

POLS 7010: Research Design

Fall 2023

Th: 3:55-6:50pm, Baldwin 104

Prof. David Cottrell

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Office Hours: Tu, 4:00-6:00pm

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Goal:

The goal of this course is to broaden your understanding of how research in political science is conducted and to give you a foundation for designing your own research as you move forward in your career as a political scientist. The course intends to improve your intuition about what political science research is about and how to conduct it. You will learn about the importance of making valid causal inferences, about the challenges to doing so, and about the research strategies political scientists use to overcome those challenges. Ultimately, the course intends to give you some exposure to a variety of research designs that can help you to improve your research and its validity.

Course Requirements

Short Papers: You will submit 5 short papers due at various dates during the semester as noted in the course agenda below. Each short paper is worth 15% of your final class grade. Ten points are granted on completion of the first draft, **due on eLC by 9am on the morning of class**, as noted in the schedule below. Late assignments will be docked 1 point immediately, and an additional half point per day late. If your assignment is late, I cannot guarantee timely feedback. Additionally, five points will be assessed following revisions based on instructor feedback. Revised short papers are due via on eLC by **Wednesday, December 13th at 5pm**. The prompts for short paper assignments are listed below.

- 1. Research question:** Formulate a “big” question about your political science subfield. Then, revise that big question into a research question, that is answerable in the space of a paper manuscript. Derive a testable hypothesis and describe the ideal data for answering your question. This memo should be no longer than 3 double-spaced pages.
- 2. Experimental design:** Take a well-known theory of politics and derive a hypothesis that is testable using an experimental design. Describe the theory, hypothesis, and experimental design in no more than 5 double-spaced pages.
- 3. Quasi-experimental design:** Take a well-known theory of politics and derive a hypothesis that is testable using a quasi-experimental design. Describe the theory, hypothesis, and design in no more than 5 double-spaced pages.

4. **Case study or Observational design:** Take a well-known theory of politics and derive a hypothesis that is testable using a case study or observational design. Describe the theory, case selection strategy, hypothesis, and design in no more than 5 double-spaced pages.
5. **Survey or Interview design:** Take a well-known theory of politics and derive a hypothesis that is testable using a survey or other form of interview. Describe the theory, hypothesis, and design in no more than 5 double-spaced pages.

Participation: Active participation is foundational to graduate courses. You are expected to do come to class having completed all assigned reading and ready to ask questions and actively discuss course material. To do so, you should take notes when reading and reflect on the material prior to class.

Attendance: Your attendance is not graded in this class. However, participation accounts for a substantial portion of your final grade, and it is not possible to participate actively without attending. In other words, attendance is “necessary” but not “sufficient” for success in this class.

If you are ill, please do not come to class! In such an instance, make sure to review the lecture slides, follow up with a classmate for their notes, and come to office hours or schedule a meeting with me to clarify any points of confusion.

Readings: Most readings are available to you for free via google scholar, accessed from campus. Selections from books are available through the university library, at www.gilfind.uga.edu. Readings that are not available through these sources will be made available on the course’s eLC page. We will engage extensively with the following textbook, both available free to you online, over the course of the semester:

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

Slides: All slides will be made available on the course eLC page.

Grades:

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

Short Papers: 75%

Participation: 25%

Grade scale:

>=93%:	A
90-92.9%:	A-
87-89.9%:	B+
83-86.9%:	B
80-82.9%:	B-

77-79.9%:	C+
73-76.9%:	C
70-72.9%:	C-
60-69.9%:	D
<60%:	F

Academic Honesty Policy:

The academic honesty policy of the university is supplemented (not replaced) by an Honor Code which was adopted by the Student Government Association and approved by the University Council May 1, 1997, and provides: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." All students agree to abide by this code by signing the UGA Admissions Application.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources:

- *If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.*
- *UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).*
- *If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.*
- *Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.*

Care In Using Third-Party Grading Software

Care should be exercised using electronic platforms for grading student assignments, exams, etc. Student information is FERPA-protected. If you are planning to use third-party software/web-based platforms for grading, please consult with EITS Computer Equipment, Software and Services at 706-542-6033 (2-6033 if using a campus landline) to ensure FERPA-protected protocols are followed.

ChatGpt

ChatGPT is a large language model chatbot that uses machine learning algorithms to generate content in response to user prompts. For some instructors, ChatGPT poses challenges for classroom assignments and tests. Under the right conditions, it can also be harnessed as a learning tool. Please see these tips (<https://ctl.uga.edu/resources/documents/ChatGPT-Guidance-for-Instructorsc.pdf>) from the UGA CTL for navigating ChatGPT and other chatbots.

