

Public Opinion

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Office: 231-C Brackett Hall
Office Hours: Th, 12pm-2pm

POSC 4890, Fall 2018
T, Th 9:30am-10:45am
Classroom: 233 Brackett Hall

Course Description

This course takes a close look at public opinion – what it is, how it is measured, and why it matters. We will explore tools used to measure public opinion, different topics within public opinion, factors that influence public opinion, and how institutions and democracy relate to public opinion. In each of these areas, we will emphasize how to apply these concepts in concrete ways – to both research designs and contemporary politics.

Public opinion is a broad topic in political science, covering a wide range of attitudes, behaviors, and social factors. It has connections to individuals' political beliefs, public opinion polls, methods of persuasion, questions of representation in government, and key forms of political participation. As such, I cannot possibly cover every part of public opinion. If, as you look over the course schedule, you do not see an issue you would like me to cover, please let me know. I encourage you to ask questions, bring in outside material, and dive deeply in the course.

Course objectives

As a part of the course, students will:

1. Analyze different definitions of public opinion
2. Interpret and critique different techniques of measuring public opinion.
3. Understand the foundations of public opinion
4. Assess how public opinion relates to political institutions and government.
5. Evaluate the ways people express their political opinions and engage in one of those actions during the course.

Course texts

There are no textbooks for this course. All class materials will be made available to you on Canvas.

Classes, Assignments, and Grades

Our class meets in 233 Brackett Hall on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30am to 10:45am. You are expected to attend all classes, to complete all assigned readings and assignments on time, and to actively participate. Classes will typically involve a seminar type format, beginning with a guided discussion of the readings. Each class period will involve various types of learning activities that will vary depending on the topic; these will include group discussions, having students lead part of the seminar, presentations, and extended application activities.

Grades will be determined from the following assessments (each of which is explained below):

| Assignments | Due date | Percentage of final grade |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Weekly responses | Most Tues. | 10% |
| Political voice activity: ideas | Thurs. 9/13 | 1% |
| Political voice activity: reflection | Thurs. 10/4 | 14% |
| Midterm | Thurs. 10/16 | 15% |
| “Become an expert” project | Tues. 11/29 | 20% |
| Final exam | Tues. 12/11 | 30% |
| Participation | | 10% |

The letter grade distribution for the course is as follows:

| A | B | C | D | F |
|----------|------------|------------|------------|----------|
| 89.5-100 | 79.5-89.49 | 69.5-79.49 | 59.5-69.49 | <59.5 |

The descriptions that follow are brief summaries of these assignments; more details can be found on Canvas.

Weekly responses

Per the schedule, you will be asked to write a weekly response to the materials and activities we are using in the course. The prompts for each week will be posted on Canvas – for each, consider the prompt and respond with *no more than 250 words*. These assignments are meant to provide you with the opportunity to reflect on what we are learning and how you are doing in the course, rather than serve as formal writing assignments. You will be graded based only on completion – with the caveat that if you do not provide a response with some substance (e.g, you type out one or two words) or do not respond to the prompt in some way, you will not get credit for the response. There are 10 opportunities to complete these responses – you must turn in 8 of the 10 to get full credit on this part of your grade.

Please turn your weekly response by 8pm via Canvas by the listed due-date. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Political voice activity

One key component in the study of public opinion is the way that individuals express their political views. To understand this in a practical way, I ask you to complete a two-part activity. For the first part, you will write two paragraphs detailing four different ways individuals express their political opinions. This is not meant to be an in-depth research paper, and as such, you do not need to provide references. Instead, you should spend some time exploring different ways to voice political views; every source of information is fair game *so long as it leads you to understand a way to voice a political opinion*.

You should turn in these paragraphs online via Canvas by 8pm on 9/13. As long as you do so and comply with the assignment requirements (exactly two paragraphs discussing at least four ways to voice political opinions), you will receive full credit for this assignment. This task is meant to lead you to the larger reflection activity by providing you with ways you can express your political views. If you are struggling to come up with ideas, please see me *before* you need to turn in these paragraphs. I will give you feedback on your paragraphs by 9/20.

