

American Political Development

POLS 4105
The University of Georgia
Prof. Anthony Madonna
ajmadonn@uga.edu

Instructor Info

Instructor: Anthony Madonna
Email: ajmadonn@uga.edu
Website: http://spia.uga.edu/faculty_pages/ajmadonn/
Office: 407 Baldwin Hall
Office Hours: TTR 11:00-12:00am

Syllabus is on the website.

Outline

I. Introduction

- a. clips
- b. Announcements
- c. News
- d. Website
- e. test—Sep. 25
- f. sign-in

II. Ruling

- a. the political problem
- b. the question(s)
- c. the holding
- d. the “conventional wisdom”

III. Clinton and game theory

- a. This paper...
- b. game theory
- c. sequential game tree
- d. prisoner’s dilemma
- e. Nash equilibrium
- f. zero-sum

IV. Argument

- a. Marshall’s four objectives
- b. Clinton’s argument
- c. approach
- d. why do we care?

V. The game...

- a. three elements
- b. the game tree
- c. assumptions
- d. normal form

VI. Critiques

- a. thoughts?
- b. the assumptions
- c. evidence
- d. conventional wisdom

VII. Writing a Research Paper I

VIII. Conclusion

- a. thoughts?
- b. Class Champion
- c. For Tuesday

Announcements

1. Professor Lynn Vavreck will be speaking on Friday, September 12th, 2:00-3:30pm in Baldwin 302. Vavreck is an associate professor in the political science department, an expert on American elections and the primary contributor to the New York Times political science blog, "The Upshot."
2. Please join us for our annual Parthenos Lecturer on October 15th, 2014. This year's guest is Dr. David Mayhew. Dr. Mayhew is one of the world's leading authorities on American party politics and Congress. This year marks the 40th anniversary of his landmark book, Congress: The Electoral Connection. Sponsored by the Department of Political Science in the School of Public and International Affairs.
3. Dear Students: One of our SPIA alumni is a Political Consultant for the Republican Party and would like to hire a student for part time work collecting and analyzing election data. Proficiency with Excel is essential. If you are interested, please send a brief statement describing your skills and a resume to Paul Welch at texan@uga.edu by September 20.



News



A new Atlanta Journal Constitution poll in Georgia finds the race for governor is in a dead heat with Gov. Nathan Deal (R) barely ahead of challenger Jason Carter (D), 43% to 42%. In the race for Senate, David Perdue (R) holds a slightly bigger lead over Michelle Nunn (D), 45% to 41%. However, a new InsiderAdvantage poll finds Deal with a four point lead in the governor's race, 44% to 40%, and gives Perdue a 10 point lead in the Senate race, 50% to 40%.

"A series of tight polls ahead of an independence referendum next week suggests Scots might well make a momentous decision to secede from the United Kingdom," the Wall Street Journal reports. "That reflects a surge of pro-independence fervor in the past several weeks. But aggregations of recent survey data still give the 'no' camp, which favors remaining in the U.K., a modest lead, and enough voters are undecided--and divining their intentions is sufficiently difficult--that the outcome of the ballot is too close to call."



Just as some prominent election prognosticators seem ready to give Republicans the Senate, two forecasting models show the battle is essentially a toss up. The Upshot now gives Republicans a 52% chance of winning control of the upper chamber, while Election Lab gives the GOP a 50% chance. The Votemaster also has the race as a toss up. For comparison, FiveThirtyEight gives Republicans a 58% chance of taking the Senate.

Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) told Meet the Press that he is thinking about running for president in 2016 as either a Democrat or an independent. Said Sanders: "I think anybody who speaks to the needs of the working class and the middle class of this country and shows the courage to take on the billionaire class, I think that candidate will do pretty well." First Read: "He seemed to be leaning toward running as a Democrat (instead of his current status as an independent), but it's worth asking if that will fly with Democratic voters in a Democratic primary."



