

INTL 7007: Data Analytics and Presentation for International Policy Professionals

Wednesdays, 9:10-12:20

LeConte Hall 101

Spring 2024

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Drop-in Hours: Mondays, 9:00 to 11:00 am, Room 327 of the IA Building

Course Description and Objectives

As an international policy professional, you will have to be up-to-date on data projects that could influence international policy and know how to present data within the policy community. This course provides you with tools that will help you find, critically examine, analyze, and present international policy data to a broad community. Although the focus will be on data analytics, **no background in statistics is expected or required**. We will be using multiple data software tools to help you work with existing datasets and/or create your own data for the policy community. Each week will focus on different datasets and data structures that you could be using as a policy professional. Whenever possible, I will organize Q-&-A Zoom sessions with policy professionals where we will ask them questions about how they use data in their current careers.

U.S. State Department Diplomacy Lab Opportunity

We will be working this semester on a joint project with the U.S. State Department's Office of Verification, Planning, and Outreach in the Bureau of Arms Control, Deterrence, and Stability (ADS). The project is part of the U.S. State Department's Diplomacy Lab Program. We will spend the semester investigating ways to understand opinions related to weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms issues, especially among youth, within with United States. The project will involve all aspects of our data analytic course materials. Students will meet with State Department officials at the beginning of the semester and then present their findings at the end of the semester. Students may have the option to continue working on the project in the fall of 2024. After completing their research, students will jointly prepare an executive summary, 10-15 page paper, Powerpoint presentation, and a short video on the project. These research projects will be shared with the Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Arms Control, Deterrence, and Stability at the U.S. Department of State and other State Department officials. You will also prepare your own short overview of the project, highlighting your individual work. More information on the project will be shared during our first meetings. We have set aside work days throughout the semester.

Grading

Your course grade is calculated from the following components:

- **65%** - Practice Sets
- **25%** - Diplomacy Lab Group and Individual Work
- **10%** - Critical Review of Existing Dataset

Practice Problem Sets

Throughout the semester, you will be required to examine an existing dataset and provide some answers to policy questions using the data. Some of these assignments will be completed during class time; other assignments will require work between classes.

Diplomacy Lab Group and Individual Work

As mentioned, we will work this semester on a project for the U.S. State Department's Diplomacy Lab Program. As a group, we will prepare an executive summary, 10-15 page paper, Powerpoint presentation, and a short video on the project. You will prepare a 5-10 page (double-spaced) outlining your contributions to the joint project and illustrating how the tools learned in class can be used in applied policy work. Your individual paper will also include your reflections of the project and your role. A rubric will be available for the assignment.

Critical Review of Existing Dataset

It is important for policy professionals to be aware of existing international affairs datasets and be able to critically evaluate datasets for their quality and usability. For this assignment, you will work with a group of 4-5 individuals to (1) present a general 10 minute overview of a dataset and (2) provide the class with typed notes (1-2 pages) that outline the source, coverage, and overview of the dataset (to be uploaded to eLC before the class meeting). A rubric will be available for the assignment.

We will get a calendar of presentations together during the first class.

Grading Scale:

Your final grade will be calculated on the following scale:

- 94 to 100 - A
- 90 to 93.9̄ - A-
- 87 to 89.9̄ - B+
- 84 to 86.9̄ - B
- 80 to 83.9̄ - B-
- 77 to 79.9̄ - C+
- 74 to 76.9̄ - C
- 70 to 73.9̄ - C-
- 60 to 69.9̄ - D
- 59 and below - F

Useful Information and University Policies

Attendance Policy and Make Up Policy

Attendance is not required this semester. I am willing to work with you to make up any work that you miss without penalty. However, please plan to turn in all assignments on time. Problem sets will generally be due a week after they are assigned throughout the semester. Your dataset presentation and Diplomacy Lab project also have set due dates and rubrics requiring timely completion.

Preferred Name and Pronouns

The following is taken verbatim from LINK:

“Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I am eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.”

Prohibition on Recording Lectures

The following is taken verbatim from LINK:

“In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course. o Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.”

University Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy

The following is taken verbatim from LINK:

UGA Student Honor Code: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University’s policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at www.uga.edu/ovpi.

I expect that the Student Honor Code will guide your efforts in this course. A lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy does not explain a violation. Please email me with any questions.

Changes to the Syllabus Could Occur

The following is taken verbatim from LINK:

“The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.”

FERPA Statement

The following is taken verbatim from LINK:

“The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants students certain information privacy rights. See the registrar’s explanation at www.reg.uga.edu/general-information/ferpa/. FERPA allows disclosure of directory information (name, address, telephone, email, date of birth, place of birth, major, activities, degrees, awards, prior schools), unless requested in a written letter to the registrar.”

