POS 3703: SCOPE AND METHODS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Fall 2011
Th 6:00-8:50 pm, BC 235

Professor: Barbara Sgouraki Kinsey
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Office Hours: Tuesday 2:00-5:00 PM; Wednesday 10:00 – Noon (Orlando);
Thursday 3:00-5:00 PM (Cocoa); or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an introduction to the logic and methods of social science research in general and political science in particular. Emphasis will be placed on the logic of research design and data analysis. Students learn techniques of quantitative analysis including statistical inference, hypothesis testing, and regression analysis, and analyze political datasets using statistical software.

TEXTS AND READINGS:

Philip H. Pollock III. 2012. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. 4th Edition. Washington D.C.: CQ Press

Philip H. Pollock III. 2012. *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*. 4th Edition. Washington D.C.: CQ Press

Additional readings will be provided to students at class meetings.

SOFTWARE:

We will be using SPSS in this course. I assume that you have no prior experience with this software. Laboratory sessions will be conducted using the Mobile Lab. These sessions will introduce students to the software and provide time to address questions related to the lectures and assignments.

Cocoa: SPSS is available in the BCC/UCF Joint-Use Computer Laboratory located in Suite 184. **Also, SPSS is installed in two computers at the BCC/UCF Joint Library**.

Computer Lab Hours	**Suite 184, Building 3 (321-433-7971)**
Monday – Thursday	8:30 AM—8:30 PM

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Course grades are determined by nine homework assignments and two in-class open-book exams. Homework assignments are to be turned in by 6 PM on the days specified in the syllabus. Except for cases involving overriding and well documented personal reasons, all late work will be accepted only if submitted within one week following the assignment's due date and will be subjected to a penalty of one letter grade.

There will be two open-book exams. Each exam will cover the portion of the course preceding it. The second exam will not be a comprehensive final exam.

Grades are a weighted average of the following requirements:

Requirement:	Weight:
1. Nine Homework Assignments	50%
2. Two Exams	50%

The plus/minus grading system will apply in this course.

Students must fulfill the following tasks:
1. Complete reading assignments on time.
2. Complete **nine** homework assignments on time.
3. Take **two** open-book exams in class: an exam on Thursday, October 13, and a second exam on Thursday, December 8.

There will be **no** "extra work/credit" to improve your grade. If you think you are failing the course, please contact the professor right away.

A grade of "I" is only given in cases of extreme emergency or special & well documented circumstances late in the semester, provided that you have been making satisfactory progress. In order to be considered for an "I", students **must** contact & make arrangements with the professor prior to the scheduled final exam on **December 8, 2010**.

Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations.
Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371 TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116**, before requesting accommodations from the professor.**

Please note that no laptops (or substitutes) will be used in class other than the Mobile Lab laptops.

If there is anything in the syllabus that is unclear**, <u>it is up to the student to contact the professor for clarification</u>.** Also, it is the student's responsibility to be informed of any announcements made in class.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

<u>Note</u>: This schedule is subject to change depending on the needs of the class. <u>Students are responsible for any changes in syllabus/schedule which are announced in class</u>.

<u>Reading assignments in the schedule refer to *The Essentials of Political Analysis*</u>**

Week	**Topics Covered:**	**Assignments:**
August 25	Introduction to Course	
September 1	Scientific Study: Elements of Research	Pollock: *Essentials of Political Analysis** Introduction Chapter 1, pp. 6-14 Chapter 3, pp. 48-58 Chapter 4, pp. 84-97
September 8	Research Design: Experiments	Pollock: Chapter 4 (review pp. 84-97) ***Homework Assignment 1 Due: 9/8***
September 15	Measurement Sampling ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 1, pp. 14-22 Chapter 2, pp. 28-32 Pollock: Chapter 6, pp. 122-128 ***Homework Assignment 2 Due: 9/15***
September 22	Description of Data ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 2, pp. 32-44; Chapter 6, pp. 128-133 ***Homework Assignment 3 Due: 9/22***
September 29	Probability The Normal Distribution	Reading to be distributed in class Pollock: Chapter 6, pp. 133-140 ***Homework Assignment 4 Due: 9/29***

October 6	Inference Review for First Exam	Pollock: Chapter 6, pp. 140-151 ***Homework Assignment 5 Due: 10/6***
October 13	First Exam	**First Exam: Thursday, October 13**
October 20	Hypothesis Testing Error Types ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 7, pp. 155-164
October 27	Contingency Tables ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 3, pp. 58-63 Chapter 5 Chapter 7, pp. 164-169 ***Homework Assignment 6 Due: 10/27***
November 3	**Campus Closed**	
November 10	Correlation Regression Analysis ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 8, pp. 182-187 Pollock: Chapter 8, pp. 187-196 ***Homework Assignment 7 Due: 11/10***
November 17	Regression Analysis ***(SPSS lab)***	Review Pollock, Chapter 8, pp. 187-196 ***Homework Assignment 8 Due: 11/17***
November 24	***Thanksgiving***	
December 1	Regression Analysis & Review for Second Exam ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 8, pp. 196-201 ***Homework Assignment 9 Due: 12/1***
December 8	Second Exam	**Second Exam: Thursday, December 8**