Syllabus
Spring 2012

Instructor Contact

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Course Information

Course Name	POS 3703: Scope and Methods of Political Science
Course ID & Section	ID: 20386 Section: OW58
Credit Hours	3 credits
Semester/Year	Spring 2012
Location	Online

Course Description

Prerequisites: Junior standing or consent of the Instructor.

The scope and methodology of political analysis. Extensive examination of the discipline, research design and methodology. The first half of the semester covers basic research designs, the research process, and gives students the tools and information needed to complete the course research paper. The second half of that paper covers other methods of investigation and analysis, survey research, sampling, qualitative research, and ethical considerations.

Course Objectives

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

- Identify basic components of research methodology and techniques used by political scientists.
- Identify ethical considerations in political science research.
- Locate academic resources using the library
- Construct a annotated bibliography for a political science research paper
- Analyze data using statistical software
- Evaluate research, statistics and findings.
- Write a literature review for a political science research paper

Required Text

- Pollock III, Philip H. 2008. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. 3rd Edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Pollock III, Philip H. 2008. *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*. 3rd Edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Optional Texts

- Baglione, Lisa. 2011. *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science: A Practical Guide to Inquiry, Structure, and Methods*. 2nd Edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- Brians, Craig Lenord, Lars Willnat, Jarol B. Manheim, and Richard Rich. 2011. *Empirical Political Analysis: Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods*. 8th Edition. Boston: Longman.
- Le Roy, Michael K. and Michael Corbett. 2008. Research Methods in Political Science: An Introduction Using Microcase ExplorIt. Wadsworth Publishing.

Course Requirements

Discussion (20%):

In order to fully engage in this course, students will be expected engage with other students in online discussions. For each discussion, a student is required to post on the topic, and reply to at least one other student's post. Each required discussion element is to be posted by 11:59 pm on the due date. Late posts will not be accepted for the purpose of grading (i.e. will not count). Any disruptive behavior, inappropriate comments, activities not related to the course, etc. will reflect poorly on the student's participation grade.

Discussion questions and responses will be graded on quantity (i.e. posting the minimum number of required times) and quality (content of the posts and replies). There are a total of 3 discussions, the highest 2 discussion grades will each count toward 10% of the students overall grade. To calculate the score for each required set of discussion questions and replies, the question will be about half the grade, and the reply will be the other half. NO late discussions will be accepted for a grade.

Discussion 1: Students will post a short introduction of themselves. These posts will include their interests within political science (i.e. which subfields and what in particular within those subfields). They will also reply to another student's post.

Discussion 2: Students will post their research question. The post should include a clear research question, which conforms to the course and lecture material and specifications. Students will later use this research question to identify academic research, construct an annotated bibliography, and write their literature review. They will also reply to another student's post.

Discussion 3: For this discussion, students will post the annotated bibliography for at least one of their academic sources. This post should include, the full citation, the key theory or framework the author(s) investigates, the way in which they go about investigating their research question, and their findings (particularly as they relate to the research question and the general theory). They will also reply to another student's post.

Library Module Sets (20%)

This course utilizes the information fluency modules produced by the UCF library. These modules are linked through the content modules. There are two sets of library modules that students will complete online, each of the sets will be worth 10% of the student's overall course grade.

Each set of library modules contains multiple information fluency tutorials and quizzes. Students will be allowed to take each tutorial quiz twice. However if they take any one tutorial quiz more than once, the two scores for that tutorial quiz will be averaged for an overall tutorial quiz grade. To calculate each of the module sets grades, the tutorial quizzes from that module set will be averaged. See the Library Information Literacy Modules Description for more information. There are NO make-ups of missed quizzes or module sets. NO late work.

Assessments (40%):

There will be a total of five assessments. Each assessment is cumulative, and may contain any material that has been assigned, covered, read, etc. for that module or any previous module. The lowest assessment score will dropped and the other four will each account for 10% of the students overall grade. The dates of the assessments are in the schedule. Each assessment must be completed by 11:59pm on the due date.

