Public Opinion POS3233.0001

Pollock / Fall 2014

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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 22, October 24, and December 1.** Your best exam score will count *40 percent* of your course grade. Your next-best exam score will count *30 percent* of your course grade. Your worst exam score will count *20 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. *Attendance will count 10 percent of your course grade*. Do not arrive late for class. Do not depart early from class. You are responsible for signing the attendance sheet each day.

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

As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the following academic activity by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than August 27. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

→ **You are required to**: Complete the Academic Activity Quiz on the course site.

Schedule for the term:

Week of:	**Topic:**	**Reading:**∞
Aug18 Aug25	Public opinion and democracy	ET1 *No class Aug29*, Sep1***
[Sep1] Sep8	Measuring public opinion	ET2 Pew report, "Assessing the Representativeness of Public Opinion Surveys" (posted) Catherine Marsh, "Back on the Bandwagon" (posted)
Sep15	Micro-level opinion	ET3
Sep22	**Exam 1**	
Sep22 Sep29	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)
Oct6 Oct13	Political socialization	ET chap5 Alford, Funk, and Hibbing "Are Political Orientations Genetically Transmitted?" (posted)
Oct20	Democratic stability	ET chap6 Gibson, "Enigmas of Intolerance" (posted)
Oct24	**Exam 2**	
Oct27	Group differences	ET chap7
Nov3 Nov10	Media	ET chap8 Posner, "Bad News" (posted)
Nov17	Elections	ET chap9 Geer, "Rise of Negativity" (posted)
Nov24	Public policy	ET chap10 *No class Nov28***
Dec1	**Exam 3**	

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