Public Opinion POS3233.0001

Pollock / Fall 2012

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Office hours	MW: 12:30-2:30 / F:10:30-11:20
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Book	Erikson & Tedin, *American Public Opinion: Its Origins, Content and Impact* (8th Edition)

This course covers all major topics in American public opinion—its definition and measurement, its relationship with democratic governance, the quality of political opinions among citizens, the learning of political orientations, the connection between aggregated opinion and public policy, the role of media and political elites in shaping opinion, and the connection between opinions and electoral choice. The assigned text provides up-to-date treatment of virtually all of the important academic studies of public opinion. Course resources include assigned reading, lectures, Power Point presentations, and supplemental material.

Requirements:

Exams. You will take three non-cumulative exams during the term—on **September 24, October 26, and December 5. (The December 5 exam will begin at 10:00 a. m**.) Your best exam score will count *40 percent* of your course grade. Your next-best exam score will count *35 percent* of your course grade. Your worst exam score will count *25 percent* of your course grade. Exams will be graded in a timely manner and exam grades will be posted on the course site.

If you know that you will be unable to take any of the exams on the scheduled dates: Drop the course. No early exams and no make-up exams will be given. No "extra credit" work will be assigned or accepted. *If you want to look at your exam*: Come to my office during office hours. Bring the following materials to my office—your textbook, your notes on the reading, and the notes you have written during lecture.

Attendance. Attendance is required. Do not arrive late for class. Do not depart early from class. Take careful and complete lecture notes. If you wish to discuss how your exams were graded, then lecture notes are required (see preceding paragraph).

Grading Scale. Your course grade will be determined by this numeric scale:

>=90	87-89	80-86	77-79	70-76	67-69	60-66	<=59
A	B+	B	C+	C	D+	D	F

Schedule for the term:

Week of:	**Topic:**	**Reading:**∞
Aug20 Aug27	Public opinion and democracy	ET1 *No class Aug31*, Sep3***
[Sep3] Sep10	Measuring public opinion	ET2 Pew report, "Assessing the Representativeness of Public Opinion Surveys" (posted) Catherine Marsh, "Back on the Bandwagon" (posted)
Sep17	Micro-level opinion	ET3
Sep24	**Exam 1**	
Sep24 Oct1	Macro-level opinion	ET4 Ellis and Stimson, "Pathways to Ideology in American Politics" (posted) Gallup report, "Nearly Half Identify as Economically Conservative" (posted) Wildavsky, "Choosing Preferences by Constructing Institutions" (posted)
Oct8 Oct15	Political socialization	ET chap5 Alford, Funk, and Hibbing "Are Political Orientations Genetically Transmitted?" (posted)
Oct22	Democratic stability	ET chap6 Gibson, "Enigmas of Intolerance" (posted)
Oct26	**Exam 2**	
Oct29	Group differences	ET chap7 *No class Oct31**
Nov5 [Nov12]	Media	ET chap8 Posner, "Bad News" (posted) *No class Nov12***
Nov19	Elections	ET chap9 Geer, "Rise of Negativity" (posted) *No class Nov23***
Nov26	Public policy	ET chap10
Dec5	**Exam 3 (10 a.m.)**	

∞Additional reading may be required at the discretion of the instructor.
*Instructor at conference.
**University holiday.