Disability Services

The following is taken verbatim from LINK:

“If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>”

The following is taken verbatim from LINK:

“Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor or designate during regular office hours or by appointment.”

I want to help all students succeed in this course!

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

The following is taken verbatim from LINK:

“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.”

Some material in this course contains references to violence. I urge you to take your mental health seriously. There are campus resources to help.

Course Readings and Software

No book purchases are necessary for this class. All of the readings come from academic journal articles, online materials, and book chapters. If the readings cannot be easily downloaded from Google Scholar on campus, readings can be found on the eLearningCommons page for this course. I expect you to have completed the readings **before** coming to each week’s class.

This course will use Stata and R software packages. For this semester, we've been lucky enough to get special access to Stata for you for 6 months. I'll be posting information on this to the course page in eLC. If you are interested in buying Stata for yourself, I urge you to purchase a perpetual license (\$225 - <https://www.stata.com/order/new/edu/profplus/student-pricing/>) so that you can use these tools later on. R is free. I encourage you to use RStudio (also free). We'll talk about how to get R early in the semester.

To note, you have access to R and Stata through the vLab: <https://eits.uga.edu/support/vlab/>. However, I strongly recommend you download Stata yourself using the instructions on eLC.

Class Outline

January 10th: No Class: Dr. Murdie at the Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs Deans and Directors Meeting at the National University of Singapore

- Go over course materials on eLC, download Stata and R Studio to your computer

January 17th: Module 1: Introduction to Course and Why Data in the Policy Community, Begin Data Work in Stata

- **Goals:** Introduction and expectations for semester, outline goals and Diplomacy Lab structure
- **Readings:**
 - Cukier, Kenneth, and Viktor Mayer-Schoenberger. 2013. "The rise of big data: How it's changing the way we think about the world." *Foreign Affairs* 92:28.

January 24th: Module 2: What Can We Do With Data? A Beginner's Guide to Stata - FIRST MEETING WITH STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS

- 9:30 Zoom with State Department
- **Goals:** Engage with State Department, familiarize yourself with Stata, learn basics as to how to summarize data, creating do and log files for your work with data
- **Readings:**
 - Rodriguez, German. 2019. "Stata Tutorial." <https://data.princeton.edu/stata/tutorial.pdf>
 - (Just browse!) - Quality of Government Basic Dataset Codebook. https://www.qogdata.pol.gu.se/data/codebook_

January 31st: Module 3: What Can We Do With Data? A Beginner's Guide to R

- **Goals:** Begin using R, understand how to import data or create data in R, where to go to get help, what makes R different than Stata, creating script files for your work with data
- **Readings:**
 - "Introduction to R workshop notes." 2018. <http://tutorials.iq.harvard.edu/R/Rintro/Rintro.html>
 - Paradis, Emmanuel. "R for Beginners." https://cran.r-project.org/doc/contrib/Paradis-rdebuts_en.pdf

- Great overviews of differences between R and Stata and some basic commands: <https://www.princeton.edu/~otorro/>, http://rslblissett.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/RTutorial_160930.pdf

- **Dataset Presentation:**

- Correlates of War Project - Militarized Interstate Disputes
 - * <https://correlatesofwar.org/data-sets/mids/>

February 7th: Module 4: Human Subject Overview - Surveys and Survey Experiments

- **Goals:** Discuss the potential for surveys for policy professionals, outline the problems with human subject research, create basic surveys and survey experiments
- Please go through human subjects training courses: <https://research.uga.edu/compliance-training/human-subjects/>
- Establish a Qualtrics account: https://eits.uga.edu/web_and_applications/qualtrics/
- World Values Survey: <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp>
- **Readings:**
 - Murdie, Amanda, and Carolin Purser. 2017. "How protest affects opinions of peaceful demonstration and expression rights." *Journal of Human Rights* 16.3 (3): 351-369.
 - Haines, Alexandra, Michele Leiby, Matthew Krain, and Amanda Murdie. "Two sides of the same coin: can campaigns generate support for both human rights and retributive violence?." *International Interactions* 46 (3): 402-430.
- **Dataset Presentation:**
 - UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset
 - * <https://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/index.html#armedconflict>

February 14th: Group Diplomacy Lab Work Day

- **Goals:** By the end of class, we need to have our survey/survey experiment drafted and our IRB application submitted for our Diplomacy Lab project. We will also meet one-on-one to go over individual contributions.