The second part of this assignment requires you to express your political views in some way and reflect on that experience. This activity must occur during the timeframe of the course – you cannot, for example, reflect on something you did before the semester began or plan to do after the semester ends. You should then reflect on that experience, considering the political importance of what you have done, how it relates to themes in the class, and what it has taught you about public opinion. You should turn in these reflections by 8pm on 10/4 via Canvas – these can take any form, including a series of written paragraphs, a video recording, a long social media post, or a conversation with me during office hours. If you would like your reflection activity to take a form other than the ones list here, please confirm with me that the format you have selected is feasible.

Whatever you do for your reflection activity must contain substantial discussion of what you did and how you have thought about it. As you voice your opinion and reflect on it, consider the following questions:

- What made you choose this way of expressing your political views?
- What was challenging about this experience? Who might be discouraged from doing what you did?
- What did you gain from this experience?
- How did your attitudes change as engaged in this activity?

You will lose ten percentage points for every day that this assignment is late – for example, if you turn it in at 8:01pm on the due date, you will lose 10 percent. If you turn it in at 8:01pm on the following day, you will lose 20 percent. This penalty will be applied on weekends as well as weekdays.

Midterm

This exam will consist of a series of short answer and essay questions that will require you to demonstrate an understanding of the topics covered to that point and critically apply those topics. The test consists of four short answers (requiring a response of one or two paragraphs) and two essay responses (which you will select from four possibilities). The primary purpose of this exam is to help you evaluate your learning and prepare you for the final. The exam will be completed in class in our normal classroom. For this test, you may use a list of citations; however, all this can include is the full citation and no descriptions whatsoever of what the source discusses.

“Become an expert” research project

One key component of this course is thinking critically about public opinion research, how public opinion is measured, and what is still unknown in this area of political science. To help you experience this, you will complete a project that has, as its ultimate deliverable, a presentation to the class and a written, one-page executive summary. The project asks you to respond to the following prompt:

I come to you, interested in researching important topics in public opinion. I have about \$5,000 to spend, but I don't know how best to use it. I ask you to help in the following ways:

- *What topic should I study?*
- *What already exists on that topic? What do polling organizations have to say on the topic (think Pew, Gallup, etc.)? What do academics think about that issue?*

- *How should I spend my \$5,000 to study this topic?*

For your assignment, you should do the following things, in this order:

1. Identify a topic you think is important in public opinion. Anything is fair game so long as it deals with public opinion **and** you can find something someone has already done on the topic. Examples include (do not feel limited to these topics):
 - a. How much do Americans support democracy?
 - b. What is the best way to measure attitudes about racial demonstrations?
 - c. How have views on same-sex marriage changed over time?
 - d. How much support exists for extremist political parties?
2. Explore what already exists on this topic. You should find out what major polling organizations have to say about this topic, what prominent political figures claim, and what academic researchers already know about this area of study. Specifically,
 - a. Identify at least two polling organizations (Pew, Gallup, Washington Post polls, etc.) that have something meaningful to say on the topic
 - b. Consider what prominent political figures have said about this topic – such as the President, members of Congress, prominent activist groups, etc. This does not need to be research by these figures; instead, what do political figures *say* people want or think on this topic
 - c. Find at least two academic research articles that provide insight into this area. These should be peer-reviewed publications from the last five years.
3. Suggest new areas for study. What still remains unknown in this area? What do you think researchers should explore next? As part of this point, think about how I could best use \$5,000 to study this topic, and come up with your ideal way to answer your research question. Your ideas should be detailed enough that I could go and actually do what you are proposing.

As a preliminary step in this process, you should submit to Canvas a brief document with your topic and a brief outline (no more than two pages total). This outline should include your topic, where you intend to look for sources, and any early ideas you have about what you will recommend I do to study this topic. This should be submitted by 11:59pm on Tuesday, 10/30. I will provide you will feedback on these documents by Tuesday, 11/6. **Failing to turn in this outline will lead to a 5 percentage point deduction on the final project.**

The final deliverable for this project is a presentation for the class and a one-page executive summary (summary submitted on Canvas by 9:30am the day of presentations). These presentations will take place on 12/4. We will not hold class on 11/20 to provide you with time to finish and polish your presentations and executive summaries. I will be available in my office during our normal class time (9:30-10:45) as a resource for you.

Your presentation should take no more than 12 minutes. Your goal in these presentations is to (1)demonstrate that you have become an expert in this area and (2)provide me with concrete recommendations about what to do with my \$5,000 to meaningfully study this topic. The memo should contain the most critical pieces of your presentation, can be in bullet or paragraph form, and cannot be longer than one, single-spaced page. I should be able to understand your main points and design using the executive summary alone.