Week 1. Overview of the class

August 17

Week 2. The Scientific Study of Politics: research questions, theory, hypotheses, validity

August 24

Required reading:

1. King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. "Chapter 1: The Science in Social Science." *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
2. Geddes, Barbara. 2003. Pp. 27-35 of Chapter 2: "Big Questions, Little Answers: How the Questions You Choose Affect the Answer You Get." *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
3. Nyhan, B. and Reifler, J., 2010. *When corrections fail: The persistence of political misperceptions*. *Political Behavior*, 32(2), pp.303-330. (Example of clear question, theory, and hypotheses)

Week 3. NO CLASS (APSA)

September 31

Week 4. Concepts and measurement: data, validity, and reliability

September 7

Required reading:

1. Kellstedt and Whitten. 2018. "Chapter 5: Measuring Concepts of Interest". *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*.
2. Adcock, Robert, and David Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *American Political Science Review* 95(3): 529-546.
3. McDonald, Michael P., and Samuel L. Popkin. 2001. The Myth of the Vanishing Voter. *American Political Science Review* 95 (4): 963-974.
4. Cheibub, José Antonio, Jennifer Gandhi and James Raymond Vreeland. 2010. "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited." *Public Choice* 143(1/2): 67-101.
5. Lührmann, Anna, Marcus Tannenbergh and Staffan Lindberg. 2018. "Regimes of the World (RoW): Opening New Avenues for the Comparative Study of Political Regimes." *Politics and Governance* 6(1):1-18.

Week 5. Description, description, description

Research question memo due via eLC drop box by 9am

September 14

Reading:

1. King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. "Chapter 2: Descriptive Inference." *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994: 33-72.
2. Fariss, Christopher J. 2014. "Respect for human rights has improved over time: Modeling the changing standard of accountability." *American Political Science Review* 108(2): 297-318.
3. Davenport, Lauren D. 2016. "Beyond black and white: Biracial attitudes in contemporary US politics." *American Political Science Review* 110(1): 52-67.
4. Lerner, Alexis M. "The Co-optation of Dissent in Hybrid States: Post-Soviet Graffiti in Moscow." *Comparative Political Studies* (2019): 0010414019879949.

Week 6. Causal inference and the experimental ideal

September 21

Reading:

1. King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. "Chapter 3: Causal Inference." *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994: 33-72.
2. Angrist, J.D. and Pischke, J.S., 2014. "Chapter 1: Randomized Trials" *Mastering metrics: The path from cause to effect*. Princeton university press.
3. Pearl, J. and Mackenzie, D., 2018. "Chapter 5: The Smoke Filled Debate: Clearing the Air." *The book of why: the new science of cause and effect*. Basic books.

Week 7. Experiments and field experiments

September 28

Reading:

1. 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.
2. Cheema, Ali, Sarah Khan, Asad Liaqat, and Shandana Khan Mohmand. 2021. "Canvassing the Gatekeepers: A Field Experiment to Increase Women Voters' Turnout in Pakistan." *American Political Science Review*: 1-21.
3. Lyall, J., Blair, G. and Imai, K., 2013. Explaining support for combatants during wartime: A survey experiment in Afghanistan. *American political science review*, 107(4), pp.679-705.
4. Butler, D.M. and Broockman, D.E., 2011. Do politicians racially discriminate against constituents? A field experiment on state legislators. *American Journal of Political Science*, 55(3), pp.463-477.

Week 8. Natural Experiments

October 5.

Reading:

1. Dunning, Thad. 2012. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences*. Chapter 2, pp. 41-62.
2. Angrist, Joshua D. 1990. "Lifetime Earnings and the Vietnam Era Draft Lottery: Evidence from Social Security Administrative Records." *American Economic Review* 80(3): 313–36.
3. Hyde, Susan. 2007. "The Observer Effect in International Politics: Evidence from a Natural Experiment." *World Politics* 60:37-63.
4. Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "The political salience of cultural difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are allies in Zambia and adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545.
5. Healy, A.J., Malhotra, N. and Mo, C.H., 2010. Irrelevant events affect voters' evaluations of government performance. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 107(29), pp.12804-12809.
6. Jones, B.F. and Olken, B.A., 2009. Hit or miss? The effect of assassinations on institutions and war. *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*, 1(2), pp.55-87.

Week 9. Other quasi-experimental designs

Experimental design memo due via eLC drop box by 9am

October 12.

Reading:

1. Dunning, Thad. 2012. "Chapter 3: Regression Discontinuity Designs." In *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences*.
2. Harris, J. Andrew. 2021. "Election administration, resource allocation, and turnout: Evidence from Kenya." *Comparative Political Studies* 54(3-4): 623-651.
3. Lyall, Jason. 2010. "Are Co-Ethnics More Effective Counter-Insurgents? Evidence from the Second Chechen War." *American Political Science Review* 104(1):1-20.
4. Yoder, J., Handan-Nader, C., Myers, A., Nowacki, T., Thompson, D.M., Wu, J.A., Yorgason, C. and Hall, A.B., 2021. How did absentee voting affect the 2020 US election?. *Science advances*, 7(52), p.eabk1755.
5. Grumbach, Jacob M., and Charlotte Hill. 2022. "Rock the registration: Same day registration increases turnout of young voters." *The Journal of Politics* 84(1): 405-417.

