

Public Opinion in Agriculture and Natural Resources

AEC 5060

Fall 2025 – 3 credit hours

# Instructor

Dr. Lisa Lundy

Professor

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Office location: 121E Bryant Hall

Zoom Office Hours: Thursday, 1-2 pm, EST (also available by appointment) - <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/97915510863>

# Class Times

Class is delivered 100% online, asynchronously (no live class time). Each week’s module will open by Monday at 8 a.m. Weekly assignments, unless otherwise noted, are due on Mondays at 11:59 p.m.

# Course Description

This course explores the role and relevance of public opinion in shaping policies and perceptions related to agriculture and natural resources. Students will gain a foundational understanding of the purpose and societal value of public opinion polling, with a specific focus on how it influences decision-making in agricultural and environmental contexts.

# Course Objectives

* To develop an understanding of the purpose and value of public opinion polling
* To understand how public opinion data is gathered and used
* To become aware of the presence and use of public opinion polls in our everyday lives
* To develop an ability to critically judge the value of public opinion polls and how they are reported

# Instructor Team Communication & Feedback

Communication - The instructor is committed to responding to your Canvas and email messages within 48 hours when feasible during the work week, Monday through Friday, except holidays. The major assignments will be graded, with meaningful feedback provided, within one week of their submission.

Individual Learner Interaction – Education extends beyond the mere transmission of knowledge; it involves providing valuable feedback and maintaining ongoing communication with the learner. The instructor is committed to engaging in one-on-one interactions with each student. This may manifest as detailed feedback on assignment submissions, responses to discussion board posts, or personalized Canvas messages to check in on the student's progress in the course.

Office Hours: To best accommodate instructor and student schedules, office hours are available by appointment via Zoom. Please reach out to Dr. Lundy at lisalundy@ufl.edu to set up a time to meet. Office hours are a time for students to physically or virtually drop in and visit with Dr. Lundy. Whether you have questions about the course, assignments, covered topics, or simply wish to have a casual chat to better get to know each other, these hours are reserved for you. Dr. Lundy strongly encourages students to take advantage of these office hours as an enriching experience for academic support and personal connection.

# Requirements

## Textbook:

* Bardes, B. A., & Oldendick, R. W. (2016). Public opinion: Measuring the American mind (5th ed.). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
* A subscription to Yellowdig ($16.95). Information on how to set up your Yellowdig account can be found in our Canvas course shell under the Yellowdig Information page.

## Technology:

To succeed in this course, you must have access to the following technology:

