



UMass

Dartmouth

UNIVERSITY STUDIES

UNIVERSITY STUDIES COURSE APPROVAL REQUEST

FACULTY AND CHAIR SPONSOR SHEET

COURSE NAME/DEPARTMENT/NUMBER: PSC 400 Seminar in American Politics & Policy

CLUSTER REQUIREMENT: 5A Capstone Study

As a condition of approving this course for University Studies credit, we agree:

That each offered section of this course shall have a syllabus explicitly listing the learning outcomes for this Cluster Requirement along with the course-specific learning outcomes.

That each offered section of this course shall follow the general spirit of the Master Syllabus, with the understanding that different instructors may emphasize different elements of the course and/or use different pedagogical approaches or assessments.

That a syllabus for each offered section of this course will be emailed to the University Studies Director prior to the end of the semester in which it is offered.

That all faculty teaching this course will make available to the University Studies Director and the University Studies Committee any and all student work for the purposes of program assessment, with the understanding that such assessment will take place on a multi-year cycle, that such assessment will keep anonymous the identities of both the students and the instructors, that the responsibility for the collection of student work will fall in the main on the University Studies Director or designee and that this collection shall entail minimal disruption to the operation of the course.

Chair: Shannon Jenkins [Signature] Professor 12/12/18

Faculty Sponsor: Doug Roscoe [Signature] Professor 12/12/18

Faculty Sponsor: Kenneth Manning [Signature] Professor 12/13/18

Faculty Sponsor: [Blank] [Blank] [Blank] [Blank]

Faculty Sponsor: [Blank] [Blank] [Blank] [Blank]

(Mail completed form to Doug Roscoe, University Studies Director, LARTS 327)



Master Syllabus
Course: PSC 400
Seminar in American Politics & Policy
Cluster Requirement: 5A

This University Studies Master Syllabus serves as a guide and standard for all instructors teaching an approved course in the University Studies program. Individual instructors have full academic freedom in teaching their courses, but as a condition of course approval, agree to focus on the outcomes listed below, to cover the identified material, to use these or comparable assignments as part of the course work, and to make available the agreed-upon artifacts for assessment of learning outcomes.

Course Overview:

PSC 400 is a variable-topics course that provides the opportunity for advanced investigation of a subject in American politics. For the capstone project in the seminar, students will complete a project of independent and original research and analysis, within parameters established by the instructor. Students will communicate their findings both orally and in writing.

Course topics include: Public Opinion; Campaigns and Elections; Women and Politics; Work-Family Issues & Policies; State and Local Policy; Judicial Process and Behavior; State Legislatures; Government, Business & You

University Studies Course Rationale:

All of the 400-level courses in PSC are seminars, with small enrollment caps, that permit students to engage in a very focused investigation of a subfield within political science. There is generally an expectation that students will read original political science research (not just textbooks) and that seminar-style discussions will be an important part of the learning process. Additionally, a major term paper or project is always an expectation for seminar students. The course-specific learning outcomes for PSC seminars include all of the designated program learning outcomes. For these reasons, the PSC seminars are ideal as capstones. Additionally, the department is requiring that students have completed at least 60 credits to enroll, assuring that the course can cater to advanced students. To complete a PSC major, students need to take at least two seminars, so most students will take at least one seminar their senior year.

Learning Outcomes:

Course-Specific Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the seminar, students will be able to:

1. Understand concepts, theories and empirical findings in political science
2. Demonstrate basic research skills including research design, data analysis and interpretation
3. Access, understand and synthesize professional and popular writing on public affairs
4. Formulate arguments and analyze their structure and quality
5. Assess the relevance and weight of evidence

6. Write clearly and persuasively
7. Form and answer political science research questions using research skills and appropriate evidence
7. Organize their ideas in a focused paper or presentation

University Studies Learning Outcomes:

5A - Capstone Study

Upon completion of the capstone study, students will be able to:

1. Synthesize the knowledge and skills gained within major courses, independently complete a research-based project or creative work and integrate the results of both in an open-ended project or experience (projects within the major are encouraged)
2. Integrate knowledge and principles from the field of study with those of the broader University Studies curriculum
3. Demonstrate advanced information literacy skills by selecting, evaluating, integrating and documenting information gathered from multiple sources into discipline-specific writing
4. Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, the results of the project or experience

Examples of Texts and/or Assigned Readings:

Course readings will vary by topic and instructor. Readings primarily will be original political science research from scholarly books or peer-reviewed journals. These may be supplemented with writings for popular audiences and/or textbooks.

Example Learning Activities and Assignments:

All sections of this course, regardless of topic and instructor, shall include the following assignments:

1. At least one research-based **paper** of no less than 10 pages that demonstrates independent, original integration and analysis. Students will be required to locate original political science research and synthesize this literature as part of this assignment.
2. Each student will have flexibility to select a specific question within the parameters set by the instructor. Each student will be required, in a written topic **proposal**, to explain how the choice of topic was shaped by earlier coursework both inside and outside of the major. The topic proposal will thus provide an assessable artifact for University Studies outcome 4.B.2.
3. At least one **oral presentation** of no less than 10 minutes. The presentation may involve analysis of the literature explored in the class, the student's research question and research design, and/or the results of the student's individual project.

