

COURSE SYLLABUS

Political Science 6364: Public Opinion and Survey Research
4:00-6:45 p.m., Monday, Spring Semester, 2018

Contact Information

Professor: (Dr.) Marianne Stewart
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Office Hours: 2:30-3:45 p.m., Monday; 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m., Wednesday; or by appointment
Office Location: 3.226 GR

Course Information

The general objective of this graduate-seminar course is to help students learn to describe, to explain and to assess the sources, distributions, consequences of, and use of survey research to study, public opinion in the United States and other democracies. The specific objectives of the course involving students' learning about:

- definitions and types, as well as sources, distributions, and dynamics of economic, political and social public opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and values;
- guidelines, design, conduct, and communication of survey research;
- consequences of public opinion for public policy and democratic well-being.

Course Readings

Three required course books can be obtained from online and other sources. These books are:
Clawson, Rosalee A. and Zoe M. Oxley. 2017. *Public Opinion: Democratic Ideals, Democratic Practice*, third edition. Thousand Oaks, CA/Washington, D.C.: Sage Publications/CQ Press. Paperback ISBN 9781506323312.
Fowler, Jr., Floyd J. 2014. *Survey Research Methods*, fifth edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. Paperback ISBN 978-1-4522-5900-0.
Stimson, James A. 2015. *Tides of Consent: How Public Opinion Shapes American Politics*, second edition. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. Paperback ISBN 978-1-1075-18919.
Other required course readings are available from online sources listed in the Course Schedule.

Course Schedule

August 20. An Introduction to The Course.

August 27/September 10-17. Public Opinion and Survey Research: Characteristics and Types, Theories, Models and Methodology.

Class lectures and discussions.

Required readings

Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*:

Chapter 1, "Public Opinion in a Democracy"

Chapter 4, "Attitude Stability and Attitude Change"

Appendix, "Studying Public Opinion Empirically"

Fowler, *Survey Research Methods*:

- Chapter 1, "Introduction"
 Chapter 11, "Ethical Issues in Survey Research"
 Stimson, *Tides of Consent*, Chapter 1, "Opinion Flows"
 Berinsky, Adam J. 2017. "Measuring Public Opinion with Surveys," *Annual Review of Political Science* 20: 309-329 (available online from the UTD Library).
 Reifler, Jason, Harold D. Clarke, Thomas J. Scotto, David Sanders, Marianne C. Stewart and Paul Whiteley. "Prudence, Principle and Minimal Heuristics: British Public Opinion Towards the Use of Military Force in Afghanistan and Libya," *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 16: 28-55 (available on e-learning).
- Recommended reading – Research design
 King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Recommended readings – Survey research and public opinion
 Brady, Henry. 2000. "Contributions of Survey Research to Political Science," *PS: Political Science & Politics* March: 47-57 (available on e-learning)
 Korzi, Michael J. 2000. "Lapsed Memory: The Roots of American Public Opinion Research," *Polity* XXXIII: 49-75
 Zaller, John R. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Recommended readings: Public opinion – characteristics, types and models
 Gigerenzer, Gerd. 2008. *Rationality for Mortals; How People Cope with Uncertainty*. New York, NY: Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 Kahneman, Daniel. 2011. *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
 Popkin, Samuel L. 1991. *The Reasoning Voter: Communication and Persuasion in Presidential Campaigns*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
 Neuman, W. Russell, George E. Marcus, Ann N. Crigler and Michael McKuen, eds. 2007. *The Affect Effect: Dynamics of Emotion in Political Thinking and Behavior*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

September 3. Labor Day – No Class.

September 24/October 1. Survey Research: Components and Designs.
 Class lectures and discussions.

Required readings

Fowler, *Survey Research Methods*:

- Chapter 2, "Types of Error in Surveys"
- Chapter 3, "Sampling"
- Chapter 4, "Nonresponse: Implementing A Sample Design"
- Chapter 5, "Methods of Data Collection"
- Chapter 6, "Designing Questions to Be Good Measures"
- Chapter 7, "Evaluating Survey Questions and Instruments"
- Chapter 8, "Survey Interviewing"
- Chapter 13, "Survey Error in Perspective"

Sniderman, Paul M. 2018. "Some Advances in the Design of Survey Experiments," *Annual Review of Political Science* 21: 259-275 (available online from the UTD Library).

Recommended readings

- Clarke, Harold D., David Sanders, Marianne C. Stewart and Paul Whiteley, eds. 2008. "Special Issue on Internet Surveys and National Election Studies: A Symposium," *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 18.
- Couper, Mick P. 2008. *Designing Effective Web Surveys*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Ansolabehere, Stephen and Douglas Rivers. 2013. "Cooperative Survey Research." *Annual Review of Political Science* 16: 307-329.
- Groves, Robert M. et al. 2009. *Survey Methodology*, second edition. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Lupu, Noam, and Kristin Michelich. 2018. "Advances in Survey Methods for the Developing World.," *Annual Review of Political Science* 21:: 195-214.
- Miller, Peter V., ed. 2017. "Special Issue: Survey Research, Today and Tomorrow" and "Symposium on Probability and Nonprobability Sample Surveys," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 81.
- Stephenson, Laura B., and Jean Crete. 2011. "Studying Political Behavior: A Comparison of Internet and Telephone Surveys," *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 23: 24-49.
- Tourangeau, Roger, Frederick G. Conrad and Mick P. Couper. 2013. *The Science of Web Surveys*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Weisberg, Herbert F. 2005. *The Total Survey Error Approach: A Guide to the New Science of Survey Research*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

October 8. Test #1.