* Desktop Computer or Laptop
* Audio Capabilities
* Webcam and Microphone for synchronous sessions
* Microsoft Office Programs
  + [Microsoft Privacy Statement](https://privacy.microsoft.com/en-us/privacystatement)
  + [Microsoft Accessibility Information](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/trust-center/compliance/accessibility)
  + Word - [Microsoft 365 basics video training](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsupport.microsoft.com%2Fen-us%2Foffice%2Fmicrosoft-365-basics-video-training-396b8d9e-e118-42d0-8a0d-87d1f2f055fb&data=05%7C01%7Cbrooke.brammer%40ufl.edu%7Cfa687a99f8814d9457ff08db03a74f10%7C0d4da0f84a314d76ace60a62331e1b84%7C0%7C0%7C638107789339169026%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=TLW6NUAxqahJlebtSJzmI6gGZFi5bvKksQmj7nOsgPA%3D&reserved=0)
* Adobe Reader
  + [Acrobat tutorials](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fhelpx.adobe.com%2Facrobat%2Ftutorials.html&data=05%7C01%7Cbrooke.brammer%40ufl.edu%7Cfa687a99f8814d9457ff08db03a74f10%7C0d4da0f84a314d76ace60a62331e1b84%7C0%7C0%7C638107789339169026%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=hZA7%2FIKCV%2BzbSPu2MjomDnxCbI5usbBdV2%2FMV9lzRso%3D&reserved=0)
  + [Adobe Privacy Statement](https://www.adobe.com/privacy/policy.html)
  + [Adobe Accessibility Statement](https://www.adobe.com/trust/accessibility.html)
* Zoom
  + [Zoom Privacy Policy](https://explore.zoom.us/en/privacy/)
  + [Zoom Accessibility Information](https://explore.zoom.us/en/accessibility/)
* Internet Connection with access to Canvas
* Canvas is the course management system at the University of Florida in which students will find course content, links to video lectures, assignments, quizzes, discussions, and grades. The use of this system will vary by instructor, but the following videos describe the most common tools in Canvas. The [full student guide](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fcommunity.canvaslms.com%2Ft5%2FStudent-Guide%2Ftkb-p%2Fstudent&data=05%7C01%7Cbrooke.brammer%40ufl.edu%7Cfa687a99f8814d9457ff08db03a74f10%7C0d4da0f84a314d76ace60a62331e1b84%7C0%7C0%7C638107789339325259%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=584OMZNA3VDOhfbJir6w2cQXUz118ncUvLFwjg063fw%3D&reserved=0) is provided if you have additional questions.
* [Canvas Privacy Policy](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.canvaslms.com%2Fpolicies%2Fprivacy&data=05%7C01%7Cbrooke.brammer%40ufl.edu%7Cfa687a99f8814d9457ff08db03a74f10%7C0d4da0f84a314d76ace60a62331e1b84%7C0%7C0%7C638107789339325259%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=MZOYIJ9jHRaqebfqNW15YE%2F6T%2Biy6S6znresFJaVMrQ%3D&reserved=0)
* [Canvas Accessibility Standards](https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-the-Canvas-accessibility-standards/ta-p/1564)
* **Web Browser - Chrome** is the preferred browser for Canvas. If you do not have Chrome, you can [download it.](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2Furl%3Fsa%3Dt%26rct%3Dj%26q%3D%26esrc%3Ds%26source%3Dweb%26cd%3D2%26cad%3Drja%26uact%3D8%26sqi%3D2%26ved%3D0CDYQjBAwAQ%26url%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fsupport.google.com%252Fchrome%252Fanswer%252F95346%253Fhl%253Den%26ei%3D16T0U_61AZWAygT1vYHoAQ%26usg%3DAFQjCNHFiowHAaPSkTUo-EyAOIeZWDPSCw%26sig2%3DulcujkhFWJawLyO6J0SvpA%26bvm%3Dbv.73231344%2Cd.aWw&data=05%7C01%7Cbrooke.brammer%40ufl.edu%7Cfa687a99f8814d9457ff08db03a74f10%7C0d4da0f84a314d76ace60a62331e1b84%7C0%7C0%7C638107789339325259%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=NJn3IJOjWwtZLgxmHrwwCiuh0EKyquERtWcT9Vs%2FKus%3D&reserved=0)
* University of Florida Email
* Students are expected to check their my.ufl emails daily. View the [Student Computing Requirements](https://it.ufl.edu/policies/student-computing-requirements/) page for information on technology requirements and expectations.

## Prerequisite Knowledge:

{Insert any pre-req knowledge required for your course, as appropriate}

## Expected Technical & Digital Literacy Skills:

Minimum skills required:

* Proficiency in utilizing Canvas and navigating the internet effectively.
* Competence in using email for communication purposes, including sending and receiving messages and managing attachments.
* Familiarity with commonly used word processing applications (such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs), including the ability to create, edit, and format documents.
* Basic computer skills, including understanding fundamental operations like file management, using menus and toolbars, and navigating between different applications.
* Using online search tools for specific academic purposes, including the ability to use search criteria, keywords, and filters.
* Analyzing digital information for credibility, currency, and bias.

## Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) Use:

You may use AI programs e.g. ChatGPT to help generate ideas and brainstorm. However, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Relying on these programs also keeps you from developing your own independent thinking and creativity. These are important skills that you should be developing in this class. You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor). AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism and referred to the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution office for review. If you have questions about what is appropriate or acceptable, please ask. We are happy to help you.

# Assignments

## Last Assignment Policy:

I understand that fall is a busy time for graduate students. If you need extra time on an assignment, please reach out to me ahead of the due date so we can work out an arrangement.

## Assignment Points & Explanation:

Participation (Yellowdig)

* Yellowdig is an interactive platform designed to foster community engagement and collaborative learning among students. Each week, you will be given a topic to comment on, allowing you to share your insights, ask questions, and engage in discussions with your peers. This platform encourages active participation and helps you deepen your understanding of course material through meaningful conversations.

Personal Statement on Public Opinion

* As we begin, think through your ideas and thoughts regarding public opinion. Consider why you are taking this course? What specifically about public opinion interests you? Have you ever read a public opinion poll that troubled you or made you question your own beliefs? Have you ever changed your opinion on a major issue because of the opinions of others? What role does public opinion play in a democracy? Consider these questions as well as any others that come to your mind and write a two-page statement on your personal views of public opinion.