February 21st Module 5: A Crash Course in Regression Analysis

- **Goals:** Understand the basics of models where you “control” for other factors (multivariate analyses), learn how to run these models on statistical software, focus on ways to provide results of these models to consumers
- **Readings:**
 - UK Government Statistical Service. “Statistics for policy professionals: things that you need to know.” https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Guidance-on-Statistics-for-Policy-Professionals-v1.0_FINAL.pdf
 - Gallo, Amy. 2015. "A refresher on regression analysis." *Harvard Business Review* <https://hbr.org/2015/11/a-refresher-on-regression-analysis>
- **Dataset Presentation:**
 - International Crisis Behavior Project
 - * <https://sites.duke.edu/icbdata/data-collections/>

February 28th: Module 6: Maps and Geocoded Data

- **Goals:** Basic introduction on making maps with statistical software, understanding grids and geocoded data
- **Readings:**
 - Cohen, Dara Kay, and Ragnhild Nordås. 2014. "Sexual violence in armed conflict: Introducing the SVAC dataset, 1989–2009." *Journal of Peace Research* 51(3): 418-428
 - Sundberg, Ralph, and Erik Melander. 2013. "Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset." *Journal of Peace Research*, 50(4): 523–532.
- **Dataset Presentation:**
 - Global Sanctions Database
 - * <https://www.globalsanctionsdatabase.com/>

March 6th: No Class - Spring Break

March 13th: Module 7: Automated Event Data

- **Goals:** Understand the potential and the problems with automated event data, how to extract necessary information from event datasets
- **Readings:**
 - King, Gary, and Will Lowe. "An automated information extraction tool for international conflict data with performance as good as human coders: A rare events evaluation design." *International Organization* 57.3 (2003): 617-642.
 - Bell, Sam, David R. Cingranelli, Amanda Murdie, and Alper Caglayan. 2013. "Coercion, Capacity, and Coordination: Predictors of Political Violence." *Conflict Management and Peace Science*. 30(3): 240-262.
- **Dataset Presentation:**
 - Global Terrorism Database
 - * <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/about/>

March 20th: Module 8: Network Analysis Data

- **Goals:** Discuss network data and its analysis, basic overview of how network data can be used
- **Readings:**
 - Hafner-Burton, Emilie M., Miles Kahler, and Alexander H. Montgomery. "Network analysis for international relations." *International Organization* 63.3 (2009): 559-592.
 - Murdie, Amanda, and David R. Davis. "Looking in the mirror: Comparing INGO networks across issue areas." *The Review of International Organizations* 7.2 (2012): 177-202.
 - Asal, Victor, and R. Karl Rethemeyer. "Researching terrorist networks." *Journal of Security Education* 1.4 (2006): 65-74.
- **Dataset Presentation:**
 - Big Allied and Dangerous (BAAD) Project
 - * <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=hdl%3A1902.1/16062>

March 27th: Module 9: Small N Data - Focus Groups and Interviews

- **Goals:** Discuss small N data issues, focus on case selection, practice interview basics
- Look over this website: <http://atlasti.com/>
- And this one: <https://provalisresearch.com/qualitative-research-software/>
- **Readings:**
 - Carpenter, Charli, et al. "Explaining the advocacy agenda: Insights from the human security network." *International Organization* 68.2 (2014): 449-470.
 - Aberbach, Joel D., and Bert A. Rockman. "Conducting and coding elite interviews." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 35.4 (2002): 673-676.
- **Dataset Presentation:**
 - Political Terror Scale
 - * <https://www.politicalterrorscale.org/Data/>

April 3rd: Group Diplomacy Lab Work Day- Dr. Murdie at the International Studies Association Annual Meeting

- **Goals:** By the end of class, the class should turn in a progress report of all progress completed to date. Each individual student should complete a brief (1 page) outline of their contributions and reflections.

April 10th: Module 10: Small N Data - Archives, *Meet at the Richard B. Russell Special Collections Library

- **Goals:** Discuss the role of archival research, ethical challenges with research
- **Readings:**
 - Wood, Elisabeth Jean. "The ethical challenges of field research in conflict zones." *Qualitative Sociology* 29.3 (2006): 373-386.
 - Lee, Alexander. 2015. "How (and How Not) to Use Archival Sources in Political Science." http://www.rochester.edu/college/faculty/alexander_lee/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/archives.pdf

April 17th: Group Diplomacy Lab Work Day - Internal Presentations

- **Goals:** This will be the final class group work day for the Diplomacy Lab project. Dr. Murdie will oversee all final work products before they are shared with the U.S. State Department.

April 24th: Final Diplomacy Lab Q&A

Final Papers Due May 4th by 11:59 pm