This course examines the role of the electorate in a representative democracy, looking at the attitudes that citizens hold about politics and government, as well as how they behave politically. We are going to address the origins and formation of political opinions, how these opinions endure over time, how these perspectives are communicated to elected officials. Towards this goal of understanding the attitudes and opinions that citizens hold about government and politics, we will also look at the measurement of public opinion, and how we come to understand what the electorate thinks. This requires a focus on research and survey methodology, which will be emphasized throughout the course. In sum, this class will focus on the voice of the people in a representative democracy – what this voice constitutes, how it is formed, and how it endures.

**Required Text**


**Grading**

Your grade for this class is comprised of the following components:

*Attendance/Participation (15%)* - Being present in class and participating regularly is essential for success in this class. It is important that you share your ideas and ask any questions that you may have. Doing so will result in better understanding of the course material and subsequently, higher grades.

*Discussion Leadership (5%)* - One of the best ways to learn a subject is to have to teach it. You will not be responsible for any teaching in this course, but you will be required to lead discussion one day with several of your classmates. You will be assigned a day of the semester (most will be on Fridays) where you and 2-3 classmates will be responsible for leading discussion on the materials for that day. I will provide the group who is leading the discussion with any assistance that they would like prior to the class period they are leading. All members of the group will be given the same grade. You will need to meet with the group before leading discussion to plan out the class period. The discussion should include 10-15 minutes to summarize the main points of the week’s readings and discussions, followed by any kind of discussion that the group wishes. You will be graded on the quality of discussion that is generated and the preparation that was done.
Midterm 1 (25%)- Midterm 1 will be on April 27th.

Final Exam (25%)- The Final will be on June 1st.

Final Paper (30%)- You will be writing a final paper for this class. The paper will be from 8-10 pages long, double spaced. The details will be distributed to the class shortly. The paper will be due on May 20th.

Final Grades will be based on the following distribution, though please note that I reserve the right to curve point totals should I decide that is necessary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&gt;93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A: Designates student performance of an extraordinarily high level, indicates a comprehensive understanding of course material, and reflects original insight and thought.

B: Designates student performance of a high level, indicates a thorough understanding of course material, and reflects solid insight and well-considered thought.

C: Designates student performance that completely fulfills the basic requirements of the course, indicates a basic understanding of course material, and reflects basic insights and a surface-level understanding of concepts.

D: Designates student performance that mostly fulfills the basic requirements of the course, indicates a basic or weak understanding of course material, and reflects poor, basic, or weak insights and a poor understanding of concepts.

F: Designates student performance that fails to fulfill the basic requirements of the course, indicates a weak or inaccurate understanding of course material, and reflects poor or misinformed insights and a lack of understanding of concepts.
Administrative Policies

Late Work: Late assignments will not be accepted.

E-Mail and Web Communication: An email list has been setup to contact you with class updates, additional readings, and questions you might consider while reading. It is critical that you regularly check your DU email account and Canvas for updates. Students will be held accountable for assignments and syllabus changes communicated via email. I will always give you reasonable notice for any changes or additions to the syllabus.

The Classroom Environment: Tardiness, early departures, ringing phones, etc. detract from the learning environment. Therefore, I ask that students arrive on time and remain in class for the duration of the period. Please turn off cell phones and other electronic devices when you enter the classroom. While the use of a computer for note-taking is certainly encouraged, web surfing, text-messaging, emailing, etc. not only reduces your engagement and comprehension of the material during class, but is highly distracting for the students around you. Please do not participate in these activities during class.

Academic Integrity: I take issues of academic integrity very seriously. Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. All work is expected to be original, and not previously or simultaneously turned in for credit in another course. All forms of academic dishonesty will result in an F for the course.

Disability Services: If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please contact me about this during the first week of the class so that I can prepare to make accommodations ahead of time.

Religious Accommodations: University policy grants students excused absences from class or other organized activities or observance of religious holy days, unless the accommodation would create an undue hardship. Faculty are asked to be responsive to requests when students contact them in advance to request such an excused absence. Students are responsible for completing assignments given during their absence, but should be given an opportunity to make up work missed because of religious observance. Once a student has registered for a class, the student is expected to examine the course syllabus for potential conflicts with holy days and to notify the instructor by the end of the first week of classes of any conflicts that may require an absence (including any required additional preparation/travel time). The student is also expected to remind the faculty member in advance of the missed class, and to make arrangements in advance (with the faculty member) to make up any missed work or in-class material within a reasonable amount of time.

Classroom Behavior: Students and faculty each have a responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.
Quarter Schedule

Note: Syllabus is subject to change.

Week 1

3/23: Introduction/Role of Public Opinion in a Democracy
  - Readings: E&T Ch. 1

3/25: The Science of Polling
  - Readings: E&T Ch. 2, Sections 1-3

Week 2

3/30: Analyzing and Interpreting Polls/In-Class Poll Workshop
  - Readings: E&T Ch. 2, Sections 4-5

4/1: Nature of Micro-Level Opinion
  - Readings: E&T Ch. 3

Week 3

4/6: Nature of Macro-Level Opinion
  - Readings: E&T Ch. 4

4/8: Nature of Macro-Level Opinion, continued/Polarization


Week 4

4/13: Political Socialization and Learning/Other Origins of Opinions
- Readings: E&T Ch. 5


4/15: Class Cancelled – I’m at a conference in Chicago.

Week 5

4/20: The Media, Persuasion, and Attitude Change

- Readings: E&T Ch. 8


4/22: The Public and Democratic Expectations

- Readings: E&T Ch. 6


Week 6

4/27: Exam 1

4/29: Group Differences in Opinion and Engagement

- Readings: E&T Ch. 7

Week 7

5/4: Elections and Accountability

- Readings: E&T Ch. 9


5/6: Linkages Between Citizens and Elites

- Readings: E&T Ch. 10


Week 8

5/11: Public Opinion and the Performance of Democracy/Participation

- Readings: E&T Ch. 11


5/13: Vote Choice


Week 9


- Look at polls.

- Wilcox, Clyde and Patrick Carr. 2009. “The Puzzling Case of the Abortion Attitudes of the Millennial Generation.” in Kernell, Samuel and Smith, Steven S. *Principles and


5/20: Campaigns and Their Effects

************Papers due in class************


Week 10

5/25: Memorial Day – No Class.

5/27: Wrap up, Group Presentations

Final:

6/1, 4:00-5:50