Public Opinion Poll Critique

* On two occasions you will select a topic relating to agriculture or natural resources and find two similar polls to critique. Consider issues related to sampling, the type of poll and questions used, was a filter question used, response format and use of the poll. Now compare the two polls in a three-page paper discussing how consistent public opinion is on the issue. Use supporting information from course readings.

Public Opinion Poll News Article Critique

* Locate a public opinion poll in a NEWS source such as a magazine, newspaper or online news site that includes an article along with the poll. Looking at the strengths and weaknesses of both the poll and how it was reported, write a three-page critique. Consider issues similar to those in the Public Opinion Poll Critique, but then go beyond those to include the reporting factor. Did the reporter skew any of the data through his or her reporting? Is any language used that biases the reporting of the data?

Public Opinion News Story

* Taking what you learned from the News Article Critique, you now get to be the reporter. Put yourself in the role of a journalist for a national U.S. newspaper, and then select a public opinion poll from the past three years that relates to agriculture and natural resources. Write a news story on the poll using clear, unbiased and concise language. As with all news stories you will need supporting quotes from people central to this issue which you may find from previously published sources. Note that these sources do not need to be news sources as you might find better quotation information in reports published on the issue you select.

Public Opinion Poll Proposal

* In a five-page paper, propose a public opinion poll you would like to conduct that relates to agriculture and natural resources. Your proposal will need to be highly detailed with issues discussed throughout the course including a well-stated purpose, sampling issues, poll format and question types among other factors. You will also create the poll in Qualtrics. While you will not be expected to conduct this poll, the proposal should be detailed enough that you could easily do so if given the time and opportunity.

## Course Grading:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Assignment | % of Final Grade |
| Yellowdig | 20 |
| Reading Quizzes | 20 |
| Personal Statement on Public Opinion | 5 |
| Public Opinion Poll Critique (2) | 20 |
| Public Opinion Poll News Article Critique | 10 |
| Public Opinion Poll Proposal | 25 |
| Total | 100 |

### Grading Scale

| A = 93-100% | C+ = 76 – 79.99% | F = Below 60% |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A- = 90 – 92.99% | C = 73 – 75.99% |  |
| B+ = 86 – 89.99% | C- = 70 – 72.99% |  |
| B = 83 – 85.99% | D+ = 66 – 69.99% |  |
| B- = 80 – 82.99% | D = 63 – 65.99% |  |
|  | D- = 60 – 62.99% |  |

## Reading & Assignment Schedule:

{Insert your reading and assignment schedule here. If using a table, be reserved with using split cells, they make it more difficult for screen readers to bounce through. You can test the ease of this by using the tab function on your keyboard to tab through the table and see how it moves}

Instructional materials for this course consist of only those materials specifically reviewed, selected, and assigned by the instructor(s). The instructor(s) is only responsible for these instructional materials.

Please note that the course schedule and syllabus are subject to change. The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus, including assignment due dates and course content, as deemed necessary. Any changes will be communicated promptly to ensure you have adequate time to adjust.

# University-Wide Policies and Student Support Services

As part of the updated University of Florida Syllabus Policy, this course syllabus refers students to a central online resource that contains the most current university-wide academic policies and student support services. Using this shared link helps ensure that all students receive accurate, consistent, and up-to-date information.

Students are expected to visit and review the centralized UF Syllabus Policy page at: [UF Syllabus Policy Link](https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/). Throughout the term, students are strongly encouraged to return to this page regularly to stay updated on important university expectations and explore available resources. The page includes information on topics such as:

**Academic Policies**

* Attendance requirements and make-up work procedures
* Academic accommodations for students with disabilities
* Grading standards and grade point policies
* Course evaluation instructions and portals
* Student Honor Code and University Honesty Policy
* Guidelines governing the recording and use of class lectures

**Academic Resources**

* E-learning support and technology assistance
* Career and counseling services (Career Connections Center)
* Library access and help services
* Study skills support and tutoring (Teaching Center)
* Writing support (Writing Studio)
* Complaint procedures and academic grievance resources
* UF Student Success Initiative resources

**Campus Health & Wellness**

* Physical, mental, and emotional health services
* Safety and support programs
* UF Whole Gator wellness tools