mail [CPB] Questions: Week X.

CLASS CONTRIBUTIONS

Reaction Papers: Each student will write a 3-5 page reaction paper during the semester. This paper will be submitted to the whole class by noon the Monday before class, and should be read by other students in the class. As you are writing your reaction papers, you may wish to think of some of the following questions:

- *What is the primary argument of the readings for this week?*
- *How do these readings fit together? Do they agree? Disagree?*
- *How do these readings fit in with other readings from this class, or from other coursework you have taken?*
- *Do you buy what the author(s) is/are selling? Why or why not?*

Discussion Leadership: On the week you write a reaction paper, you will also lead class discussion. Days may have multiple discussion leaders.

FINAL PROJECT

For your final project, you will have three options:

1. An empirical paper on political behavior using social networks data (approx. 15 pgs).
2. An empirical paper on political behavior using behavioral, contextual, and/or contextual data. (approx. 15 pgs)

3. An expansive literature review of an area related to social networks, social context, social influence, and/or political behavior. (approx. 25 pgs)

Essentially, I will be looking for you to examine the role of social networks or social context in some aspect of political activity and behavior writ large. (Although we won't be examining things like policy networks or terrorist networks in depth, for instance, those are perfectly acceptable topics for papers.) For data sources, I recommend examining the Cross-National Election Project (CNEP), the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), and/or survey-based network data sets we've discussed throughout class, including but not limited to the 1992 CNEP, 1996 Indianapolis St. Louis Study, and the 2000 American National Election Study (all available at ICPSR). Collecting and/or using your own networks data in either a qualitative or quantitative fashion is encouraged as well.

The project will have two components: a paper and a presentation, and a pre-registration assignment is due before your paper. Presentations will take place during the last two weeks of classes, and the final paper will be due the Friday the last week of class. I recommend talking with me before getting too deep into the project.

ADVANCED
SEMINAR CREDIT

This course fulfills an advanced seminar requirement for the Political Science AOC, and counts as either an American or Comparative class depending on your final project. If your final project used American data or literature only, it counts as an American seminar; if it covers comparative data or literature, it counts as a comparative seminar.

Course Expectations

COURSE POLICIES **Etiquette:** Course participants must be courteous to the professor and fellow students. Attend class on time, listen to fellow students when they talk, and disagree (or agree) with others' arguments professionally. Keep cell phones silenced and out of sight.

Computation and Technology: Laptops be useful for the portions of class dealing with visual representations of social networks in software; I recommend you bring them for those classes. Aside from these particular times in class, laptops are required to be closed and left out of sight. Alternate accommodations, if necessary, can be made in the case of documented necessity.

Office Hours: I encourage you to stop by my office hours at any point if you have questions about the course, the readings, school, etc. I have drop-in hours between 12 and 2 every Tuesday, as well as additional hours by appointment (schedule at jackreilly.com/appointments).

E-mail: Students can generally expect a response to all e-mails within 24 hours, excepting weekends. I'm happy to answer any questions over e-mail that require less than a paragraph in response. Questions that require more than a short paragraph in response should be addressed in person.

A Note on Writing: Clear writing and argumentation is a critical element to success in this class. I strongly recommend exploring the options for writing (and revising!) assistance at the Writing Resource Center. You can schedule an appointment through the writing center here: <https://ncf.mywconline.com>

Class Schedule

OVERVIEW

	Topic	Workshops	Assignments
MINI CLASSES			
1	Course Overview		
2	Social Networks, Embeddedness	Overview of Networks	
3	Political Geography	Networks Data & Visualization	Literature Searches
4	Structure	Example Paper Presentation	
5	Homophily & Causality		
6	Research Designs	Using R for Networks	
7	Emergence	Network Presentations	Network Drawings I
SPRING BREAK			
8	Context, Space, and Place		
9	Boundaries, Communities, Migration	Two-Mode Networks	Final Paper Topic
10	Rural Politics		
11	Economic Geography & Policy	Network Presentations	Network Drawings II
12	BACC WEEK		
13	Student Presentations I		Presentations
14	Student Presentations II		Presentations
FINALS WEEK			Paper Due