NO MAKE-UP ASSESSMENTS, except in exceptional, extenuating circumstances (but not after the final). Students with a valid reason such as serious illness and documentation that satisfies the instructor can schedule a make-up exam, but must do so **prior** to the scheduled exam.

Article Assessment (20%)

Students will write a 2 to 3 page paper analyzing an article assigned by the professor. More detail will be presented about this paper as the semester progresses. It will follow the stipulations in the handout and rubric, and in the other course content. For more help, refer to the web-links and Baglione text. It is due at 11:59pm on the due date. NO late work will be accepted.

Missed Assignments/Make-Ups/Extra Credit

NO LATE WORK. There are no make-ups for missed exams, quizzes, or other required course activities. DUE DATES for the term paper and assignments are FINAL. Late work will NOT be accepted for a grade. Only under exceptional circumstances and with the permission of your professor are students allowed to make-up an exam (if the instructor is informed and gives permission prior to the scheduled exam). To qualify for this exemption from the DUE DATE rule, you must: notify me in advance of the exam/paper due date of your possible absence, AND provide a legitimate reason for your absence (death in family, serious injury, etc.). Do not anticipate any deviation from this policy There is no extra credit in this course.

Students are encouraged not to wait until the last minute to complete assigned work. The online@UCF support is available by email Monday thru Friday 8am to 5pm and by phone from 8:30am to 4:30 pm Monday thru Friday. If you wait until the last minute and have a technical (i.e. webcourses@UCF) issue, do not expect any deviation from the NO late work policy. (I allow one quiz and one discussion to be dropped in case you have a problem accessing webcourses@UCF).

Evaluation and Grading

Grade Breakdown:

Discussion	20 %
Library Module Sets	20%
Assessments	40%
Article Assessment	20%

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Final Grade Percentage
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69

F	59 or below

Grading Rubric

A-Level Work	• Fully addresses each element in the assignment. • Demonstrates mature critical thinking skills. • Uses relevant examples and support for argument(s). • Uses appropriate and relevant language and terminology. • Uses a coherent and logical structure. • Writing is free of spelling and grammatical errors; is strong and concise; and demonstrates good word choices.
B-Level Work	• Achieves above average quality in most, but not all, of the elements above.
C-Level Work	• Achieves an acceptable level in most, but not all, of the elements above, but has some deficiencies in full completion of the assignment, argument or logical structure, and/or writing.
D-Level Work	• Fails to achieve acceptable level in most of the elements above. Assignment has significant deficiencies in full completion of the assignment, argument or logical structure, and/or writing.
F-Level Work	• Unacceptable amount of writing, logic, argument, or completion deficiencies. Contains many flaws and omissions of importance. Any submission of plagiarized work will also fall into this category.

Attendance Policy

Students should check in on the webcourse at least twice per week (once at the beginning of the week, and once closer to the end of the week).

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an "F" for the entire course) and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. See the UCF Golden Rule for further information. I will assume for this course that you will adhere to the academic creed of this University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask me to change (or expect me to change) your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

Disability 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

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Protocols

Items of Note

- This class is a combination of lectures and activities. Relevant concepts will be covered in the lecture, and many of these concepts will be applied via various activities. Therefore, it is imperative that students “attend” class regularly to fully understand the research process.
- The reading associated with any of the lectures is meant to be read BEFORE that lecture.

- Students that are able to access the computer labs on the UCF main campus or the Valencia West campus should plan on using the statistical software SPSS and should purchase the Pollock (2008) SPSS workbook. Students that live out of town and do not have access to these labs should use the LeRoy (2008) Microcase optional text. See the course introduction for more detail about SPSS.
- Save your work on a flash drive. You will need it repeatedly and do not want to have to keep redoing all of your tasks.
- If you have questions, ask.
- The best way to reach me is through the mail tool on our webcourse.

