

**The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Political Science  
Political Science 3337F  
Comparative Public Opinion  
Winter 2024**

**Instructor:** Cameron D. Anderson

**Office:** SSC 7312

**Office Hours:** Thursday 2-3:00pm (or by appointment)

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**Course Description:**

This seminar course will critically assess the topic of public opinion within politics and the study of political science. The course addresses topics including the definition and measurement of public opinion, how citizens determine and organize their attitudes and beliefs, the relationship of public opinion and citizen competence, the interaction of public opinion and policy, the influences of political communication on public opinion, as well as the nature of public opinion on contemporary issues.

**Learning Objectives:**

By the end of the course students will:

- Be able to demonstrate understanding of issues relating to the meaning and measurement of public opinion
- Be able to demonstrate understanding of diverse theories of and approaches to the study of public opinion
- Be able to interpret and analyze public opinion data

**Course Readings:**

Required book available in UWO bookstore.

Anderson and Turgeon (ed.). 2022. Comparative Public Opinion. Routledge: New York.

Additional Readings available through course page on OWL or online through the Western Library's website.

**Course Requirements:**

Participation 10%

Research Paper Proposal 5%

Research Paper 25%

Midterm Exam 25%

Take Home Final Exam 35%

## **DISCUSSION OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**1.) Participation (10%):** As this is a smallish third-year course, there will be a mix of lecture and classroom discussion. Students are expected to actively participate each week. The participation grade will be based on attendance, the quality of comment, evidence of preparation, willingness to challenge accepted ideas and concern for the views expressed by others. If unable to attend, please inform the instructor in advance. Students will be given a preliminary grade for participation in the seventh week of the course. The final participation grade may change based on whether in-class performance improves, declines or stays the same.

**2.) Research Paper Proposal (5%):** The research paper proposal will be submitted online through the OWL course page and will be due at the beginning of class on **March 6, 2024**. This proposal should consist of a 1-page outline of the paper which includes an introduction of the topic, a thesis statement, tentative plan of the paper and (on a second page) a working bibliography of at least **6 (six)** academic sources (refereed books and journal articles) (not on the course outline).

**3.) Research Essay (25%):** You are required to write a research paper of 12-15 double-spaced pages in length using 12-point font. This paper will be submitted online through the OWL course page and will be due at the beginning of class on **April 5, 2024**. The intent of this assignment is to have you write a research essay that probes some topic of relevance within the field of public opinion. You may choose to further delve into a topic covered in class or you may find something outside of the class which is both of interest to you and within the broad subject nature of the class. As this is a research essay, you will be expected to utilize a minimum of **10 (ten)** academic sources (books and refereed journal articles) to develop and support your arguments/ideas.

**4.) Mid-term Exam (25%):** An in-class midterm exam will occur on **February 14, 2024**. The exam will be a mix of multiple choice, short answer and essay. There will be choice of questions in the short answer and essay questions.

**5.) Take Home Final Exam (35%):** A take home final exam will be distributed and submitted during the April examination period.

## IMPORTANT COURSE POLICIES

### *Submission of Assignments:*

Assignments are due at the beginning of class and must be submitted through the OWL course page.

### *Academic Offences:*

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_20](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20). All papers must be submitted through the Turnitin program portal on the OWL course page.

### *Late penalty:*

Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day. Assignments that are more than 1 week late will **not be accepted** for grading.

### *Extensions:*

Extensions are not given. However, when there are genuine and unavoidable family or medical circumstances an extension may be granted at the discretion of the professor.

**Artificial Intelligence:** The University regulations on AI use in course work are listed here: <https://ai.uwo.ca/>. I expect you to complete all work for this course adhering to the spirit and principles of intellectual honesty and integrity **and to not use AI for the generation and completion of written assignments this course.**

## **Course Topics and Readings:**

### **I. Introducing Public Opinion:**

#### **Week 1 (January 10) Introduction and Overview**

Anderson and Turgeon (A and T) 'Chapter 1'

### **II. Issues in Public Opinion:**

#### **Week 2 (January 17) Defining Public Opinion**

A and T 'Chapter 2'

Clawson, R. and Z. Oxley. 2017. Public Opinion. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. CQ Press. (Chapter 1)

Glynn, C. et al. 2004. Public Opinion. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Westview Press. (Chapter 1)

#### **Week 3 (January 24) Issues in Measurement, Sampling and Survey Response**

A and T 'Chapter 2'

Asher, H. 2012. Polling and the Public. 8<sup>th</sup> edition. (Chapters 2 and 3)

#### **Week 4 (January 31) Citizen Competence and Public Opinion**

Althaus, S. 1998. "Information Effects in Collective Preferences" American Political Science Review, 92, 3, 545-58.

Converse, P. 1993. "The Stability of Belief Systems over time" in Niemi and Weisberg (eds.) Classics in Voting Behavior. CQ Press: Washington, D.C. (pp. 54-61)

Gilens, M. 2012. "Two-Thirds Full? Citizen Competence and Democratic Governance" in Adam Berinsky (ed.) New Directions in Public Opinion. Routledge.

### **III. Explaining Public Opinion**

#### **Week 5 (February 7) Age, Gender, Language and Opinion about Immigration**

A and T Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 15

#### **Week 6 (February 14) In-class Midterm Exam**

\*\*\*\*\***(February 21) No class - Reading Week**\*\*\*\*\*

#### **Week 7 (February 28) Religion, Immigrant Status, Race, Class and Opinion about Immigration**

A and T Chapters 6, 7, 8

#### **Week 8 (March 6) Ideology, Partisanship and Opinion about Immigration**

\*\*\*\***Research Paper Proposal Due**\*\*\*\*

A and T Chapter 10 and 11

Cochrane, C. 2010. "Left/Right Ideology and Canadian Politics." Canadian Journal of Political Science, 43, 3, 583-605.

