POS3703 – Spring, 2011

Introduction to Political Science Research Methods

TH 6:00 PM – 8:50 PM

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Office Hours: M, W 1:30-4:00 P.M., or by appointment

Course Description

This is an introductory course on political science research methods. We will survey a variety of research methods employed by social scientists in general and political scientists in particular. Topics covered in this course include research design, measurement and sampling techniques, and how to conduct qualitative and quantitative analyses. My hope is that after this class you will begin to critically assess social science research because STATISTICS CAN LIE.

Required Texts

Pollock, Philip H. III. 2009. *The Essentials of Political Analysis.* 3rd ed. Washington D.C: CQ Press.

Pollock, Philip H. III. 2011. *A Stata Companion to Political Analysis.* 2nd ed. Washington D.C.: CQ Press.

Class Rules and Regulations

Attendance Policy

Attendance is not mandatory for this class. When you come to class I expect you to at least appear to be paying attention. There will be no reading the newspaper, magazines or other material, listening to a CD player or talking to other students. All material, other than the class material, should be out of sight when class starts and all personal conversations will stop. I will ask you to leave if you cannot follow the rules.

Examinations and Assignments

In-Class Exams

There will be two in-class exams for this course. They may contain multiple choice and short answer questions. I will provide further details when we approach the first exam.

Make-up exams will ONLY be given for EXCUSED ABSENCE. If the absence occurs the same day as a scheduled exam or other graded procedure, you need to notify me or the department by the end of the FIRST working day of your return to ensure full rights. You are responsible for providing satisfactory evidence to me within one week of your return to substantiate the reason for the absence. I do not accept photocopies of documents. All make-up exams must be completed by the end of the SECOND working day of your return to class. I may give entirely essay exams as necessary.

Homework Assignments

There will be a total of **10** homework assignments. You will need access to STATA for homework assignments. All assignments will be submitted online via Webcourses.

DO NOT MISS THE DEADLINE. I DO NOT ACCEPT LATE HOMEWORK!

Extra Credit

I will randomly take attendance 5 times. You will receive a total of 2 bonus points if you are present during ALL of these times. If you are present 4 out of 5 times, you will receive only 1 bonus point, unless the absence if university excused. In other words, there will be no bonus points given for more than one unexcused absence. A university excused absence will not be counted against you.

Academic Dishonesty

Students who plagiarize or cheat will receive an "F." A clear definition of academic dishonesty and university procedures for responding to such misconduct can be found in the Golden Rule (see http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/).

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request 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.

Copyright

The handouts used in this course are copyrighted. By "handouts," I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, power-point, quizzes, exams, lab problems, in-class materials review sheets, and additional problem sets. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy and distribute the handouts, unless I expressly grant permission.

Grading Criteria

Your final course grade will consist of three components:

Homework	30%
Final Exam	30%
Second Exam	40%

Letter grades assigned at final time will reflect the following numeric grades:

Numerical Grade	*University Standard*	*Letter Grade*
89.5-100	Excellent	A
79.5-89.4	Good	B
69.5-79.4	Satisfactory	C
59.5-69.4	Passing	D
Below 59.4	Failing	F

Calculation of the final course grade will use the following procedure:

Grade of homework	x . 30	= weighted grade
Grade of first exam	x . 30	= weighted grade
Grade of second exam	x . 40	= weighted grade
Preliminary course grade		= total of weighted grades

Adjustment for extra credit

Final Course Grade = Preliminary grade after adjustment

Grade Distribution

Grades for this class are available only through Webcourses. For instruction of accessing WebCT, see https://myucfgrades.ucf.edu/help/.

DO NOT NEGOTIATE YOUR GRADES. If you are concerned about your performance, grades after the first exam, schedule an appointment with me as early as possible -- not a week before the final exam. I may be able to help you to do better for the rest of the class. Remember, the longer you wait, the less I can do to help you.

Disclaimer

This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion when necessary.

Reading and Assignment Schedule

I expect reading assignments to be completed before the class in which they will be discussed.

Week 1

Course Introduction

Week 2

Pollock, Chapter 1

Week 3

Pollock, Chapter 2

Lab 1, Pollock Stata Companion Chapter 1
Homework #1

Week 4

Pollock, Chapter 3

Lab 2, Pollock Stata Companion Chapter 3
Homework #1 due
Homework #2

Week 5

Pollock, Chapter 4
Lab 3, Pollock Stata Companion Chapter 2
Homework #2 due
Homework #3

Week 6

Pollock, Chapter 5

Lab 4, Pollock Stata Companion Chapter 4
Homework #3 due
Homework #4
Review

Week 7

Exam I

Week 8

Pollock, Chapter 6
Lab 5, Pollock Stata Companion Chapter 5
Homework #4 due
Homework #5

Week 9

Pollock, Chapter 7

Week 10

Pollock, Chapter 8

Week 11

Lab 6, Pollock Stata Companion Chapter 6
Homework #5 due
Homework #6

Pollock, Chapter 9

Week 12

Pollock, Chapter 9
Homework #6 due

Week 13

Lab 7, Pollock Stata Companion Chapter 7
Homework #7

Lab 8, Pollock Stata Companion Chapter 8
Homework #8

Week 14

Lab 9, Pollock Stata Companion Chapter 9

Homework #7 due
Homework #9
Lab 10, Pollock Stata Companion Chapter 10
Homework #8 due
Homework #10

Week 15

Review

Final Exam

University Schedule