Research and Writing Skills:

References required for written/class/online assignments must be relevant to our research, academic, authoritative and reliable. If you are a little shaky on academic standards governing acceptable references, ask questions of myself, or a librarian (or refer to the UCF library website).

All written communication follows standard rules of English grammar and spelling. If you are a little rusty on the standards acceptable in the academic community, go to the writing center, or ask me. All written work should be presented in a formal, professional manner; using proper language and formatting, and should be edited for grammar, spelling, and writing flow/style.

Writing Center:

The University Writing Center (UWC) is a free resource for UCF undergraduates and graduates. At the UWC, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you on anything you're writing (in or out of class), at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the UWC website at http://www.uwc.ucf.edu, stop by MOD 608, or call 407.823.2197.

Academic Misconduct

Don't Plagiarize (not properly citing sources, passing off someone else's work as your own). Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an "F" for the entire course) and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. See the UCF Golden Rule for further information. I will assume for this course that you will adhere to the academic creed of this University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask me to change (or expect me to change) your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

Turnitin.com: In this course we may utilize turnitin.com, an automated system which instructors can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you may be expected to submit assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as an instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process, visit http://www.turnitin.com

Non-Academic Misconduct

The scope and content of the material included in this course are defined by the professor in consultation with the responsible academic unit. Although the orderly exchange of ideas, including questions and discussions prompted by lectures, discussion sessions and laboratories, is viewed as a key part of the educational environment, the professor has the right to limit the scope and duration of these interactions.

Students who engage in disruptive behavior, including persistent refusal to observe boundaries defined by the professor regarding inappropriate talking, discussions, and questions in the classroom may be subject to discipline for non-academic misconduct for disruption of teaching or academic misconduct, as defined in the Golden Rule Student Handbook also defines potential sanctions for these types of infractions.

Examples of inappropriate behavior include, but are not limited to: text messaging, talking or using cell phones, (turn off cell phones prior to class), surfing the internet, listening to music, downloading music, watching movies, checking scores, cursing, using offensive or inappropriate language of any kind, name calling, inappropriate actions of any kind, etc. Any student acting in a disruptive manner may be asked to leave the classroom and will forfeit participation and attendance credit.

Classroom Expectations

The following ground rules will help your work in this course to go much more smoothly. Please carefully review these expectations and follow them.

1. Academic integrity will be appraised according to the student academic behavior standards outlined in The Golden Rule of the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook. See http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/ for further details.
2. Don't turn in late assignments. Late submissions will result in a zero (will not be accepted).
3. Keep up with the reading and tasks. You have quite a few chapters, modules, discussion postings, and e-mail messages to read for the class.

Students who keep up with the reading tend to do much better in this kind of class than those who do not.
4. Don’t miss a quiz. Missed quizzes may not be retaken. No make-ups
5. Work with others. You are required to make every effort to work effectively and promptly with others in your groups. Fair criticism of your failure to work effectively with others will significantly affect your collaboration and participation grade.
6. No make-ups on missed assignments, activities, discussions, quizzes, exams, and/or papers.

Web Useage and Hints

Computer Useage:

Students will be expected to have access to a computer frequently, as all writing assignments used will be typed out and not handwritten. The software you use to write your assignments is irrelevant, as long as you follow my writing guidelines outlined later in my syllabus. I recommend to have access to a computer weekly. If you do not own a computer, there are computer accessible to you in all UCF's computer labs. For further information on computer labs, please see the following website: http://registrar.sdes.ucf.edu/webguide/index_quickfind.aspx.

Instructor Availability

Students wishing to meet with me can do so before or after class, during office hours (listed at top of first page), or by appointment. Please be aware that the easiest way to reach me is via e-mail.