WEEK 1 Syllabus and Course Overview

- Discussion Leaders
- Journal Assignments
- Article Presentation Discussion

WEEK 2 Social Networks, Social Context, and the Problem of Embeddedness

- Padgett and Ansell, 1993. *Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici*.
- Granovetter, 1985. *The Problem of Embeddedness*
- Coleman, 1988. *Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital*

Presentation: An Overview of Social Networks

WEEK 3 Political Geography

- Ethington and McDaniel, 2007. "Political Places and Institutional Spaces: The Intersection of Political Science and Political Geography"
- King, "Why Context Should Not Count", *Political Geography*
- Nall, "The political consequences of spatial policies: How interstate highways facilitated geographic polarization" *Journal of Politics*

Presentation: An Introduction to Social Networks Visualization

WEEK 4 Social Networks, Social Groups, and Network Structure

- Granovetter, Mark (1973). The Strength of Weak Ties. *The American Journal of Sociology*

- Burt, Ronald S. (2004). Structural holes and good ideas. *The American Journal of Sociology*
- Huckfeldt, Robert, Paul A. Beck, Russell J. Dalton, and Jeffrey Levine (1995). Political environments, cohesive social groups, and the communication of public opinion. *American Journal of Political Science*
- Mason, Lilliana and Julie Wronski (2018). One Tribe to Bind Them All: How Our Social Group Attachments Strengthen Partisanship. *Political Psychology*
- Pietryka and Debats, "Its Not Just What You Have, but Who You Know: Networks, Social Proximity to Elites, and Voting in State and Local Elections"

Example Paper Presentation: Social Connectedness and Political Behavior

WEEK 5

Homophily, Social Influence, and the Problem of Studying Causation in Social Networks

- McPherson, Miller, Lynn Smith-Lovin, and James M Cook (2001). Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks. *Annual Review of Sociology*
- Burt, Ronald S. (1987). Social Contagion and Innovation: Cohesion versus Structural Equivalence. *The American Journal of Sociology*
- Christakis, Fowler, and assorted collaborators have written a variety of highly critiqued articles on the influence of friends on social behavior over large social networks.
 - Read: Johns, "Disconnected? Social contagions debunked: Reports of infectious obesity and divorce were grossly overstated" [A popular summary of the Christakis & Fowler debate in Slate]
 - Scan a handful of the original articles:
 - * Christakis, Nicholas A and James H Fowler (2007). The Spread of Obesity in a Large Social Network over 32 Years. *New England Journal of Medicine*
 - * Christakis, Nicholas A and James H Fowler (2008). The Collective Dynamics of Smoking in a Large Social Network. *New England Journal of Medicine*
 - * Fowler, James H and Nicholas A Christakis (2008). Dynamic spread of happiness in a large social network: longitudinal analysis over 20 years in the Framingham Heart Study. *BMJ*
 - * Murabito, Joanne and Nicholas A Christakis (2010). The spread of alcohol consumption behavior in a large social network. *Annals of Internal Medicine*
 - Scan two critiques. (Focus on the non-mathematical portions.)
 - * Cohen-Cole, Ethan and Jason M Fletcher (2008). Detecting implausible social network effects in acne, height, and headaches: longitudinal analysis. *BMJ: British Medical Journal*
 - * Shalizi, Cosma and Andrew C Thomas (2011). Homophily and Contagion Are Generically Confounded in Observational Social Network Studies. *Sociological Methods & Research* (especially pgs. 212-216, 231-233)
 - And read the Christakis & Fowler response:
 - * Christakis, Nicholas A and James H Fowler (2013). Social contagion theory: examining dynamic social networks and human behavior. *Statistics in Medicine*
- Nickerson, David W (2008). Is Voting Contagious? Evidence from Two Field Experiments. *The American Political Science Review*
- Bond, Robert M et al (2012). A 61-Million-Person Experiment in Social Influence and Political Mobilization. *Nature*
- *Optional:* Fowler, et al, "Causality in Political Networks" (2011). *American Politics Research*.

