



Public Opinion, Political Psychology, and Politics

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PS 416/516 (19880/19881)

Oregon State University

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MW 12:00-1:50 p.m.

MLM 206

I hope this class will be interesting, maybe exciting, and possibly even fun. Most people have views about public opinions and polling, and many question whether a sample of about 1000 Americans possibly can reflect the views of the nation's people. A common statement is "I don't trust polls. I don't know anyone who has ever been polled."

I do not intend this class to turn students into pollsters but instead to help students develop:

- a sense of the strengths and limits of polling and other methods for examining public opinion;
- a basic understanding of how individuals form opinions, how opinions influence public officials, and how officials attempt to influence public views;
- a sense of the complexity and content of opinions in relation to various politically-relevant topics;
- appreciation of how elements of public opinion apply to themselves personally, that is, by each student using himself or herself as a "guinea pig" for application of course materials; and
- introductory-level skills (possibly even "marketable" in job searches) in at least one method of studying public opinion, through a project that requires analyzing (and possibly collecting) opinion data

This course will examine public opinion and also political psychology, an emerging field. It will give attention to "cutting-edge" developments in neuroscience that have relevance for the study of politics. The course will examine how opinions are studied, how individuals form opinions, how opinions influence public officials, and how officials attempt to influence public opinion.

Among other topics, political psychology examines how leaders and public think about political topics. Neuroscience methods now enable researchers to "see" how the brain operates when people consider politics, and have opened new areas of public opinion and political psychology research.

This quarter the course will pay special attention to the importance of (mis-)information, self-interest, and emotion concerning political opinions.

Compared with earlier quarters, I have reduced core reading and writing requirements to allow students more time to grapple with these topics. The course will involve frequent in-class discussion, based on course reading and current examples. In addition to reading common to all students, each student will study in some depth one public opinion topic or analyze data.

Requirements and Grading: There are **no exams** in this course. Instead, there will be a number of brief papers, which ask students to analyze course readings and apply it to recent developments and to their personal experience. The major class project—which also will help develop skills—is an opinion analysis project; one of several types can be used, as discussed in class (**300** points). The allocation of course points is as follows:

Response Papers (RPs): seven relatively brief 50-point RPs, among eight possible (because I adjust the scores to equal eight RPs, the total maximum points are **400**)

Research project **300** points, including progress reports, an oral presentation, and a written paper

Graduate students journal analysis with each RP (@25, seven, adjusted to eight, so **200** points maximum)

Note: Students satisfied with a maximum grade of C+ are excused from the opinion analysis project.

A course grade of A requires 90% (630 of 700 course points or 810 of 900 for PS 516), a B 80% (560 or 720), a C 70% (280 of 400; or 420 of 600), and a D 60% (240 or 360). **Within each grade range**, the top three percentage points are plus and the bottom three are minus. Improvement, attendance/participation, and similar will be used to determine borderline grades. (Low scores on course requirements can be improved by analyzing extra reading.)

⇒ **Course Blackboard Web Site:** Use **PS_416_X001_F2010** for **both PS 416 and PS 516**.

Questions and Difficulties: Because this is a 4-credit course, it requires more work than 3-credit courses. Although I have reduced the required reading for this course, *organizing time carefully is essential to do well*. This applies particularly to the end-of-quarter paper and oral presentation. Feel free to contact me about questions or

problems. I recommend an appointment, even during office hours, to avoid waiting. Feel free to contact me by e-mail at the above address or leave me a telephone message, indicating times to phone you.

Note: Although I am in political science (housed in Gilkey Hall), several of us now have offices in Ballard Hall, at the corner of Campus Way and 26th Street. My office is Ballard Hall 330B. Any papers not submitted in class should be delivered to me in the **Economics office, Ballard Hall 303**. **Put papers in the box outside that door ONLY IF no one is available in the Economics office.**

⇒ **Note: This is not a no-show drop course. If you stop coming to the course, you must drop it.**

Core Textbook: This is available in the Bookstore and on 3-hour Valley Library reserve.

Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, 2nd edition, paperback (CQ Press, 2013), the core text. Students will read one or two chapters for nearly all classes. As a textbook, this usually is not available on library reserve; however, I was able to place an extra copy on 3-hour reserve.

Seven of 19 chapters in the following book are required reading. These chapters are available in Blackboard, and copy of the book is on 3-hour Library reserve; an e-book version should be available soon on the Valley Library online site. **Non-required chapters** from this book are **optional** for **extra credit** on RPs. Students interested in political psychology might want to buy the book online from Amazon or other sources.

Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd ed (Routledge, 2015); e-book <http://oasis.oregonstate.edu/record=b3356423>

Optional but strongly recommended subscription: The *New York Times* (NYT) remains the most influential news publication, and is useful for students of political communication to know. (It is much less “liberal” than many people appear to assume. For example, its editorial page was consistently very critical of President Clinton.) Although much of the NYT is available free online, students can subscribe at special student rates for home delivery. Students who want to subscribe should contact NYT by toll-free telephone (888-698-2655) or online (www.nytimes.com/student). Students can subscribe for Monday through Friday or for seven days a week (Sunday’s NYT is the most widely read; see especially the “Sunday Review” section). This is **totally optional** but recommended because of the quality of NYT coverage of polls, its own and those of others.

Other news media (the *Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist*, and the *Financial Times*) also are available at special student rates. Interested students can ask me for details.)

Response Paper Makeup Reading: To offset low Response Paper or other scores a student may read and analyze a book on the public opinion, **pre-approved** by me. Then write a paper no more than 10 pages long, single-spaced, typed, carefully written and proofread, with these components: summary, statement of themes, relating to other course material, and evaluation (as part of this, locate, use, and **cite** published book reviews).

Review Reading: Students who need review of basic features of American politics and government might want to read appropriate chapters in an American government text, e.g., US election process. Ask me for suggestions.

Additional Information

♿ **Students with documented disabilities** who need accommodations, have emergency medical information the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation should contact the instructor. Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Students with accommodations approved through SSD are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through SSD should contact SSD immediately at (541) 737-4098.

The **official Oregon State University “Statement of Expectations for Student Conduct,”** that is, policies about cheating and related, is available online at oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/index.htm (this link must be in syllabi).

Public Opinion in Printed and Online Materials

Students should regularly monitor public opinion examples using online sites. Some of the general news sites on the Web contain public opinion data or links to public opinion data. In addition, most survey organizations have at least some of their data on the Web. **Please notify me about any incorrect or no longer operating web sites.**

Some useful sites are (**all addresses are preceded by: <http://>**):

- ◆ OSU Political Science Department home page: oregonstate.edu/cla/polisci/; see the political science sites section, which contains numerous links; also www.politicalindex.com; see also the OSU Library guide to political science materials: guides.library.oregonstate.edu/home
- ◆ Two useful starting points for general searches: Yahoo (www.yahoo.com) and Google (www.google.com) both provide

useful searches (search each, for example, for “public opinion polls”). In addition to standard Google search, also **Google Scholar**, at scholar.google.com/. It is particularly useful for scholarly materials not picked up by regular Google.

- ◆ Excellent starting point about current political developments: www.washingtonpost.com and also www.nytimes.com—see especially its Political Points, with numerous links to government, other sites
- ◆ An **indispensable source of recent opinion data** is Polling Report: www.pollingreport.com; also useful, though more focused on campaigns and related polling, is www.realclearpolitics.com/
- ◆ Gallup Organization polls: www.gallup.com/home.aspx (Gallup is now partly a paid site, so maybe not totally accessible); see especially its www.gallup.com/poll/politics.aspx for presidential and related polling
- ◆ Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, an excellent collection of opinion data on many topics: www.people-press.org
- ◆ The *Washington Post* not only maintains its own polling web site—www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/polls/vault/vault.htm—but also includes links to numerous other poll web sites: www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/polls/datadir.htm.
- ◆ The “Monkey Cage” site at the *Washington Post* contains interesting material from political scientists around the country; it might be interesting to visit: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/>
- ◆ The Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), which has excellent data collections on a range of topics: www.icpsr.umich.edu
- ◆ National Opinion Research Center, with excellent long-term data: www.norc.uchicago.edu
- ◆ Some public opinion web links are available at www.politicalindex.com
- ◆ General Social Survey (GSS), which has data downloads: www.norc.org/GSS+Website/
- ◆ These sites provide links to national, state, and international data: ciser.cornell.edu/info/polls.shtml; “Internet Data Sources for Social Scientists” at ciser.cornell.edu/info/datasource.shtml; www.lib.wsc.ma.edu/polls.htm; guides.socialsciencelibraries.yale.edu/content.php?pid=14700&sid=809599; www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/links.html; hcl.harvard.edu/research/guides/public_opinion/
- ◆ An excellent site about US opinions and information, especially foreign policy, is PIPA, www.policyattitudes.org/
- ◆ A number of commercial (for-profit) pollsters, some of whom work at least sometimes for candidates and other political figures are available online at the following web addresses (see also the links in roper, immediately above): Frank Luntz (probably the most influential Republican pollster) www.luntz.com/; Stan Greenberg (author of a course book and a pollster who usually works for Democrats) www.greenbergresearch.com/; www.zogby.com/; www.pos.org/; www.yankelovich.com/; www.wirthlin.com/
- ◆ The following site contains excellent references for survey research, including sample-size issues and similar: www.surveysystem.com/sdesign.htm
- ◆ Also very good is: www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/Documents.center/stpolisc/html#opinion; this is excellent on a very large range of topics, as illustrated below about “think tanks”
- ◆ For health care opinion data, the Kaiser site is excellent: www.kaiseredu.org/research.asp?id=268
- ◆ Links to international polls: ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/links_en.htm; www.queensu.ca/cora/6links.html (Canada); and www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/butref/subj/stats/polls.html; www.ipsos-na.com/news-polls/
- ◆ Some blogs that are especially useful for this course are: Mystery Pollster, www.pollster.com/blogs/; Political Arithmetic, politicalarithmetik.blogspot.com/index.html; PolicySigh, polysigh.blogspot.com/; Daily Kos, www.dailykos.com/; and My DD, www.mydd.com/
- ◆ Various public opinion texts list numerous relevant links (other sites, data, and so on), for example:
 - ◆ Bardes and Oldendick, *Public Opinion*, 3rd edition: www.wadsworth.com/cgi-wadsworth/course_products_wp.pl?fid=M20b&product_isbn_issn=9780495007531&discipline_number=20
 - ◆ Shiraev [he taught at OSU for a short time during the 1990s] and Sobel, *People and Their Opinions*: wps.ablongman.com/long_sobel_pto_1/ (two chapters in this book are required, in Blackboard documents)
 - ◆ Dalton, *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, 5th edition: www.cqpress.com/cs/dalton/ and especially www.cqpress.com/cs/dalton/links.asp, which includes links to a number of sets of opinion data
- ◆ Links to “Think Tanks,” a topic this course will consider: www.nira.go.jp/linke/tt-link; see also About.com list: globalbusiness.about.com/money/globalbusiness/cs/thinktanks; a listing by types of policy concerns: reinert.creighton.edu/advocacy; and an international list: www3.pitt.edu/~ian/resource/thinktk.htm; the *Washington Post* “ideas industry” web site: washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/politics/fedpage/columns/ideasindustry/index.html; and University of Michigan site mentioned above: www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/Documents.center/psthink.html

