Syllabus

ADVANCED ISSUES IN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION - 56762

Last update 15-09-2013

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Political Science

Academic year: 1

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Tamir Sheafer

Coordinator Email: msstamir@huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Monday 14:00-15:30. Room: 4311.

Teaching Staff: Prof Tamir Sheafer
Course/Module description:
The course provides students with basic concepts in political communication and an understanding of some of the important and new research directions in the field.

Course/Module aims:
The purpose of the course is to discuss advanced issues in political communication research.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
1. Define basic concepts in political communication.
2. Explain the important and new research directions in political communication research.
3. Develop critical thinking on research in the field and point out major theoretical lacunae in it.
4. Integrate a more complete picture of the field of political communication thru examination of its key issues.

Attendance requirements(%):
80%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: The course will require great involvement of the students in the following way: each issue will be discussed for one class or several classes, depending on its scope. On every subject (except for the first one) every pair of students will be responsible for summarizing one article from the syllabus, following the instructions below and the guiding questions that will be given specifically to each article (the lecturer reserves the right to update the guidelines during the course). The summary will be uploaded to the course website by 12:00 the day before the lesson. Each lesson (except a lesson or two at the beginning of the semester) will open with a presentation of some of the articles, according to the guidance given a week earlier. Then a class discussion will take place, in which each student will contribute relevant knowledge acquired when reading the article assigned to him/her. The discussion will give the broad picture of the different approaches in question. The students take an important part of the course and therefore they are expected to be involved and participate during lessons. The coupling of students and selection of articles will take place in the first lesson.
Course grade:
1. Each pair of students will submit five summaries of articles during the semester. Each article summary is 15% of the course grade (total 75%). The summary will receive one of the following grades: 15, 10, or 5. The grade will be given if the summary was uploaded to the website on time. (Late submission but before class minus 5 points; 5 points will be reduced for a delay of each day). Articles should be sent via forum posts in the course website on Moodle.
2. Critical Review Article: every student will select one area of research that was discussed in the course (out of the 5 topics in the syllabus) and present a summary of up to three pages. The article will include the main questions in the field, the various answers given to these questions, the questions that have not been asked yet, asked but not yet answered or answered only partially. This document will be based on all relevant articles from the syllabus, and also on the relevant articles from other issues, as there is a small number of articles relevant to several issues. This article is 25% of the final grade.
Articles will be sent no later than a week after the end of the semester. 4 points (out of 25) will be reduced for each day of delay. The grade will be based on the quality of the answer, on demonstrating understanding of the field of research and on integrating relevant articles accurately.

Course/Module Content:
Introduction: The mediatization of the political arena

First issue: The independence of the political communication from the government

Second issue: Comparative political communication

Third issue: Media Frames: Frame building, media frames and framing effects

Fourth issue: Strategic issues in political communication

Fifth issue: Different aspects of political communication effects

Required Reading:
On each issue, one article will be assigned to two students.

The independence of the political communication from the government:


Baum, M. A. (2013). The Iraq Coalition of the Willing and (Politically) Able: Party


Comparative political communication:


Media Frames: Frame building, media frames and framing effects:

Frame Building and Media Frames:

Communication Quarterly, 86(2), 349-367.


Framing Effects:


Strategic issues in political communication:

Benoit, W., & Henson, J. (2009). President Bush’s image repair discourse on


Different aspects of political communication effects:

Agenda Setting and Priming:

Political Science, 40, 663-677.


Van Aelst and Walgrave (2011). Minimal or massive? The political agenda setting power of the mass media according to different methods. The International Journal of Press/Politics, 16(3), 295-313.

Participation and Learning:


Selective Exposure:


Soft News and Satire:
http://crx.sagepub.com/content/early/2012/07/23/0093650212453600.full.pdf+html


Public Opinion and Policy:


Additional Reading Material:
Introduction: The mediatization of the political arena


Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 25 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 75 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:
The Course is open to students of the political communication program. Other students will be accepted only with the approval of the lecturer, based on availability, students grades and specialty.
Guidelines for summarizing articles:
Length: up to two pages.
The document will include:
- A clear and focused response to the focus question/s given to each article.
- A summary of the main arguments and hypotheses presented in the article, and a clear presentation of the findings and conclusions.
Clear definitions of key concepts is highly important. Since the summary is limited to two pages, make sure to shorten the description of the study and focus on the main theoretical arguments examined in it.
- Position in Research: Why and How the article deals with the subject of the lesson as well as other issues.
- The main contribution of the article.