News



Daily Beast: "The list of pundits, political analysts, and numbers-crunchers who are predicting Republicans will win control of the Senate in November is long, including Nate Silver of FiveThirtyEight. The folks at The New York Times' The Upshot are saying it could be a tie. But Sam Wang of Princeton stands almost alone in forecasting that the Democrats will just barely hold their Senate majority." Wang's latest forecast finds Democrats have a 78% chance of holding control of the Senate.

Nate Silver: "I don't like to call out other forecasters by name unless I have something positive to say about them -- and we think most of the other models out there are pretty great. But one is in so much perceived disagreement with FiveThirtyEight's that it requires some attention. That's the model put together by Sam Wang, an associate professor of molecular biology at Princeton." "That model is wrong -- not necessarily because it shows Democrats ahead (ours barely shows any Republican advantage), but because it substantially underestimates the uncertainty associated with polling averages and thereby overestimates the win probabilities for candidates with small leads in the polls."



"There's one power Congress has that it doesn't want: The power to declare war," Bloomberg reports. "And that's certainly so seven weeks before congressional elections." "The House will vote today on an amendment that gives the administration the authority to train and equip Syrian rebels as part of President Barack Obama's strategy for destroying Islamic State. But it is silent on whether the president can deploy U.S. forces in the region. Some say Congress is setting a dangerous precedent by abdicating its war powers."

"Although every statewide elected official in Kansas is a Republican and President Obama lost the state by more than 20 points in the last election," Gov. Sam Brownback's (R) "proudly conservative policies have turned out to be so divisive and his tax cuts have generated such a drop in state revenue that they have caused even many Republicans to revolt," the New York Times reports. "Projections put state budget shortfalls in the hundreds of millions of dollars annually, raising questions of whether the state can adequately fund education in particular."



Outline		
I. Introduction	IV. Argument	VIII. Conclusion
a. clips	a. Marshall's four objectives	a. thoughts?
b. Announcements	b. Clinton's argument	b. Class Champion
c. News	c. approach	c. For Tuesday
d. Website	d. why do we care?	
e. test—Sep. 25		
f. sign-in		
II. Ruling	V. The game...	
a. the political problem	a. three elements	
b. the question(s)	b. the game tree	
c. the holding	c. assumptions	
d. the "conventional wisdom"	d. normal form	
III. Clinton and game theory	VI. Critiques	
a. This paper...	a. thoughts?	
b. game theory	b. the assumptions	
c. sequential game tree	c. evidence	
d. prisoner's dilemma	d. conventional wisdom	
e. Nash equilibrium		
f. zero-sum		
	VII. Writing a Research Paper I	

Research Design Proposal

30% of your final grade is based on a research design proposal. The proposal should be a maximum of 15 pages in length (typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point font, Chicago style citations). Students will be allowed to choose the topic of their paper, provided it is related to American Political Development. The instructor will be available during office hours for consultation. The paper should feature a review of the relevant scholarly literature, a well developed theory, and a detailed discussion of a potential test of that theory. The paper is due **Thursday, December 4th** at 5:00pm. *E-mailed papers will not be accepted.* Papers will be docked a full letter grade for each day they are late. A more detailed discussion of the paper project can be found on the website.

Students will be allowed fairly wide latitude in choosing their topic. Again, do not hesitate to consult the instructor for ideas and/or suggestions. The topic should be in some way related to American Political Development. The most important aspect of choosing a paper question is that the topic be testable using data or methods that can be acquired and implemented.

The final paper should require the following labeled sections:

Research Design Issues

- A **research design** is a plan that shows how a researcher intends to fulfill the goals of a proposed study
 - A research design is the scheme that guides the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data
 - It is a logical model of proof that allows the making of valid causal inferences
 - It indicates what observations will be made to provide answers to the questions posed by the researcher, how the observations will be made, and the analytical and statistical procedures to be used once the data are collected
 - If the goal of the research is to test hypotheses, a research design will also explain how the test is to be accomplished

Research Design Issues

- All research designs to test hypotheses are attempts by researchers to accomplish four main objectives:
 - Establish a relationship between two or more variables
 - Demonstrate that the results are generally true in the real world
 - Reveal whether one phenomenon precedes another in time
 - Eliminate as many alternative explanations for a phenomenon as possible

Research Design Issues

- Many factors affect the choice of a particular research design
 - One is the purpose of the investigation—whether the research is intended to be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory will most likely influence the choice of a research design
 - Another is the practical limitations on how researchers may test their hypotheses
- Some research designs may be unethical, others impossible to implement for lack of data or sufficient time and money
- Researchers frequently must balance what is humanly possible to accomplish against what would be ideally done to test a particular hypothesis
 - Consequently, many of the research designs that researchers actually use are unfortunate but necessary compromises

Research Design Issues

Regardless of the specific purpose of a study, its research design should include the following *basic elements*:

1. An **introduction**, outlining the question, explaining its importance and a statement discussing the researcher's argument
2. A statement of the purpose of the research
 - This can contain a **literature review**
3. A statement of the hypothesis to be tested (if any)
 - These are specified in the **theory**
4. A specification of the variables to be employed
5. A statement of how each variable is to be operationalized and measured
6. A detailed statement of how observations are to be organized and conducted
7. A general discussion of how the data collected will be analyzed
 - These four points should be detailed in the **methods section**
8. A **conclusion** detailing the importance of the study and argument, as well as outlining potential problems, future work, generalizability and normative policy recommendations (if any).

Introduction

I. Introduction – This section sets up the paper. What is the question you're seeking to answer? Why does it matter? What is your argument? Provide a brief outline of what you're planning on doing in the paper. A clear introduction goes a long way towards motivating the research.

Students often have difficulties selecting a paper topic. Feel free to contact the instructor for feedback on this. Here is a listing of some broader ideas for paper topics that students have looked at in the past:

- How does <gender, the adoption of the 17th amendment, education, the Electoral College> affect <voting, turnout, etc.> in <presidential elections, congressional elections, state judicial elections, political primaries, etc.> in the United States?
- How does <term limits for elected officials, the line-item veto, campaign finance reform, the length of a member's term, negative campaign advertising, the Senate filibuster> affect <a representatives' voting, spending in congress/a state, the likelihood a member gets reelected>?
- How does <age, gender, the mode of selection> impact voting in <the United States Court of Appeals, trial courts, the United States Supreme Court, the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate >?
- What factors influence <members of Congress, State representatives, governors> decision to <retire, seek higher office>?

DEFINE YOUR TERMS!

Introduction

I. Introduction – Your introduction should accomplish a couple things. First, sell me on the importance of your question. Why should I care about media bias? You can do this either by telling me or by using a case study/news story. Regardless, you should try to hook your reader in. Second, you should be clear in telling the reader what your argument is. You don't need to give me all the details (and you shouldn't), but I should be aware of what your specific question/argument is from your introduction. Finally, a roadmap paragraph is usually a helpful way to conclude your introduction. This generally involves telling me what your argument is, how you plan on testing it, what conclusions you will draw and what the next section does.



Literature Review

II. Literature Review – The literature review section builds off of your introduction. What does the most recent and relevant literature say about your question? Is the current literature limited in any way? Are there controversies or debates within it? In what way will your paper contribute to this literature?

Your paper should cite at least five political science/scholarly resources. This includes published articles, working papers or published books. An invaluable resource to identify these papers can be found at www.jstor.org or through usage of [Google Scholar](https://scholar.google.com/). Students looking for accessible political science research may also consider consulting articles discussed on the [monkey cage](#) – a political science blog. The blog itself is not a source; however, the articles they discuss are often good fit for your literature review.

Articles published in law reviews are fair game to use in the paper, but that they do not count towards your five scholarly sources. Please don't take this as an indictment of law reviews – they publish some fantastic research. However, they don't go through the blind peer-review process and are often more normative than traditional social science research. Additionally, students will become familiar with law reviews as they go on to law school, etc., and as such, I'd like to them to use political science research while they're here.

Wikipedia is open-source material and **NOT** appropriate for this paper. Please do not cite to Wikipedia in any form in this paper.

Theory

III. Theory – Again, this section should build off of your previous two sections. It is typically the most difficult section for students to compose. Your theory needs to be clear in addressing the issues and questions posed in your introduction and literature review sections. Here's a descriptive of a theory section I gave to a student in a previous course:

Your theory section needs to take your thesis statement from your introduction and build on it. For example, in the Moraski and Shipan paper, their thesis was that "political context is going to dictate the ideological location of Supreme Court nominations." Their theory explained why this is in greater detail. It argued that when the Senate was located to the left of the president, who was to the left of the current court, that the Senate should allow the president substantially leeway in choosing a nominee. Moraski and Shipan explained why they felt this was the case in greater detail and then expanded on two other ideological scenarios.

Often times, students write weak theory sections because they don't want to state anything they think is going to be obvious. Don't make this mistake and don't assume too much of the reader. Another common mistake is that students fail to anticipate and evaluate any counter-points to their argument. This is another issue that should be dealt with in your theory. Generally – a good theory section is a page and half. If you're not running that long, don't kill yourself over it – you can still put together a solid paper even if the theory is weak.

Theory

Theories are statements about the expected relationships between variables

- Expectations are formed by linking some variables to other variables in a series of logically connected arguments
- The logical connections stipulate the relationship between the variables
- Can think of a theory as a series of if...then statements



Ex. Median Voter Theory

- Series of assumptions about voters and candidates leads to expectations about candidate's ideological positions

Dependent/Independent Variables

- All theories include dependent and independent variables
 - A **dependent** variable is something we hope to explain (the "effect" in a cause and effect relationship)
 - An **independent** variable is something that we think will provide us with all or part of the explanation of the dependent variable (the "cause" in a cause and effect relationship)
- Ex – Voters casting votes for the candidates closest to them on the ideological spectrum causes candidates to converge to the median of the electorate
- The relationships between independent and dependent variables implied by any theory constitutes its **predictions**
 - These predictions are often referred to as **hypotheses**
 - They are the empirical implications drawn from the theory's logical connections between variables
 - We then need to test the hypotheses
- Ex – The Median voter theory predicts that candidates will converge to the middle of the ideological spectrum

Theories

- Every theory has some core features in common
 - Every theory contains a set of assumptions
 - The assumptions of a theory are its crucial building blocks
 - Assumptions are the principle means by which theorists simplify reality
- Ex – Median Voter Assumptions
 - Only Two Candidates/Parties
 - Everyone votes
 - Candidates only care about winning office
 - Movement on the ideological spectrum is costless



Theories

One of the most important questions to ask about any theory is whether its assumptions limit the domain of circumstances that the theory is capable of addressing

A good theory will be general enough to apply to many events

The more events or facts a theory can explain with a limited set of assumptions, the more useful the theory will be (parsimony)

- Thus, a theory of elections that does not require you to distinguish between primary and general elections has greater potential value for the study of elections than does a theory that only explains primary elections or general elections but not both

Theories

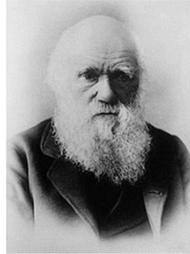


- Beware of the straw man. A straw man argument is based on either misrepresentation of an opponent's position or the creation of an argument to which few or no credible support exists.

