

**Antalya Bilim University**  
**POLS 325/379 Public Opinion and Political Behavior**  
**Fall 2023**

Class time: Thursday 10.00-12.50 (A2-01)

Office hours: Tuesday 14.00—15.00 p.m.

Cerem I. Cenker-Özek  
cerem.cenker@antalya.edu.tr

This course focuses on public opinion and political behavior. It is, particularly interested in the ways citizens' opinions and behaviors interact with institutions and practices of democratic regimes. Relying on comparative data from both democracies and non-democracies, some of the questions this course intends to answer are as follows: Do democratic regimes need better-informed and more competent citizens than other types of political regimes? Where do political opinions come from? How does public opinion influence policy-making in democracies? How do the policy-makers know about the public opinion? What are types of political participation in a digital age? How much citizens' side of politics does matter in an age of democratic backsliding and COVID-19?

The course is organized into two components. In the first component, we focus on the meaning and the relevance of public opinion in politics. Factors that motivate political opinion are also discussed in this component. Alternatively, in the second component, we question the ways different opinions translate into different political behaviors. Attitudinal and behavioral underpinnings of both conventional and unconventional political participation guide the discussions in this component.

Though the study of public opinion and political participation is a central theme in our discipline, it has become the more relevant with the advent of the recent populist wave of democratic backsliding. Further, the recent pandemic has influenced the context in which different types of democratic participation is discussed. In this ever-changing political and social contexts, the students are expected to actively follow the class materials and reflect on the current, significant political currents across the globe ☺.

**Course book:**

The instructor will send all class materials to the students via e-mail. The syllabus also provides information on on-line materials.

### **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. Plagiarism is a type of intellectual theft. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement. You will be subject to disciplinary action and punishment if you are caught plagiarizing.

### **Expectations & Requirements:**

- 1) Attendance & Participation (5%):** Attendance is COMPULSORY in this course. Students who miss more than 70% of the course fail the course automatically. Besides the attendance, the students are also expected to come to class prepared and actively participate in the weekly discussions.
- 2) Mid-term (30%):** Students will have one mid-term exam throughout the semester, which constitutes 30% of the overall grade. Midterm will base on ALL the course material we cover until the exam date.
- 3) In-class quizzes (25%):** We will dedicate one hour of our weekly classes to discuss course topics at length. For this purpose, we will utilize podcasts and Youtube videos besides the course materials. The quizzes will base on these discussion material(s). There will be 6 quizzes during the semester. The average of these quizzes will count towards 25% of the class grade.
- 4) Final exam (40%):** Students will have one final exam at the end of the semester, which makes 40% of your overall grade. The majority of the final exam questions base on the course material we cover after the midterm exam.

### **Expected Student Conduct in the Classroom**

The expected student conduct in the classroom includes and not limited to:

- ✓ Coming to class on time and not leaving the class early without prior permission of the instructor.
- ✓ Focusing carefully on the course and avoiding engaging in not-class related activities such as checking e-mails from laptops/cell phones, reading not-class related materials such as newspapers and magazines, engaging in side conversations.
- ✓ Students are expected to behave mindful about the instructor as well as the fellow students while asking questions and making comments. They should request permission from the instructor before asking a question or making a comment. Also, they should respect other student's right to ask questions/make comments.
- ✓ Students are expected to behave mindful about the physical environment as well. They should be careful not to trash the classroom. Students should clean up their garbage before leaving the classroom.

- ✓ Students should make sure they turn off their cell phones during the class time and they should use their laptops only for class-related purposes.

### **Course Schedule**

#### **WEEK 1. (3-8 Oct.) Introduction**

#### **WEEK 2-4. (10.-29 Oct.) Conceptual foundations and citizens' competence in democracies**

Clawson A.R. & Oxley Z.M. 2013. *Public Opinion: democratic ideals, democratic practice*, Chapter 1. Sage Publications.

Dalton, Russell J. 2013. *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, Chapter 2, Chatnam House Publishers.

Berelson, Bernard. 1952. Democratic Theory and Public Opinion, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 314-330.

Urbinati, N. and Warren. M.E. 2008. The concept of representation in contemporary democratic theory, *Annual Review of Political Science*, 11: 387-412.

#### **Discussion materials:**

**Podcast:** "On Walter Lippmann's Public Opinion" Writ Large, interview with Dr. Heidi Tworek

**Podcast:** "The Future of Public Opinion: A Conversation with Susan Herbst" Herbst is the author of *Numbered Voices: How Opinion Polling Has Shaped American Politics*, New Books on Political Science

Who are the Public? Public Sphere, Opinions, Moods & History  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1Yv0FamjCw>

Can We Still Trust Polls? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHgZlRhezo>

#### **WEEK 5-7 (31 Oct.-19 Nov.) What motivates citizen's opinion?**

Peter Mair. (2007) *Left-right orientations* in in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, (eds). Russell Dalton & Hans-Dieter Klingemann, 206-223.

