Scope and Methods of Political Science (POS3703.0004)
Pollock / Spring 2014

Office	302 Phillips Hall
Office hours	TTh 8-8:50 a.m. / 12:00 noon- 3:00 p.m.
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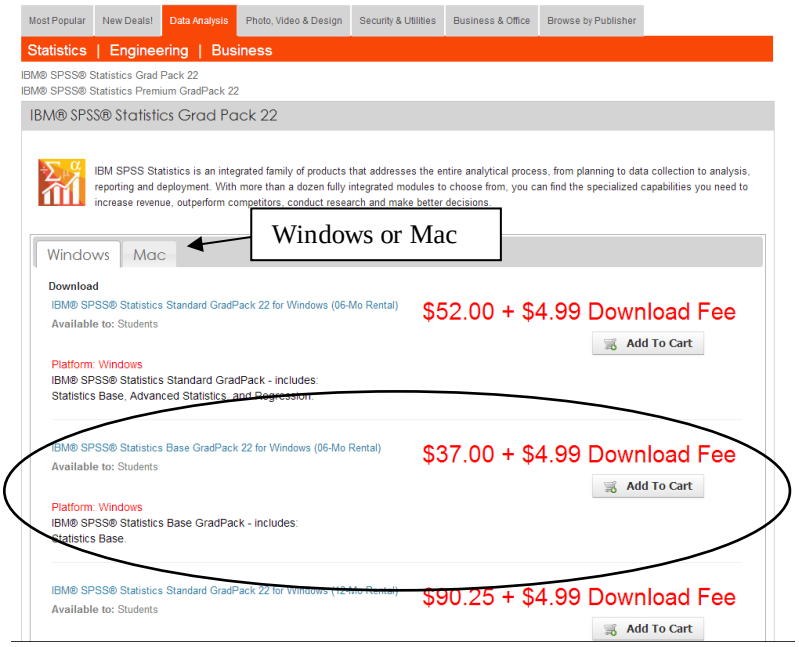
Email	Philip.Pollock@ucf.edu
Books	Pollock, *The Essentials of Political Analysis, 4th Edition* + *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis, 4th Edition Package*
Recommended	Rent SPSS (see below)

In this course you will learn the elements of social scientific thinking—how to describe variables and measure complex concepts, how to create explanations, how to construct and test hypotheses, how to think analytically, and how to control for rival explanations of political phenomena. You also will learn SPSS, data analysis software that is installed in many labs on campus.

The CD in the required workbook, *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*, contains the datasets you will be analyzing. **The CD does not contain the SPSS software.** I repeat for emphasis: **The CD does not contain the SPSS software.** To complete the workbook assignments and take-home exams, you must use a lab computer OR rent the software and install it on your PC or laptop.

To rent SPSS for 6 months ($37 + $4.99 download fee):
http://e5.onthehub.com/WebStore/OfferingsOfMajorVersionList.aspx?pmv=e60626f1-6a03-e311-93f3-b8ca3a5db7a1&cmi_mnuMain=2ff73789-74c7-e011-ae14-f04da23e67f6&cmi_mnuMain_child=2a1143f0-74c7-e011-ae14-f04da23e67f6&ws=49c547ba-f56d-dd11-bb6c-0030485a6b08&vsro=8



Class sessions include lectures and SPSS skill-set development. **During lectures, lab computer monitors, laptops, and all other devices must be turned off. During SPSS skill-set development, lab computer monitors must be turned on.**

In order to do well in this course, you must have a thorough grasp of the reading, the lecture material, and the computer software. This is very important. Come to class every day. Take good notes. Ask questions. If you do not understand an idea or topic, visit me during office hours or send me an email.

Requirements. Your course grade will be based on three components: Attendance (15 percent), Assignments (15 percent), and Exams (70 percent).

- **Attendance. 15 percent.** Attendance is required. Do not arrive late or leave early. Late arrivals count as absences. Early departures count as absences.
- **Assignments**. **15 percent**. You will be given regular assignments during the term. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned date. Do not put assignments in my office mailbox. **Do not email or fax your assignments**. Late assignments receive zero points. No make-up assignments. No extra credit.
- **Exams. 70 percent.** There will be four exams during the term—two in-class exams (25 percent each) and two take-home exams (10 percent each). No early exams. No make-up exams. The exams will follow this schedule:

Exam:	***Taken or Due on:***
In-class exam I	Feb25
Take-home exam I	Feb27
In-class exam II	Apr17
Take-home exam II	April 29 @ 9:00 a.m.

Grading Scale. Your course grade will be determined by this numeric scale:

Course average	*Letter grade*
90-above	A
87-89	B+
80-86	B
77-79	C+
70-76	C
67-69	D+
60-66	D
59-below	F

Schedule for the term.

Class of:	*Topic*	*Essentials*	*Companion*
Jan7 Jan9 Jan14 Jan16	Concepts and measurement	Introduction, Ch1	
Jan21 Jan23 Jan28	Measuring and describing variables	Ch2	Getting Started, Ch1, Ch2
Jan30 Feb4 Feb6	Explanations, hypotheses, comparisons	Ch3	Ch3
Feb11 Feb13 Feb18 Feb20	Making comparisons		Ch4
Feb25 **Feb27** *[Break]*	**In-class exam I** **Take-home exam I due**		
Mar11 Mar13	Research design	Ch4	
Mar18 Mar20	Understanding controlled comparisons	Ch5	
Mar25 Mar27	Making controlled comparisons		Ch5
Apr1 Apr3	Inference and measures of association	Ch6, Ch7	Ch7
Apr8 Apr10 Apr15	Regression analysis	Ch8	Ch8
April 17 **April 29**	**In-class exam II** **Take-home exam II due, 9:00 a.m.**		