- ◆ An excellent media starting point is: www.newslink.org, with links to newspapers, magazines, radio-TV
- ◆ Some specific network television media sites are: www.cnn.com; www.abcnnews.com, cbsnews.com; www.msnbc.com/news
- ◆ Project Vote Smart (excellent on domestic politics, congressional voting records, and similar): www.vote-smart.org

Note: On all **graded** written materials, indicate only your **Student ID number, project name (e.g., RP 1), and the date you submit it**. Do **NOT** indicate your **name** or use a **cover** on any paper. Also, please **number the pages** and be sure they are stapled together in the correct order. On **Progress Reports**, indicate your **NAME, not ID number**.

General Guidelines for Written Assignments

- As indicated above, on any **graded** assignments, do **NOT** indicate your **name**. Instead, in the **upper right corner** of the **first page** indicate your ID number, PS 416 (even if in PS 516), the assignment name, and the date you submit it.
- Do **not** use a **cover** (plastic or similar) on any written assignment.
- I prefer that you type **single-spaced**, with a line between paragraphs, with 1-inch margins on all sides.
- Guidelines for **paper length** are indicated below for specific assignments. These are approximate and are estimates of what might be required to respond adequately to the elements of the assignment. Concise responses are graded more highly than longer, less clearly written responses.
- Each paper should be carefully written and **proofread**. Use a spell checker **and** a grammar checker!
- **Citations to course reading** should use simply the author and page number(s), in parentheses after using that material (quotation, paraphrase, or any other use). You need **not** list these in any citations listing at the end.
- **Citations of non-course material** should be complete: Author, *Title*, edition if 2nd or later (City: Publisher, year) or web address and date accessed, using footnotes or—preferred—parenthetical references and citations at end.
- Many students engage in **plagiarism**—presenting points that need citation without indicating source—sometimes without realizing it; to avoid plagiarism, you **must give credit whenever you present**:
 - ▷ another person’s idea, opinion, or theory
 - ▷ any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings—any pieces of information—that are not common knowledge; if in doubt about whether something is “common knowledge,” provide a cite (that is, err on the side of caution)
 - ▷ quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words, or
 - ▷ paraphrase of another person’s spoken or written words (that is, **re-wording** what another person has said or written does **not** eliminate plagiarism)
- **NUMBER the pages** on all assignments, for ease in my commenting and to be sure pages are in the correct order.

Criteria for Evaluating Written Work

- Response to each of the specific questions to be addressed
- Drawing on appropriate course materials and, if appropriate, materials from other sources
- Drawing on personal experience, or media examples, or both, and clearly citing any external sources
- Clear and well-written responses, showing use of spell checker, grammar checker, and careful organization

OSU Writing Assistance

The Oregon State University Center for Writing and Learning has very useful materials for helping the writing process, including online access. The address is <http://cwl.oregonstate.edu/twc.html>. Note especially the “Online Writing Lab,” to which you can submit a draft of your papers for feedback, the “web resources” (excellent links to writing resources), and “Writing Tips and Handouts” (suggestions about writing issues). Students can make appointments for in-person consultation about writing.