Zoe Lefkofridi, Markus Wagner and Johanna E. Willmann. 2014. Left-Authoritarians and Policy Representation in Western Europe: Electoral Choice across Ideological Dimensions, *West European Politics*, Vol.37., No.1, 65-90.

Clawson A.R. & Oxley Z.M. (2013) *Public Opinion: democratic ideals, democratic practice*, Chapter 6 "Pluralistic roots of public opinion: personality, self-interest, values and history". Sage Publications.

Shanto Iyengar, Yphtach Lelkes, Matthew Levendusky, Neil Malhotra and Sean J. Westwood. 2019. The Origins and Consequences of Affective Polarization in the United States, *Annual Review of Political Science* 22, 129-46.

#### **Discussion materials:**

**Podcast:** What is affective polarization? Politics in Question

<https://www.listennotes.com/podcasts/politics-in-question/what-is-affective-polarization-me9DhKEI7R-/>

Do politics make us irrational? - Jay Van Bavel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8yOoOL9PC-o>

## **WEEK 8. MIDTERM (20-26 Nov.)**

## **WEEK 9-12 (28 Nov.-24 Dec.) Political participation**

### **\*Conventional political participation: Voting and the Campaign Activity**

Pippa Norris.(2002) *Democratic Phoenix*, Chapter 5 “Who Votes?”, 83-103.Cambridge University Press

### **\*Unconventional political participation: Protest Politics and the Internet**

Dalton, R.J. (2000). Citizen attitudes and political behavior. *Comparative Political Studies*, 33, 912-940.

Pippa Norris.(2002) *Democratic Phoenix*, Chapter 10 “New Social Movements, Protest politics, and the Internet?”, 188-215.Cambridge University Press

Dietlind Stolle, Marc Hooghe and Michele Micheletti (2005) Politics in the Supermarket: Political Consumerism as a Form of Political Participation, *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 245-269.

Patrick Bernhagen & Michael Marsh (2007) Voting and Protesting: Explaining Citizen Participation in Old and New European Democracies, *Democratization*, 14:1, 44-72, DOI: 10.1080/13510340601024298

Theocharis, Y. And Van Deth, J. (2016) The continuous expansion of citizens’ participation: a new taxonomy. *European Political Science Review*, 10, 1, 1-24.

Hilde Coffé & Catherine Bolzendahl. (2010) Same Game, Different Rules? Gender Differences in Political Participation, *Sex Roles*, 62, 318-333.

Çenker-Özek C. I., D. Çakmaklı, and E. Karakoç. (2021) “Rights and responsibilities: citizenship norms and protest activity in a cross-country analysis.” *Social Science Quarterly*. 1–14.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.1304>

### **Discussion materials:**

The Power of the Youth Vote | Mindy Romero | TEDxUCDavis

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2jwSUhu7ok>

How to Win Election Campaigns in a Changing World | Louis Perron | TEDxZurich

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Wo89K-uc7U>

How Social Media is Shaping Our Political Future | Victoria Bonney | TEDxDirigo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Kd99IIWJUw>

We're building a dystopia just to make people click on ads | Zeynep Tufekci

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFTWM7HV2U!>

How Twitter needs to change | Jack Dorsey

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BcgDvEdGEXg>

School strike for climate - save the world by changing the rules | Greta Thunberg | TEDxStockholm

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAmUIEsN9A>

Activism 2.0 - Rebirth of the Environmental Movement: Emily Hunter at TEDxUTSC

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KsB2qtDaiRw>

**WEEK 13-14 (25 Dec.-7 Jan.) Contemporary debates on democracy, public opinion and participation: considering the populist backlash and COVID-19**

Geoffrey Pleyers (2020) The Pandemic is a battlefield. Social movements in the COVID-19 lockdown, *Journal of Civil Society*, 16:4, 295-312, DOI: 10.1080/17448689.2020.179439

Sabrina Zajak, Katarina Stjepandić & Elias Steinhilper (2021) Pro-migrant protest in times of COVID-19: intersectional boundary spanning and hybrid protest practices, *European Societies*, 23:sup1, S172-S183, DOI: 10.1080/14616696.2020.182107

**Discussion materials:**

Coronavirus Is Our Future | Alanna Shaikh | TEDxSMU

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fqw-9yMV0sl>

Gen Z: How a Generation Defined a Pandemic | Darcy Dixon | TEDxBedford

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjYcOotAYu0>