

Introduction to Political Science

Political Science 2000 [#28104]

Fall 2016

9:30am-10:45am, TTh

Peabody 205C

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Course Description: The intent of this course is to introduce students to the academic study of political science. Our focus will be on developing the skills necessary to analyze political science research using the methods accepted in the social sciences and to begin developing the ability to begin carrying out research in political science. Understanding the “hows” of political science analysis is where the emphasis lies, and not with simply augmenting your “political” knowledge. *A grade of C or higher is necessary in POLS 2000 to be admitted to the political science major.*

Required Texts:

Brians, Craig Leonard, Lars Willnat, Jarol B. Mannheim and Richard C. Rich. 2011. *Empirical Political Analysis*, 8th edition. New York: Pearson.

Additional readings will augment those in the textbook and be posted online ahead of time. You are also required to keep up with current events in a publication/medium of your choice. The New York Times, Washington Post, CNN and FOX News are among those from which you can choose.

Grading:

The grading in this course will be based on several criteria:

1) **Literature Review (20%):** This assignment requires students to compile and analyze material the area of political science literature relating to the topic of their research question. The goal is not an exhaustive list, but rather an understanding of what has been done and what has yet to be done in the area of concentration (3 pages).

2) **Research Design and Presentation (20%):** Building on the first two assignments, the goal of these tasks is not only to get the student to think about the best way to solve the puzzle presented by their chosen research question, but to learn how to relate these issues to others both orally and in writing. This will be important preparation for future political science classes. The presentation portion of the assignment will be a very brief synopsis of the research question and other pertinent details that will allow for feedback from not only the instructor but from your peers as well. The intent is that this will help you to hone your 3 page write up of your research design before it is due. Some questions to consider during this assignment are: What are the dependent and independent variables? What are your hypotheses about how the variables relate

to one another? From where will the data come?

3) Exams (Midterm: 20%, Final: 20%): There will both a midterms and a final exam. The midterm will cover just the readings and lectures in that unit (or since the last midterm). The final will emphasize the materials in the second unit of study, but will also contain some cumulative elements. All exams are in class and closed note. All of the exams dates/times are clear now. [See schedule below.] If you foresee having a conflict, please bring that to my attention *ahead of time*. I cannot help you *ex post facto*. In other words, there are no make-up exams.

4) Participation (20%): See below.

Late Work: No late work will be accepted. All of the due dates/times are clear now (see schedule below). If you foresee having trouble completing an assignment, please bring that to my attention ahead of time. I cannot help you *ex post facto*.

Attendance/Participation: Attendance in this class is integrated into your participation grade. The reasoning behind this is that a student cannot participate if that student is not in attendance. Attendance will be taken periodically, and it is incumbent upon all students to attend and to participate meaningfully and substantively in class.

Technology: Laptops are prohibited in this class unless required due to a disability. Cell phone use is also prohibited. I will not ask that you turn them off, but please set the ring to vibrate or silent during class.

Disability: If you have a disability that may require an accommodation, please let me know and contact the Disability Resource Center (706.542.8719) within the first two weeks of the semester so that arrangements can be made between student, professor and administration.

Academic Honesty: Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and to act in accordance with the Honor Code in all aspects of this course in and out of class.

Classroom conduct: Please be courteous of your classmates and instructor. That goes for interactions in class as well as outside pertaining to class. Also, emergencies happen. But they are rare. Take care of anything that might pull you out of class *before* class. Getting up and leaving in the middle of class is a distraction to everyone.

Course Schedule:

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be required but not on the spur of the moment.

Readings			Notes
Week 1		Introduction	
August	11	Welcome	
Week 2		The Research Process	
August	16	BWMR Chp. 1	Drop/Add Ends 8/17
	18	BWMR Chp. 1	Research Question Proposal Due
Week 3		Theory Building and Hypotheses	
August	23	BWMR Chp. 2	
	25	The Literature — BWMR Chp. 3	
Week 4		Research Design	
August	30	BWMR Chp. 4	
September	1	BWMR Chp. 4	
Week 5		Operationalization	
September	6	BWMR Chp. 5	Levin & Fox reading distributed
	8	BWMR Chp. 5	
Week 6		Quantitative Research	
September	13	Probability — Levin & Fox Chp. 5	
	15	Levin & Fox Chp. 5	Literature Review due
Week 7		Sampling	
September	20	BWMR Chp. 7	
	22	BWMR Chp. 7	
Week 8		Survey Research	
September	27	BWMR Chp. 8	
	29	BWMR Chp. 8	
Week 9		Survey Research	
October	4	BWMR Chp. 8	
	6		Exam One
Week 10		Scaling & Content Analysis	
October	11	BWMR Chp. 9	
	13	BWMR Chp. 10	
Week 11		Aggregate and Comparative Analysis	
October	18	BWMR Chp. 11	Last day to withdraw
	20	BWMR Chp. 12	
Week 12		Qualitative Research	
October	25	BWMR Chps. 19-21	
	27	BWMR Chps. 19-21	

Readings			Notes
Week 13 Toward Reading Quantitative Research			
November	1	Coding — BWMR Chp. 14	
	3	BWMR Chp. 15	
Week 14 Statistics			
November	8	BWMR Chp. 16	
	10	BWMR Chp. 17	
Week 15 Statistics, continued			
November	15	BWMR Chp. 18	
	17		Exam Two
Week 16			
November	22		No Class -- Thanksgiving
	24		No Class -- Thanksgiving
Week 17 Research Design Presentations			
November	29	Presentations	
December	1	Presentations	
Week 18			
December	5		Research Design due