Response Papers (RPs)

In order to prepare for class discussion and to provide a means of evaluating student understanding, each student will write at least **seven (7)** of a possible eight Response Papers (RPs), due each Wednesday beginning week 2. I might provide suggestions for some RPs, but generally each is to provide brief summary of reading for that week (or for weeks 1 and 2 for RP 1) **and** provide examples, reactions, or both to that material. It is **ESSENTIAL** in writing RPs to discuss how **your** experience or observations—direct or through media—relate to the course material.

Each RP is worth a maximum of 50 points. Normally each will be **less than five (5) single-spaced pages**, and **most probably will be somewhat shorter**. (Attached tables, examples, or similar do not count in page length.) Papers should follow the guidelines listed on pages 4-5 above. Be sure to include page numbers in course papers.

Each Wednesday, beginning week 2, an RP is due. Each RP examines course materials for the week in which the RP is due, so includes course materials assigned for the Wednesday class as well as the Monday class. Because I intend RPs partly to stimulate discussion, students should think about elements they find confusing, with which they disagree, or for other reasons might be fruitful to discuss in class.

Students submit **at least seven (7) RPs** during weeks 2 through 9. **RPs 1 and 8 are required.** (If a student submits eight, I will count the best seven.) I adjust total RP scores to base on eight RPs, for a total maximum score of 400.

Required RPs: As noted earlier, although students can select not to complete all eight RPs, two RPs are **required: RP 1**, which focuses on polling, and **RP 8**, which involves overall evaluation and synthesis

As noted, the usual **maximum** length is 5 single-spaced pages, plus any attached materials (printouts of data, for example), though many RPs will be somewhat shorter

For **extra credit reading**, as listed in the syllabus or announced in class, attach at the end of the paper a summary and reaction of the extra credit reading(s), about one-half page per extra credit reading. **Label** each carefully as extra credit and identify the source.

Reminder: **Students can submit a second book analysis** (as discussed on page 2 above) **to replace three non-consecutive RPs.** To submit a second book analysis, follow the instructions for the book analysis (below). Graduate students (PS 516) who are replacing three RPs should attach to and discuss in their book analysis at least three journal articles related to the content of the book.

Graduate Student Journal Analyses

As noted on page 2 above, graduate students (those enrolled for PS 516) are required to read and summarize at least seven (7) journal articles, one for each RP.

Note: The core text (Clawson-Oxley) lists data sources, journal articles, and similar at the end of nearly every chapter. Graduate students might consider these as starting points for selecting relevant journal articles.

For each journal article or chapter, do the following: Select a journal article that is related to the topic of the week (possibly from one of the journals listed below). Read that article carefully. Then write an **analysis** (usually no more than 3 single-spaced pages, possibly shorter) that **includes:** a careful statement of the article's focus and the question/topic it addresses; a summary of the methods used; a clear statement of conclusions; and finally application of the journal article to other course materials. **Attach the first page of the journal article** at the end of the analysis (almost always the first page of journal articles contains an abstract of the article).

All or nearly all the following journals are available online through the OSU Library web page. At the main OSU Library web page (<http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/>), select "E-journals" and locate the journal(s) of interest. For **journals that cannot be accessed through the OSU Library**, you can use interlibrary loan (from the OSU Library web page) or find the online location of the author(s) of journal articles; many authors provide access to at least some of their published works on their personal or institutional home pages.

In relation to **public opinion and political science**, the following journals are likely to be especially relevant:

- *Public Opinion Quarterly* (POQ)
- *American Political Science Review* (APSR), *Perspectives in Political Science*, and *P.S.* (the official journals of the American Political Science Association)
- *American Journal of Political Science* (AJPS), *Journal of Politics* (JOP), similar
- *Political Behavior* or other political science or possibly sociology or similar journals

In relation to **political psychology and neuroscience**, the following journals are likely to be especially relevant:

- *Political Psychology*
- *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience* (SCAN)
- *Perspectives on Psychological Science*
- Various other psychology and neuroscience journals (search Valley Library e-journal listings)
- *Annual Reviews of Psychology*, *Political Science*, *Neuroscience*, other social-behavioral sciences (useful surveys)

Opinion Analysis

⇒ **Reminder:** Students satisfied with a maximum course grade of C+ are excused from this analysis.

You can use either of two methods. Each involves using data, which you analyzed and then write a report. This analysis is worth a maximum of 300 points, by far the largest point value in the course for a single item.

