POLS 4150: Research Methods in Political Science
Class Time: MWF 9:10 – 10:00am
Classroom: Baldwin 101D
Instructor: Jeffrey M. Glas, PhD

Contact Information:
Office Hours: By Appointment
Office Location: Baldwin 380a
Email: jeffrey.glas@uga.edu

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 and other social phenomena 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 literature and use them to responsibly formulate new theories and hypotheses.

(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 quantitative data.

II. Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation

(2.1) Required Textbooks
We will be using a textbook. It is available in the University Bookstore, but feel free to obtain the text through alternative vendors. Other assigned readings can be found in Content Folders on eLC.

(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 through a series of five problem sets, a research paper broken up into three parts, and a research poster.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“Front End” Paper</td>
<td>(10%)</td>
<td>February 2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical Research Design Paper</td>
<td>(20%)</td>
<td>March 1st</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper &amp; Poster</td>
<td>(20%)</td>
<td>April 29th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem Sets</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Weekly-ish</td>
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(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) Disability Disclosure Statement
Abled-ness 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). The DRC is located at 825 Lumpkin Street (Clark-Howell Hall) and can be contacted by phone at 706.542.8719.

(3.2) Student Athletes
Representing our university in athletics places some unusual scheduling obligations on you. Please get in touch with me (Dr. Glas) about your schedule so we can make sure you are able to achieve in the classroom as well as on the field or in the arena.

(3.3) Absences
John Lennon once said, “Life happens while you’re busy making other plans.” Attending class is critical for your success in this class. Participation is a significant portion of your grade and there is a significant amount of course content that we will cover in our class meetings and breakout sessions. Absences will be excused for legitimate reasons (and I am reasonable).

Please do not come to class if you are ill. The UGA Health Center (www.uhs.uga.edu) is located at 55 Carlton Street (across the street from Ramsey).
(3.4) **Missed/Late Assignments**
Missed assignments are awarded a grade of zero. Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of ten (10) points for each calendar day late.

(3.5) **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.

(3.6) **Problems and Emergencies**
If a problem or emergency arises that prevents you from attending an exam or coming to class, you should contact me (Dr. Glas) as soon as possible.

(3.7) **Policy on Disruptive Behavior**
1) Turn communication devices to silent…or turn them off entirely.
2) Be polite during class discussion.

(3.8) **Withdraw Policy**
Be advised that the last day to withdraw from a course without failing is Thursday, March 21. All students who withdraw after this date will receive a “WF”.
IV. **Course Reading and Assignment Schedule**

**Week 1 – January 8 \(^{th}\) and 10 \(^{th}\) – Thinking Scientifically About Politics**

Syllabus and Introductions

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 1


***Friday, January 12 \(^{th}\) – SPSA – No Class***

***Friday, January 12 \(^{th}\) – Last Day of Drop/Add***

**Week 2 – January 17 \(^{th}\) and 19 \(^{th}\) – 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 eL.C)

Problem Set 1 – Theorizing

***Monday, January 15 \(^{th}\) – MLK Day – No Classes***

**Week 3 – January 22 \(^{nd}\), 24 \(^{th}\), and 26 \(^{th}\) – Research Design**

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 4


**Week 4 – January 29 \(^{th}\) and 31 \(^{st}\) – Concepts, Variables, and Measurement, Part I**

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 5


“Front End” Paper Due

***Friday, February 2 \(^{nd}\) – No Class***

**Week 5 – February 5 \(^{th}\), 7 \(^{th}\), and 9 \(^{th}\) – Concepts, Variables, and Measurement, Part II**

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 6

Problem Set 2
Week 6 – February 12th, 14th, and 16th – Sampling and Statistical Inference, Part I
Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 7

Week 7 – February 19th, 21st, and 23rd – Research Workshop
Research Workshop

Week 8 – February 26th, 28th, and March 1st – Sampling and Statistical Inference, Part II
PEW Research Center – How Different Weighting Methods Work
Empirical Research Design Paper Due

***Semester Midpoint – March 2nd***

Week 9 – Spring Break

***Monday, March 4th – Friday, March 8th – Spring Break – No Classes***

Week 10 – March 11th, 13th, and 15th – Bivariate Hypothesis Testing
Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 8

Problem Set 3

Week 11 – March 18th, 20th, and 22nd – Statistical Modeling and Hypothesis Testing
Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 9

***Thursday, March 21st – Withdrawal Deadline***
Week 12 – March 25th, 27th, and 29th – Multivariate Regression Models, Part 1
Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 10

Problem Set 4

Week 13 – April 1st and 3rd – Multivariate Regression Models, Part 2
Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 11

***Friday, January 12th – MPSA – No Class***

Week 14 – April 8th, 10th, and 12th – Multivariate Regression Models, Part 3
Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 12

Problem Set 5

Week 15 – April 15th, 17th, and 19th – Presenting Research
Selection for Schwabish’s Better Presentations

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

Week 17 – April 29th – Final Paper & Poster Due

***Tuesday, April 30th – Reading Day***