American Public Opinion & Pressure Groups

Fall 2018

Instructor Information

- Candace Turitto Ph.D.
- By appointment – email me at the address below
- Ct92@nyu.edu

Course Information

- POL-UA 9342 DC1
- American Public Opinion & Pressure Groups
- Tuesdays, 2-5pm
  - B109

Course Overview and Goals

This course aims to provide students with a thorough understanding of the intricate workings of American public opinion. From the history of measuring public opinion to the contemporary uses and manipulations of mass opinion, this course offers students a wide-ranging knowledge of political psychology, cognition, emotion, pressure groups, political ads, and more.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- Read and correctly interpret public opinion polls in mass and local media – including an understanding of the survey's structure, sample, and questions.
- Identify the psychological aspects of mass opinion – in particular, how the public learns about politics, the multiple sources of political attitudes, the power of group identities, and how emotions are used to enhance persuasion.
- Understand the deference (or lack thereof) to public opinion by political leaders, to include a firm grasp on how public opinion influences the three branches of government, as well as how media and political campaigns affect, and react to, public opinion.
• Place current political opinion events (such as mass demonstrations) into contemporary context, with a foundational comprehension of the dynamics of group conflict, interest groups, and rhetoric.

Course Requirements

Class Participation
You must attend class. It will contribute to your grade. If you have a particularly difficult circumstance, please let me know as soon as possible.

You must participate in class. This usually hinges on the quality of your contributions to discussions. The student who has read the material in preparation for our discussion will find this task quite simple. Those who have no read the material will find it difficult to contribute to the conversation, which is also difficult to hide over a three-hour lecture. If you are unprepared for our discussions, your participation grade will reflect that fact.

Assignment 1
Later in the semester, we will discuss the particulars of this assignment. In sum, it will be a 4-5 page paper that persuasively convinces the reader to take a certain “side” on a contemporary political issue. There will be restrictions on the available topics, but we will cover this in more detail as the assignment approaches.

Assignment 2
This will also be a 4-5 page persuasive paper on a contemporary political issue. It also includes an additional 2-3 page Addendum Analysis, for a total of 6-8 pages. This will be due during finals week. More detail will come later in the semester.

Tests & Quizzes
The material covered in the beginning of this course adapts well to a test. We will have a midterm exam before the Fall Break that covers the primary basics of public opinion. There will be no quizzes. You will have a major assignment at the end of the semester in lieu of a final exam.

Guest Speakers
Hosting professional guest speakers will be one way we get more hands-on experience understanding the dynamics of American public opinion. Throughout the semester, we will have 1 or 2 speakers. Due to the nature of their professions (and that it’s a midterm election year) many of the ideal guests are quite busy. Therefore, please be patient if we must adjust our syllabus slightly as we do what we can to accommodate their schedules.
For each speaker, students will be asked to come prepared for a rigorous conversation. This includes having a thorough understanding of the speaker’s background and experiences, as well as brainstorming multiple lines of questioning and topics to raise during the discussion.
Assigned Readings

I have provided scanned copies of the various sources (journal articles and book selections) we will read from over the semester. They are listed in a short-hand manner in the weekly outline below, and are listed here:

*The Sage Handbook of Public Opinion Research*, various authors
*Tides of Consent*, Stimson
*The Appeal to Reason*, Lippmann
*The Nature of Belief Systems in the Mass Public*, Converse
*Numbered Voices*, Herbst
*Polling and the Public*, Asher
*The Voter’s Guide to Election Polls*, Traugott and Lavrakas
*An Impression-Driven Model of Candidate Evaluation*, Lodge, McGraw, and Stroh
*The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*, Zaller
*Reconsidering the Rational Public*, Kuklinski and Quirk
*Advantages and Disadvantages of Cognitive Heuristics in Political Decision Making*, Lau and Redlawski
*Toward Theories of Persuasion and Belief Change*, Jaccard
*Striking a Responsive Chord*, Brader
*Threat, Anxiety, and Support for Antiterrorism Policies*, Huddy
*Symbolic Politics: A Socio-Psychological Theory*, Sears
*Persuasion in Context*, Mondak, Mutz, and Huckfeldt
*It’s a Matter of Interpretation*, Kuklinski and Hurley
*Partisan Hearts and Minds*, Green, Palmquist, and Shickler
*Honesty First*, McDonald, Turitto, and Croco
*Political Polarization in the American Public*, Pew
*Disrespectfully Agree*, Mason
*Political Socialization*, Hyman
*Us Against Them*, Kinder and Kam
*Assessing the President*, Brody
*Presidential Leadership in Public Opinion*, Cohen
*Fenno’s Paradox*, Fenno
*Does Congress Care about Public Opinion?*, Roll Call
Rethinking Representation, Mansbridge
How Public Opinion Constrains the U.S. Supreme Court, Casillas, Enns, and Wohlfarth
Oppositional Consciousness, Morris and Braine
Politics at the Margin, Herbst
Public Opinion and Political Action, Kinder and Sears
Pluralistic Roots of Public Opinion, Kinder and Sears
The Politics of Sacred Rhetoric, Marietta
Priming the Vote, Druckman
Politicians Don't Pander, Jacobs and Shapiro
Cues that Matter, Valentino, Hutchins, and White
News vs. Entertainment, Prior
Red Media, Blue Media, Iyengar and Hahn
Journalistic Practices and Their Problems, Gans
The Semisovereign People, Schattsneider
Public Opinion and American Democracy, VO Key, Jr.
Does Money Buy Public Policy? Baumgartner et al
Interest Groups: A Survey of Empirical Models, Potters and Sloof

