

MASARYK UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND EUROPEAN STUDIES

Spring 2010

Syllabus for Comparative Mass Political Behavior – U.S.

David McCuan, Ph.D.
Email: david.mccuan@sonoma.edu
Office Phone: +420-549-49-3881

Office Location: FSS 424
Office Hours: Wednesdays,
9:45-10:45 am

Course Description & Purpose:

This course examines the impact of changing styles and techniques of political campaigning and how these styles affect the electioneering and governing process focusing on US electoral politics. Modern techniques of voter analysis and manipulation are discussed, along with the characteristics and behavior of the electorate, and historical patterns of political participation. We address such concerns as: formation of public opinion, voter turnout, candidate evaluation, issue voting, and partisanship. This course provides both a solid grounding in the “classics” of behavioral work and insight into current research in American mass electoral behavior.

Course Learning Objectives:

Course readings and discussion highlight the broad topic of voting behavior, the rise of distrust, disinterest, and inefficacy; the formation of party attachments; political attitudes and sophistication; ideology; the influence of the media; and the centrality of race and gender in American electoral politics. As a result, we explore several questions in examining the behavior of American citizens. Where do political beliefs and convictions come from? What are the forces that influence a citizen’s vote? What is the role of the mass media in American politics? What is the role of race, and gender, in American participation patterns? **This is a seminar course with a considerable reading and discussion requirement. Students themselves will be responsible for digesting a large literature and discussing its relevance and implications for understanding mass political behavior. Some previous interest or knowledge of social science research methods and/or campaigns and elections is helpful to do well in this class.**

Required & Recommended Texts

To maintain lower costs for students, the Instructor will provide weekly readings available via online sources from the electronic resources of Masaryk University & through the web. Most of these documents will be in PDF or HTML format. Additional citations that are REQUIRED reading are noted below in the course schedule.

Recommended Texts

1. Daily reading & access to one or more of the following: *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal*
2. Flanigan, William and Nancy Zingale. 2006. 11th Edition. *Political Behavior of the American Electorate*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
3. Herrnson, Paul. 2004. Fifth Edition. *Congressional Elections: Campaigning At Home and In Washington*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
4. Holbrook, Thomas. 1996. *Do Campaigns Matter?* Thousand Oaks: Sage Press.
5. McCuan, David and Steve Stambough (eds.). 2005. *Initiative-Centered Politics: The New Politics of Direct Democracy*. Durham: Carolina Academic Press.
6. Niemi, Richard and Weisberg, Herbert (eds.). 2001. 4th Edition. *Controversies in Voting Behavior*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Additional Recommended Texts

- Campbell, Angus; Converse, Philip; Miller, Warren; Stokes, Donald. 1980; 1960. *The American Voter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Glynn, Carroll J., Susan Herbst, Garrett J. O'Keefe, and Robert Y. Shapiro. 1999. *Public Opinion*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Iyengar, Shanto and Ansolabehere, Stephen. 1995. *Going Negative: How Attack Ads Shrink and Polarize the Electorate*. New York: Free Press.
- Jacobson, Gary. 1997. *The Politics of Congressional Elections*. 4th Edition. New York: Longman.
- Nie, Norman; Verba, Sidney; Petrocik, John. 1976. *The Changing American Voter*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Norrander, Barbara and Clyde Wilcox. 2002. 2nd Edition. *Understanding Public Opinion*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Popkin, Samuel. 1994. *The Reasoning Voter: Communication and Persuasion in Presidential Campaigns*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Rinehart, Sue. 1992. *Gender, Consciousness, and Politics*. New York: Routledge.
- Rosenstone, Steven and Hansen, John Mark. 1993. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*. New York: Macmillan.
- Sabato, Larry. 1981. *The Rise of Political Consultants: New Ways of Winning Elections*. New York: Basic Books.
- Verba, Sidney and Norman Nie. 1972. *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Zaller, John. 1992. *Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Course Requirements:

Attendance and participation	25%
Midterm (In class, held first or second week of April 2010)	30%
Final Exam (To be announced in class several times)	45%

Assignment Notes:

A good portion of the course is in seminar format, so plan to attend each session and to have read the assignment. Much of the reading is in the first half of the semester to provide the necessary information for both the Midterm and Final Exams.

Course Outline:*This is a tentative schedule that is adapted as the semester progresses.
REQUIRED READINGS ARE IN BOLD PRINT. REC = Recommended readings.