WEEK 6

Presentation: An Introduction to R for Social Networks

Research in Social Networks: Designs to Detecting Social Influence and Selection

- Lazar et al, 2010. The Coevolution of Networks and Political Attitudes. *Political Communication*.
- Samara Klar and Yotam Shmargad. 2017. The Effect of Network Structure on Preference Formation, *The Journal of Politics*
- Levitan and Visser, 2009. Social network composition and attitude strength: Exploring the dynamics within newly formed social networks. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*.
- Santoro, 2023. Do Political Beliefs Drive Environment Selection? *American Politics Research*.
- Dietrich, Bryce. 2020. Using Motion Detection to Measure Social Polarization in the U.S. House of Representatives. *Political Analysis*
- *Recommended:* Fishkin et al, 2021. Is Deliberation an Antidote to Extreme Partisan Polarization? Reflections on America in One Room. *American Political Science Review*
 - Or: These 526 Voters Represent All of America. And They Spent a Weekend Together. *New York Times*
 - Or: <https://helena.org/projects/america-in-one-room>
- Optional:
 - Feldman, J et al. The timing and causes of a unique chimpanzee community fission preceding Gombe's Four-Year War
 - Carlson, 2019. Through the Grapevine: Informational Consequences of Interpersonal Political Communication. *American Political Science Review*
 - Travers & Milgram, An Experimental Study of the Small World Problem*
 - Coleman, Katz, and Menzel, 1957. The Diffusion of an Innovation Among Physicians. *Sociometry*.
 - Santoro and Broockman, The promise and pitfalls of cross-partisan conversations for reducing affective polarization: Evidence from randomized experiments
 - Klar, 2014. Partisanship in a Social Setting. *American Journal of Political Science*
 - Iyengar, 2018. The Home as a Political Fortress: Family Agreement in an Era of Polarization *Journal of Politics*
 - Fitzgerald, 2012. Partisan Discord in the Family and Political Engagement: A Comparative Behavioral Analysis *Journal of Politics*
 - Newman, 2018. Network structure from rich but noisy data *Nature Physics*
 - Robert Huckfeldt, Jeffery J. Mondak, Matthew Hayes, Matthew T. Pietryka, and Jack Reilly. Networks, Interdependence, and Social Influence in Politics. In Leonie Huddy, David O. Sears, and Jack S. Levy, editors, *The Oxford handbook of political psychology*, pages 662-698. Oxford University Press, Oxford, England, second edition, September 2013

WEEK 7

Emergent Behavior in Social Networks

- Granovetter, Threshold Models of Collective Behavior *American Journal of Sociology*
- Sagalnik and Watts, Leading the Herd Astray: An Experimental Study of Self-Fulfilling Prophecies in an Artificial Cultural Market. *Social Psychology Quarterly*

- Arthur, Positive Feedbacks in the Economy. *Scientific American*
- Macy et al, Opinion cascades and the unpredictability of partisan polarization. *Science Advances*
- Goel et al, Real and perceived attitude agreement in social networks. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*
- Becker et al, The Wisdom of Partisan Crowds. *PNAS*.
- Optional:
 - Dodds et al, An Experimental Study of Search in Global Social Networks. *Science*
 - Healy, The Performativity of Networks. *European Journal of Sociology*

WEEK 8

Space and Place in Politics

- Mummolo & Nall, Why Partisans Do Not Sort
- Bisgaard et al, Reconsidering the Neighborhood Effect
- Campbell, Why Friends and Neighbors?
- Levan, Neighborhoods that Matter
- Gotz, Physical Topography is Associated With Human Personality
- Scan: Wong et al, Maps in People's Heads
- Optional: Brown & Enos, The measurement of partisan sorting for 180 million voters
- Optional: Baybeck & Huckfeldt, Urban contexts, spatially dispersed networks, and the diffusion of political information