This assignment must be completed on the due date, as it involves presentations to the class. If you cannot complete the assignment by the due date, you can present it to me in my office for a 25-percentage point penalty so long as you do so within 7 days of the due date.

Final exam

The final exam will be held on Wednesday 12/12 from 8:00am—10:30am. Like the midterm, the final exam will consist of a series of essay and short answer questions that will require you to demonstrate an understanding of the topics covered to that point and critically apply those topics. The test consists of six short answers (requiring a response of one or two paragraphs) and three essay responses (which you will select from four possibilities). This exam is cumulative, covering material from the entire course. Like the midterm, you may bring a list of citations; however, all this can include is the full citation and no descriptions of what the source discusses.

Participation

Our class will be most successful if you participate in our class meetings and engage with the activities in class. As a result, part of your grade is determined by your participation, and I ask that you participate in each class period. This participation can take many forms – including (but not limited to) asking questions in class, answering questions, coming on time, not leaving early, staying engaged with the class discussion, meeting with me during office hours, and participating in class activities. If you miss more than two class periods, you will begin to lose points on your participation grade.

As part of our class meetings, I may call on you to answer questions about the readings and topics for that day. If you have not prepared enough for that class period and cannot provide an answer, you will begin to lose participation points. Note that an answer can be an informed question about some element of the reading/material/question that you do not yet understand.

If, ahead of a class meeting, you are unable to complete the readings for any reason (I don't need to know why), you can contact me ahead of time and I will not call on you that class period. You may do this for two class periods without losing points. After that, you may still inform me, but you will begin to lose participation points at a rate of 0.25 percentage points each time. If you have concerns about this policy, please meet with me at the start of the semester, and we will find a way to make it work for you.

On October 12th, prior to the midterm, I will email you a brief statement about your participation which will indicate what grade you are likely to receive if you continue participating as you have been to that point. This will also include a more general note about your performance to that point in the course. We can speak at that point if you have any concerns.

Your feedback

Your feedback is invaluable to the class as a way to evaluate the assignments and activities I use in class. As such, I will email three feedback surveys to you throughout the course. You are not obligated to complete these but doing so will help me adjust my teaching in the course to benefit you and other students in the class. All three will be complete anonymous.

Excused absences

Any student missing an exam or a due date must provide documentation to schedule a make-up or turn in a late paper/assignment. You must contact me within one week of the exam or due date to schedule a make-up option and present documentation.

In the case of emergencies, please contact me as soon as safely possible.

General Course Policies

The grading of each assignment lays out the way late or incomplete work will be handled. If you would like to appeal an assigned grade, *you must submit a written statement to me explaining why the grade should be changed (within two class periods of receiving the grade).*

In general, if you contact me outside of normal working hours (M-F, between 8am and 6pm), I may not respond until the next business day. You can still email me outside of this window, but my response will be delayed. Additionally, please put “POSC 4890” in the subject line of your email so that I prioritize your messages.

The easiest way to meet with me in person is to drop by my office during my office hours. You can stop by at any time; however, there’s a good chance I will not be available. Feel free to email me in advance if you need to meet with me outside of my office hours and would like to set up an appointment.

Cell phones and laptop computers may be used for note-taking only – if you choose to use a laptop, please sit on the edges of the room so that other students are not distracted by your computer. Misuse of technology in class will adversely affect your participation grade.

Classroom environment

At times, we may cover topics and have conversations that challenge your viewpoints or provoke intense discussion. I expect everyone to be respectful of others’ views, *especially when those views challenge their own.* My goal is to create an environment where all students feel safe sharing their views and, in turn, feel respected by other students and myself. You should feel free to present viewpoints that differ from my own and to ask challenging questions of the material presented in class.

If, at any point, you feel that I have failed to create this type of environment or have not been respectful of your views, I ask that you please inform me as soon as you can so that I can address the issue appropriately. If you feel that this would not be appropriate, please speak with the department chair (Professor Jeff Peake - jpeake@clemsun.edu) about your concerns.

Additionally, if you have any concerns about the topics planned for the course, I would ask you to speak with me as far in advance as possible.

Policy on Absent Instructor

If I have not arrived by 9:45am, you are free to leave without penalty. I will send an email with as much advanced notice as possible if I need to cancel class.

