

## **Short Course 6: Genetics for Political Scientists**

Co-Sponsor: Political Psychology Section

Contact Person: John Hibbing, Department of Political Science  
University of Nebraska, 411 Oldfather Hall, Lincoln NE 68588-0328  
E: [jhibbing1@unl.edu](mailto:jhibbing1@unl.edu) P: (402) 472-3220

Registration: Faculty - \$20; Grad Students - \$5  
Please make checks payable to the Political Psychology Section

Fee Address: David Redlawsk, Dept. of Political Science, University of Iowa  
341 Schaeffer Hall, Iowa City, IA 52242

Time: 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Location: On the premises of the APSA Annual Meeting

Instructors: John Hibbing, University of Nebraska

As recognition grows that political attitudes and behaviors are influenced by both environmental and genetic factors, it becomes incumbent upon political scientists to understand the basics of modern behavioral genetics. This APSA short course, sponsored by the political psychology section, is designed to provide this basic information. The course will begin with coverage of simple Mendelian principles but will quickly progress to recent advances in genetics applicable to complex phenotypes such as political ideology. Examples will be drawn from social and political traits and will be designed to illustrate the manner in which genes interact with environmental forces to influence biological systems (particularly those pertaining to neurotransmitters and the central nervous system) which in turn influence political predispositions. Applying genetic principles to political variables is an inherently interdisciplinary undertaking. It is not necessary for political scientists to become cutting-edge geneticists, but it is necessary for us to learn enough to be able to communicate with the geneticists on our research teams or simply to be able to consume new research at the interface of the social and life sciences. It is toward these ends that the course is directed, but it is important to note that no prior biological or genetic knowledge is assumed. The course will begin at the beginning and therefore should be appropriate both for the merely curious as well as those contemplating future research in this exciting and rapidly growing area of scholarly interest.