Week 10. Observational designs

October 19

Reading:

1. King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. "Chapter 5: Understanding What to Avoid." *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994: 150-206.
2. Przeworski, Adam, and Fernando Limongi. 1997. "Modernization: Theories and facts." *World politics* 49(2): 155-183.
3. Boix, Carles, and Susan C. Stokes. 2003. "Endogenous democratization." *World politics* 55(4): 517-549.

4. Archer, Allison MN. 2018. "Political advantage, disadvantage, and the demand for partisan news." *The Journal of Politics* 80(3): 845-859.
5. Chen, J. and Cottrell, D., 2016. Evaluating partisan gains from Congressional gerrymandering: Using computer simulations to estimate the effect of gerrymandering in the US House. *Electoral Studies*, 44, pp.329-340.

Week 11. Case studies, case selection, and the comparative method

Quasi-experimental design memo due via eLC drop box by 9am

October 26

Reading:

1. Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative politics and the comparative method." *American political science review* 65(3): 682-693.
2. Geddes, Barbara. 1990. "How the cases you choose affect the answers you get: Selection bias in comparative politics." *Political analysis* 2: 131-150.
3. Card, D. and Krueger, A.B., 2000. Minimum wages and employment: a case study of the fast-food industry in New Jersey and Pennsylvania: reply. *American Economic Review*, 90(5), pp.1397-1420.
4. Berman, Sheri. 1997. "Civil society and the collapse of the Weimar Republic." *World politics* 49(3): 401-429.
5. Gamboa, Laura. 2017. "Opposition at the Margins: Strategies against the Erosion of Democracy in Colombia and Venezuela." *Comparative Politics* 49(4): 457-477.

Week 12. On mechanisms and process tracing

November 2

1. Collier, David. 2011. "Understanding process tracing." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44(4): 823-830.
2. Ricks, Jacob I. and Amy H. Liu. 2018. "Process-Tracing Research Designs: A Practical Guide." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 51(4): 842-846.
3. Pérez Betancur, Verónica, Rafael Piñeiro Rodríguez, and Fernando Rosenblatt. 2020. "Chapter 4: Origins and Reproduction of the Mass-Organic Structure." In *How Party Activism Survives: Uruguay's Frente Amplio*. Cambridge University Press.
 - a. Also read Chapter 1. Introduction

Week 13. Surveys

Case study or observational design memo due via eLC drop box by 9am

November 9

Reading:

1. Lupu, Noam, and Kristin Michelitch. 2018. "Advances in survey methods for the developing world." *Annual Review of Political Science* 21(1): 195-214.

2. Berinsky, Adam J. 2017. "Measuring public opinion with surveys." *Annual review of political science* 20: 309-329.
3. Blair, Graeme, Alexander Coppock, and Margaret Moor. 2020. "When to worry about sensitivity bias: A social reference theory and evidence from 30 years of list experiments." *American Political Science Review* 114(4): 1297-1315.
4. Castorena, Oscar, Noam Lupu, and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister. "Online Surveys in Latin America." Forthcoming, *PS: Political Science and Politics*.
5. Ansolabehere, S., Fraga, B.L. and Schaffner, B.F., 2022. The current population survey voting and registration supplement overstates minority turnout. *The Journal of Politics*, 84(3), pp.1850-1855.

Week 14. Fieldwork: talking to people

November 16

Reading:

1. Mosley, Layna. 2013. "'Just Talk to People'? Interviews in Contemporary Political Science" In *Interview Research in Political Science*, editors, Layna Mosley. Ithaca NY, Cornell University Press.
2. González, Yanilda, and Lindsay Mayka. 2022. "Policing, Democratic Participation, and the Reproduction of Asymmetric Citizenship." *American Political Science Review*: 1-17.
3. Cramer, Katherine J., and Benjamin Toff. 2017. "The fact of experience: Rethinking political knowledge and civic competence." *Perspectives on Politics* 15(3): 754-770.
4. Fenno, R.F., 1977. US House members in their constituencies: An exploration. *American Political Science Review*, 71(3), pp.883-917.

November 23. Thanksgiving Break

Week 15. Best Practices

Survey or interview design memo due via eLC drop box by 9am

November 30

Reading:

1. Berinsky, Adam J., James N. Druckman, and Teppei Yamamoto. 2021. "Publication Biases in Replication Studies." *Political Analysis* 29(3): 370-384.
2. Dion, Michelle L., Jane Lawrence Sumner, and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell. 2018. "Gendered citation patterns across political science and social science methodology fields." *Political analysis* 26(3): 312-327.
3. Djupe, Paul A., Amy Erica Smith, and Anand Edward Sokhey. 2019. "Explaining gender in the journals: how submission practices affect publication patterns in political science." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 52(1): 71-77.
4. Elman, Colin, Diana Kapiszewski, and Arthur Lupia. 2018. "Transparent social inquiry: Implications for political science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 21: 29-47.

5. Franco, Annie, Neil Malhotra, and Gabor Simonovits. 2014. "Publication bias in the social sciences: Unlocking the file drawer." *Science* 345(6203): 1502-1505.

All revised short papers are due via eLC by Wednesday, December 13th at 5pm.