WEEK 9

Boundaries, Communities, Migration, Place Attachment

- Enos, The Space Between, pgs 12-17 *and* Enos, Causal effect of intergroup contact on exclusionary attitudes
- Wong, Boundaries of Obligation
- Maxwell, Cosmopolitan Immigration Attitudes in Large European Cities
- Hernandez et al, 2007. Place attachment and place identity in natives and non- natives *Journal of Environmental Psychology*
- Hopkins, 2010. Politicized Places: Explaining Where and When Immigrants Provoke Local Opposition *American Political Science Review*.
- Martin and Webster, Does residential sorting explain geographic polarization?
- Munis, Us Over Here Versus Them Over There . . . Literally: Measuring Place Resentment in American Politics
- *Review from last week:* Mummolo & Nall, Why Partisans Do Not Sort

WEEK 10

Rural Politics

- Rodden, *Why Cities Lose*, Intro, chs 1 & 8
- Cramer, *Rural Consciousness*
- Sherman, *Coping with Rural Poverty: Economic Survival and Moral Capital in Rural America*
- Hochschild, *Strangers in their Own Land* (ch 9 - The Deep Story)
- Beggs, *Revisiting the Rural-Urban Contrast: Personal Networks in Nonmetropolitan and Metropolitan Settings*
- Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy*, Intro and Conclusion
- Maxwell, *Geographic Divides in Switzerland*
- Optional:
 - Wuthnow, *The Left Behind*, Introduction
 - Monnat & Brown, *More than a Rural Revolt: Landscapes of Despair and the 2016 Presidential Election*
 - Auerbach, *The Geography of Citizenship Practice: How the Poor Engage the State in Rural and Urban India Perspectives on Politics*

WEEK 11

Policy & Economic Geography

- Rickard, *Spending to Win*, ch 1
- Anzia et al, *Does Receiving Government Assistance Shape Political Attitudes? Evidence from Agricultural Producers*
- Ogorzalek, *Nationally poor, locally rich: Income and local context in the 2016 presidential election* *Electoral Studies*
- Jha, *Trade, Institutions and Ethnic Tolerance: Evidence from South Asia* *American Political Science Review*
- Dell, *The Persistent Effects of Perus Mining Mita* *Econometrica*
- Ichino, *Crossing the Line: Local Ethnic Geography and Voting in Ghana* *American Political Science Review*
- Gest et al, *Roots of the Radical Right: Nostalgic Deprivation in the United States and Britain* *Comparative Political Studies*
- Optional:
 - Marble and Nall, 2021. *Where Self-Interest Trumps Ideology: Liberal Home-owners and Local Opposition to Housing Development* *Journal of Politics*.
 - Trounstine, *The Geography of Inequality: How Land Use Regulation Produces Segregation* *American Political Science Review*
 - Harris, *(Under What Conditions) Do Politicians Reward Their Supporters? Evidence from Kenyas Constituencies* *Development Fund American Political Science Review*
 - Beramendi et al, *Economic Geography and Redistribution: Malapportionment as Compensation* Working paper

Campus Academic Resources

YOUR ACADEMIC ADVISOR	Your academic advisor is your first resource at the college for navigating your courses and academic work at the college. Many first year students find themselves uncertain about when it is "ok" to go their advisor with questions or for advice—but the real answer is "anytime"! We all have open office hours that you can simply drop in at, even if you don't have an appointment, and are eager to help you.
WRITING SKILLS	Clear writing and argumentation is a critical element to success in college (not to mention, life generally). That said, writing is hard, and students come to college with very different levels of preparation for college level and professional writing. Regardless of your skill and comfort with writing, I strongly recommend exploring the options for writing (and revising!) assistance at the Writing Resource Center. You can schedule an appointment through the writing center here: https://ncf.mywconline.com
QUANTITATIVE SKILLS	Like writing skills, quantitative literacy is an integral element to success in college (not to mention, life generally). That said, math is (also) hard, and students come to college with very different levels of preparation for college level and professional data literacy. While this course will cover many aspects of data literacy, should you desire additional support beyond what I and/or the course TA can provide, I recommend exploring the options for assistance at the Quantitative Resource Center. The QRC is located in the Academic Resource Center (ARC), located on the first floor of the Jane Bancroft Cook Library.
STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER	Having trouble figuring out how to manage it all? In addition to your faculty mentor and professors, New College has peer to peer coaching and group workshops available at the Student Success Center. The SSC helps you develop the skills necessary for success in college. We offer one-on-one appointments with trained peer coaches, group study sessions, recurring appointments, workshops, printable resources, regular newsletters, and referrals to other campus services. You can find more information here: https://www.ncf.edu/academics/student-success-center/
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	Please see the Campus Support Resources document—located in the course canvas page and google drive—for all the academic resources available to you at New College.

New College & Community Academic Policies

CRITICAL THINKING	Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint or belief.
STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY	New College of Florida is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, you are encouraged to initiate a conversation with the AALC (Advocacy and Accessible Learning Center). The AALC works with students with disabilities to identify reasonable accommodations and plans ways to implement these with your faculty members. Please visit their website for additional information: https://www.ncf.edu/departments/advocacy-accessibility/ . You may also contact the AALC in-person (HCL3), via phone at 941-487-4844, or via email at aalc@ncf.edu . Students are welcome to discuss privately any

concerns related to barriers to both fully participating and learning in this course. Students with accommodations are highly encouraged to meet with their primary or partner instructor as soon as possible.

TITLE IX

New College of Florida is committed to equal access to education pursuant to Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. The law protects all individuals on our campus from gender-based discrimination or exclusion or instances of sexual misconduct. All full-time faculty, full-time staff, and resident advisors are Responsible Employees required to report any known instances of sexual misconduct or gender discrimination to the Title IX Coordinator. Please contact our Title IX coordinator (titleix@ncf.edu) or see the website (<https://www.ncf.edu/campus-life/title-ix/>) for more information.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

New College's commitment to excellence can only be realized in a learning environment that is inclusive, characterized by openness to diverse perspectives, and marked by mutual respect. Anything short of this aspiration is inconsistent with our commitment. Equal access, and the opportunity to participate fully in all of our programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, political ideology, national origin, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation, is essential to that commitment and will be the standard to which we expect all members of our learning community to adhere.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining a vibrant, healthy, and engaging learning environment for which we all must take responsibility. The New College faculty considers academic dishonesty to be a serious violation of community standards. Students are expected to refrain from acts of academic dishonesty, which may include:

1. cheating and/or plagiarism (such as: presenting the intellectual work of others as one's own; failing to cite sources; improper paraphrasing via failing to use own words even if a citation is given; partial, incomplete, or inaccurate citation of work of others);
2. unauthorized multiple submissions (submission of the same work for different academic activities, without the approval of the instructor);
3. false citation (false citation of a source or knowingly attributing work to a source from which the referenced material was not obtained);
4. falsifying data (fabricating or altering data to deliberately mislead; for example, changing data to get better experiment results is academically fraudulent);
5. falsifying information, signatures, or initials on official and academic forms.

If you are in doubt about what practices are permissible in an examination, you should consult the professor prior to sitting for the exam. If you lack understanding of how, in a paper or other presentation, to distinguish your thoughts from those of others, the faculty can refer you to standard guidelines and discuss specific questions.

CLASSROOM RECORDING

Florida State Law allows students to record classroom lectures without a requirement for prior notice and without the faculty member's consent, with specific limitations on where and how those recordings can be used.

"A recorded lecture may not be published without the consent of the lecturer," and it may be employed only

- a. "for a student's own personal educational use"

- b. "in connection with a complaint to the public institution of higher education where the recording was made"
- c. "as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding"

Recorded lectures used for other purposes may allow the faculty member to seek damages plus court costs and reasonable attorney fees, with the total recovery not to exceed \$200,000.

A class lecture is defined as an educational presentation delivered by faculty or guest lecturer, as part of a New College course, intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.