Research Methods in Political Science
Political Science 4150
Spring 2018
Class Time: MWF 9:05am – 9:55am
Instructor: Jeffrey M. Glas, PhD

Contact Information:
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I. Course Description

It is often overlooked, and occasionally dismissed, that political science is a science. Indeed, this is a problem all social sciences face. Sure, politics can be studied non-scientifically…but the value of such work is inherently subjective. In contrast, though, by employing a scientific methodology to the study of politics we can generate new knowledge in an objective fashion. This course is designed to introduce students to empirical research methodology in the social sciences and will cover topics such as the formulation of research questions, the development of theory and testing of hypotheses, conceptualization and measurement, data collection, and regression analysis. By the end of this course students should:

(1.1)   Learn to think in a more nuanced and scientific way about politics and government.

(1.2)   Become proficient in the analysis of political science research.

(1.3)   Demonstrate a proficiency in identifying, locating, and evaluating scholarly political science resources and literature as well as using them responsibly to formulate effective arguments.

(1.4)   Understand the different ways in which hypotheses can be tested in the social sciences.

(1.5)   Develop an original political science research design.

II. Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation

(2.1) **Required Text**
We will be using one textbook over the course of this class. It is available in the University Bookstore, but feel free to obtain the text through alternative vendors.

Kellstedt, Paul M. and Guy D. Whitten. 2013. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research,* 2nd Edition. New York: Cambridge University Press.

(2.2) **Course Assignments**
Learning is an active exercise. Students at all levels of learning and accomplishment benefit when they are actively engaged with course material. Your grade in this class will be assessed through class participation, writing assignments, and three exams.

Here are some important dates for these assignments and the rubric I will follow for you final grade:

Writing Assignment 1	5%	February 2nd
Writing Assignment 2	5%	February 23rd
Writing Assignment 3	10%	March 28th
Writing Assignment 4	20%	April 27th
Exam 1	20%	February 7th
Exam 2	20%	March 7th
Exam 3	20%	April 30th

(2.4) **Grading**
All grades (including final grades) will be assigned following the system depicted below:

A	=	94-100	C+	=	78
A-	=	90	C	=	74
B+	=	88	C-	=	70
B	=	84	D	=	60 – 69
B-	=	80	F	≤	59

III. Class Policies

(3.1) **Absences**
Come to class! Attendance is critical for the successful completion of this course. If you are more than ten (10) minutes late for this class DO NOT ENTER the class unless we previously discussed your tardiness.

(3.2) **Makeup Exams**
If you miss an exam, you will receive a zero. If you are late to an exam, you must take it in the time that remains when you arrive. Make-up exams are only given to students with legitimate and documented excuses. All make-up exams are administered by the Department of Political Science on Fridays from 1pm – 4pm.

(3.3) **Missed/Late Assignments**
Missed assignments are awarded a grade of zero. Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of five points for each calendar day late.

(3.4) **Cheating and Academic Misconduct**
Violations of the academic dishonesty rules are grounds for receiving an "F" in the course as well as possible expulsion from the university. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating, academic misconduct, or plagiarism, examine the university policy and /or ask the instructor.

(3.5) **Problems and Emergencies**
If a problem or emergency arises that prevents you from attending an exam or coming to class, you should contact Professor Glas as soon as possible.

(3.6) **Disability Disclosure Statement**
Please advise the instructor if you have a documented disability that needs to be accommodated. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations must be registered with the Office of Disability Services before an instructor can modify instruction or expectations.

(3.7) **Policy on Disruptive Behavior**

1) Turn communication devices to silent.
2) Be polite during class discussion.

(3.8) **Withdraw Policy**
Be advised that the last day to withdraw from a course without failing is March 19th. All students who withdraw after this date will receive a "WF".

IV. Course Schedule and Assignments[1]

Week of January 1st – Course Overview

*** Classes Begin – January 4th ***

Week of January 8th – Thinking Scientifically About Politics

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 1

Riker, William H. 1982. "The Two-Party System and Duverger's Law: An Essay on the History of Political Science." *American Political Science Review* 76(4): 753-766.

*** Drop/Add End – January 10th ***

Week of January 15th – Questions and the Theories that Answer Them

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 2

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. "The Science in Social Science," Chapter 1 in *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Research Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

*** No Classes – MLK Day – January 15th ***

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[1] The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.

Week of January 22nd – The Logic of Causal Inference

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 3

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. "Defining Causality," pp. 75-91 in *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Research Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Week of January 29th – Research Design

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 4

John Stuart Mill's "Of the Four Methods of Experimental Inquiry"

Writing Assignment #1 Due

Week of February 5th – Exam Week

Exam 1

Week of February 12th – From Concepts to Variables and their Measurement

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 5

Week of February 19th – Statistical Inference, Part 1: Probability

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 6

Writing Assignment #2 Due

Week of February 26th – Statistical Inference, Part 2 : Sampling

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 6

Selection from: Fenno, Richard. 1978. *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts*. New York: Harper Collins.

Jones-Correa, Michael. 1998. "Different Paths: Gender, Immigration, and Political Participation." *The International Migration Review* 3(2): 326-349.

*** Semester Midpoint ***

Week of March 5th – Exam Week

Exam 2

Week of March 12th – Spring Break

*** No Classes – Spring Break – March 12th – 16th ***

Week of March 19th – Research Design and Hypothesis Testing

Research Design and Hypothesis Testing: A Primer (see eLC)

Paper Workshop

*** Withdrawal Deadline – March 19th ***

Week of March 26th – Bivariate Hypothesis Testing

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 7

Bertrand, Marianne, and Sendhil Mullainathan. 2004. "Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination." *American Economics Review* 94(4): 991-1013.

Writing Assignment #3 Due

Week of April 2nd – Statistical Models and Hypothesis Testing

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 8

See corresponding Content Folder on eLC

Week of April 9th – Multivariate Regression Models, Part 1

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 9

See corresponding Content Folder on eLC

Week of April 16th – Multivariate Regression Models, Part 2

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 10

See corresponding Content Folder on eLC

Week of April 23rd

Writing Assignment #4 Due

*** Last Day of Classes – April 25th ***

*** Reading Day – April 26th ***

Week of April 30th - Exam Week

Final Exam – Monday, April 30th @ 8am