E-Mail:

E-mail will be an integral part of this course. Make sure you:

1. Check your webcourses e-mail at least twice per week (more often is better).
2. Be patient. Don’t expect an immediate response when you send a message. Generally, two days is considered reasonable amount of time to receive a reply.
3. Include "Subject" headings: use something that is descriptive and refer to a particular assignment or topic.
4. Be courteous and considerate. Being honest and expressing yourself freely is very important but being considerate of others online is just as important as in the classroom.
5. Make every effort to be clear. Online communication lacks the nonverbal cues that fill in much of the meaning in face-to-face communication.
6. Do not use all caps. This makes the message very hard to read and is considered "shouting." Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation (you

may want to compose in a word processor, then cut and paste the message into the discussion or e-mail).
7. Break up large blocks of text into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
8. Sign your e-mail messages.
9. DO NOT email me hours (24 or less) before something is due to ask me questions about it. You need to stay on task so that I have an appropriate amount of time to read the message and respond (generally, that is 48 hours).

Never assume that your e-mail can be read by no one except yourself; others may be able to read or access your mail. Never send or keep anything that you would not mind seeing on the evening news.

I will communicate with you through the webcourses sites e-mail to answer questions regarding class assignments and exams. Regarding exams, I will *not* give exact answers for possible exam questions, but rather will provide information to help you find the answers. Professional e-mail communication is an important skill that will last beyond the class and college experience. Keep in mind how you want to present yourself through e-mail. In this class our official mode of communication is through email. All communication between student and instructor and between student and student should be respectful and professional.

Netiquette

"Netiquette" has evolved to aid us in infusing our electronic communications with some of these missing behavioral pieces. Do not use emoticons, causal abbreviations, or other non professional forms of communication in this course. Use words in an appropriate fashion.

The important thing to remember is that all of the "cute" symbols in the world cannot replace your careful choice of words and "tone" in your communication.

You can learn more about Netiquette and electronic communication by visiting Learning Online.

Webcourses:

Webcourses is an online course management system (accessed through my.ucf.edu and then the "Online Course Tools" tab) which will be used as a medium for turning in assignments and a forum for communicating with your teammates. Webcourses goes through a weekly system maintenance on Sunday mornings, DO NOT take your assessments at this time. If you have a technical issue, contact online@ucf.

Under the "Discussion" section, you will have a designated forum section. My recommendation is to check Webcourses every 2-3 days for updates from your teammates or myself. I will post the lecture outlines, study guides and lab assignments on Webcourses. If you are not familiar with this web site or you need more information please let me know.

Privacy: Access to Webocourses is extended to you for the duration of your enrollment in the course, providing that you comply with class and school policies. You may not share that access with another person who is not enrolled in the course. Students who do so violate the privacy of other students as well as school policy. The act may lead to the violator being denied access to the Blackboard shell.

On occasion, I permit others to enter the course, to critique my work, to view the operations of the course, or to work on a technical problem. For the entire term, my technical consultant has access to the course to provide continuity for you should the unexpected happen to me.

Discussion Topics

Many of the "rules of the road" or protocols that apply to e-mail also apply to the use of discussions. Use the following conventions when composing a discussion posting:

1. During a Discussion assignment, deadlines for posting to and replying will be specified with each assignment. It is a good practice to always check the Discussions multiple times during the week.
2. If you want to send a personal message to the instructor or to another student, use e-mail rather than the discussions (see above E-mail Protocols).
3. Use the appropriate Discussion Topic; don't post everything on the "Main" Discussion Topic.
4. Be patient. Don't expect an immediate response when you send a message.
5. A helpful hint for use with both discussions and e-mail --- Compose your message in your word-processing application in order to check spelling, punctuation, and grammar --- then copy and paste your composition into e-mail or the discussion. This also saves online time.
6. Everyone should feel free to participate in class and online discussions. Regular and meaningful discussion postings constitute a substantial portion of your grade.
7. Respect each other's ideas, feelings and experience.
8. Be courteous and considerate. It is important to be honest and to express yourself freely, but being considerate of others is just as important and expected online, as it is in the classroom.
9. Explore disagreements and support assertions with data and evidence.