Class Cancellations:

Any exam that was scheduled at the time of a class cancellation due to inclement weather will be given at the next class meeting otherwise instructed by me. Any assignments due at the time of a

class cancellation due to inclement weather will be due at the next class meeting unless otherwise instructed by me. Any extension or postponement of assignments or exams must be granted by me via email or Canvas within 24 hours of the weather-related cancellation. *Note that this policy does not apply to assignments or exams that are to be submitted via Canvas. Any changes to deadlines on Canvas submissions will be announced on Canvas.*

Academic Integrity, Cheating and Plagiarism:

The university has a detailed Academic Integrity policy, which includes the following:

As members of the Clemson University community, we have inherited Thomas Green Clemson's vision of this institution as a "high seminary of learning." Fundamental to this vision is a mutual commitment to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of others. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of a Clemson degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form. When, in the opinion of a faculty member, there is evidence that a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty, the faculty member shall make a formal written charge of academic dishonesty, including a description of the misconduct, to the Associate Dean for Curriculum in the Office of Undergraduate Studies. At the same time, the faculty member may, but is not required to, inform each involved student privately of the nature of the alleged charge.

Every student is capable of succeeding in this course without resorting to plagiarism or cheating. All work you submit must be your own work – that is, of your own construction; any materials that come from other sources should be appropriately referenced or cited. You should not submit work performed by another student as your own. You should also not submit work from previous courses as though it were an original creation for this class. Any questions should be directed to me early on in the term.

Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty in this course will be penalized per the academic integrity policies on campus.

Copyright:

Some of the materials in this course are copyrighted. They are intended for use only by students registered and enrolled in this course and only for instructional activities associated with and for the duration of the course. They may not be retained in another medium or disseminated further. They are provided in compliance with the provisions of the Teach Act. Please refer to the Use of Copyrighted Materials and "Fair Use Guidelines" policy on the Clemson University website for additional information: <http://www.clemson.edu/library/>

Academic Access Letters:

Clemson University values the diversity of our student body as a strength and a critical component of our dynamic community. Students with disabilities or temporary injuries/conditions may require accommodations due to barriers in the structure of facilities, course design, technology used for curricular purposes, or other campus resources. Students who experience a barrier to full access to this class should let the professor know, and make an appointment to meet with a staff member in Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible. You can make an appointment by calling 864-656-6848, by emailing studentaccess@lists.clemson.edu, or by visiting Suite 239 in the Academic Success Center building. Appointments are strongly encouraged – drop-ins will be seen if at all possible, but

there could be a significant wait due to scheduled appointments. Students who receive Academic Access Letters are strongly encouraged to request, obtain and present these to their professors as early in the semester as possible so that accommodations can be made in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to follow this process each semester. You can access further information here: <http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/sds/>.

If your Academic Access Letter provides you with accommodated testing, you are responsible for scheduling the Test Proctoring Center at least one week in advance of your exam. Detailed information on this policy and on how to schedule the Test Proctoring Center can be found here: <https://www.clemson.edu/academics/studentaccess/test-center.html> .

Title IX:

Clemson University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, veteran's status, genetic information or protected activity in employment, educational programs and activities, admissions and financial aid. This includes a prohibition against sexual harassment and sexual violence as mandated by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. This policy is located at <http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/access/title-ix/>. Ms. Alesia Smith is the Clemson University Title IX Coordinator, and the Executive Director of Equity Compliance. Her office is located at 110 Holtzendorff Hall, 864.656.3181 (voice) or 864.656.0899 (TDD).

COURSE SCHEDULE

| Date and Objectives | Readings | Assignments |
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| <p><i>Thursday, August 23</i></p> <p>(1) What is required of me in this course? (2) What questions do I have on the syllabus? (3) What is the best way to read research articles?</p> | <p>(1) Syllabus and assignment descriptions (2) “How to Read Scientific Papers” infographic</p> | <p>Complete introductory survey at this link</p> |
| <p><i>Tuesday, August 28</i></p> <p>(1) What is public opinion? (2) How is public opinion related to public opinion polling? (3) What kinds of things does public opinion research focus on?</p> | <p>Childs, Harwood K. 1939. “By Public Opinion I Mean” <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 3(2): 327-336.</p> <p>Dionne, E.J. and Thomas E. Mann. 2003. “Polling and Public Opinion: The good, the bad, and the ugly”. <i>The Brookings Institution</i>. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/polling-public-opinion-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly/</p> <p>Browse the latest issue of <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> (https://academic.oup.com/poq); skim at least one article that interests you and be ready to share.</p> | <p>Weekly response due</p> |
| <p><i>Thursday, August 30</i></p> <p>(1) Does it matter <i>who</i> we study?</p> | <p>Kennedy, Courtney. 2017. “How can a survey of 1,000 people tell you what the whole U.S. thinks?” Pew Research Center. http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/05/12/methods-101-random-sampling/</p> | |

