

7323A048FY

## Understanding Politics through Psychology

### Guidelines for the Term Paper

#### Objective

The term paper will be used to deepen the student's knowledge of the course material. It aims for the student to expand on a topic related to the course that is of interest to them.

It also seeks to improve the student's ability to summarize works, arguments and debates.

#### Format

A synthesis of important studies on a research question based on one of the themes explored in the course. Examples of research questions:

- Why do individuals obey authority?
- What is the link between authoritarianism and threat?
- Do heuristics lead to good decisions?
- Does a group influence an individual's judgement?
- What leads to intergroup competition?
- What accounts for the collective behaviour of a crowd?
- Is a leaders' performance associated with their personality?

The student must present the main theoretical arguments and empirical results related to the questions (For example: Have researchers found that heuristics lead to good or bad decisions? How has it been demonstrated that they lead to good or bad decisions?).

This paper is a synthesis and must be structured by arguments (e.g., heuristics are useful vs. heuristics are problematic). The paper must not simply present the arguments of authors one after another (i.e., author A states that, author B states that, author C states that, etc.).

The paper must conclude with a short answer to the question that is explored. This answer must be justified by the arguments and evidence presented in the paper.

Students will be evaluated on the presentation of the subject, the structure and justification of the arguments, the style and format used in the paper, and the preliminary work plan (outline). For more information, please see the detailed evaluation sheet at the end of this document.

#### Length

The paper should contain approximately 15 double-spaced pages (roughly 4,500 words). A minimum of 13 pages and a maximum of 16 pages will be accepted. Failure to conform to this guideline will be severely sanctioned.

**Deadline**

The term paper must be submitted via Blackboard by 23 October at noon.

Papers that are submitted after this deadline will be deducted 5% per day for late submission.

No paper will be accepted after 25 October at noon; in this case, the student will receive a 1.0 for their term paper grade.

**Re-writes**

Seeing as the term paper is worth 40% of the total grade, the student is entitled to re-write the paper. However, the re-written paper will be graded on a maximum of 6/10 (rather than 10/10).

Furthermore, if the student has not submitted a serious version of the term paper by the 23 October noon deadline, they will not be eligible for a rewrite.

**Sources**

Only cite reputable scientific sources (academic articles or books). The speculations/ramblings/fables from a columnist or a citizen are not to be used!

**DO NOT CITE WIKIPEDIA!!!**

For information on citing sources, please refer to the UvA English Style Guide.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's ideas as your own. Copying, paraphrasing or translating of text needs to be referenced according to academic standards. Plagiarism will be sanctioned severely.

For more information: <http://www.student.uva.nl/preventfraud-plagiarism>.

## Term Paper Evaluation Sheet

**Presentation of the subject:**

The student presents important the theoretical notions and the empirical results related to the subject. They also demonstrate a good understanding of the subject.

/4

**Structure and justification:**

The student presents the paper in a fluid and coherent manner, and not as a simple presentation of articles one after another. They also justify their statements with precise and adequate references.

/3

**Quality and diversity of references:**

The student demonstrates thorough research of the literature. They also cite scientific and appropriate references.

/1.5

**Style and format:**

The student respects the norms for presenting papers and uses appropriate academic language (including spelling and grammar mistakes).

/1

**Work Plan:**

The preliminary work plan was approved by 28 September.

/0.5

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/10