

Course title	Public Opinion
Credits	6
University	UCM
Language of the course	English
Learning outcomes	<p>LO1. understand the different disciplinary approaches to European Studies, including the way in which the different disciplines interact and enrich each other, so that they can grasp the richness of disciplinary perspectives on Europe and reflect on the added-value of multidisciplinary knowledge to understand Europe.</p> <p>LO4. be able to grasp the need for a general knowledge of different conceptual, theoretical and methodological perspectives to analyze and understand the European Union, and consequently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use various conceptual frames, theoretical approaches and methodological tools, that attempt to provide answers to the fundamental and practical questions that the European project is confronted with; • utilize means of comparison to answer to which degree similarities and differences across Europe exist, and how they define Europe at large; <p>LO6 Have developed a large set of transversal skills which students need to master in their future domestic and international work environments, so that they are equipped to use organizational, inter- cultural communication, language and information skills, when confronted with the challenges of daily professional practice. Being immersed in a multi-disciplinary, multi-multilingual and multi-cultural study environment at different universities allows all students to sharpen their skills to combine intra-European mobility with their study-related workload in a structured and effective manner on a daily basis; to understand and communicate issues from and across different cultural, European and international perspectives; to process knowledge and information in a timely, accurate, and efficient way and to seek solutions with student peers across cultural and linguistic boundaries throughout their studies.</p>
Course objectives	<p>At the end of this course students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Display a systematic understanding and critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights in public opinion research, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline. 2. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the process of opinion formation; knowledge the current key debates in the field of public opinion research and understanding of the approaches and theoretical perspectives that inform those debates. 3. Display a level of conceptual understanding that enables them to: evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses. 4. Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non- specialist audiences.

Content	<p>Module 1: The History and meaning of public opinion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Topic 1: Public opinion as community: from Ancient Times to the Seventeenth Century. 2. Topic 2: The emergence of public opinion: the Anglo-Saxon and the American political tradition 3. Topic 3: Public opinion, broadcast media and the internet from the 20th century. <p>Module 2: The methodological foundations of public opinion (sampling, questionnaire, interviews)</p> <p>Module 3: Democracy and surveys in the political process</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Topic 4: Perceptions of public opinion influencing public opinion 5. Topic 5: Opinions, attitudes, surveys and new research methods in public opinion <p>Module 4: Mass media and public opinion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Topic 6: Are citizens affected by the Mass Media? 7. Topic 7: New theoretical approaches: From the agenda setting to the fragmented audiences <p>Module 5: Political communication and public opinion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Topic 8: The transformations of democracy 9. Topic 9: Public opinion in globalized societies
Work format(s)	<p>This course is designed as an interactive lecture, with many elements of a seminar. A typical session might begin with an introduction of the covered topics and an overview of the assigned readings done by the professor. From there, a talk will follow with remaining time devoted to class discussion or – during this time – students will engage in team projects that entail analyzing a case study.</p>
Manner of assessment	<p>The final evaluation is determined on the basis of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Class attendance and informed participation. Attendance at both lectures and seminars is mandatory. Active participation means doing the assignments, readings, thinking about them, bringing your thoughts, questions, and opinions on the table during section, team debates, case studies and public opinion polling/ survey design analysis exercise. ● Final examination. All the topics covered during the semester, lectures and seminars, will be part of the final exam.
Literature (required/ recommended)	<p>Berinsky, A. J. (Ed.). (2015). <i>New directions in public opinion</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Clawson, R. A., & Oxley, Z. M. (2016). <i>Public opinion: Democratic ideals, democratic practice</i>. CQ Press.</p>