- Attacking a straw man can involve creating the illusion of having refuted a proposition by substituting a superficially similar proposition (the "straw man"), and refuting it, without ever having actually refuted the original position. -- Wikipedia
- The end result is to bolster one's theoretical claim or personal standing.
- If you can't address the entirety of an argument (it happens), say so – and ALWAYS cite.

Theories

- How we judge predictions from theories is certainly open to some dispute
- Some theories do not allow any possibility that evidence can show them to be wrong
 - Such theories are not *falsifiable* (they cannot be proven inaccurate or wrong)
 - They may be true (or not), but we have no way to be confident they are true or useful, short of faith



Methods



IV. Methods - Once you have made your theory clear, you should begin thinking about how you will test it. What are your hypotheses/expectations? What variables will you use? How will you acquire them? What do you expect to find when you test them? What will you use to test your expectations? You can keep the technical aspects of this section as simple as you would like.

You do not need to specify or include a working statistical model -- and one is not expected for this paper. Your methods section should focus on (1) identifying where you would get the data from the test your hypothesis, and then, for you to (2) identify your dependent and (3) any independent variables in your analysis. You can feel free to write your conclusion section as if you ran the model and that your results confirmed your hypotheses.

Conclusion

V. Conclusion - Assuming your results hold, what conclusions can you draw from your research? Can your findings be generalized to other areas? Can you make any normative recommendations based on them? What future work is necessary?



Don't be this Student...

1. 3 am six page illegible rant about Obama/Republicans/hippies/etc...
 - It's a research paper, people
2. The student who cites wikipedia exclusively...
 - Cato institute and Daily KOS are also not appropriate cites.
3. 8 page lit review, half a paragraph of theory...
4. The "is this a good topic?" the weekend before its due e-mailer...
 - You can wait until the last minute, just don't advertise
5. The four page paragraph composer...
 - It's even worse if it's all one sentence.
6. The scared writer...
 - Suck it up and make an argument!
7. The overly confident writer...
 - You haven't "conclusively proven" anything.
8. The student who never rereads...
 - There's a big difference between "assess" and "asses"
9. The perfectionist...
 - Two types of papers: Good and finished
10. The plagiarizer and the paper buyer
 - I know how to work google
11. The creative writer
 - I'm not asking you to recreate "A Tale of Two Cities." Be direct.
12. The never picks up the paper student
 - I hold onto them for several years. Pick them up or I will find you...



Don't be this Student...

- 
13. The conversational writer
 - "Sick and tired," "that being said," "line in the sand"
 14. The student who Doesn't capitalize Consistently
 - Use the find command...
 15. The "over-quoter"
 - Use your own words...Show me you've done the reading
 - Block quotes and page numbers!
 16. The policy paper writer
 - Political science and public policy are separate fields
 17. Captain Jargon
 - Define your terms
 18. The rambler
 - Be on point and stay on point. Don't shy away from footnotes.
 - Shorter sentences!
 19. The car salesman
 - Cut the adjectives and adverbs. Let the reader decide if something is tremendous or very interesting
 20. The fact fudger
 - Check your dates and background information. When in doubt - cite!

Outline

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>I. Introduction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. clips b. Announcements c. News d. Website e. test—Sep. 25 f. sign-in | <p>IV. Argument</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Marshall's four objectives b. Clinton's argument c. approach d. why do we care? <p>V. The game...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. three elements b. the game tree c. assumptions d. normal form <p>VI. Critiques</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. thoughts? b. the assumptions c. evidence d. conventional wisdom <p>VII. Writing a Research Paper I</p> | <p>VIII. Conclusion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. thoughts? b. Class Champion c. For Tuesday |
|--|---|--|
- II. Ruling**
- a. the political problem
 - b. the question(s)
 - c. the holding
 - d. the "conventional wisdom"
- III. Clinton and game theory**
- a. This paper...
 - b. game theory
 - c. sequential game tree
 - d. prisoner's dilemma
 - e. Nash equilibrium
 - f. zero-sum

Conclusion



Have a great day.
