

Public Opinion and Electoral Behavior

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Office Hours
Th 1-3pm
And by appointment

Introduction

This class is organized into two major sections. The first half of the class concerns "Political Behavior" – loosely defined as what causes people take political action, primarily voting, but also other political activities. The second half of the class concerns "Public Opinion" – loosely defined as how people hold opinions on issues.

Reading

- Robert S. Erikson and Kent L. Tedin. 2007. *American Public Opinion, 7th Addition Update*. New York, NY: Pearson Publishers.
- William Flanigan & Nancy Zingale. 2007. *Political Behavior of the American Electorate, 11th Edition*. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.
- Additional reading material will be available on-line.

The readings that will be discussed for each class are below listed as Assigned Reading for that day of class.

Grades

Grades consist of a midterm, a final, two papers, and classroom attendance and participation. The weighting of the aspects of the grade are:

Paper 1	Sept. 29	10%
Midterm	Oct. 20	30%
Paper2	Dec. 8	15%
Final	Dec. 15	35%
Attendance/Participation		10%

Honor Code

All work submitted in fulfillment of course requirements is to be solely the product of the individual(s) whose name(s) appear on it. Except with

permission of the instructor, no recourse is to be had to projects, papers, lab reports or any other written work previously prepared by another student, and except with permission of the instructor no paper or work of another type submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of another course may be used a second time to satisfy a requirement of any course in the Department of Public Affairs. No assistance is to be obtained from commercial organizations that sell or lease research help or written papers. With respect to all written work, as appropriate, proper footnotes and attribution are required. All violations will be reported to the Honor Committee (see honorcode.gmu.edu for more information).

Disability Statement

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Resources at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. You must also notify the professor at the beginning of the semester so that reasonable and timely steps can be taken to accommodate your situation.

Enrollment Statement

You are responsible for verifying your enrollment in all classes, including this one. The last day to add classes for the Fall 2011 semester is Sept. 6; the last day to drop classes with no tuition penalty is Sept. The last day to drop classes with no academic liability and some tuition penalty is Sept. 30. After the drop deadline, withdrawing from a class requires the approval of the Dean and is allowed only for non-academic reasons. Undergraduates may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the University Catalog for more information. The Catalog is your official source for university rules and always supersedes any other information provided to you.

Week 1 Sept 1	What is Public Opinion? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glynn, Herbst, O'Keefe, Shapiro, and Lindeman. <i>Public Opinion</i>, Second Edition. Chpt 1, 2.
Week 2 Sept 8	Polling Methodology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome! Erikson and Tedin Chpt 1, 2 Flanigan and Zingale Appendix
Week 3 Sept 15	The U.S. Electoral System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flanigan and Zingale Introduction, Chpt 1 Alexander Keyssar. 2000. <i>The Right to Vote</i> (Chapter 1, p. 1-25). Online. Justin Levitt. A Citizen's Guide to Redistricting. Online.
Week 4 Sept 22	Voting and Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flanigan and Zingale Chpt 2 Robert Putnam "Bowling Alone" Online. Norrander and Wilcox Chpt 10. Online. Michael McDonald. "Voter Turnout in the 2010 Election." Online.
Week 5 Sept 29	Partisanship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flanigan and Zingale Chpt 3, 5 -->PAPER #1 DUE<--
Week 6 Oct 6	Political Socialization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flanigan and Zingale Chpt 4 Erikson and Tedin Chpt 5
Week 7 Oct 13	Vote Choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erikson and Tedin Chpt 9 Flanigan and Zingale Chpt 8 Norrander and Wilcox Chpt 11. Online. Andrew Gelman. Red State, Blue State, Rich State, Poor State. Chpt. 4. Online.
Week 8 Oct 20	MIDTERM
Week 9 Oct 27	Individual Level Public Opinion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erikson and Tedin Chpt 3, 6
Week 10 Nov 3	Ideology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flanigan and Zingale Chpt 6 Norrander and Wilcox, Chpt 8. On-Line.
Week 11 Nov 10	Macro-Level Public Opinion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erikson and Tedin Chpt 4, 7 Norrander and Wilcox Chpt 1, 3, 4. Online.
Week 12	Trust in Government

Nov 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norrander and Wilcox Chpt 13, 14, 15. Online.
Week 13 Nov 24	THANKSGIVING BREAK
Week 14 Dec 1	The Media and Public Opinion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erikson and Tedin Chpt 8 • Flanigan and Zingale Chpt 7 • Iyengar and Kinder. News That Matters. Chpt 3. Online.
Week 15 Dec 8	Attitudes Towards Rights & Representation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erikson and Tedin Chpt 10, 11 • Norrander and Wilcox Chpt 5, 6. Online. -->PAPER #2 DUE<--
Week 16 Dec 15	FINAL (4:30pm-7:15pm)