Course Schedule & Topics, Spring 2010

Session	Topics	Readings and Assignment
WEEK 1	Introduction & Overview of the Field: Voting Behavior, Participation, & Elections as a Growth Industry in Scholarship: What do we know? What do we not know?	Niemi & Weisberg, Part I Holbrook, Chapters 1, 2 Flanigan & Zingale, Chapter 1 McCuan, Stambough, Chapter 1 REC: James Madison. 1787. The Federalist, #10
WEEK 2	Foundations of Political Attitudes and Values Introduction to Public Opinion & Ideology Constructs	Niemi & Weisberg, Part II Holbrook, Chapter 1 Flanigan & Zingale, Chapter 1 Herrnson, Intro & Chapter 1 REC: Anthony Downs, <i>An Economic Theory of Democracy</i> . New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957, pp. 21-35, 114-132. REC: Donald Green and Ian Shapiro, <i>Pathologies of Rational Choice</i> . New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994, pp 151-153.
WEEK 3	Participation, Efficacy, & the Polls	Niemi & Weisberg, Part I, redux Flanigan & Zingale, Chapters 2, 5 McCuan, Stambough, Chapter 3 REC: Section II, Campbell, et al., <i>The American Voter</i> , 1960, 1980. REC: Feldman, Stanley. 1988. "Structure and Consistency in Public Opinion: The Role of Core Beliefs and Values" <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 32:416-440
WEEK 4	Participation, Efficacy, & the Polls, cont'd Politico-Socio-Psychological Determinants of the Participation Equation	Herrnson, Chapter 7 Holbrook, Chapter 5 REC: Converse, Philip. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics" in David Apter, ed. <i>Ideology and Discontent</i> . New York: Free Press REC: Rosenstone and Wolfinger. 1978. "The Effect of Registration Laws on Voter Turnout" <i>American Political Science Review</i> 72 (March): 22-45.
WEEK 5	Partisanship, Non-partisanship, & Partisan Change: Macro- and Micro-partisanship Partisanship, Non-partisanship, & Partisan Change, cont'd Gender Gap & Racial Influences on the Vote	Niemi & Weisberg, Part V Flanigan & Zingale, Chapters 3, 4 REC: Wilma Rule, "Women's Underrepresentation and Electoral Systems," <i>PS: Political Science and Politics</i> 27 (1994), pp. 689-692. REC: Niemi, Richard and Jennings, M. Kent. 1991. "Issues and Inheritance in the Formation of Party Identification" <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 35: 970-988. REC: Franklin, Charles and Jackson, John. 1983. "The Dynamics of Party Identification" <i>American Political Science Review</i> 77: 957-973
WEEK 6	MIDTERM PREP REVIEW SHEET AVAILABLE VIA MASARYK INFO SYSTEM	READING WEEK – CATCH UP ON ALL READINGS TO DATE
WEEK 7	MIDTERM WEEK	
WEEK 8	READING WEEK	READINGS ASSIGNED BY INSTRUCTOR

WEEK 9	Mass Media Effects, Mass Opinion, & Campaigns	<p>Flanigan & Zingale, Chapters 7 Herrnson, Chapter 8 McCuan, Stambough, Chapters 4, 7 – 11</p> <p>REC: Iyengar, Shanto. 1989. "How Citizens Think about National Issues" <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 33: 878-900.</p> <p>REC: MacKuen, Michael. 1984. "Exposure to Information, Belief Integration, and Individual Responsiveness to Agenda Change" <i>American Political Science Review</i> 78: 372-391.</p> <p>REC: Zaller, John. 1992. <u>Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion</u>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 8-9.</p>
WEEK 10	Determinants of Vote Choice: Economics, Issues, & Group Interests	<p>Niemi & Weisberg, Part III Flanigan & Zingale, Chapters 5, 6</p> <p>REC: Aldrich, John; Sullivan, John; Borgida, Eugene. 1989. "Foreign Affairs and Issue Voting: Do Presidential Candidates Waltz Before a Blind Audience?" <i>American Political Science Review</i> 83: 123-141</p> <p>REC: Carmines, Edward and Stimson, James. 1980. "The Two Faces of Issue Voting" <i>American Political Science Review</i> 74: 78-91.</p> <p>REC: Fiorina, "Economic Retrospective Voting in American National Elections: a Micro-Analysis" <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 22: 426-443.</p> <p>REC: Kinder, Donald R. D. Roderick Kiewiet. 1981. "Sociotropic Politics: The American Case." <i>British Journal of Political Science</i> 11:129-161.</p> <p>REC: "Dimensions of Sociotropic Behavior: Group-Based Judgments of Fairness and Well-Being." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 41:284-308.</p>
WEEK 11	Determinants of Vote Choice: Candidate Evaluation	<p>Flanigan & Zingale, Chapter 8 Holbrook, Chapters 3, 6, 7 McCuan, Stambough, Chapter 2</p> <p>REC: Marcus, George. 1988. "The Structure of Emotional Response: 1984 Presidential Candidates" <i>American Political Science Review</i> 82: 737-762.</p> <p>REC: Miller, Arthur; Wattenberg, Martin; Malachuk, Oksana. 1986. "Schematic Assessments of Presidential Candidates" <i>American Political Science Review</i> 80: 521-540.</p> <p>REC: Lodge, Milton and Steenbergen, Marco. 1995. "The Responsive Voter" <i>American Political Science Review</i> 89-309-326</p>
WEEK 12	The Micro Level: Voting in Congressional Elections Campaign Finance Issues in Elections	<p>Herrnson, Chapters 2-6, 9 Niemi & Weisberg, Part VI McCuan, Stambough, Chapter 5</p> <p>REC: Campbell, James. "The Presidential Surge and its Midterm Decline in Congressional Elections, 1868-1988." <i>Journal</i></p>

		<p>of <i>Politics</i> 53: 477-487. REC: Parker, Glenn. 1986. "Economic Partisan Advantages in Congressional Contests: 1938-1978." <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 50:387-401. REC: Kinder, Donald and Kiewiet, D. Roderick. "Economic Discontent and Political Behavior: The role of personal Grievances and Collective Economic Judgments in Congressional Voting." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i>. 23: 495-527. REC: Tufte, Edward. 1975. "Determinants of the Outcomes of Midterm Congressional Elections." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 69; 812-826.</p>
WEEK 13	<p>Effects of Participation: Isolation, Distrust, & Alienation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FINAL EXAM PREP BEGINS</p>	<p>Niemi & Weisberg, Part IV REC: Poole, Keith and Rosenthal, Howard. 1984. The Polarization of American Politics." <i>Journal of Politics</i> 46: 1061-1079. REC: Brady, Verba, Schlozman 1995. "Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation" <i>American Political Science Review</i> 89: 271-294. REC: Stimson, Mackuen, Erikson. 1995. "Dynamic Representation" <i>American Political Science Review</i> 89: 543-565. REC: Putnam, Robert. 1995. "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital" <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 6: 65-78.</p>
WEEK 14	FINAL EXAM	