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Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 3:00 PM--4:00 PM (all other times by appointment).

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Political Analysis 3001

Spring Semester, 2007

This course is designed to introduce students to a variety of research methods used by social science researchers. Upon completing the course, students should be able to evaluate others' research critically and design and complete their own research projects. To accomplish this, students will learn social science research terms and concepts, learn the rudiments of experimental and quasi-experimental research designs, learn about data collection and measurement, learn about data management and analysis, and learn how to frame a research question and design a research study. Students will be introduced to the basic logic of inference and to basic statistical techniques for analyzing data.

Text requirements: 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.

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

COURSE SCHEDULE

(subject to change as time constraints and interests dictate)

Week	
1. Jan 9 & 11	<u>Introduction to the Course; Overview of the Research Process</u> . Read Johnson and Reynolds, chapter 1 "Introduction" and chapter 2 "Studying Politics Scientifically." Read Le Roy and Corbett, chapter 1 "A Brief Overview of Research Methods..." Do Practice Assignment 1
2. Jan 16&18	<u>Research Questions, Variables and Hypotheses</u> . Read Johnson and Reynolds, chapter 4 "The Building Blocks... Hypotheses, Concepts and Variables." Read Le Roy and Corbett, chapter 4 "Variables, Variation and Explanation" and chapter 5 "Hypotheses." Homework #1 assigned.
3. Jan 23 & 25	<u>Measuring and Operationalizing Concepts and Variables</u> . Read Johnson and Reynolds, chapter 6 "The Building Blocks... Measurement." Read Le Roy and Corbett, chapter 2 "Measurement I: The Basic Ideas" and chapter 3 "Measurement II: Types of Data." Do Practice Assignment 2

4. The Experimental Method and Research Design. Read Johnson and Reynolds, chapter 3 “Research Design.”
- Jan30 & Feb 1 Research Methodology: Sampling and Survey Data. Read Johnson and Reynolds, chapter 9 “Sampling” and chapter 10 “Elite Interviewing and Survey Research.” Read Le Roy and Corbett, chapter 6 “Sampling”. Homework #2 assigned.
5. Research Methodology: Sampling and Survey Data continued. Observational Techniques and Document Analysis. Read Johnson and Reynolds, chapter 7 “Making Empirical Observations...” and chapter 8 “Document Analysis...”
- Feb 6 & 8 Observational Techniques and Document Analysis continued.
6. Review for midterm exam.
- Feb 13 & 15
7. Midterm Exam, 1st half of class. (The exam will cover Johnson and Reynolds, chapters 1-4 and 6-10 and Le Roy and Corbett, chapters 1-6).
- Feb 20 & 22 Introduction to Statistical Analysis, 2nd half of class.
8. Describing and Analyzing Data: Frequency Distributions, Measures of Central Tendency and Measures of Dispersion. Read Johnson and Reynolds, chapter 11 “Univariate Data Analysis and Descriptive Statistics.” Read Le Roy and Corbett, chapter 8 “Descriptive Statistics.” Homework #3 assigned.
- Feb 27 & March 6
9. Cross-tabulation and Measures of Association. Read Le Roy and Corbett, chapter 9 “How to Read a Cross-tabulation” and chapter 10 “Tests of Statistical Significance and Measures of Association.” Read Johnson and Reynolds, chapter 12 “Measuring Relationships and Testing Hypotheses: Bivariate Data Analysis,” pp. 339-360 only, and reread chapter 9, pp. 254-265 “Samples and Statistical Inference.” Homework #4 assigned.
- March 8 & 13
10. Inferences and the Chi-square Test of Statistical Significance. Read Johnson and Reynolds, chapter 12 “Measuring Relationships and Testing Hypotheses...” pp. 360-366 only.
- March 15 & 20
11. Assessing Causality: Using Control Variables. Read Le Roy and Corbett, chapter 12 “Cross-tabulation and Statistics: Controlling for a Third Variable.” Homework #5 assigned.
- March 22 & 27

12. Measures of Association Between Continuous Variables: Correlation and Bivariate Regression. Read Johnson and Reynolds, chapter 12
 March 29 & April 3 “Measuring Relationships and Testing Hypotheses...” pp. 372-402 only.
 Read Le Roy and Corbett, chapter 13 Correlation and Regression,” pp. 243-249 only. Homework #6 assigned.
Correlation and Regression continued.
13.
 April 5 & 10
Correlation and Regression continued.
14.
 April 12 & 17
15. Summary and Review: Analyzing Statistical Data.
 April 19 & 24 Review for final exam.

Take home final will be distributed on Thursday, April 24 and will be due on Thursday May 3rd. Take home final must be turned in no later than May 3rd at noon in my office #310 Marriott Library. There is a 30 points penalty for late final. Assignments must be turned in on due dates and late assignments are not accepted.

Grades: A standard grading scale, i.e. A: 93.0-100.0%, A-: 90.0-92.9%, B+: 87.0-89.9%, B: 83.0-86.9%, B-: 80.0-82.9%, C+: 77.0-79.9%, C: 73.0-76.9%, C-: 70.0-72.9%, D+: 67.0-69.9%, D: 63.0-66.9%, D-: 60.0-62.9%, E: < 59.9%, will be used. However, if the class average is below a C grade on the exams, then the average will be used as the C grade and scores will be adjusted up appropriately. Your grade will be based on a score out of 355, made up of 155 points for assigned Homework 20 points for participation/attendance, 80 points for the midterm, and 100 points for the final exam.

Important Information

Classes begin	Monday, January 8
Last day to drop (delete) classes	Wednesday, January 17
Last day to register, elect CR/NC, or audit classes	Monday, January 22
Last day to withdraw from classes	Friday, March 2
Last day to reverse CR/NC option	Friday, April 20
Classes end	Wednesday, April 25
Reading day	Thursday, April 26
Final exam period	Fri-Thurs, April 27-May 3