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| <p>(2) How do we select individuals for our research? (3) Do all voices count equally in public opinion research?</p> | <p>Gaurav, Jha. "6 sampling techniques: How to choose a representative subset of the population?" <i>Socialcops.com</i>, https://blog.socialcops.com/academy/resources/6-sampling-techniques-choose-representative-subset/</p> <p>Small, Mario Luis. 2009. "How many cases do I need?' On science and the logic of case selection in field-based research" <i>Ethnography</i> 10(1):5-38.</p> | |
| <p><i>Tuesday, September 4</i> (1) Why does survey question wording matter? (2) What are some other good strategies for surveys? (3) What good are surveys anyways?</p> | <p>Kennedy, Courtney. 2018. "Can we still trust polls?" Pew Research Center. http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/05/14/can-we-still-trust-polls/</p> <p>Smith, Scott. 2013. "Survey Questions 101: Do You Make any of These 7 Question Writing Mistakes?" <i>Qualtrics Blog</i> www.qualtrics.com/blog/writing-survey-questions/</p> <p>Krosnick, Jon A. 1999. "Survey Research." <i>Annual Review of Psychology</i>, 50(1):537-567.</p> | <p>Weekly response due</p> |
| <p><i>Thursday, September 6</i> (1) How do you conduct a good interview? (2) What things do interviews tell us that surveys can't? (3) How do we decide who to interview?</p> | <p>Goldstein, Kenneth. 2002. "Getting in the Door: Sampling and Completing Elite Interviews". <i>PS: Political Science & Politics</i> 35(4):669-672.</p> <p>Woliver, Laura R. 2002. "Ethical Dilemmas in Personal Interviewing". <i>PS: Political Science & Politics</i> 35(4):677-678.</p> <p>Berry, Jeffrey M. 2002. "Validity and Reliability Issues in Elite Interviewing". <i>PS: Political Science & Politics</i> 35(4):679-682.</p> | |

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| <p><i>Tuesday, September 11</i></p> <p>(1) How can experiments be used to study public opinion? (2) What kinds of questions are not suited to experiments?</p> | <p>Geer, John G. 1991. "Do Open-Ended Questions Measure "Salient" Issues?". <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 55(3):360-370.</p> <p>Marsh, Catherine. 1985. "Back on the Bandwagon: The Effect of Opinion Polls on Public Opinion". <i>British Journal of Political Science</i> 15(1):51-74.</p> <p>Nooruddin, Irfan. 2014. "Making Surveys Work Better: Experiments in Public Opinion Research". <i>Studies in Indian Politics</i> 2(1):105-108.</p> | <p>Weekly response due</p> |
| <p><i>Thursday, September 13</i></p> <p>Summary discussion of the different techniques</p> | <p>Review your notes and the readings for each method of measuring public opinion. Choose a method you prefer and come ready to defend and discuss that position. Each person will be asked to contribute to the conversation.</p> <p>Also consider any methods or approaches you know of that we have not discussed.</p> | <p>Political voice assignment: ideas due</p> |
| <p><i>Tuesday, September 18</i></p> <p>(1) What are people doing when they express opinions? (2) What kinds of things influence people's attitudes? (3) What implications does this have for the</p> | <p>Zaller, John and Stanley Feldman. 1992. "A Simple Theory of the Survey Response." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 36(3):579-616.</p> <p>Stafford, Tom. 2013. "Why people act out of line with their beliefs" <i>BBC Future</i>. http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20130312-why-we-act-against-our-beliefs</p> <p>Busby, Ethan C., James N. Druckman, and Alexandria Fredendall. 2017. "The political relevance of irrelevant events." <i>Journal of Politics</i> 79(1):346-350.</p> | |

