

**POLS 4156E – Online Political Research & Analysis**  
**Class Day/Time: Online Monday - Friday**  
**Instructor: Jeffrey M. Glas, PhD**

**Contact Information:**

Office Hours: By Appointment (via telephone or Zoom)  
Instructor Email: [jeffrey.glas@uga.edu](mailto:jeffrey.glas@uga.edu)

**I. Course Description:**

Whether for better or worse, the Internet has had an undeniable influence on humanity. The Internet is, indeed, a pervasive element in modern society. For the vast majority of users, the Internet is simply a medium for communication, commerce, information, and entertainment. But, for a few of us, the Internet is a research tool that has opened a variety of new avenues for studying social phenomena...even birthing entirely new fields of research.

This is a research methodology course, substantive content will be covered, too, but the primary focus of this course is to teach you how the Internet can be leveraged for research purposes. The course is broken up into four units: Unit 1 is a crash course in general research methodology. Unit 2 covers classic research methods as they have migrated online. In Unit 3 we will get into “native digital” methods that have emerged as the Internet has expanded across the globe. In our fourth and final course unit focuses on social media.

**II. Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation**

**(2.1) Textbooks**

This class does not use textbooks. Instead, we will be using open-source material freely available on the Web. After all, this is an online class about how to use the Internet for research purposes.

**(2.2) Assessment**

As a summer course, time will feel more scarce than usual. We are cramming an entire semester into eight (8) weeks. This class features four (4) major assessments and four (4) minor assessments. Major assessments are each worth 20% of your final grade involve applying the concepts and methods covered in the course. The minor assessments are also research oriented, but primarily focus on specific tasks necessary to conducting professional research and account for the remaining 20% of your final grade.

**(2.3) Grading**

All grades (including final grades) will be assigned following the system depicted below. You must earn a C or higher to pass this class. Grades will not be curved.

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) Disability Disclosure Statement**

Able-bodiedness should not impede your intellectual development. Please get in touch with me (Dr. Glas) about any accommodations you need in the classroom and for exams. We have some amazing resources for you here at UGA. For testing accommodations please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as soon as possible. For more information please check out the DRC's website ([www.uga.drc.edu](http://www.uga.drc.edu)). The DRC is located at 825 Lumpkin Street (Clark-Howell Hall) and can be contacted by phone at 706.542.8719.

#### **(3.2) Makeup Exams**

If you miss an exam, you will receive a zero (and passing the class will be unlikely). 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 excuses.

#### **(3.3) Missed/Late Assignments**

Missed assignments are awarded a grade of zero. Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of ten 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, please examine the university policy and /or ask the instructor.

#### **(3.5) Problems and Emergencies**

If a problem or emergency arises that prevents you from completing coursework please contact me as soon as possible.

#### **(3.6) Withdraw Policy**

Be advised that the last day to withdraw from a course without failing is Thursday, July 7<sup>th</sup>. All students who withdraw after this date will receive a "WF".

## IV. Course Schedule<sup>1</sup>

### Important Administrative Dates for the Summer Thru-Session

Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup> – First Day of Classes

Thursday, June 16<sup>th</sup> – Last Day of Drop/Add

Monday, June 20<sup>th</sup> – Juneteenth Observation (No Classes)

Monday, July 4<sup>th</sup> – Independence Day (No Classes)

Thursday, July 7<sup>th</sup> – Withdrawal Deadline

Wednesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> – Last Day of Classes

### Unit 1: Fundamentals of Research Methodology: A Crash Course

#### Week 1 (June 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>): Designing Empirical Research

[Franco et al, Chapters 5 & 6](#)

Schlozman, K.L., Verba, S. and Brady, H.E., 2010. Weapon of the strong? Participatory inequality and the Internet. *Perspectives on Politics*, 8(2), pp.487-509.