Grading of Assignments
The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>[10%]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation/Prep</td>
<td>[20%]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>[20%]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper #1</td>
<td>[20%]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper #2 w Analysis</td>
<td>[30%]</td>
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Letter Grades
Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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**View Grades**
Grades will be made available on the NYU Classes site.

**Course Schedule**

**Topics and Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week/Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td><strong>History of Public Opinion</strong></td>
<td>- Sage (Ch 8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>28-Aug-18</td>
<td><strong>Attitudes or Non-Attitudes?</strong></td>
<td>- Tides of Consent (pgs 20-32)</td>
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<td>- Lippman (Ch xxviii)</td>
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<td>- Converse (pgs 3-10, 29-52)</td>
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<td>Session 2</td>
<td><strong>How do I read a poll? Questionnaire Design</strong></td>
<td>- Sage (Chs 33 and 34)</td>
<td>Take the <a href="https://www.pewresearch.org/amazon/news-quiz/">pew research news IQ quiz</a> online.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-Sept-18</td>
<td><strong>Polling Issues</strong></td>
<td>- Polling and the Public (Ch 3)</td>
<td>(or Google “Pew news IQ quiz”)</td>
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<td>- Numbered Voices (Ch 6)</td>
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<td>- Voter’s Guide (Ch 9)</td>
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<td>Session 3</td>
<td><strong>Learning, Decision-making, and shortcuts – what do we really know?</strong></td>
<td>- Sage (Ch 12)</td>
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<td>11-Sept-18</td>
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<td>- Lodge, McGraw, and Stroh</td>
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<td>- Lau and Redlawski</td>
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<td>- Kuklinski and Hurley</td>
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<td>Session 4</td>
<td><strong>Some theories of public opinion – how rational is the public?</strong></td>
<td>- Zaller (40-52)</td>
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<td>18-Sept-18</td>
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<td>- Tides of Consent (10-18)</td>
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<td>- Kuklinski and Quirk</td>
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<td>Session 5</td>
<td><strong>The varied sources of political attitudes: Socialization, Group Identities, and Symbolism vs. Self-Interest</strong></td>
<td>- Hyman (Ch 5)</td>
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<td>25-Sept-18</td>
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<td>- Us Against Them (Ch 1)</td>
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<td>- Pluralistic Roots of Public Opinion (pgs 671-682)</td>
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<td>- Sears (“Symbolic Politics”)</td>
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<td>Session 6</td>
<td>MIDTERM EXAM</td>
<td>MIDTERM EXAM</td>
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<td>2-Oct-18</td>
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<td>9-Oct-18</td>
<td>Fall Break - No Class</td>
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<td>Session 7</td>
<td><strong>The Psychology of Persuasion: Symbols and Emotion</strong></td>
<td>- Mondak, Mutz, and Huckfeldt</td>
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<td>16-Oct-18</td>
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<td>- Jaccard (260-69)</td>
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<td>- Brader (“Striking a Responsive Chord”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week/Date</td>
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<td>Assignment Due</td>
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<td>Session 8</td>
<td>Identity Politics: Partisanship, Polarization, and Motivated Reasoning</td>
<td>- Huddy (&quot;Threat, Anxiety…&quot;)</td>
<td>Read the online Vox article entitled, &quot;Honesty first: how to make politicians pay for lying.&quot;</td>
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| 23-Oct-18       |                                                                        | - Green, Palmquist, Schickler (Chs 2 and 8)  
- Mason ("Disrespectfully agree")  
- Vox – "Honesty First..."  
- Pew – "Political Polarization..."                                                                                                                                                                      | Read the Pew Research Center's online article entitled, "Political Polarization in the American Public" |
| Session 9       | Public Opinion in Government: The Presidency and The U.S. Supreme Court | - Brody (Intro, Ch 9)  
- Cohen (pgs 107-118, 137-8, Ch 8)  
- Casillas, Enns, and Wollfarth                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                   |
| 30-Oct-18       |                                                                        | - Fenno’s Paradox  
- “Does Congress Care”? Online Roll Call Article  
- "Rethinking Representation"                                                                                                                                                                           | PERSUASIVE PAPER #1 DUE |
| Session 10      | Public Opinion in Government: Congress and views of representation     | - Public Opinion and Political Action (pgs 696-705)  
- Oppositional Consciousness (Ch 2)  
- Politics on the Margin (Ch 1)  
- Rhetoric and Social Movements                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                   |
| 6-Nov-18        | Expressions of Public Opinion                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                   |
| Session 11      | Public Opinion and Campaigns – do campaigns matter?                   | - Politicians Don't Pander (Intro, Ch 1)  
- Tides of Consent (Ch 4)  
- Druckman  
- Valentino, Hutchings, and White                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                   |
<p>| 13-Nov-18       |                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                   |
| Session 12      |                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                   |
| 20-Nov-18       |                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                   |</p>
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<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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| Session 13 | Media Effects: Framing, Priming, Agenda Setting, Fragmentation, and Self-selection | - Sage (Ch 19)  
- Prior  
- Iyengar and Hahn  
- Democracy and the News (xxx)                                                                 |                                     |
| 27-Nov-18  |                                                                        |                                                                                                      |                                     |
| Session 14 | Collective Action and Lobbyists: Friend or Foe?                        | - Semisovereign People (Chs 1-2)  
- VOKey (Ch 6)  
- Lobbying and Policy Change (Chs 1 and 10)  
- Potters and Sloof                                                                 |                                     |
| 4-Dec-18   |                                                                        |                                                                                                      |                                     |
| Session 15 | Finals Week - Week of 10-Dec-18                                        | FINAL PAPER DUE                                                                                      | PERSUASIVE PAPER #2 with ANALYSIS DUE|