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| <p>study of public opinion?</p> | | |
| <p><i>Thursday, September 20</i></p> <p>(1) Are opinions on all topics the same? (2) Is it good or bad to be a single-issue voter?</p> | <p>Carmines, Edward G. and James A. Stimson. 1980. "The Two Faces of Issue Voting". <i>American Political Science Review</i> 74(1): 78-91.</p> <p>Herndon, Astead W. 2018. "Meet Colorado's New Single-Issue Voters: The Cannabis Community". <i>The New York Times</i>, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/25/us/politics/colorado-cannabis-governor.html</p> <p>Kim, Young Mie. 2009. "Issue publics in the new information environment: Selectivity, domain specificity, and extremity". <i>Communication Research</i> 36(2):254-284.</p> | <p>Weekly response due</p> |
| <p><i>Tuesday, September 25</i></p> <p>(1) What is ideology? (2) Do political opinions influence ideology or vice versa?</p> | <p>Klar, Samara. 2014. "A Multidimensional Study of Ideological Preferences and Priorities among the American Public." <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 78(S1):344-359</p> <p>Drutman, Lee. 2017. "Tribalists and Ideologues", <i>Washington Monthly</i>, https://washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/junejulyaugust-2017/tribalists-and-ideologues/</p> <p>Jost, John T. 2006. "The end of the end of ideology." <i>American Psychologist</i> 61(7): 651-670.</p> | |
| <p><i>Thursday, September 27</i></p> <p>(1) What are "values"? (2) How are values different from ideology?</p> | <p>Schwartz, Shalom H. 2012. "An Overview of the Schwartz Theory of Basic Values." <i>Online Readings in Psychology and Culture</i> 2(1).</p> <p>Schwartz, Shalom H., et al. 2014. "Basic Personal Values Underlie and Give Coherence to Political Values: A Cross National Study in 15 Countries." <i>Political Behavior</i> 36 (4): 899-930.</p> | <p>Weekly response due</p> |

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| <p>(3) What do values add to the study of public opinion?</p> | <p>Lombroso, Daniel, and Olga Khazan. 2017. "A better way to argue about politics." <i>The Atlantic</i>. https://www.theatlantic.com/video/index/520737/a-better-way-to-argue-about-politics/</p> | |
| <p><i>Tuesday, October 2</i></p> <p>(1) How is public opinion expressed to elected officials? (2) What can individuals do to ensure they are heard? (3) What competes with public opinion for elected officials attention/time?</p> | <p>Shogan, Colleen J. 2010. "Blackberries, Tweets, and YouTube: Technology and the Future of Communicating with Congress". <i>PS: Political Science and Politics</i> 43(2):231-233.</p> <p>Broockman, David E. and Timothy J. Ryan. 2016. "Preaching to the Choir: Americans Prefer Communicating to Copartisan Elected Officials". <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 60(4):1093-1107.</p> <p>Matthews, Dylan. 2013. "One study explains why it's tough to pass liberal laws" Wonkblog. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/03/04/one-study-explains-why-its-tough-to-pass-liberal-laws/?utm_term=.d5b7a8504911</p> <p>Write out your response to the following prompt: Consider a political issue, debate, or policy that you feel strongly about. How would you communicate these views to an elected official? What would you do to make sure this official takes you as seriously as possible? Come ready to discuss.</p> | |
| <p><i>Thursday, October 4</i></p> <p>(1) How does public opinion influence elites? (2) How do elites influence public opinion? (3) Is this a good or a bad thing?</p> | <p>Ellis, Chris. 2016. "James N. Druckman and Lawrence R. Jacobs. Who Governs? Presidents, Public Opinion, and Manipulation". <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 80(1): 212-215 (book review).</p> <p>McGraw, Kathleen M., Samuel Best, Richard Timpone. 1995. "What They Say or What They Do?" The Impact of Elite Explanation and Policy Outcomes on Public Opinion" <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 39(1): 53-74.</p> | <p>Political voice assignment: reflection due</p> |