For each type of project, a **progress report** will be due **alternate Wednesdays, beginning week 2**, leading to a presentation to the class during the last week of the course (50 points total). The paper reporting the results will be due on a date to be decided, probably early final exam week. I will provide additional details about the paper in class. As noted in class, papers should be typed, clearly written, and carefully proofread. Reminder: Please **number** the pages and do **not** use a plastic or similar cover. See guidelines on pages 4-5 above.

A. Data Analysis: This involves analyzing data collected by others, for example, the Pew Research Center (see the data list at <http://people-press.org/dataarchive/>; and also at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [ICPSR], at www.icpsr.umich.edu/). I will provide additional information in class.

B. Conducting a Survey: This is a larger project than A, so it involves two-person teams. I recommend that students look through Nardi, *Doing Survey Research: A Guide to Quantitative Methods* (available on **3-hour Library reserve**; or use **another** polling reference source) and using it to design a survey, collect data (probably 50-100 cases, by telephone or other means locally, though chosen by standard sampling methods), and analyze the data to write a report. You can think of this as a pre-test for an actual survey, which would use a larger sample. Examples of projects are Corvallis resident or OSU student opinions of President Obama's actions regarding Afghanistan or the economy, in which you ask about opinions and preferably also about information.

I strongly suggest that at least one member of each 2-person team have some statistical skills, probably from coursework. Because team projects often involve difficulty determining the grade for each team member, early in the quarter each team will submit a careful statement of the allocation of effort between the two members of the team. Each team will present the results of its research to the class.

By Wednesday, October 6, you should decide tentatively which **type** of analysis you will do; a brief written statement of your choice, with reasons, is due that day. You will enlarge and possibly modify your proposal later.

The following **topics** are to be **included in your written analysis**:

1. A brief statement of the topic you selected and why you selected it
2. A summary of the data you used (where you got it, sample size, any difficulties, etc.)
3. A statement of expectations/hypotheses about what you expected to find
4. A summary of the process you used to analyze the data
5. A summary of your findings/results (tables and discussion)
6. Some conclusions: overall what you found in relation to what you expected to find; relating to other course materials, possible additional analyses that would be useful, and so on.
7. For B only, include a brief statement of the division of labor between the two students doing the survey.

Some of these can be quite short, but some, especially findings, probably will be longer, especially with included or attached tables. You are free to include additional material not listed in these topics.

In your **oral presentation**, do **not** attempt to cover **all** these topics. Instead, briefly: identify your topic and state why you selected it, explain your methods, and then summarize your results. **Prior to his or her oral presentation**, each student should provide me a **PowerPoint or similar presentation**, other handouts (data, for example), or both that I will distribute in class the day of the presentation.

Current Examples of Public Opinion

News and other organizations conduct polls about a huge number of political topics, both serious and frivolous. Most classes we will spend some time discussing current examples of "public opinion," either polls or specific developments, possibly even funny reports of "polls" done by various groups or organizations. Please **bring examples to class**, either as notes or printed, since the main source of these will be items that students have noticed.

Overview of Course Due Dates (I do not list RPs; one is due each Wednesday, beginning Week 2)

- By Monday, October 6**..... Complete and turn in the course grade form (last page of this syllabus); this is **very important**
- Wednesday, October 8**..... **Progress report 1** due (choice of A or B opinion analysis, with reasons carefully stated)
- Wednesday, October 22**..... **Progress report 2** about opinion analysis due, summarizing progress and asking questions about any questions that have arisen. For B, identify the tentative division of labor between the two members of the team.
- Wednesday, November 5**..... **Progress report 3** about opinion analysis due, summarizing progress, asking questions, and including a bibliography of sources used.
- Wednesday, November 19**..... **Progress report 4** about opinion analysis due, summarizing progress, asking questions, and outlining core elements of the in-class oral presentation.
- Monday, November 24** I will announce the **schedule of student presentations**.
- Monday and Wednesday, December 1 and 3** Oral presentations of opinion analyses in class
- Probably Monday, December 8** . Written opinion analysis due

Topic and Reading Schedule

Note: The required course text (Clawson-Oxley) is in the Bookstore and has been ordered for **3-hour reserve** in Valley Library; other required readings have been placed on Blackboard. **Read regularly** to participate in discussion. Study text graphs and similar carefully. Know core points and supporting details of chapters.

Read actively! Because RPs ask that students relate course materials to their own experiences and to other current examples, as you read think how it relates to personal experience and to materials from recent media accounts.

Current national political events, especially in relation to opinion, will be discussed in class and are to be reflected in RPs, so **pay attention to news media**. Because journalists pay much attention to public opinion, you should regularly look at various media, especially the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and similar, which conduct their own polling. I also recommend at least occasionally monitoring television news coverage.

Extra credit on RPs is worth 4-5 points, depending on length of reading.

Course Blackboard Site: Because of financial restrictions, most of the materials shown in class lectures will **not** be distributed in class. Instead, I will place them on the course Blackboard web site. I strongly encourage students to visit that site **regularly** and read/download/print/save some of those materials.