**Week 9 (March 13) Biology, Personality and Emotion and Opinion about Immigration**

A and T Chapter 9

Brader, T. 2020. “The Emotional Foundations of Democratic Citizenship” in Adam Berinsky (ed.) New Directions in Public Opinion 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Routledge.

Gonzalez, F. J. Hibbing and K. Smith. 2020. “No Longer “Beyond our Scope”: The Biological and Non-Conscious Underpinnings of Public Opinion” in Adam Berinsky (ed.) New Directions in Public Opinion 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Routledge.

**IV. Public Opinion and Politics**

**Week 10 (March 20) Political Communication and Public Opinion**

A and T Chapter 16

Baum, M. and D. Young. 2020. “The “Daily Them”: Hybridity, Political Polarization and Presidential Leadership in a Digital Media Age” in Adam Berinsky (ed.) New Directions in Public Opinion 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Routledge.

**Week 11 (March 27) Public Opinion, Public Policy and Representation**

Campbell, A. and E. Rigby. 2020. “Public Opinion and Public Policy” in Adam Berinsky (ed.) New Directions in Public Opinion 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Routledge.

Soroka, S. and C. Wlezien. 2004. “Opinion Representation and Policy Feedback: Canada in Comparative Perspective” Canadian Journal of Political Science, 2004, 4, 530-59.

**Week 12 (April 3) Conclusions**

A and T Chapter 18

## **APPENDIX TO UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINES DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

### **Prerequisite checking - the student's responsibility**

"Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites."

### **Essay course requirements**

With the exception of 1000-level courses, most courses in the Department of Political Science are essay courses. Total written assignments (excluding examinations) will be at least 3,000 words in Politics 1020E, at least 5,000 words in a full course numbered 2000 or above, and at least 2,500 words in a half course numbered 2000 or above.

### **Use of Personal Response Systems ("Clickers")**

"Personal Response Systems ("clickers") may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning. Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else's clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence,
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence."

**Security and Confidentiality of Student Work** (refer to current *Western Academic Calendar* <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/>)

**"Submitting or Returning Student Assignments, Tests and Exams** - All student assignments, tests and exams will be handled in a secure and confidential manner. Particularly in this respect, leaving student work unattended in public areas for pickup is not permitted."

### **Duplication of work**

Undergraduate students who submit similar assignments on closely related topics in two different courses must obtain the consent of both instructors prior to the submission of the assignment. If prior approval is not obtained, each instructor reserves the right not to accept the assignment.

### **Grade adjustments**

In order to ensure that comparable standards are applied in political science courses, the Department may require instructors to adjust final marks to conform to Departmental guidelines.

### **Academic Offences**

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

### **Submission of Course Requirements**

ESSAYS, ASSIGNMENTS, TAKE-HOME EXAMS MUST BE SUBMITTED ACCORDING TO PROCEDURES SPECIFIED BY YOUR INSTRUCTOR (I.E., IN CLASS, DURING OFFICE HOURS, TA'S OFFICE HOURS) OR UNDER THE INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE DOOR.

**THE MAIN OFFICE DOES NOT DATE-STAMP OR ACCEPT ANY OF THE ABOVE.**

### **Attendance Regulations for Examinations**

EXAMINATIONS/ATTENDANCE (Sen. Min. Feb.4/49, May 23/58, S.94, S.3538, S.3632, S.04-097) A student is entitled to be examined in courses in which registration is maintained, subject to the following limitations: 1) A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year. 2) Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

## **Absences from Final Examinations**

If you miss the Final Exam, please contact the Academic Counselling office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a "Multiple Exam Situation" (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

**Note:** Missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is **not** sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty of Social Science Academic Counselling Office.

## **Accommodation and Accessibility**

### **Religious Accommodation**

When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request accommodation for their absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the course instructor and/or the

Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays (updated annually) at

<https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>.

## **Accommodation Policies**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic\\_Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Accommodation_disabilities.pdf).

## **Academic Policies**

The website for Registrarial Services is <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>.

In accordance with policy,

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies\\_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf),

the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at their official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

During exams/tests/quizzes, no electronic devices (e.g. a phone, laptop, iPad) are allowed and must be powered down and stored out of reach.

**Scholastic offences** are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

If a course uses remote proctoring, please be advised that you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide **personal information** (including



some biometric data) and the session will be **recorded**. Completion of a course with remote proctoring will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including technical requirements, is available on Western's Remote Proctoring website at:

<https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>.

## Support Services

Please visit the Social Science Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: [Academic Counselling - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](https://www.uwo.ca/academic_counselling/)

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at

[https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html).

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education at

[http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html)

if you have any questions regarding accommodations.

Learning-skills counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre (<https://learning.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

Western University is committed to a thriving campus as we deliver our courses in the mixed model of both virtual and face-to-face formats. We encourage you to check out the Digital Student Experience website to manage your academics and well-being: <https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/>.

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.

## Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence." (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

**Plagiarism Checking:** "All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)."

**Multiple-choice tests/exams:** "Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating."

Note: Information excerpted and quoted above are Senate regulations from the Handbook of Scholarship and Academic Policy. [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic\\_policies/index.html](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/index.html)

### PLAGIARISM\*

In writing scholarly papers, you must keep firmly in mind the need to avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged borrowing of another writer's words or ideas. Different forms of writing require different types of acknowledgement. The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

#### **A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.**

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of publication, and page number.

Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

**B. In adopting other writers' ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.**

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in 'A' above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source, these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in 'A' above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks is necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student's receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases in their suspension from the University.

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Adopted by the council of the Faculty of Social Science, October, 1970; approved by the Dept. of History August 13, 1991