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| | <p>Kalla, Joshua, and David Broockman. 2017. "Persuading voters is hard. That doesn't mean campaigns should give up". <i>Monkey Cage, Washington Post</i>, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/10/11/our-research-shows-that-persuading-voters-is-hard-that-doesnt-mean-campaigns-should-give-up/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.9f171b667b7a</p> | |
| <p><i>Tuesday, October 9</i></p> <p>(1) How "good" is public opinion? (2) How much to people know about politics? (3) Does that even matter?</p> | <p>Annenberg Public Policy Center. 2017. "Americans Are Poorly Informed About Basic Constitutional Provisions". <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>. Link here</p> <p>Lupia, Arthur. 2006. "How elitism undermines the study of voter competence." <i>Critical Review</i> 18(1-3):217-232.</p> <p>Domonoske, Camila. 2016. "Students Have 'Dismaying' Inability To Tell Fake News From Real, Study Finds." <i>National Public Radio</i>. http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/11/23/503129818/study-finds-students-have-dismaying-inability-to-tell-fake-news-from-real</p> | |
| <p><i>Thursday, October 11</i></p> <p>(1) How does public opinion influence government and policy? (2) What role should public opinion play in a democracy?</p> | <p>Gilens, Martin and Benjamin I. Page. 2014. "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens." <i>Perspectives on Politics</i> 12(3):564-581.</p> <p>Key, V. O. 1961. "Public Opinion and the Decay of Democracy." <i>Virginia Quarterly Review</i> 37(4):481-494.</p> <p>Morning Edition. 2003. "Does Public Opinion Matter?" <i>National Public Radio</i>. http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=932958</p> | <p>Weekly response due</p> |
| <p><i>Tuesday, October 16</i></p> <p>Complete the midterm</p> | <p>Complete midterm</p> | <p>Midterm</p> |

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| Thursday, October 18 | Discussion of political voice assignment and midterm (more details to follow) | |
| Tuesday, October 23 (1) What are implicit attitudes? (2) Do implicit attitudes influence public opinion? (3) In what areas do you think implicit attitudes are most important to understand? | <p>Theodoridis, Alexander George. 2013. "Implicit Political Identity" <i>PS: Political Science and Politics</i> 46(3):545-549.</p> <p>Project Implicit. 2011. "Frequently Asked Questions". https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/faqs.html</p> <p>Albertson, Bethany L. 2011. "Religious appeals and implicit attitudes". <i>Political Psychology</i> 32(1):109-130.</p> | Weekly response due |
| Thursday, October 25 (1) What differences in public opinion exist among different racial/ethnic groups? (2) How does race shape public opinion? On what topics? | <p>White, Ismail K. 2007. "When Race Matters and When It Doesn't: Racial Group Differences in Response to Racial Cues." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 101(2):339-354.</p> <p>Kam, Cindy D. and Camille D. Burge. 2017. "Uncovering Reactions to the Racial Resentment Scale across the Racial Divide". <i>Journal of Politics</i> 80(1):314-320.</p> <p>Pew Research Center. 2017. "The partisan divide on political values grows even wider: 4. Race, immigration and discrimination". Pew Research Center. http://www.people-press.org/2017/10/05/4-race-immigration-and-discrimination/ NOTE: read only section 4, on Race, immigration, and discrimination</p> | |
| Tuesday, October 30 | | Weekly response due |

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| <p>(1) How do different views on gender influence politics? (2) How does gender identity influence public opinion?</p> | <p>Horowitz, Juliana Menasce, Kim Parker, and Renee Stepler. 2017. "Wide Partisan Gaps in U.S. Over How Far the Country Has Come on Gender Equality". Pew Research Center. http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2017/10/18/wide-partisan-gaps-in-u-s-over-how-far-the-country-has-come-on-gender-equality/</p> <p>Klar, Samara, Heather Madonia, Monica C. Schneider. 2014. "The influence of threatening parental primes on mothers' versus fathers' policy preferences". <i>Politics, Groups, and Identities</i> 2(4):607-623.</p> <p>Brooks, Deborah Jordan and Benjamin A. Valentino. 2011. "A war of one's own: understanding the gender gap in support for war." <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 75(2):270-286.</p> | <p>Outline for "Become an expert" project due</p> |
| <p><i>Thursday, November 1</i></p> <p>(1) How do the different identities people have combine or conflict when it comes to public opinion? (2) Are some identities always more important than others? Why or why not?</p> | <p>Klar, Samara. 2013. "The Influence of Competing Identity Primes on Political Preferences." <i>Journal of Politics</i> 75(4):1108-1124.</p> <p>Gay, Claudine and Katherine Tate. 1998. "Doubly bound: The impact of gender and race on the politics of black women." <i>Political Psychology</i> 19(1):169-184.</p> <p>Consider the groups you identify with. When are different identities more or less important to you? Come prepared to share.</p> | |
| <p><i>Tuesday, November 6</i></p> | <p>NO CLASS</p> | <p>FALL BREAK</p> |
| <p><i>Thursday, November 8</i></p> | | |

