



UNIVERSITY OF NICOSIA

ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΛΕΥΚΩΣΙΑΣ

University of Nicosia, Cyprus

Course Code COMM-502	Course Title Public Opinion and Political Communication	Credits (ECTS) 10
Department Communication	Semester Fall, Spring	Prerequisites None
Type of Course Elective	Field Communication	Language of Instruction English
Level of Course 2 nd Cycle	Year of Study 1 st	Lecturer(s) Dr Holger Briel
Mode of delivery Face-to-face	Work Placement N/A	Co-requisites N/A

Objectives of the Course:

This course analyses political theories of public opinion and their implementations. After a brief recapitulation of older theories of communication (Tönnies, Habermas, Blumer, and others), we will investigate particular systems of political communication and analyse their appearances in the public sphere. In particular, we will examine the American election campaign 2008 and its different e-phenomena. This discussion will then lead to contemporary views on the future of public opinion

Learning Outcomes:

1. Identify and understand theories of public opinion
2. Comprehend the usages of public opinion polls
3. Have an understanding of what strategies are used in public opinion formation
4. Decipher and deconstruct (visual) campaign offerings
5. Assess the role of electronic media in the formation of public opinion(s)
6. Make informed predictions about the future of public political interactions

Course Contents:

Theories of Public Opinion
 Habermas and the Public Sphere
 Elements of Reason and Public Discourse
 Film: *Wag the Dog*
 The Obama Campaign
 Comparing Political Communication
 Politics of New Media, the Role of the EFF
 Transnational Trends in Political Communication
 Blogging and Public Opinion

Learning Activities and Teaching Methods:

Lectures, Practical Exercises and Assignments.

Assessment Methods:

Homework, Project, Final Exam.

Required Textbooks/Reading:

Authors	Title	Publisher	Year	ISBN
Esser, Frank and Barbara Pfertsch (eds)	<i>Comparing Political Communication</i>	Cambridge	2004	978-0521535403

Recommended Textbooks/Reading:

Authors	Title	Publisher	Year	ISBN
Lupia, Arthur	<i>Elements of Reason: Cognition, Choice and the Bounds of Rationality</i>	Cambridge	2008	978-0-521-65329-9
Negrine, Ralph et al. (eds)	<i>The Political Communication Reader</i>	Routledge	2007	0-415-35935-x