PADP 7110: Research Methods in Public Administration and Policy

University of Georgia
Summer 2019
Tu, 6:15 - 10:00 PM
Gwinnett 121
Professor Anastasopoulos

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Office Hours: Wed 12:00-2:00 PM.

Course Description

This course is an introduction to statistical reasoning and thinking applied to public administration and policy. The tools that we will learn in this course will not only help you foster a better understanding of problems in public administration and policy more broadly, but will also help you clarify the way that you think and reason through issues where data is involved. The topics that we will cover include: research design, measurement, causal inference and understanding how we measure and interpret relationships between events and concepts.

Required Text and Readings

The required text for the course will be:

Kellstedt, Paul M., and Guy D. Whitten. 2013. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*, 3rd. New York: Cambridge University Press.

There will also be additional readings available on the course webpage.

Grading

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

Problem Sets 20%
Group project 50%
Midterm exam 30%

Letter Grade	Score (% Correct)
A	90-100%
A-	88-89%
B+	84-87%
B	80-83%
B-	78-79%
C+	74-77%
C	67-73%
D	60-66
F	59 and below

Attendance is mandatory and class participation and class discussion is an essential part of this class.

Problem Sets

20% of your final grade will be based on **7 problem sets** with assignments provided one week before the due date. These assignments will be taken from the required text. They must be turned on on time and late assignments will receive a grade of zero in the absence of a university-approved excuse.

UNLESS SPECIFIED OTHERWISE BY ME, PROBLEM SETS ARE DUE BEFORE CLASS (6:15PM) ON THE DAY THAT THEY ARE DUE

Midterm Exam

There will be one exam for the class: a take-home midterm distributed on **Thursday, July 9th at 6:15pm and due on Friday July 10th at 6:15pm.** The midterm will be about ½ multiple choice and ½ short answer questions. The midterm is open note and open book.

Group Research Project and Debates

The group research project will require you to work in groups of 2-4 apply what you learned in class to a current public policy problem being considered by the Georgia State Legislature. There are two main deliverables for the project:

1. A 5-7 page report.
2. A 5-7 minute presentation of your findings.

- You can choose the topic, but I will choose whether you are on the pro- or the anti-side of the topic and will organize the groups along these lines.
- The group projects will culminate in a final debate that we will have on the last day of class on **July 30th, 2019.**
- The quality of each team presentation will be judged by your classmates by the extent to which their opinion was influenced the team. Check out the https://www.intelligencesquaredus.org podcast to get a sense of how this works.

- The goal of the project and presentation is <u>to use data to make an effective argument</u>.

Key Dates

➔ **July 9th**: Take home midterm.
➔ **July 30th:** Group research projects and debate presentations due.

Course Calendar

I reserve the right to change the calendar to ensure that we spend enough time on each topic. If changes become necessary, they will be announced in class.

Week 1 June 11th:
Course introduction • K&W, ch. 1
Theories and hypotheses • K&W, ch. 2

Kahneman, D. and Egan, P., 2011. *Thinking, fast and slow*(Vol. 1). New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. [Introduction](#).

Problem set 1 released.

Week 2 June 18th:
Causality • K&W, ch. 3

Gerber, A.S., Green, D.P. and Larimer, C.W., 2008. *[Social pressure and voter turnout: Evidence from a large-scale field experiment](#)*. *American Political Science Review*, 102(01), pp.33-48.

Problem set 1 due.
Problem set 2 released.

Week 3 June 25th:
Research design • K&W, ch. 4

 Putnam, R.D., 2007. *[E pluribus unum: Diversity and community in the twenty first century the 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture](#)* . Scandinavian political studies, 30(2), pp.137-174.

Week 4 July 2nd
Measurement and descriptive statistics • K&W, ch. 5

Week 5 July 9th Take Home Midterm Distributed, No Class!

Week 6 July 16th
Getting to Know Your Data: Variables Types • K&W, ch. 6

Galton, Francis. 1907. The Wisdom of Crowds. *Nature.*

Week 7 July 23rd
Probability theory and statistical inference • K&W, ch. 7

Week 8 July 30th
Group project reports due and presentation debates.

Statement about Students with Disabilities

Students with special needs that require accommodation should notify me and the Office for Disability Services in the first two weeks of the course so appropriate arrangements can be made. All information and documentation of special needs is confidential.

Statement about Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance of the policy is not an acceptable defense. See also https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty.