Course program and reading list
Semester 1 Year 2023

School: Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy & Strategy B.A

Public Opinion and Foreign Policy in the U.S.

Lecturer:
Dr. Amnon Cavari  cavari@runi.ac.il

Teaching Assistant:
Ms. Adi Heller  adi.heller1@post.runi.ac.il

Course No.: 2668  Course Type : Lecture  Weekly Hours : 2  Credit: 2

Course Requirements : Final Paper  Group Code : 232266800  Language: English

Prerequisites

Prerequisite:
690 - Principles Of Statistics OR 689 - Principles Of Statistics

Students who took one of the courses listed below will not be allowed to register to the course Public Opinion and Foreign Policy in the U.S. (2668):

4758 - American public opinion about foreign policy

Course Description
This course examines the nature of public opinion on foreign policy in contemporary
American politics. We will discuss how to conceptualize and measure public opinion, where opinions or attitudes "come from," to what extent Americans have an informed and consistent attitudes about foreign policy and whether public opinion is affected by and affects foreign policy.

The course assumes (but not requires) some knowledge of empirical work (stats). This is reflected in the readings, class discussions and in your assignment (mostly the final assignment). I suggest you review your class notes from research methods and stats classes.

Course Goals

It is my goal that upon completing this course, students will understand the sources of public opinion about foreign policy in the United States and the role it has in shaping policy.

Grading

• Short assignments. Throughout the semester you will receive four (4) very short assignments (up to 1 page long). You can work on them in pairs (or alone). Each assignment is 10% of the final grade. You need to submit three (3) assignments (a total of 30% of the final grade).

• Final Paper—the final paper is a public opinion research paper for which you need to collect public opinion data about a foreign policy issue and analyze them. Submission and grading of the final assignment are divided into two parts:
  ◦ Proposal of Research Topic. The proposal is intended to get you on track with your final assignment. It should define your topic and data. 1 page. 10% of the final grade.
  ◦ A research paper about 6 pages long that includes a summary and discussion of your topic, a theoretical discussion of what we know about public opinion about this topic from which you will derive one or more hypotheses, a presentation of data, and analysis and findings. (60% of final grade)

Learning Outcomes

1. American Government – a brief overview
2. American Foreign Policy – Views and Approaches
3. What is public opinion and how we measure it
4. The structure of American public opinion about foreign policy
5. Sources of public opinion about foreign policy
6. The Goals of Foreign Policy
7. The Issues – Views of other countries
8. The Issues – Public opinion about war
9. The Issues – Foreign Trade and Economic Aid
10. Public influence on Foreign Policy

Lecturer Office Hours
On zoom - after class.

Reading List
I assign several reading items for each week. I selected them carefully with three considerations in mind: Expose you to existing literature, allow you to be more engaged in class, and minimize reading and preparation time. Therefore, these are required readings. Make sure you complete the readings before class.

Our main books are:


For good references on American foreign policy and, specifically, during the Trump presidency, we will use a few chapters from the following books:


You may want to use these sources for your assignments if applicable.

In addition, though not assigned weekly, I highly recommend referring to a textbook on public opinion to fill in gaps in knowledge and to justify decisions about focus, interest and variables in your final assignment:


All readings are available from the library or on our course website.
1. American Government – a brief overview
   • No reading required.

2. American foreign policy – views and approaches

3. American public opinion about foreign policy
   • Cavari & Freedman. Chapter 2: “Studying American Attitudes toward Israel.”

4. What is public opinion and how we measure it
   • Cavari & Freedman. Chapter 4: “Attitudes about the Arab-Israeli Conflict and US Involvement in the Region.”
   • Suggested Readings:

5. The structure of American public opinion about foreign policy
   • Cavari & Freedman. Chapter 3: “Positive Affect in American Attitudes toward Israel”
   • Suggested Readings:

6. Sources of public opinion about foreign policy
   • Cavari & Freedman. Chapter 5: “Demographic Divisions.”
   • Cavari & Freedman. Chapter 6: “Partisan Divide.”
   • Suggested Readings:


7. The Goals of Foreign Policy

- Cavari & Freedman. Ch. 8: "The Nature of the Partisan Divide over Palestinian Independence".
- Suggested readings:

8. The Issues – Views of other countries

- Cavari & Freedman. Chapter 7: “Affective Sources of Attitudes.”
- Suggested Readings:

9. The Issues – Public opinion about war


- Suggested readings:

10. The Issues – Foreign Trade and Economic Aid


11. Public Influence on Foreign Policy

- Cavari & Freedman. Chapter 9: "Conclusion: A Conditional Relationship?"

- Suggested readings: