



**FLORIDA
ATLANTIC
UNIVERSITY**

COURSE CHANGE REQUEST Undergraduate Programs

Department SCMS
College Arts and Letters

UUPC Approval 4/29/24
UFS Approval _____
SCNS Submittal _____
Confirmed _____
Banner Posted _____
Catalog _____

Current Course Prefix and Number MMC 4640

Current Course Title
Public Opinion

Syllabus must be attached for ANY changes to current course details. See Template. Please consult and list departments that may be affected by the changes; attach documentation.

Change title to:

Change description to:

Change prefix

From: _____ **To:** _____

Change course number

From: _____ **To:** _____

Change credits*

From: _____ **To:** _____

Change grading

From: _____ **To:** _____

Change WAC/Gordon Rule status**

Add Remove

Change General Education Requirements***

Add Remove

*See Definition of a Credit Hour.
**WAC/Gordon Rule criteria must be indicated in syllabus and approval attached to this form. See WAC Guidelines.
***GE criteria must be indicated in syllabus and approval attached to this form. See Intellectual Foundations Guidelines.

Change prerequisites/minimum grades to:
add MMC 1540 as prerequisite
remove MMC 3403 as prerequisite

Change corequisites to:

Change registration controls to:

Please list existing and new pre/corequisites, specify AND or OR and include minimum passing grade (default is D-).

Effective Term/Year for Changes: Spring 2025

Terminate course? Effective Term/Year for Termination:

Faculty Contact/Email/Phone Chris Robe: crobe@fau.edu

Approved by

Department Chair _____

College Curriculum Chair _____

College Dean _____

UUPC Chair _____

Undergraduate Studies Dean _____

UFS President _____

Provost _____

Date

4/11/2024

4/8/24

4/15/2024

4/29/24

4/29/24

Email this form and syllabus to mjenning@fau.edu seven business days before the UUPC meeting.

The banner features a background of palm trees against a blue sky. In the bottom left corner, there is a stylized owl logo in blue and red. The text is centered in the upper portion of the banner.

MMC 4640
PUBLIC OPINION

TR 2:00 – 3:20
3 credits

Spring 2025
Dr. Aaron Veenstra
Office: CU 223
Office hours: MW 2:00-4:00
Classroom: GS 208
Email: aveenstra@fau.edu

Course Description

Conceptual and historical study and analysis of the construction and representation of public opinion as idea and sociopolitical formation in the West from the 1800s to the present.

Instructional Method

In-Person. There is no remote option for this course.

Prerequisites/Corequisites

MMC 1540 is a prerequisite

Course Objectives

- Explore the history of how publics and public opinion have been conceptualized
- Examine the reciprocal relationship between the free press and public opinion
- Build foundational skills to interpret and conduct public opinion research
- Study and critique how the modern press represents public opinion

Course Evaluation Method

In this course you will have several ongoing assignments, along with some short papers, a midterm exam, and a final research presentation.

Weekly activities

Each week there will be an assignment related to that week's topic – most will be individual, but some will be small group projects. Some will be writing assignments, asking you to reflect on how your experience as a media consumer relates to the theory at hand; in others, you'll be asked to observe others to test theory. These will be posted to Canvas and discussed in class.

Midterm exam

We will conduct a midterm exam just before spring break. This exam will consist of several essay questions covering the material from the first half of the semester, and requiring you to connect ideas across our sets of readings. We will do some review in class the period before the exam. The exam will be open book and open note (but no electronic devices).

Final paper

To conclude the semester, you will develop a final paper (submitting a brief prospectus at mid- semester) in which you will examine a particular public opinion question. You will be able to do this in the form of a piece of social science research or as a work of long-form journalism. In the final class meetings, these pieces will be presented. We will discuss in more detail a few weeks into the semester.

Quizzes & participation

There will be occasional one-question quizzes about the previous meeting's material, which will contribute to your participation grade along with the quality of your engagement in in-class discussion. You can also boost your participation by responding to and engaging with other students' Canvas posts.

Grade weights:

Weekly activities 25%
Midterm exam 30%
Final paper 30%
Quizzes & participation 15%

Course Grading Scale

Grade scale:

| | |
|------------|------------|
| | A 90-100 |
| B+ 88-89.9 | B 80-87.9 |
| C+ 78-79.9 | C 70-77.9 |
| D+ 68-69.9 | D 60-67.9 |
| | F below 60 |

A grade of "C" or better is required for Multimedia Journalism majors.

Policy on Makeup Tests, Late Work, and Incompletes

Because of the nature of this course, in-class participation is important, and thus attendance is mandatory; if you need to miss class because of a religious observance or university-related activity, please let me know as soon as possible. Makeups and late submissions must be approved in advance. In the case of medical emergency, if at all possible, e-mail me before class. More than three unexcused absences will result in cuts to your participation grade. Incompletes are reserved for students who are passing but have not completed all the required work because of exceptional circumstances.

Policy on the Recording of Lectures

Students enrolled in this course may record video or audio of class lectures for their own personal educational use. A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to student presentations (whether individually or as part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), labs, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the lecturer, is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation or class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct and/or the Code of Academic Integrity.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations or participation in University-approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances and debate activities. It is the student's responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student's final course grade as a direct result of such absence.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center

Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few – offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to <http://www.fau.edu/counseling/>

Disability Policy

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and follow all SAS procedures. SAS has offices across three of FAU's campuses – Boca Raton, Davie and Jupiter – however disability services are available for students on all campuses. For more information, please visit the SAS website at www.fau.edu/sas/.

Code of Academic Integrity

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see [University Regulation 4.001](#).

Required Texts/Readings

The readings for this course consist of articles and book chapters that will be posted online. All readings will be posted to or linked via Canvas.

Course Topical Outline

Week 1 – Jan. 11 & 13 – COURSE INTRODUCTION
Week 2 – Jan. 18 & 20 – THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS
Week 3 – Jan. 25 & 27 – INTERPRETING PUBLIC OPINION
Week 4 – Feb. 1 & 3 – MEASURING PUBLIC OPINION I
Week 5 – Feb. 8 & 10 – MEASURING PUBLIC OPINION II
Week 6 – Feb. 15 & 17 – PUBLIC SPHERES AND COUNTERPUBLICS
Week 7 – Feb. 22 & 24 – IMPERSONAL INFLUENCE
Week 8 – Mar. 1 & 3 – REVIEW & EXAM
Week 9 – Mar. 8 & 10 – SPRING BREAK
Week 10 – Mar. 15 & 17 – SOCIAL IDENTITIES AND GROUPS
Week 11 – Mar. 22 & 24 – IDEOLOGY, VALUES, AND INTERESTS
Week 12 – Mar. 29 & 31 – NEWS MEDIA TONE AND SELECTION
Week 13 – Apr. 5 & 7 – PUBLIC OPINION AND PUBLIC POLICY
Week 14 – Apr. 12 & 14 – PUBLIC OPINION AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
Week 15 – Apr. 19 & 21 – LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING AHEAD

Final papers due Thursday, May 4