**Tests and Quizzes**
- Midterm Exam: October 2, 2018, 2-5pm

**Course Materials**

**Required Textbooks & Materials**
There are no required textbooks to purchase for this course. Instead, I have provided scanned copies of the various sources we will read from over the semester. See above for the full list.

**Resources**
- Access your course materials: [NYU Classes](nyu.edu/its/classes)
- Databases, journal articles, and more: [Bobst Library](library.nyu.edu)
- Assistance with strengthening your writing: [NYU Writing Center](nyu.mywconline.com)
- Obtain 24/7 technology assistance: [IT Help Desk](nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

**Course Policies**

**Attendance and Tardiness**
Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all
students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students’ semester grades. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure. At all Global Academic Centers, unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade (for courses that meet once per week; for courses that meet twice per week, it is a one percent reduction per missed class).

To seek an excused absence for medical reasons, students must use the online absence reporting form within 24 hours of their first missed class. Students may be required to produce a doctor’s note with that day’s date, especially if the student has missed any classes already that semester or if exams/presentations/papers occurred in the missed class.

Non-medical absences must be discussed with the Academic Staff at least 7 days before the missed date(s) in question. If faculty members do not receive notification of an excused absence, the student has not procured an excused absence.

NYU Washington, DC expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks), to be attentive, and to remain for the duration of the class. If full class attendance and participation becomes a problem, it is the prerogative of each lecturer to apply the rule for unexcused absences, which may include a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade.

Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. This means they should initiate email and/or office hour discussions to discuss any missed lectures and assignments and arrange a timeline for submitting missed work.

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave Washington, DC before the end of the finals week.

Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to arrive at the announced meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion. Staff members may always be reached by cell phone for advice regarding public transportation.

**Late Assignment**

1) Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.
2) Late work should be emailed to the faculty as soon as it is completed.
3) Late work will be reduced for a fraction of a letter grade (e.g., A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) for every day it is late, including weekends.
4) Written work during the semester that is submitted 5 days after the submission date (including weekends) without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.
5) Students who arrive to class late for an exam do not have automatic approval to take extra time to complete the exam.
6) Students who miss an exam (including the final) without previously arranged permission will receive a zero on that exam.
7) Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any
exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director.

Incomplete Grade Policy

An “incomplete” is a temporary grade that indicates that the student has, for good reason, not completed all of the course work. This grade is not awarded automatically nor is it guaranteed; rather, the student must ask the instructor for a grade of “incomplete,” present documented evidence of illness, an emergency, or other compelling circumstances, and clarify the remaining course requirements with the instructor.

In order for a grade of “incomplete” to be registered on the transcript, the student must fill out a form, in collaboration with the course instructor and the academic administration at the site; it should then be submitted to the site’s academic office. The submitted form must include a deadline by which the missing work will be completed. This deadline may not be later than the end of the following semester.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

As the University's policy on "Academic Integrity for Students at NYU" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.

The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

NYU Washington, DC takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the lecturer. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you MUST inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

NYU Policies and Guidelines on Academic Integrity
NYU Library Guides

Disability Disclosure Statement
Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

**Religious Observances**

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday.

Students must notify their professor and the Washington, DC Academics team in writing via email at least 7 days before being absent for this purpose.