- ⇒ Remember that each student is to submit at least seven RPs. Each RP is worth 50 points for undergraduates. Graduate students submit a journal analysis with each RP, worth 25 additional points.
- ⇒ This reading schedule is **tentative and subject to change**; changes, if any, probably will be minor.
- ⇒ Note that **ALL REQUIRED ITEMS NOT IN THE CORE TEXT** will be available in **BLACKBOARD DOCUMENTS**.

1. **Monday, September 29. Course Introduction**

Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion* [core text], Preface (4 pp.) and begin reading materials listed below

2. **Wednesday, October 1. Introduction to Public Opinion**

Read this syllabus carefully. **You** are responsible for knowing deadlines, assignments, and similar.

Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, chapter 1, “Public Opinion in a Democracy” (24 pp)

Recommended early in the quarter for **graduate** students (PS 516): Jordan and Zanna, “Appendix: how to read a journal article in social psychology,” in Jost and Sidanius, *Political Psychology: Key Readings* (Psychology Press, 2004; **Blackboard** documents).

- ⇒ Starting week 2 please **bring to class** examples from current observations relevant to specific topics

3. **Monday, October 6. Public Opinion Polling**

Read Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, chapter 1 **Appendix:** “Studying Public Opinion Empirically” (14 pages, pp. 349-358); locate and bring to class examples of public opinion polls to supplement this reading
Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 1, “Two Conceptual Schemes or Distinctions” (required ch from this book are in **Blackboard**, **non**-required [extra credit] chapters are **not** in Blackboard)

Reminder: The **first response paper** is due **Wednesday**; students complete **seven** of a possible eight RPs. For RP 1 students are to discuss and illustrate polling and socialization, including personal experience.

4. **Wednesday, October 8. Sources of Opinions: Socialization (RP 1 due; REQUIRED)**
Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, chapter 2, "Political Socialization" (26 pp)
Entman, "Media and Democracy without Party Competition;" brief and important so read carefully
For this topic it is especially important to think systematically about your personal experience.
Optional extra credit on this RP (if you read this, at the end of the RP summarize it and relate it to your own experience or observations; identify it as "extra credit"): Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 2, "Brief History of the Discipline" (reminder: **non-required chapters** from this book are **not** in Blackboard)
Research Progress Report 1 due (see pages 5-6 above)
5. **Monday, October 13. Media and Public Opinion**
Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, chapter 3, "Mass Media" (32 pp)
Dreier and Martin, "How ACORN Was Framed," *Perspectives on Politics*, 2010
6. **Wednesday, October 15. Attitude Stability and Change (RP 2 due)**
Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, chapter 4, "Attitude Stability and Attitude Change" (28 pp)
Optional extra credit on this RP (if you read this, at the end of the RP summarize this reading and relate it to your own experience or observations; clearly identify it as "extra credit"): Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 3, "Behavioralism and Human Freedom," and ch 5, "Creating a 'Bad Barrel'"
7. **Monday October 20. Political Ideology**
Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, chapter 5, "Ideological Innocence and Critiques" (30 pp)
Ellis and Stimson, "Symbolic Ideology in the American Electorate," *Electoral Studies*, 2009 (Blackboard)
Recommended: Pew 2014 political typology: <http://www.people-press.org/2014/06/26/the-political-typology-beyond-red-vs-blue/>, and/or <http://www.people-press.org/2014/09/12/wide-partisan-differences-over-the-issues-that-matter-in-2014/>; the Pew site contains many other relevant materials.
8. **Wednesday, October 22. Political Culture (RP 3 due)**
Elder and Cobb, *Political Uses of Symbols*, ch 4, "Cultural Aspects of Symbolic Usage" (**Blackboard**), and **EITHER**: Morgan and Watson, "Political Culture, Political System Characteristics, and Public Policies Among the American States," *Publius*, 1991; **OR** Fitzpatrick and Hero, "Political Culture and Political Characteristics of the American States," *Western Political Quarterly*, 1988
Optional extra credit on this RP (if you read this, at the end of the RP summarize it and relate it to your own experience or observations; identify it as "extra credit"): Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 6, "Group Decision Making"
Research Progress Report 2 due (see pages 5-6 above)
9. **Monday, October 27. "Pluralistic Roots" of Public Opinion**
Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, chapter 6, "Pluralistic Roots of Public Opinion: Personality. . ." (23 pp; note carefully the five sources of opinions; and chapter), and chapter 7, "Pluralistic Roots: Groups (24 pp)
Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 4, "Psychology of Obedience" and ch 15, "Politics of Racism and Political Intolerance;" e-book available at <http://oasis.oregonstate.edu/record=b3356423>
Panagopoulos and Francia, "The Polls: Labor Unions in the United States," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 2008
Suggestion: Start reading the next set of reading early.
10. **Wednesday, October 29. Political Psychology: Personality and Political Orientations (RP 4 due)**
Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 8, "Personality and Beliefs"
Gerber, others, "Big Five Personality Traits in the Political Arena," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2011
Optional extra credit on this RP (if you read this, at the end of the RP summarize this reading and relate it to your own experience or observations; clearly identify it as "extra credit"): Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 7, "Psychobiography"
11. **Monday, November 3. Political Psychology, Neuroscience, and Public Opinion**
Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 9, "Cognition," and ch 10, "Affect and Emotion"
Oxley and others, "Political Attitudes Vary with Physiological Traits," *Science*, 2008
Westen, "Neural Bases of Motivated Reasoning: An fMRI Study," *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 2006

12. Wednesday, November 5. Knowledge, Interest, and Attention to Politics (RP 5 due)

Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, chapter 8, “Knowledge, Interest, and Attention to Politics” (33 pp)

Optional extra credit on this RP (if you read this, at the end of the RP summarize it and relate it to your own experience or observations; identify it as “extra credit”): Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 11, “Biopolitics, Neuropolitics, and Genopolitics”

Research Progress Report 3 due (see pages 5-6 above)

13. Monday, November 10. Information, Misinformation, Deliberation, and Public Opinion

Kuklinski, “Limits of Facts in Citizen Decision-Making,” *Extensions*, 2007, and Kuklinski and others, “Misinformation and the Currency of Democratic Citizenship,” *Journal of Politics*, 2000

One of these: Kuklinski and others, “The Political Environment and Citizen Competence,” *American Journal of Political Science*, 2001; **OR** Jerit, Barabas, Bolsen, “Citizens, Knowledge, and the Information Environment,” *American Journal of Political Science*, 2006; **OR** Shamir and Shamir, “Pluralistic Ignorance Across Issues and Over Times: Information Cues and Biases,” *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 1997

EITHER Nyhan, “Why the ‘Death Panel’ Myth Wouldn’t Die: Misinformation in the Health Care Reform Debate,” *The Forum*, 2010; **OR** Nyhan and Reifler, “When Corrections Fail: The Persistence of Political Misperceptions,” *Political Behavior*, 2010

Jacobs and others, *Talking Together: Public Deliberation*, concerning “deliberative democracy,” skim ch 1 and ch 6 and read ch 8

Review the information questions from the questionnaire you completed at the start of the course

14. Wednesday, November 12. Opinions about Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (RP 6 due)

Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, ch 9 (“Civil Liberties; 32 pp) and 9 (“Civil Rights; 28 pp)

Optional extra credit on this RP (if you read this, at the end of the RP summarize it and relate it to your own experience or observations; identify it as “extra credit”): Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 12, “Psychology of Voting Behavior,” and ch 13, “Political Communication, Persuasion”

15. Monday, November 17. Trust in Government and “American Exceptionalism”

Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, chapter 11, “Trust in Government, Support for Institutions, and Social Capital” (34 pp)

“Changing Public Views toward Accepting Government Benefits,” *New York Times*, 2012; read pp 1-13

Hodgson, *The Myth of American Exceptionalism*, read the “Preface” and skim (relatively carefully) ch 6; this provides views of a Brit who has lived in the US about this aspect of American politics and political culture

Recommended: Shafer, “American Exceptionalism,” *Annual Review of Political Science*, 1999

Suggestion: Begin early the readings for the next class.

16. Wednesday, November 19. Political Language and the Impact of Opinion on Policy (RP 7 due)

Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, ch 12 (“Impact of Public Opinion on Policy;” 30 pp)

Jerit and Barabas, “Bankrupt Rhetoric: How Misleading Information Affects Knowledge About Social Security,” *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 2006

Policy public opinion and language: Read **one** from **each** of the following **sets**:

- **Public opinion:** **EITHER** Nisbet and Myers, “The Polls—Trends: Twenty Years of Public Opinion about Global Warming,” *POQ*, 2007, **OR BOTH** Pew Research Center, “Fewer Americans See Solid Evidence of Global Warming,” October 2009, **and** Dunlap and McCright, “A Widening Gap: Republican and Democratic Views on Climate Change,” *Environment*, 2008
- **Political language** concerning climate change **OR** health policy: Read **EITHER** Luntz, “Environmental Memo” **and** Luntz, “The Environment: A Cleaner, Safer, Healthier America,” **OR** Luntz, “The Language of Healthcare 2009” **and** Luntz, “Memo: Health Reform Language Highlights”

Optional extra credit on this RP (if you read this, at the end of the RP summarize this reading and relate it to your own experience or observations; clearly identify it as “extra credit”): Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 14, “Psychology of Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Genocide,” and ch 16, “Terrorism”

Research Progress Report 4 due (see pages 5-6 above)

17. Monday, November 24. Political Psychology Re-visited; Thinking about Limits of Opinion Polling

Think about the implications of **each** of these for limits and strengths of public opinion polling. All of the following **except** the Houghton *Political Psychology* chapter are available in **Blackboard** documents.