Minor Assessment #1: Introducing Yourself

#### Week 2 (June 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>): Data Collection and Measurement

See eLC Content Folder

Major Assessment #1: Research Design Assignment

### Unit 2: The Internet and Online Political Science Research

#### Week 3 (June 27<sup>th</sup> – July 1<sup>st</sup>): The Internet and Online Research

Shuler, Russ. 2002. How Does the Internet Work? (link in eLC)

Curran, J., Fenton, N. and Freedman, D., 2016. *Misunderstanding the internet*. Routledge. (Chapter 1)

Content Folder on eLC

Minor Assessment #2: Working with Canned Data

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<sup>1</sup> This is a general course out line, some deviations may be necessary.

#### **Week 4 (July 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>): Online Survey Research**

Brick, J.M., 2011. The future of survey sampling. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 75(5), pp.872-888.

Behrend, T.S., Sharek, D.J., Meade, A.W. and Wiebe, E.N., 2011. The viability of crowdsourcing for survey research. *Behavior research methods*, 43(3), pp.800-813.

Levay, K.E., Freese, J. and Druckman, J.N., 2016. The demographic and political composition of Mechanical Turk samples. *Sage Open*, 6(1), p.2158244016636433.

Schuman, H. and Presser, S., 1977. Question wording as an independent variable in survey analysis. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 6(2), pp.151-170.

Major Assessment #2: Sampling and Online Survey Assignment

#### **Unit 3: Down the Rabbit Hole**

#### **Week 5 (July 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>): Web Activity as Data**

Reilly, S., Richey, S. and Taylor, J.B., 2012. Using Google search data for state politics research: an empirical validity test using roll-off data. *State Politics & Policy Quarterly*, 12(2), pp.146-159.

Stoycheff, E. and Nisbet, E.C., 2014. What's the bandwidth for democracy? Deconstructing Internet penetration and citizen attitudes about governance. *Political Communication*, 31(4), pp.628-646.

Tandoc Jr, E.C., 2014. Journalism is twerking? How web analytics is changing the process of gatekeeping. *New media & society*, 16(4), pp.559-575.

Minor Assessment #3: Web Analytics Assignment

#### **Week 6 (July 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>): Hyperlink Network Analysis**

Park, H.W., 2003. Hyperlink network analysis: A new method for the study of social structure on the web. *Connections*, 25(1), pp.49-61.

Kim, J.H., Barnett, G.A. and Park, H.W., 2010. A hyperlink and issue network analysis of the United States Senate: A rediscovery of the web as a relational and topical medium. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 61(8), pp.1598-1611.

Major Assessment #3: Hyperlink Network Analysis Assignment

## Unit 4: Social Media

### Week 7 (July 25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>): Experimentation on Social Media

Guess, A.M., 2021. Experiments Using Social Media Data. *Advances in Experimental Political Science*, 184.

Bond, R.M., Fariss, C.J., Jones, J.J., Kramer, A.D., Marlow, C., Settle, J.E. and Fowler, J.H., 2012. A 61-million-person experiment in social influence and political mobilization. *Nature*, 489(7415), pp.295-298.

Teresi, H. and Michelson, M.R., 2015. Wired to mobilize: The effect of social networking messages on voter turnout. *The Social Science Journal*, 52(2), pp.195-204.

Minor Assessment #4: Redesigning Social Media Research Assignment

### Week 8 (August 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>): Social Media Network Analysis

Himmelboim, I., Sweetser, K.D., Tinkham, S.F., Cameron, K., Danelo, M. and West, K., 2016.

Valence-based homophily on Twitter: Network analysis of emotions and political talk in the 2012 presidential election. *New media & society*, 18(7), pp.1382-1400.

Min, S.J., 2021. Who Believes in Conspiracy Theories? Network Diversity, Political Discussion, and Conservative Conspiracy Theories on Social Media. *American Politics Research*, p.1532673X211013526.

Messing, Solomon, van Kessle, Patrick, and Hughes, Adam. 2017. Sharing the News in a Polarized Congress. *Pew Research Center*, December

Major Assessment #4: Social Media Network Analysis