

## PSYC 4100 A : NEW FRONTIERS IN POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY

<b>Instructor</b>	Dr. Michael J. A. Wohl
<b>Term</b>	Fall
<b>Course Delivery</b>	In-person
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<b>Office Hours</b>	By appointment

### COURSE DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTOR'S STATEMENT

Why are people willing to occupy the streets in front of Parliament, deny election results, or follow strong leaders with cult-like devotion? Why does politics feel more like an identity war than a policy debate? In this advanced seminar, we'll turn up the heat on the psychological forces driving today's explosive politics— from populism and polarization to conspiracy thinking and political violence. Drawing from cutting-edge research in political and social psychology, we'll examine how group identity, threat, and emotion shape belief, behaviour, and support for democracy (or its erosion). This is not a course in political science — it's a deep dive into the minds behind the mayhem. If you've ever wondered why “us vs. them” thinking is tearing societies apart — and what can be done about it — this course is for you.

### EVALUATION (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

<b>Course Evaluation of Grade</b>	
Class Participation (i.e., Involvement in class discussions) Note. 1/10 deduction of the deduction for every Thought Journal not provided	10%
Student-Guided Seminar	20%
Thought paper	20%

Proposal Blitz	10%
Final Essay	40%

## TEXT

No textbook. There are assigned readings each week, which can be downloaded from the CU Library. Example readings are as follows (subject to change):

Livingstone, A. G., Spears, R., Manstead, A. S. R., Bruder, M., & Shepherd, L. (2011). We feel, therefore we are: Emotion as a basis for self-categorization and social action. *Emotion*, 11(4), 754–767. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023223>

Orazani, S. N., Wohl, M. J. A., & Leidner, B. (2020). Perceived normalization of radical ideologies and its effect on political tolerance and support for freedom of speech. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 23, 1150-1170. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430220943265>

Sahdra, B., & Ross, M. (2007). Group identification and historical memory. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 33, 384-395. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167206296103>

Stefaniak, A., Mallett, R. K., & Wohl, M. J. A. (2020). Zero-sum beliefs shape advantaged allies' support for collective action. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 50, 1259-1275. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2674>

Xiao, Y. J., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2012). See your friends close and your enemies closer: Social identity and identity threat shape the representation of physical distance. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38, 959-972. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167212442228>