

## **PS 372-002 Intro to Political Analysis (Fall 2013)**

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 3- 3:50  
Chemistry-Physics Building, Room 367

**Instructor:** Theresa Schroeder  
**Office Location:** 1606 Patterson Office Tower (POT)  
**Office Hours:** Mon, Wed & Friday 1-2 pm, or by appointment  
**Email:** tsc225@g.uky.edu

### **Course Description**

The main objective of this course is to familiarize students with common approaches of political science research, both how to understand and conduct political science research. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to locate academic sources on a variety of social science topics, identify the particular research design used in the studies, identify strengths and weaknesses of the study, and utilize political science research publications and research methods in future courses. Ultimately, the course seeks to enable students to achieve the following goals:

1. **Comprehend the basic approaches to empirical research in political science.**
2. **Understand how political scientists develop research questions, theories, and hypotheses.**
3. **Learn how to operationalize concepts in order to test their hypotheses.**
4. **Be able to conduct their own political science research.**

### **Required Text**

Johnson, Janet Buttolph and H.T Reynolds. 2012. *Political Science Research Methods*. 7<sup>th</sup> Edition.

Available in the University Bookstore

### **Recommended Text**

Strunk, William and E.B. White. 2000. *The Elements of Style* 4<sup>th</sup> Edition

### **Additional Readings**

Assigned readings outside the textbook will be available on Blackboard under course content.

### **Communication With the Instructor**

If you have a question NOT answered on the syllabus, please come to my office hours, set up an appointment, or use e-mail to reach me. Students should expect a response to e-mails within 24. Certain questions for this class may be better addressed through face-to-face conversation. If I think this the case, I will ask the student to set up an appointment to discuss the question. This often is a more efficient means to address the question as well as to ensure the student fully understands the instructor's guidance.

## **Earning Grades**

Research Design Paper: **40%**  
    Research Question: 5 %  
    Annotated Bibliography: 5 %  
    Theory & Hypothesis: 5%  
    Data & Design: 5 %  
    Final Research Design: 20%  
Research Presentation: **5%**  
Other Assignments: **30%**  
    Paper Review & Critique: 20%  
    Pop Quizzes           10%

Final Comprehensive Exam: **25%**  
Total 100%

## **Submitting Assignments & Late Assignments**

All written assignments are to be uploaded on Blackboard under the Assignments tab by 3pm the date the assignment is due. There are no exceptions. Papers turned in late will receive a 10% grade deduction for each day it is late.

## **Appealing Grades**

If a student wishes to appeal a grade on an exam, they must first provide a written statement explaining why additional points should be given. This statement must be typed and does not mean a simple request for more points. The student must tell why s/he believes some specific aspect of his/her answer is correct or of more value. The instructor reserves the right to subtract points as well as to add points during the review process and to re-grade the entire exam, not just the portion under appeal.

## **Excused Absences & Make-up Exams**

Attendance is not mandatory. Make up exams for either the midterm or final will be permitted only under the gravest of circumstances and with appropriate documentation. Students are required to notify their instructor before the exam takes place of any reason why they are unable to take the exam at the designated time. Students will be allowed to make-up an exam due to sickness if the student can provide a doctor's note stating the dates the student should be excused from classes.

*Note: personal travel plans are not a legitimate reason for requesting to take an exam at a different time.*

## **Grading Policy**

Final course grades will be assigned using the following scale:

A 100% - 90%	B 89.9% - 80%
C 79.9% - 70%	D 69.9% - 60%
E 59.9% - 0%	

### **Plagiarism and Cheating**

Students are advised to retain all notes and drafts for all work until after they receive their final grade. Students should also be aware that the instructor takes matters of plagiarism and cheating very seriously and is prone to imposing the most severe penalty allowed by university rules, which includes, but is not limited to, issuing an automatic grade of 0.0 for the entire course.

### **Special Needs**

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the disability Resource Center (Room 2, Alumni Gym, 257-2754, [jkarnes@email.uky.edu](mailto:jkarnes@email.uky.edu)) for coordination of campus disability services available to students with disabilities.

