

Research Methods in Political Science
Political Science 4150
Spring 2019
Class Time: MWF 9:05am – 9:55am
Instructor: Jeffrey M. Glas, PhD

Contact Information:

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00pm – 3:00pm

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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 competency with the collection, management, and analysis of data.

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. Other assigned readings can be found on eLC.

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 by three exams, a research paper, and weekly assignments.

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

Literature Review	5%	January 28 th
Theory and Hypothesis Paper	5%	February 18 th
Empirical Research Design Paper	5%	March 22 nd
Final Research Paper	15%	April 30 th
Exam 1	20%	February 4 th
Exam 2	20%	March 4 th
Exam 3	20%	May 8 th
Weekly Assignments	10%	Weekly

(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 with the approval of the instructor.

(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 21st. All students who withdraw after this date will receive a “WF”.

IV. Course Schedule and Assignments¹

Week 1 - January 9th and 11th – Thinking Scientifically About Politics

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 1

Week 2 - January 14th, 16th, and 18th – The Logic of Causal Inference

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapters 2 and 3

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, Chapter 1 and pp 75-91 (see eLC)

Week 3 - January 21st, 23rd, and 25th – Concepts, Variables, and Measurement

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 5

*Midterm Election Data Assignment

No Class – Monday, January 21st

Week 4 - January 28th, 30th, and February 1st – Research Design

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 4

John Stuart Mill’s “Of the Four Methods of Experimental Inquiry”

*Data Management & Visualization Assignment

*Literature Review Due

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

Week 5 - February 4th, 6th, and 8th – Exam Week

Week 6 - February 11th, 13th, and 15th –Probability and Statistical Inference

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 6

*Theory and Hypothesis Paper Due

Week 7 - February 18th, 20th, and 22nd – Sampling and Statistical Inference

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.

Mullinix, K.J., Leeper, T.J., Druckman, J.N. and Freese, J., 2015. The generalizability of survey experiments. *Journal of Experimental Political Science*, 2(2), pp.109-138.

*Survey Sample Assignment

Week 8 - February 25th, 27th, and March 1st – Statistical Inference

Paper Workshop

Week 9 – March 4th, 6th, and 8th – Exam Week

Week 10 – Spring Break

No Class – Monday, March 11th – Friday, March 15th

Week 11 - March 18th, 20th, and 22nd – Hypothesis Testing

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

Paper Workshop

*Empirical Research Design Paper Due

Withdraw Deadline – Thursday, March 21st

Week 12 - March 25th, 27th, and 29th – Bivariate Hypothesis Testing

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 7

Gosnell, Harold. 1927. Getting out the Vote: An Experiment in the Stimulation of Voting.(link available on eLC)

Fehr, E. and Gächter, S., 2000. Cooperation and punishment in public goods experiments. *American Economic Review*, 90(4), pp.980-994.

*Public Policy Assignment

Week 13 - April 1st, 3rd, and 5th – Statistical Modeling and Hypothesis Testing

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 8

Riker, W.H. and Ordeshook, P.C., 1968. A Theory of the Calculus of Voting. *American political science review*, 62(1), pp.25-42.

*Voter Turnout Assignment, Part 1

Week 14 - April 8th, 10th, and 12th – Multivariate Regression Models, Part 1

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 9

Richey, S., 2008. Voting by mail: Turnout and institutional reform in Oregon. *Social Science Quarterly*, 89(4), pp.902-915.

*Voter Turnout Assignment, Part 2

Week 15 - April 15th, 17th, and 19th – Multivariate Regression Models, Part 2

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 10

Harbridge, Laurel, Jon Krosnick, and Jeffrey Wooldridge. “Presidential Approval and Gas Prices: Sociotropic or Pocketbook Influence?”

*Presidential Approval Assignment

Week 16 - April 22nd, 24th, and 26th – Presenting Research

Paper Workshop

*"Poster Presentation Assignment

Week 17 – April 29th and 30th –

*Final Research Paper Due

Last Day of Classes – Tuesday, April 30th

Reading Day – Wednesday, May 1st

Week 18 – May 8th – Exam 3

Wednesday, May 8th @ 9am