Lodge and Taber, "The Rationalizing Voter: Unconscious Thought in Political Information Processing;" **recommended** Taber and Lodge, "Motivated Skepticism in the Evaluation of Political Beliefs," *American Journal of Political Science*, 2006

Mettler, "Reconstituting the Submerged State," *Perspectives on Politics*, 2010, and Mettler, *The Submerged State*, ch 3, "From Nudge to Reveal"

Gilens and Page, "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens," *Perspectives on Politics*, 2014

Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 12, "Psychology of Voting Behavior" (Valley Library e-book)
For this RP 8, indicate why you think I assigned each of these readings for this topic.

Note: RP 8 is due by the end of the day Wednesday, November 26, but those leaving campus before then should submit it earlier.

18. Wednesday, November 26 (the day before Thanksgiving, so **possibly** no class) (**RP 8 due; REQUIRED**)

Clawson and Oxley, *Public Opinion*, chapter 12 ("Conclusion;," 6 pp)

Optional extra credit on this RP (if you read this, at the end of the RP summarize this reading and relate it to your own experience or observations; clearly identify it as "extra credit"): Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 2nd edition, ch 17, "Psychology of International Security," and ch 18, "Future of Political Psychology"

As noted above, there might be no class meeting this day. If so, please submit RP 8 in class Monday or to the Economics office, Ballard Hall 303 no later than 5 p.m. Wednesday, November 26.

19. Monday, December 1. Student presentations I

20. Wednesday, December 3. Student presentations II

Research papers are **due** in Economics, Ballard Hall 303, **no later than 5 p.m. Monday, December 8.**

For your records: You can use these spaces to record grades on completed assignments

Papers	1 _____ (50/75)	6 _____ (50/75)
	2 _____ (50/75)	7 _____ (50/75)
	3 _____ (50/75)	8 _____ (50/75)
	4 _____ (50/75)	Best 7@50 points: ___ Average ___ Total (50) ___/400
	5 _____ (50/75)	Best 7 25 points: ___ Average ___ Total (25) ___/200
		Totals: 416 ___/400; 516 ___/600

Opinion Analysis (if omit, the maximum course grade is a C+)

A. Data Analysis _____

B. Conduct survey _____

Progress reports (50 total) 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ (points are not assigned for each but for total)

Oral presentation (50)

Written report (200)

Analysis Total ___ (300)

Makeup work (if any): _____

Total ___ + any adjustment ___ = Final total points _____ 700/900 = _____ Percent = Grade _____



PS 416 __/516__ (Sahr)

PUBLIC OPINION AND POLITICS

Fall 2014

Name: Last _____, First _____ Middle _____

Nickname, if prefer _____

Student ID Number (with hyphens, as for example 930-123-456): _____

Local address: _____
_____ ZIP _____

E-mail address (print **very** clearly): _____ Local telephone: _____

Permanent address (if different): _____
_____ ZIP _____

Permanent telephone: (area code _____) number _____

Year (start of fall quarter): freshman __, sophomore __, junior __, senior __, Master of Public Policy __, other _____

Major (or likely major): _____ Minor (if any): _____

Career goals: _____

From what high school did you graduate? Name _____, City/state _____

Previous college-level courses in American politics, psychology, sociology, or similar related to this course, if any:

What other courses are you taking now (names and numbers)? _____

If you have ever lived in another country besides the US, which, when, and for what purpose: _____

If you can read or speak another language besides English, which and how fluently? _____

How familiar are you with the World Wide Web? _____

If you have athletics __, work __, or other required non-class activity (specify: _____) in addition to classes, check the appropriate space in the line above and indicate how many hours per week ____

If you have ever worked in government, a political campaign, media, or similar, check here ____ and indicate the kind of experience and when: _____

What are the main reasons you are taking this course?

Papers	1 _____	(50/75)	6 _____	(50/75)
	2 _____	(50/75)	7 _____	(50/75)
	3 _____	(50/75)	8 _____	(50/75)
	4 _____	(50/75)	Best 7@50 points: ____	Average ____ Total (50) ____/400
	5 _____	(50/75)	Best 7 25 points: ____	Average ____ Total (25) ____/200
				Totals: 416 ____/400; 516 ____/600

Opinion Analysis (if omit, the maximum course grade is a C+)

C. Data Analysis _____

D. Conduct survey _____

Progress reports (50 total) 1 ____, 2 ____, 3 ____, 4 ____ Total ____/50

Oral presentation (50)

Written report (200)

Report Total ____ (300)

Makeup work (if any): _____

_____ + attendance ____ (+ adjustment ____) = Total points _____ 700/900 = _____ Percent = Grade _____