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Contact details:

Class time: Monday/Wednesdays 4.10-5.30pm
Class place: Littauer 382 and Taubman Student Computer Lab
First class: Wednesday 4th February 2004
Last class: Wednesday 7th May 2004
Lecturer: Pippa Norris, McGuire Lecturer in Comparative Politics
Office: Littauer 110, Kennedy School of Government
Office Hours: Tuesdays 4.00-5.30pm (Sign-up sheet on the door)
Tel: (617) 495 1475
Fax: (617) 496 2850
Email: Pippa_Norris@harvard.edu
http:// www.pippanorris.com
Class website: www.pippanorris.com under ‘teaching’
Assistant: Margaret Brooke
Office: Littauer 107
Tel: (617) 495 0547
Fax: (617) 496 2850
Email: Margaret_Brooke@ksg.harvard.edu
Assessment: Course assignments, no exam - 1 credit

Course synopsis

This course provides the core conceptual tools, theoretical insights, and practical skills for analyzing elections, voting behavior, and public opinion. It is designed for careers in public opinion polling and survey research, campaign management, broadcasting and journalism, and as the foundation for policy analysis research.

The course is split vertically. Part I on Mondays provides the theoretical framework for understanding public opinion and voting behavior including the nature of mass beliefs, political participation, value change, elections and parties, social cleavages and partisan orientations, political attitudes and support for the political system, the media and campaign, and the nature of public opinion. It covers these issues by comparing the United States with other major comparable postindustrial societies (particularly France, Germany, Britain, and Italy), as well as across a broader range of both established and newer democracies.

Part II on Wednesdays provides analytical and statistical research skills, working hands-on from shared datasets (for example, the American National Election Survey, the U.S. General Social Survey, the Eurobarometer, the European Social Survey, the Afro-barometer, the World Values Survey, the International Social Survey Program, or equivalent). Students acquire the skills to use these resources using the SPSS statistical package for individual projects. The class covers issues of good research design, theory construction, model building, and hypothesis-testing; survey data sources; the appropriate statistical techniques for analyzing categorical and continuous survey data; and the professional presentation of results. Familiarity with the basic concepts of statistical inference is recommended, although no prior familiarity with SPSS is assumed. Details are available at pippanorris.com.

Course Objectives:

The aim of the course is to sharpen your analytical understanding of elections, public opinion, and voting behavior and develop your practical skills in survey analysis.

The course will use a broadly comparative methodology incorporating survey evidence from a wide range of data sources, including developed and developing societies. There are no prerequisites for taking the class.
## Class Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Mondays - Littauer 382 Theory &amp; literature</th>
<th>Wednesdays - Computer lab sessions for data analysis skills</th>
<th>Due dates (i)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 W 4 Feb</td>
<td>Introduction and road map</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 M 9 Feb</td>
<td>Mass beliefs &amp; public opinion</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 W 11 Feb</td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction to SPSS. Conceptualizing causal models and hypothesis testing</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 W 18 Feb</td>
<td></td>
<td>Identifying suitable survey and aggregate data files Data importing, editing, transforming &amp; handling missing data</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 M 23 Feb</td>
<td>Political participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 W 25 Feb</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bivariate descriptive statistics: categorical data: frequencies, cross-tabulations, bar charts, significance tests</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 M 1 Mar</td>
<td>Value change and ideological orientations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Project plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 W 3 Mar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bivariate descriptive statistics: continuous data: means &amp; ANOVA, correlations, scatter-plots, histograms, significance tests</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 M 8 Mar</td>
<td>Elections and parties</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 W 10 Mar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Factor analysis and scale construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 M 15 Mar</td>
<td>Social cleavages</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 W 17 Mar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Linear regression models I</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13 M 22 Mar</td>
<td>Partisan orientations</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 W 24 Mar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Linear regression models II</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15 M 5 Apr</td>
<td>Political attitudes &amp; issues</td>
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<td>Draft project</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 W 7 Apr</td>
<td></td>
<td>Binary logistic regression models</td>
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<td>17 M 12 Apr</td>
<td>Political representation</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 W 14 Apr</td>
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<td>Visualizing data and trends: time series and interactive graphs</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 M 19 Apr</td>
<td>Support for democracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 W 21 Apr</td>
<td></td>
<td>Merging, aggregating, splitting and restructuring files</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 M 26 Apr</td>
<td>Campaigns &amp; media</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 W 29 Apr</td>
<td></td>
<td>Presenting professional results</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 M 3 May</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final project</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 W 5 May</td>
<td>Wrap up and evaluation</td>
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</table>

*Note university holidays: No class will be held on President’s Day (M 16th Feb) and spring break (27 March to 4th April). (i) Assignments are due to be handed in at the start of the class on these dates.*
**Required books:**

Books can be ordered direct from the publishers, or from Amazon.com, Harvard Coop, Wordsworth's books or Barnes and Noble. The total cost of the three required books should be around $93 without the spss package. Further resources with optional supplementary sources are listed under each week’s topic. All required readings are available on reserve at the Kennedy School library.

### Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies

**Russell J. Dalton**

**Paperback:** 336 pages.  
**Publisher:** Chatham House Publishers; 3rd edition (2002)  
**ISBN:** 1889119326 $22

### Electoral Engineering: Voting Rules and Political Behavior

**Pippa Norris**

**Paperback:** 392 pages  
**Publisher:** Cambridge University Press (Note: only available in early March 2004 but all chapters available for downloading under ‘books’ at [www.pippanorris.com](http://www.pippanorris.com))  
**ISBN:** 0521536715 $26

### Controversies in Voting Behavior

**Richard Niemi and Herbert F. Weisberg (eds)**

**Paperback:** 494 pages  
**Publisher:** CQ Press; 4th edition (June 2001)  
**ISBN:** 1-56802-334-0 $44.95

### SPSS V.12.0

**SPSS 12.0 Student version for windows**

Statistical package and electronic manuals available for purchase from Harvard’s Technology Products Center.

Not this is an *optional* purchase- the package is also available from all terminals in the student computer lab.
Assignments:

All students will be expected to keep up with the required readings (listed in a checklist at the end of the syllabus) and to attend classes every Monday and Wednesday. The sequential hands-on sessions are essential and if you anticipate missing any you are strongly advised not to take the class.

Late policy: Barring an extraordinary excuse, all late assignments will be marked down a third of a grade (such as from A to A-) for each day following the due date.

(i) Project plan - 1st March (10%)

To apply the substantive understanding and the skills in data analysis learnt during the class you need to pick one of the topics listed in the substantive section of the syllabus and develop a two-page single spaced project plan suggesting how you will analyze the issue. The aim of the plans is to get you thinking and to give you feedback at an early stage. The plan should outline:

1. The key question you aim to explore and why.
2. The theoretical framework, model, and hypothesis you will analyze.
3. The comparative framework, survey data-set, key concepts and operational measures you will use to test these propositions.

More details will be given out nearer to the date. You are strongly recommended to pick one of the available survey datasets for your analysis. The in-class discussions will provide some feedback, and you may choose to work collaboratively with others in the class, but each student should submit his or her own report for an individual grade.

(ii) Draft project – 5th April (30%)

The draft project should be submitted by 5th April. The draft report should be about 3,000 words in length and organized with the following sections:

I. Introduction
II. Literature review, theoretical framework, and hypotheses.
III. Research design, data, and methods of analysis.
IV. Preliminary results and findings.

The aim is to hand in a draft report so that you have time for feedback and revision before submitting the final and expanded version.

(iii) Final project - 3 May (50%)

The final project is due to be submitted by 3rd May. The final project, incorporating revised and expanded materials already discussed in the draft version, should be about 6,000-7,000 words in length (not including technical appendices). The final report should have the following sections.

I. Introduction
II. Literature review, theoretical framework and hypotheses.
III. Research design, data, and methods of analysis.
IV. Final results and findings (revised and expanded from the above draft).
V. Conclusions and implications that flow from the analysis.
VI. Endnotes: comprehensive list of literature and data sources.
VII. Technical Appendices.

Class Participation (10%)

Lastly, credit will be given for class participation through the readings, case studies, and debates about controversial issues.
Required and supplementary readings

Note: These readings relate to the Monday classes, as specified in the schedule. For the Wednesday hands-on classes we will refer to the SPSS electronic manuals, where relevant.

1. Introduction and road map
No reading

2. Mass beliefs & public opinion

Essential reading:

Supplementary reading:


5. Political participation

Essential reading:

Supplementary reading:


### 7. Value change and ideological orientations

**Essential reading:**


**Supplementary reading:**


Inglehart, Ronald. 2003. ‘How Solid is Mass Support for Democracy and How Do We Measure It?’ *PS: Political Science and Politics.*


### 9. Elections and parties

**Essential reading:**

**Supplementary reading:**


**11. Social cleavages**

**Essential reading:**


**Supplementary reading:**


Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press.


13. Partisan orientations

**Essential reading:**


**Supplementary reading:**


15. Political attitudes and issue voting

Essential reading:


Supplementary reading:


17. Political representation

**Essential reading:**


**Supplementary reading:**


19. Support for democracy

**Essential reading:**


**Supplementary reading:**


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**21. Campaigns & media**

**Essential reading:**


**Supplementary reading:**


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**22. Conclusions: The nature and meaning of public opinion**

**24. Wrap up and class evaluation**