10. "Subject" headings: use something that is descriptive and refer to a particular assignment or discussion topic when applicable. Some assignments will specify the subject heading.
11. Use the "reply" button rather than the "compose" button if you are replying to someone else's posting.
12. Do not use postings such as "I agree," "I don't know either," "Who cares," or "ditto." They do not add to the discussion, take up space on the Discussions, and will not be counted for assignment credit.
13. Avoid posting large blocks of text. If you must, break them into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
14. Use the Technical Discussion topic for assistance with technical issues. Use the Help Discussion topic for questions about course material or assignments. There will be specific discussion topics for particular discussions - pay close attention to the assignment, and post appropriately.

Viruses

A virus can spell disaster. Your use of a reputable anti-virus program is a requirement for participation in this course (good ones include McAfee or Norton).

Also, back up your files: "My hard drive crashed." "My modem doesn't work." "My printer is out of ink." These are today's equivalents of "My dog ate my homework." And these events really do occur and they are really inconvenient when they do. However, these are not valid excuses for failing to get your work in on time.

Technical Resources

For specific problems in any of the areas below or for further information go to the corresponding link for assistance.

- UCF Home Page will help find UCF resources
- UCF Computer Service Desk – You can also call the Service Desk at 407-823-5117.
- Learning Online This site provides information on study skills for distance learners, the library and the writing center.
- Buying a new computer or upgrading your current equipment – http://www.cstore.ucf.edu/
- Hardware/Software Requirements
- Technical Discussion Topic: If you have technical questions and/or problems, please post a message to the Technical Discussion Topic. I encourage members of the class who are technically proficient to also monitor this discussion topic and assist your classmates.

- If your equipment problems prevent you from using e-mail from home, there are many computer labs on campus and virtually every public library offers Internet access.

Schedule

All graded items are due by 11:59 pm on the due date unless otherwise noted.

Week	Topic	Graded Item	Due Date
	Module 1: Introduction & Basics		
1	Foundations of Political Science Research	Discussion 1.1: Post by	01/17/12
		Discussion 1.2: Reply by	01/24/12
2	Theory & Research Question Variables & Hypotheses	Library Module Set 1	01/24/12
3	Literature Review & Library Research	Library Module Set 2	01/31/12
	Module 2: Data, Measurements, & Statistics		
4	Cross-Sectional & Time Series Analyses Experimental & Quasi-Experimental Designs	Assessment 1	02/07/12
5	Surveys	Discussion 2.1: Post by	02/14/12
6	Sampling	Discussion 2.2: Reply by	02/21/12
7	Research Designs	Assessment 2	02/28/12
	Module 3: Data, Measurements, & Statistics		
8	Measurements & Data Reliability & Validity		03/06/12*
9	Graphs & Central Tendency Descriptive Statistics & Distributions	Discussion 3.1: Post by	03/13/12

10	Statistical Relationships I	Discussion 3.2: Reply by	03/20/12
11	Statistical Relationships II	Assessment 3	03/27/12
12	Communicating Results	Article Activity	04/03/12
	Module 4: Research Design II & Ethical Considerations		
13	Qualitative Research Designs Content Analysis	Assessment 4	04/10/12
14	Ethics	Discussion 4.1: Post by	04/17/12
		Discussion 4.2: Reply by	04/24/12
15	Ethics	Assessment 5	04/24/12

NOTE: All dates and times are subject to change by Professor Vieux. Be informed and routinely check the Schedule and Class Discussion topics for any changes or updates
Be Aware that Webcourses@UCF goes down for updates every Sunday at 6am for about four hours. You should not attempt to take an assessment during this time. I allow two dropped quizzes in case you have issues with Webcourses@UCF, so that it does not negatively influence your grade—I will not allow extra time for quizzes if you have been kicked from Webcourses@UCF..
*The due by date for graded item is a holiday. Students leaving town or those who will be otherwise engaged on this day should complete the item prior to the due date.