These three assignments constitute a minimum common denominator for the purposes of assessment across sections and do not by any means exclude additional assignments. However, as the mapping below shows, they provide an opportunity for student development and assessment for all of the University Studies Learning Outcomes.

Outcome Map:

Univ St Learning Outcome	Teaching and Learning Activities	Student Work Products
1	Research-based paper ; students will engage with original political science research during seminar discussion and as the basis of the paper	the paper
2	The written topic proposal	the proposal
3	Research-based paper ; students will engage with original political science research during the course, which will help them develop their skills writing in disciplinary styles	the paper
4	Oral presentation ; skill development will be supported by instruction about effective presentations	oral presentation

Sample Course Outline:

INTRODUCTION

The Field of Public Opinion

- 1: Norrander and Wilcox. 2010. "Introduction: The Diverse Paths to Understanding Public Opinion." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Studying Public Opinion

- 1: Brians, Willnat, Manheim and Rich. 2011. *Empirical Political Analysis*, Boston, MA: Longman. "Chapter 8: Survey Research: Characterizing a Broader Population."
- 2: Neuman. 2003. *Social Research Methods*, 5th ed. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. "Chapter 10: Survey Research," pp 268-282.
- 3: Norrander and Wilcox. 2010. "Appendix: A Primer on Statistics and Public Opinion." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

THE CAUSES OF PUBLIC OPINION

Social Identities

- 1: Sapiro and Sames. 2010. "Chapter 1: The Gender Basis of Public Opinion." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- 2: Garcia. 2010. "Chapter 2: Latino Public Opinion: Identity Politics and Policy Preferences." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
(Survey questions are due on myCourses by February 7)

Nature and Nurture

- 1: Alford and Hibbing. 2010. "Chapter 3: The Ultimate Source of Political Opinions: Genes and the Environment." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- 2: Zaller. 1991. "Information, Values and Opinions" *American Political Science Review* 85(4): 1215-1237. (In JSTOR)

IS PUBLIC OPINION RATIONAL?

Political Knowledge

- 1: Delli Carpini and Keeter. 1996. *What Americans Know About Politics and Why It Matters*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. "Chapter 2: What Americans Know about Politics."

- 2: Jerit, Barabas and Bolsen. 2006. "Citizens, Knowledge and the Information Environment." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(2): 266-282.

Saving Public Opinion

- 1: Page and Shapiro. 1992. *The Rational Public*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press. "Chapter 1: Rational Public Opinion."
 - 2: Popkin. 1991. *The Reasoning Voter*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press. "Chapter 2: Acquiring Data: The Process of Becoming Informed."
- (Bibliography is due on myCourses by February 28)

ISSUE ATTITUDES

Foreign Policy

- 1: Berinsky. 2010. "Chapter 4: Public Opinion and the Iraq War." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- 2: Davis. 2010. "Chapter 5: Public Opinion, Civil Liberties, and Security in the Post-9/11 Context." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Domestic Policy

- 1: Atkeson and Maestas. 2010. "Chapter 6: Race and the Formation of Attitudes: Responses to Hurricane Katrina." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- 2: Wilcox and Carr. 2010. "Chapter 7: The Puzzling Case of the Abortion Attitudes of the Millennial Generation." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

ATTITUDE STRUCTURE

Ideology

- 1: Converse. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics (pages 206-234 only)." In *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David Apter. New York, NY: Free Press.
- 2: Jacoby. 2010. "Chapter 8: Is a Liberal-Conservative Identification an Ideology?" In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Party Identification

- 1: Carsey and Layman. 2010. "Chapter 9: Party Identification, Party Polarization, and "Conflict Extension" in the American Electorate." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- 2: Roscoe and Christiansen. 2010. "Exploring the Attitudinal Structure of Partisanship." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 40(9): 2232-2266.

GOVERNMENTAL CONNECTIONS

Trust in Government

- 1: Gronke, Hicks, and Cook. 2010. "Chapter 10: Trust but Verify: Three Lenses on Americans' Trust in Government." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- 2: Chanley, Rudolph and Rahn. 2000. "The Origins and Consequences of Public Trust in Government." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 64: 239-256. (In JSTOR)

Institutional Support

- 1: Harper and Norrander. 2010. "Chapter 11: The Rise and Fall of George W. Bush: Popular Support for the President." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- 2: Kimball and Patterson. 1997. "Living Up to Expectations: Public Attitudes Toward Congress." *Journal of Politics* 59(3): 701-728. (In JSTOR)

Public Opinion and the Judiciary

- 1: Wald, Silverman, Scicchitano, and Johns. 2010. "Chapter 12: In the Court of Public Opinion: Prejudging Defendants in Terrorism Trials." In *Understanding Public Opinion*, 3rd ed., eds. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- 2: Mishler and Sheehan. 1993. "The Supreme Court as a Countermajoritarian Institution? The Impact of Public Opinion on Supreme Court Decisions." *American Political Science Review* 87(1): 87-101. (In JSTOR)