

## Political Science 3001: Political Analysis

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Hours: 1:00-2:30 T & Th and by appointment  
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Fall Semester 2005  
T & Th 10:45-12:05  
OSH 104

This course is an introduction to the empirical study of politics. In this course we examine how researchers attempt to provide systematic and reliable answers to important political questions. We begin with the topic of research design -- how to frame an appropriate research question, how to develop a tentative hypothesis, and how to gather empirical evidence. Next, we examine some ways to use statistics to analyze empirical data. This course can fulfill the General Education requirement for a course in statistics or logic (QB) as well as a quantitative intensive (QI) course for the Bachelor of Science requirements.

By the end of this course, all students should:

- have a working knowledge of basic elements of empirical research in political science;
- understand commonly used research strategies in political science such as experiments, surveys, and archival research and the strengths and weaknesses of these various strategies;
- understand how data can be summarized and presented using descriptive statistics;
- be familiar with commonly used analytical techniques in political science such as contingency tables and bivariate regression analysis;
- understand how and why basic inferential statistics are used;
- be able to do basic quantitative analysis using political data, including interpreting the results and summarizing the analysis appropriately in tables or figures.

### Requirements and Texts

All students are expected to attend class and complete the assigned reading. Course grades will be based upon the following requirements:

- (1) four take-home exercises (30%);
- (2) midterm examination (20%);
- (3) statistical analysis paper (20%); and
- (4) final examination (30%).

Examinations will include objective, short answer, and problem-solving type questions. Detailed information on the statistical analysis paper will be provided in class. The four take-home exercises will be handed out in class during the weeks indicated below. Due dates will be provided with the exercise. Assignments are due in class on the due dates; late assignments will be penalized and no assignment will be accepted that is more than one week late.

There are two required texts for this course available in the bookstore:

Johnson, Janet B., and H. T. Reynolds. 2005. Political Science Research Methods. 5th ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Le Roy, Michael K. and Michael Corbett. 2006. Research Methods in Political Science: An Introduction Using MicroCase. 6th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

## COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1, August 25: Introduction: Conducting Political Research

READ: Johnson and Reynolds, Chapters 1 and 2  
Le Roy and Corbett, Chapter 1

WEEK 2, August 30-September 1: Variables and Hypotheses

READ: Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 4  
Le Roy and Corbett, Chapters 4 and 5

WEEK 3, September 6-8: Measurement and Operationalization

READ: Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 6  
Le Roy and Corbett, Chapters 2 and 3

**\* Exercise 1 assigned this week \***

WEEK 4, September 13-15: From Ideas to Evidence: The Experimental Method and the Logic of Research Design

READ: Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 3

Iyengar, Shanto, Mark D. Peters, and Donald Kinder. 1982. "Experimental Demonstrations of the 'Not-So-Minimal' Consequences of Television News Programs." American Political Science Review 76 (4): 848-858. [JSTOR and Marriott Library Reserve]

WEEK 5, September 20-22: From Ideas to Evidence II: Sampling and Survey Data

READ: Johnson and Reynolds, Chapters 9 and 10  
Le Roy and Corbett, Chapter 6

Miles, William F. S., and David Rochefort. 1991. "Nationalism Versus Ethnic Identity in Sub-Saharan Africa." American Political Science Review 85 (2): 393-403. [JSTOR and Marriott Library Reserve]

WEEK 6, September 27-29: From Ideas to Evidence III: Observational Techniques and the Use of Archival Data

READ: Johnson and Reynolds, Chapters 7 and 8

Gilens, Martin. 1996. "Race and Poverty in America." Public Opinion Quarterly 60 (4): 515-541. [JSTOR and Marriott Library Reserve]

WEEK 7, October 4: Review: Systematic Research and the Study of Political Questions

**Fall Break: No Class on Thursday, October 6**

WEEK 8, October 11-13: Midterm and Introduction to MicroCase

**\*\*\* Midterm Examination: Tuesday, October 11\*\*\***

WEEK 9, October 18-20: Describing and Presenting Data: Frequencies, Central Tendency, and Dispersion

READ: Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 11  
Le Roy and Corbett, Chapter 8

**\* Exercise 2 assigned this week\***

WEEK 10, October 25-27: Are these Variables Related? Contingency Tables and Measures of Association

READ: Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 12, pp. 339-360 only  
Le Roy and Corbett, Chapters 9 and 10

WEEK 11, November 1-3: Drawing Inferences: Using the Chi-square Test of Significance with Contingency Tables

READ: Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 12, pp. 360-366 only

**\* Exercise 3 assigned this week\***

WEEK 12, November 8-10: Is There Another Reason? Control Variables and Contingency Tables

READ: Le Roy and Corbett, Chapter 12

WEEK 13, November 15-17: Association Between Continuous Variables: Correlation and Bivariate Regression

READ: Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 12, pp. 372-402  
Le Roy and Corbett, Chapter 13

**\* Exercise 4 assigned this week\***

WEEK 14, November 22: Correlation and Regression, continued

**Thanksgiving Break: No Class on Thursday, November 25**

WEEK 15, November 29-December 1: Correlation and Regression, concluded

WEEK 16, December 6-8: Summary: Evaluating Statistical Evidence in Political Science

**\*\*Statistical Analysis Project Due: Thursday, December 8 \*\***

**\*\*\* Final Examination: Thursday, December 15, 10:30-12:30 \*\*\***

**Statement on Academic Honesty:** I expect all students in this course to meet the standards of academic honesty. The standards of academic honesty require, among other things, that all exercises, papers, and examinations that you submit in this course be your own work. Any work you submit should be the product of your individual effort and not the work of others. Work submitted for this course must not have been submitted in a previous course nor may it be submitted in any course taken concurrently without the knowledge and approval of the instructor of each class. An act of academic dishonesty is a violation of the university's regulations regarding student conduct. As such, an act of academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade for the course and may result in a recommendation to university officials for additional disciplinary action. The following definition is from the university's Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (Policy 8-10, rev 3, July 14, 1997): "'Academic dishonesty' includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one's work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information .... It also includes facilitating academic dishonesty by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty." Definitions of these terms and information regarding your rights and responsibilities as a student are available in the university's policies and procedures manual <<http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html>>.

**Grading Distribution:** The following distribution will be used in this course.

A	94% and above
A-	90% - 93%
B+	88% - 89%
B	83% - 87%
B-	80% - 82%
C+	78% - 79%
C	73% - 77%
C-	70% - 72%
D+	68% - 69%
D	63% - 67%
D-	60% - 62%
E	59% and below

**Equal Access:** The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

**Schedule Changes:** The schedule of examinations, assignments, or due dates may need to be changed based upon events during the semester. If changes need to be made, advance notification will be made in class.