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| <p>(1)In what sense is public opinion polarized? (2)What are the causes of this polarization? (3)What are the consequences?</p> | <p>Doherty, Carroll. 2014. “7 things to know about polarization in America”. Pew Research Center. http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/06/12/7-things-to-know-about-polarization-in-america/ Be sure to watch the video at the beginning.</p> <p>Harbridge, Laurel, Neil Malhotra, and Brian F. Harrison. 2014. “Public Preferences for Bipartisanship in the Policymaking Process.” <i>Legislative Studies Quarterly</i> 39(3):327-355.</p> <p>Ahler, Douglas J. 2014. “Self-Fulfilling Misperceptions of Public Polarization”. <i>Journal of Politics</i> 76(3):607-620.</p> | |
| <p><i>Tuesday, November 13</i></p> <p>(1)How would you describe Americans’ views on education policy? (2)How does education influence public opinion? Is this the same or different from the popular narrative?</p> | <p>Richmond, Emily. 2017. “What the public wants from schools”. <i>The Atlantic</i>, https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/08/what-the-public-wants-from-schools/538335/</p> <p>Henry, P.J. and Jaime L. Napier. 2017. “Education is Related to Greater Ideological Prejudice.” <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 81(4):930-942.</p> <p>Agerberg, Mattias. 2018. “The Curse of Knowledge? Education, Corruption, and Politics”. <i>Political Behavior</i>.</p> | <p>Weekly response due</p> |
| <p><i>Thursday, November 15</i></p> <p>(1)What are “family values” and “family policies”?</p> | <p>Carroll, Joseph. 2007. “Public: “Family Values” Important to Presidential Vote”. Gallup. https://news.gallup.com/poll/103375/public-family-values-important-presidential-vote.aspx</p> <p>Jennings, M. Kent, Laura Stoker, and Jake Bowers. 2009. “Politics across Generations: Family Transmission Reexamined.” <i>Journal of Politics</i> 71(3):782-799.</p> | |

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| <p>(2)How does the family shape public opinion? (3)Do you think of your answers to the previous questions as good or bad things?</p> | <p>Fitzgerald, Jennifer, and K. Amber Curtis. 2012. "Partisan Discord in the Family and Political Engagement: A Comparative Behavioral Analysis." <i>Journal of Politics</i> 74(1):129-141.</p> | |
| <p><i>Tuesday, November 20</i></p> | <p>Workday for "Become an expert" projects</p> | |
| <p><i>Thursday, November 22</i></p> | <p>NO CLASS</p> | <p>THANKSGIVING BREAK</p> |
| <p><i>Tuesday, November 27</i></p> <p>(1)How do social connections influence politics? (2)How does politics influence various kinds of relationships? (3)When, if ever, have your friends been politically important?</p> | <p>Tavernise, Sabrina and Katharine Q. Seelye. 2016. "Political Divide Splits Relationships – and Thanksgiving, Too." <i>New York Times</i>. Nov. 15.</p> <p>Klar, Samara. 2014. "Partisanship in a social setting." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 58(3):687-704.</p> <p>Read ONE of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jackman, Mary R. and Marie Crane. 1986. "'Some of My Best Friends Are Black...': Interracial Friendship and Whites' Racial Attitudes". <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 50(4):459-486. • Newman, Benjamin J. 2014. "My Poor Friend: Financial Distress in One's Social Network, the Perceived Power of the Rich, and Support for Redistribution". <i>Journal of Politics</i> 76(1):126-138. | <p>Weekly response due</p> |
| <p><i>Thursday, November 29</i></p> | <p>Review your notes on the internal and external foundations of public opinion (race, gender, other identities, education, polarization, families, etc.). Which internal and</p> | |

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| | <p>external factors do you consider to be most important? Come prepared to defend your position.</p> <p>What important internal or external factors did we not discuss that you think we should have?</p> | |
| <i>Tuesday, December 4</i> | | Group project presentations |
| <i>Thursday, December 6</i> | Catch-up/review | Please complete the survey to indicate what you would like to review |
| <i>Wednesday, December 12</i> | FINAL EXAM, 8:00am—10:30am | |