

INTL 6010: Research Methods in International Policy

Fall 2019

Dr. Shane P. Singh

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Course Webpage: <http://www.shanepsingh.com/teaching.html>

Class Meeting Time: Wednesdays, 9:05AM-12:05PM

Class Location: 274 Miller Learning Center

Goal of the Course: The goal of this course is to help you understand how we study politics and policy and to provide guidance in conducting original research. The course will provide you with a general understanding of what science is and a foundation in the logic and practice of systematic social science inquiry. In addition to discussing general questions about the philosophy of science, we will cover fundamental issues such as arriving at a research question, theory building, hypothesis development, variable measurement, and identifying and dealing with confounding factors, and causality. We will then move to quantitative analysis; topics covered will include statistical inference, bivariate relationships, and multivariate relationships. The student should leave with an understanding of how to conduct his or her own research and a solid foundation for reading scholarly literature in political science and international policy.

Required Readings:

Kellstedt, Paul M., and Guy D. Whitten. 2018. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (KW)

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (KKV)

Putnam, Robert D. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Putnam)

Several journal articles, all of which are available online for free

Student Responsibilities and Grade Breakdown:

Readings: Students are required to do the readings for each class period ahead of time. Each week, students should write a short memo summarizing the readings for each class ahead of time. They should then refer to the memo during discussion.

Participation: As this is a graduate seminar, your participation is crucial and will count for 10% of your grade. Your involvement toward the end of the semester,

when we will critique the research designs of students in the class, is particularly important.

Research Design and Presentation: A critical assignment in the course is a research design, which includes a research question, theory and literature review, hypotheses, variable operationalization and measurement, dependent and independent variables, and what your expected findings would be if you were to actually conduct the research. (If you are able, you are encouraged to actually conduct analyses.) You will present your design toward the end of the semester. The research design will count for 25% of your grade. Note that a one-page summary of your research design is due in class midway through the semester.

Exams: There will be two exams, each of which will count for 30% of your grade.

Homework Assignment: There will be one, rather long homework assignment handed out in the second half of the semester. This can be turned in any time on or before the day of the second exam. It will count for 5% of your grade. The purpose of the homework is to help you prepare for the second exam. You should approach me with any questions you have about the homework questions.

Grade Scale:

| | |
|------------|----|
| >=93%: | A |
| 90-92.99%: | A- |
| 87-89.99%: | B+ |
| 83-86.99%: | B |
| 80-82.99%: | B- |
| 77-79.99%: | C+ |
| 73-76.99%: | C |
| 70-72.99%: | C- |
| 60-69.99%: | D |
| <60%: | F |

Late/Missed Assignments: Missed assignments will result in a zero without a university-approved medical excuse or family emergency. Students will be penalized for late assignments; 20% of the grade for each day late without a university-approved medical excuse or family emergency. Make-up exams can be arranged with the instructor with a university-approved medical excuse or family emergency.

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: www.uga.edu/honesty. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Readings and Course Schedule: *The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*

Readings with a “*” in front are optional

WEEK 1

August 14: No Class (Out of Town)

WEEK 2

August 21: Welcome and Introduction

The Edicts of Candler Hall

WEEK 3

August 28: The Scientific Study of Politics and Policy

KW, Chapter 1

KKV, Chapter 1

Putnam, Chapter 1 (an example of selecting and formulating a research agenda)

WEEK 4

September 4: Theory, Hypotheses, Concepts, and Variables

KW, Chapter 2

Skim: Burlacu, Diana. forthcoming. “Corruption and Ideological Voting.” *British Journal of Political Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123417000758> (a good comparative politics example with clear hypotheses and variables)

Skim: Cassese, Erin C., and Tiffany D. Barnes. forthcoming. “Reconciling Sexism and Women’s Support for Republican Candidates: A Look at Gender, Class, and Whiteness in the 2012 and 2016 Presidential Races.” *Political Behavior*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-018-9468-2> (a good American politics example with clear hypotheses and variables)

Skim: Fuhrmann, Matthew. 2009. Spreading Temptation: Proliferation and Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation Agreements. *International Security* 34 (1): 7-41. (a good international relations example with clear hypotheses and variables)

WEEK 5

September 11: Operationalization and Measurement

KW, Chapter 5 and pages 125-130 of Chapter 6

Putnam, Chapter 3 (an example of operationalization and measurement)

*KKV, Chapter 5, pgs. 150-168 (a good discussion of measurement error)

*McDonald, Michael P., and Samuel L. Popkin. 2001. The Myth of the Vanishing Voter. *American Political Science Review* 95 (4): 963-974. (an example of how measurement decisions can affect substantive conclusions)

WEEK 6

September 18: Causality and Relationships between Variables

KW, Chapter 3

KKV, Chapter 3 (important rules for constructing and evaluating causal theories)

WEEK 7

September 25: Experimental and Observational Designs

KW, Chapter 4

Putnam, Chapter 4 (Putnam's theory testing chapter)

Gerber, Alan S, and Donald P. Green. 2000. The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment. *American Political Science Review* 94 (3): 653-663. (an example that will inform our discussion of internal validity)

WEEK 8

October 2: Exam 1

WEEK 9

October 9: Sampling and Surveys

Hand out homework assignment

KW, Chapter 7

*<https://www.economist.com/international/2018/05/26/plunging-response-rates-to-household-surveys-worry-policymakers> (an article on the perils of declining survey response rates)

WEEK 10

October 16: Descriptive Statistics and Statistical Inference

Hand in one-page research design summaries

KW, pages 130-139 of Chapter 6, Chapter 7 again, and section 8.3 of Chapter 8

WEEK 11

October 23: Bivariate Relationships

Sign up for research design presentation days

KW, skim Chapter 8 and read Chapter 9 in depth

Putnam, Chapter 4 again, skim it (Putnam's theory testing chapter, which includes several bivariate examinations)

WEEK 12

October 30: Multivariate Relationships

KW, Chapter 10 and pages 246-257 of Chapter 11

*Brambor, Thomas, William Roberts Clark, and Matt Golder. 2006. Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses. *Political Analysis* 14 (1): 63-82. (provides excellent guidance for testing conditional hypotheses with multiple regression)

WEEK 13

November 6: Presentation of Research Designs

WEEK 14

November 13: Presentation of Research Designs

WEEK 15

November 20: Exam 2 (Last Day of Class)

WEEK 16

November 27: No Class (Thanksgiving)

FINALS WEEK

December 11: Research design papers due in my mailbox, under my door, or directly to me by 5:00PM—not by email.