### **Guidelines for Article Review/Critique**

Students will chose 1 political science research paper to review, selected from possible options on the course website. The student will briefly review the research paper i.e. identifying the research question, theory, hypothesis, the dependent and independent variables, and how the author(s) test the hypothesis. After briefly reviewing the article, the student must articulate what was good about the paper as well as what the student would change to make it better, focusing on the variables, measurement, data used, and over research design. The reviews must be 2-3 pages in length and turned in via Blackboard. Students must use Times New Roman (12-point) font, standard margins, and use APSA style citations.

### **Pop Quizzes**

To ensure students are able to actively participate in the class discussion, five pop quizzes will be administered throughout the semester over the article readings. The quizzes will focus on the article readings for the assigned week with questions asking about elements of the paper covered in class up to that point. For example, the week of September 16, a potential question might be name the research question and hypotheses in Caprioli (2000). Questions the week of October 7 might ask about the sample used in the different articles assigned.

## **Expectations and Guidelines for the Research Design Paper**

You have been given a research budget of \$100,000 and been told to go out and do research. The completion of this project will be a 10-20 page research design. It will require students to select a research topic, devise a research question, conduct a literature review, formulate a theory and testable hypothesis, operationalize concepts into usable variables, and create a plan to carry out the study. The research design will be completed in 5 parts over the course of the semester. These 5 parts are: the research question; an annotated bibliography; the theory and hypothesis; the variables and method you would use to test your hypothesis; and then the final research design paper with all the components together in one coherent research paper. **The paper components must be turned in via Blackboard. Students must use Times New Roman (12-point) font, standard margins, and use APSA style citations and section headings. With the exception of the research questions and annotated bibliography, all sections must be double-spaced.** A pdf copy of the style guide is located on the course website. If the student has any questions about the proper format, please talk with the instructor for further guidance.

The Research Question: Students will prepare 3-5 possible political science questions they would be interested in exploring over the course of the semester. The question can be about American politics, comparative politics, international relations, or any political science related topic. The question should be something the student is interested in. If a research paper is assigned in a different political science class, the student may use the same question for PS 372 as long as the professor of the other class approves using the same paper in 2 classes.

Annotated Bibliography: In order to move forward, you must know where you've been. This means that to conduct good research you must first understand previous findings on your topic. This will allow you to develop a theory about your research question and develop a testable hypothesis. **Students must find a minimum of 7 peer-reviewed academic sources.** It is quite likely that more sources will be needed for the final project, however, these 7 sources will serve as a solid foundation to begin the research design. For the annotated bibliography, students must list the sources in proper APSA format. Under each citation, the student must briefly summarize the article or book (2-5 sentences). Failure to use proper peer-reviewed academic sources will result in a deduction of the grade for the project.

Theory & Hypothesis: The theory is your story of how you think the world works. It is what you think the answer is to your research question. The theory is developed using the previous literature on the topic. From the theory, testable hypothesis (or hypotheses) are derived that articulate the expected relationship between your concepts. The theory is the most important piece of the research paper and is the core of what you are contributing to the larger body of knowledge. From your theory, you must develop at least one hypothesis that you will test. **The length of this section should be around 2-5 pages.**

Data & Methods: To test the hypothesis, you must make decisions on how you will operationalize your concepts into variables. For example, if you think democracy will increase human rights in a country you have to explain what democracy and human rights are and how you measure these variables. For this component, you will describe your variables and explain your rationale for selecting these particular variables to represent your concepts. You must also state what source you will get your data (online database, World Bank, other scholars, collect the data yourself through interviews, surveys, etc), and why you chose this source for your data.

Final Research Design: Finally, you will put all the components together to create a Final Research Design. The student is expected to have made the necessary revisions to the final project based on the feedback received on each component from the professor. Failure to make the revisions will ultimately result in a low grade on the final project. The final project will include: an introduction, literature review, theory and hypothesis, discussion of the data and methods proposed to test the hypothesis, and conclude with the possible implications of (unknown) results of the research.