October 15-22. Public Opinion: Individual- and Social Sources.

Class lectures and discussions.

Required readings

Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*:

Chapter 6, "Pluralistic Roots of Public Opinion: Personality, Self-Interest, Values and History"

Chapter 2, "Political Socialization"

Chapter 3, "Mass Media"

Chapter 7, "Pluralistic Roots of Public Opinion: The Central Role of Groups"

Stimson, *Tides of Consent*, Chapter 4: "The Great Horse Race: Finding Meaning in Presidential Campaigns"

Recommended readings

Baker, Andy. 2015. "Race, Paternalism, and Foreign Aid: Evidence from U.S. Public Opinion," *American Political Science Review* 109: 93-109.

Burns, Nancy and Katherine Gallagher. 2010. "Public Opinion on Gender Issues: The Politics of Equity and Roles," *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 425-443.

October 29/November 5. Public Opinion and "The Good Citizen"

Class lectures and discussions.

Required readings

Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*:

Chapter 5, "Ideology, Partisanship and Polarization"

Chapter 8, "Knowledge, Interest, and Attention to Politics"

Chapter 9, "Support for Civil Liberties"

Chapter 10, "Support for Civil Rights"

Chapter 11, "Trust in Government, Support for Institutions, and Social Capital"

Stimson, *Tides of Consent*:

Chapter 2, "What the Public Wants of Government"

Chapter 3, "Left and Right Movements in Preference"

Chapter 5, "Between the Campaigns: Public Approval and Disapproval of Government"

Carmines, Edward G. and Nicholas J. D'Amico. 2015. "The New Look in Political Ideology Research," *Annual Review of Political Science* 18: 205-216 (available online from the UTD Library).

Recommended readings

Lupia, Arthur. 2016. *Uninformed: Why People Know So Little about Politics and What We Can Do About It*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Lupia, Arthur, and Mathew D., McCubbins. 1998. *The Democratic Dilemma: Can Citizens Learn What They Need to Know?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

November 12. Test #2.

November 19-25. Fall Break/Thanksgiving Holidays – No Class.

November 26/December 3. A Conclusion to the Course.

Class lectures and discussions.

Required readings

Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, Chapter 12, "Impact of Public Opinion on Policy"

Stimson, *Tides of Consent*, Chapter 6, "On Politics at the Margin"

Canes-Wrone, Brandice. 2015. "From Mass Preferences to Policy." *Annual Review of Political Science* 18: 147-165. (available online from the UTDLibrary).

Students' research paper presentations.

Grading Criteria and Requirements

Class Participation = 10%. Each student is expected to complete assigned readings before, and to take careful notes during, each class, as well as to participate constructively in class discussions.

Two Presentations-Reports @ 15% = 30%. Each student will prepare and present two reports. Each presentation-report will discuss why the topic is interesting and important, will summarize the relevant research based on professor-assigned required and/or recommended readings, and will give an assessment (that is, an application of the student's ideas) of how the research has been conducted and of how better research needs to be conducted. Each report will be presented orally with power-point slides in approximately 25 minutes (which also allows for discussion). A hard copy of the power-point slides must be given by the student to the professor on the assigned day of the presentation.

Two Tests @ 15% = 30%. Each test is based on lectures, discussions and readings; is open-book and open-note; and consists of 2-3 essay questions that involve definition, description, and explanation or assessment. Each test also is out-of-class – the test will be posted by the professor on e-learning at class start time, it will be taken during regular class time, and each student's answers must be emailed to the professor no later than 6:45 p.m. on the test day. The tests are scheduled for Monday, October 8 and Monday, November 12 – All students are expected to take the tests on these dates – No make-up tests are given. University honesty policy applies, and no other sources can be used or other people consulted.

Research Paper = 30%. A 20-page, double-spaced, typed/word-processed paper that:

- states an interesting and important research question about public opinion and justifies why it is so (1 page);
- reviews a selection of relevant research literature on the question that includes scholarly articles*, scholarly books, and/or scholarly chapters in edited volumes in either a

chronological (date-of-publication) order or a knowledge-production (set-of-ideas) form (3 pages);

- relates the question and the literature to the development of an empirically testable hypothesis and identifies the independent and dependent variables in this hypothesis (1 page);
- justifies why and how survey research can be used to assess the hypothesis, to develop indicators/measures of the independent and dependent variables, and to provide an answer to the research question posed. (1-2 pages)
- includes a questionnaire designed to assess the hypothesis, to develop indicators/measures, and again to provide an answer (4+ pages as an Appendix);
- discusses a strategy for analyzing data from the questionnaire (1-2 pages).
- lists endnotes and references in appropriate form.

Due November 26/December 3 – All students are expected to comply with these dates – no extensions are given.

A: 95-100%; A-: 90-94; B+: 83-89; B: 77-82; B-: 70-76; C+: 65-69; C: 60-64; F: Below 60%.

Notes

In addition to the above, students are expected to:

- know that this syllabus, including calendar/timelines, is subject to change at the discretion of the Professor;
- access and read related policy material at <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>.