## KentVision Code and title of the module

POLI9560 Public Opinion: Nature and Measurement

## Division and School/Department or partner institution which will be responsible for management of the module

Division of Human and Social Sciences, School of Politics and International Relations

## The level of the module (Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 or Level 7)

Level 7

## The number of credits and the ECTS value which the module represents

20 credits (10 ECTS)

## Which term(s) the module is to be taught in (or other teaching pattern)

Autumn or Spring

## Prerequisite and co-requisite modules and/or any module restrictions

None

## The course(s) of study to which the module contributes

#### Compulsory to the following courses:

* MSc Political Psychology

#### Optional to the following courses:

* This module is available to all students on MA programmes within the School of Politics and International Relations.

Also available as an elective module

## The intended subject specific learning outcomes. On successfully completing the module students will be able to:

8.1 Understand and critically evaluate key perspectives and debates on the nature and formation of public opinion.

8.2 Have a critical understanding of the way in which public attitudes may be said to be ‘constructed’, and of the principal factors that influence this construction.

8.3 Evaluate the role of external agencies in shaping the information to which citizens are exposed, and the processes by which citizens internalise such information.

8.4 Have a critical understanding of academic debates over the informational and ‘rational’ content of public attitudes

8.5 Evaluate academic arguments over how far citizens’ attitudes and behaviour are consistent with the requirements of democratic theory.

## The intended generic learning outcomes. On successfully completing the module students will be able to:

9.1 Have gained a critical understanding of relevant perspectives within the field of political psychology, and of the ways in which these perspectives inform the analysis and understanding of public opinion.

9.2 Have gained a critical understanding of the various theories and methods used in the psychological study of public opinion, and be able to use this understanding to evaluate the relative merits of different theoretical and methodological approaches.

9.3 Identify and critically evaluate theories and empirical findings within the literature on political psychology, and to apply these evaluations in helping to address and resolve key political issues.

9.4 Evaluate complex issues, and to express their ideas and conclusions effectively.

9.5 Manifest self-direction and originality in tackling issues, along with a critical awareness of their own understanding and skills and an ability to advance these*.*

## A synopsis of the curriculum

This module provides students with a detailed introduction to the nature and study of public opinion. Opinion and attitudes are central to the choices that citizens make and to the way they behave, which in turn are core outcomes in politics. Yet the nature and formation of those attitudes are complex, and shaped by a range of individual and contextual factors, which are central subjects within psychology. This module therefore brings together perspectives from both political science and psychology, in helping students to understand how citizens form attitudes and opinions, the processes and considerations that underpin attitude formation, the factors and actors that influence these formative processes and the effect that citizens’ attitudes have on their behaviour. The module will also consider the principal ways in which we identify and measure public opinion, notably through surveys. Underpinning the module will be the central question of whether the nature of citizens’ opinions are consistent with the assumptions and demands of modern democratic states.

## Reading list

The University is committed to ensuring that core reading materials are in accessible electronic format in line with the Kent Inclusive Practices.

The most up to date reading list for each module can be found on the university's [reading list pages](https://kent.rl.talis.com/index.html).

## Contact Hours

Private Study: 178

Contact Hours: 22

Total: 200

## Assessment methods

* 1. Main assessment methods
* Essay 1, 3000 words, 40%
* Essay 2, 3000 words, 60%
  1. Reassessment methods

100% coursework

## Map of module learning outcomes (sections 8 & 9) to learning and teaching methods and methods of assessment (section 13)

**Module learning outcomes against learning and teaching methods:**

| Module learning outcome | 8.1 | 8.2 | 8.3 | 8.4 | 8.5 | 9.1 | 9.2 | 9.3 | 9.4 | 9.5 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Private Study | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** |
| Weekly class | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |

**Module learning outcomes against assessment methods:**

| Module learning outcome | 8.1 | 8.2 | 8.3 | 8.4 | 8.5 | 9.1 | 9.2 | 9.3 | 9.4 | 9.5 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Essay 1 | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |
| Essay 2 | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |

## Inclusive module design

The Division recognises and has embedded the expectations of current equality legislation, by ensuring that the module is as accessible as possible by design. Additional alternative arrangements for students with Inclusive Learning Plans (ILPs)/declared disabilities will be made on an individual basis, in consultation with the relevant policies and support services.

The inclusive practices in the guidance (see Annex B Appendix A) have been considered in order to support all students in the following areas:

a) Accessible resources and curriculum

b) Learning, teaching and assessment methods

## Campus(es) or centre(s) where module will be delivered

Canterbury

## Internationalisation

The subject matter of the module is non-country specific, and so the concepts and results students will be exposed to are generalizable across countries. Most of the literature does not derive from Britain, but instead from the US and western Europe. In addition, many of the students taking the course will come from overseas, and efforts will be made to incorporate examples and cases from their home countries into class discussions.

**DIVISIONAL USE ONLY**

**Module record – all revisions must be recorded in the grid and full details of the change retained in the appropriate committee records.**

| Date approved | New/Major/Minor revision | Start date of delivery of (revised) version | Section revised (if applicable) | Impacts PLOs (Q6 & 7 cover sheet) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 17/01/2017 | Minor | January 2017 | 13 | No |
| 14/01/2022 | Minor | September 2023 | 5, 7, 9, 10 | No |