A rough suggestion for page lengths of each section in the final draft is as follows:

- Introduction—1 page
- Literature Review—3-5 pages
- Theory—2-5 pages
- Data and Methods—3-5 pages
- Conclusion—1-2 pages

Minimum 9 pages total, Maximum 20 pages total

### **Expectations and Guidelines for Research Presentations**

All students must present their research to the rest of the class. This presentation serves two purposes: 1) exposes the students to a larger amount of political science research, 2) give students experience in giving professional presentations. The presentation will be a general overview of the final written research design. The presentation must include: question the student is trying to answer i.e. the research question, previous literature on the topic, the theory & hypothesis, an overview on the variables and data used and the rationale for using the variables and data selected, and finally the possible implications of the results of the research. Once the student is finished presenting their research, the other students have the chance to answer general questions about the research project. To present their research, the student is expected to utilize Power Point. The presentation should be around 5-7 minutes in length. The presentation is a chance for students to present their work in a professional environment and need to dress accordingly. All students **MUST** present their project.

## Course Schedule

The instructor reserves the right to make alterations to the syllabus as needed.  
Please bring the assigned articles to class either printed off or on your laptop or tablet.

### Class Introduction & Syllabus Review

August 28 & 30

Read the examples of scientific and political science research on the course website.

### Intro to Social Science & the Empirical Approach

Week of September 2--**No Class Monday September 2 Labor Day**

Manzi, Jim. 2010. "What Social Science Does, and Doesn't Know." *City Journal*.  
<http://www.city-journal.org/printable.php?id=6330> (accessed August 8, 2013).

Noel, Hans. 2010. "10 Things Political Scientists Know That You Don't". *The Forum*. 8(3):1-19.

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### Beginning the Research Process: Developing Research Questions & Reviewing the Literature

Week of September 9

Geddes, Barbara. 2003. *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. **Read pgs 27-37**

Ross, Michael. 2008. "Oil, Islam, and Women." *American Political Science Review* 102: 107-23.

Fearon, James. 1994. "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes." *American Political Science Review* 88: 577-92.

*Political Science Research Methods* Chp 3

Research Questions due Friday September 13. Upload on Blackboard AND bring to class.

## **Building Blocks of Scientific Research: Hypotheses, Concepts, & Variables**

Week of September 16

Caprioli, Mary. 2000. "Gendered Conflict." *Journal of Peace Research* 37: 51-68.

Hafner-Burton, Emilie M. 2005. "Trading Human Rights: How Preferential Trade Agreements Influence Government Repression." *International Organization* 59: 593-629.

*Political Science Research Methods* Chp 4

## **Measurement**

Week of September 23

Collins, Todd and Christopher Cooper. 2012. "Case Salience and Media Coverage of Supreme Court Decisions: Toward a New Measure." *Political Research Quarterly*. 65(2): 396-407

Elkins, Zachary. 2000. "Gradations of Democracy? Empirical Tests of Alternative Conceptualizations." *American Journal of Political Science* 44: 293-30

Ross, Michael. 2008. "Oil, Islam, and Women." *American Political Science Review* 102: 107-23.

*Political Science Research Methods* Chp 5

## **Research Design**

Week of September 30

Posner, Daniel. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbuas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98: 529-45.

Geddes, Barbara. 1990. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics." *Political Analysis* 2: 131-50.

Hughes, Melanie. 2009. "Armed Conflict, International Linkages, and Women's Parliamentary Representation in Developing Nations." *Social Problems* 56: 174-204.

*Political Science Research Methods Chp 6*

*Annotated Bibliography due Oct 2 on Blackboard*

**Sampling**

Week of October 7

Mintz, Alex, Steven Redd, and Arnold Vedlitz. 2006. "Can We Generalize from Student Experiments to the Real World in Political Science, Military Affairs, and International Relations?". *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50: 757-76.

Gibson, James, Jeffrey Gottfried, Michael Delli Carpini, and Kathleen Hall Jamieson. 2010. "The Effects of Judicial Campaign Activity on the Legitimacy of Courts: A Survey-Based Experiment." *Political Research Quarterly* 20: 1-14.

*Political Science Research Methods Chp 7*

*Sampling Exercise due October 7 in Class*

**Ethics & Qualitative Approaches**

Week of October 14

Singer, Elenor. and Felice J. Levine. 2003. "Protection of Human Subjects of Research: Recent Developments and Future Prospects for the Social Sciences." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 67(1): 148-164.

Carapico, Sheila. 2006 "No Easy Answers: The Ethics of Field Research in the Arab World." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 39(3): 429-431

Hudson, Valerie, and Andrea Den Boer. 2002. "A Surplus of Men, a Deficit of Peace: Security and Sex Ratios in Asia's Largest States." *International Security* 26.

*Political Science Research Methods Chp 8*

**Surveys**

Week of October 21-**No Class Friday October 25: Peace Science Society Conference**

Wilcox, Clyde, Lara Hewitt, and Dee Allsop. 1996. "The Gender Gap in Attitudes toward the Gulf War: A Cross-National Perspectives." *Journal of Peace Research* 33: 67-82.

Canache, Damarys, Jeffery Mondak, and Mitchell Seligson. 2001. "Meaning and Measurement in Cross-National Research on Satisfaction with Democracy." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 65: 506-28.

Kuklinski, James, Michael Cobb, and Martin Gilens. 1997. "Racial Attitudes and the "New South"." *Journal of Politics* 59: 323-49.

*Political Science Research Methods* Chp 10  
*Theory & Hypothesis Due October 23 on Blackboard*

### **Exploring the Data**

Week of October 28

Ross, Michael. 2006. "Is Democracy Good for the Poor?" *American Journal of Political Science* 50: 860-74.

Bush, Sarah Sunn. 2011. "International Politics and the Spread of Quotas for Women in Legislatures." *International Organization* 65: 103-37.

Mansfield, Edward, and Jack Snyder. 1995. "Democratization and the Danger of War." *International Security* 20: 5-38

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### **Catch-up & Miscellaneous**

Week of November 4

Ross, Michael. 2006. "Is Democracy Good for the Poor?" *American Journal of Political Science* 50: 860-74.

Mansfield, Edward, and Jack Snyder. 1995. "Democratization and the Danger of War." *International Security* 20: 5-38

Wilcox, Clyde, Lara Hewitt, and Dee Allsop. 1996. "The Gender Gap in Attitudes toward the Gulf War: A Cross-National Perspectives." *Journal of Peace Research* 33: 67-82.

*Variables, Data, and Methods Due November 4 on Blackboard*

## **Statistical Inference**

Week of November 11

Leeds, Brett Ashley. 2003. "Do Alliances Deter Aggression? The Influence of Military Alliances on the Initiation of Militarized Interstate Disputes." *American Journal of Political Science* 47: 427-39.

Barbieri, Katherine. 1996. "Economic Interdependence: A Path to Peace or a Source of Interstate Conflict?". *Journal of Peace Research* 33: 29-49.

*Political Science Research Methods* Chp 12

## **Investigating Relationships Between Variables**

Week of November 18

Vasquez, John. 1995. "Why Do Neighbors Fight? Territoriality, Proximity, or Interaction." *Journal of Peace Research* 32: 277-93.

Stack, Steven, and Jim Gundlach. 1992. "The Effect of Country Music on Suicide." *Social Forces* 71: 211-18.

Kibris, Arzu. 2011. "Funerals and Elections: The Effects of Terrorism on Voting in Turkey." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55: 220-47.

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## **Paper Writing**

Week of November 25- **No Class November 27 & 29 Thanksgiving**

Review/ Critique Paper due November 25 on Blackboard

## **Student Research Presentations**

Week of December 2

Final Research Design Papers due December 2 on Blackboard

## **Catch-up & Review**

Week of December 9

**Final Exam: 8:00 am Thursday December 19 in Chemistry-Physics Building, Room 367**