POS 3703: Scope and Methods of Political Science

Department of Political Science
University of Central Florida
Syllabus

Instructor Contact

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Office Hours	By appointment	By appointment

- All office hours are *first come, first served*. You can make an appointment with me during my office hours to ensure that I see you at the time you are available. *Appointments take priority over walk-ins*.
- The best way to reach me is via my mail tab in Webcourses. If you send me an email via the webcourse DO NOT send me the same email via the knights email. If you send me an email via knights email, DO NOT send me the same email via the webcourse.

Course Information

Course Name	POS 3703: Scope and Methods of Political Science
Course ID & Section	ID: 85958 Section: OW57
Credit Hours	3 credits
Semester/Year	Fall 2015
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.
- Analyze data using statistical software
- Evaluate research, statistics and findings.

Additional Items of Note

- 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.
- You may NOT record classroom meetings (voice or video recordings). Reasonable accommodations can be made for students with disabilities—speak with me.
- *Your failure to plan is not my emergency. Stay on top of your classwork and get started well in advance of deadline.* See How to Study.org
- ALL work MUST be your own.
- If you have questions, ask.

Required Textbook

- Pollock III, Philip H. 2008. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. 4th Edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
    - ISBN # 978-1-60871-686-9

Required Workbook

- Pollock III, Philip H. 2008. *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*. 4th Edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
    - ISBN # 978-1-60871-687-6

Additional Required Readings:

In addition to the aforementioned texts, you will be required to read political science journal articles (or other political science research). They are listed in the weekly schedule, or will be announced in class, or announced vial the course web-site.

Useful Supplements

- 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.

Course Syllabus

This is the course syllabus, and should be treated as a written agreement between the professor and student. Students should refer to the syllabus for any questions pertaining to the course, grading, etc. Any deviations from this syllabus will be announced. Therefore, students are responsible for any announcements, and any information or handouts given. Absence is not an excuse for ignorance.

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.

UCF Computer Labs:

Campus Computer Labs:
http://guides.ucf.edu/c.php?g=78577&p=517810

SPSS labs in Tech Commons:
http://www.cst.ucf.edu/about/technology-sales-service-and-support/technology-commons-2/

UCF Apps
http://apps.ucf.edu/

Webcourse Privacy:

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.

E-Mail:

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

1. 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.
2. Include "Subject" headings: use something that is descriptive and refer to a particular assignment or topic.
3. 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.
4. Make every effort to be clear. Online communication lacks the nonverbal cues that fill in much of the meaning in face-to-face communication.
5. 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).
6. Break up large blocks of text into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
7. Sign your e-mail messages.
8. 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.

See these websites for helpful information on how to write professional emails.

How to Email a Professor
How to Email a Professor
How to Email Your Professor

Students: How to email your professor, employer, or professional peers
How to email your professor: FAQ

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.

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.

In addition, the notes, lectures, videos, handouts, etc. provided by the professor are owned by the professor and considered intellectual property. All intellectual property is safeguarded by copyright law and is not to be shared, distributed, etc. without the professor's consent.

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 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.

Grading & Course Requirements

The following applies to all assignments:

- All assignments are due at 11:59 pm on the due date in the schedule
- NO LATE WORK, NO MAKE-UPS.
- All work MUST be your own

Academic Activity (0%) **REQUIRED**

All faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the academic activity by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as

possible after adding the course. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Introductory Quiz (5%):

At the beginning of the semester, there will be a quiz over the introduction, syllabus, and assignment documents. You will find the material you need to answer the questions under the Course Modules titled "Course Introduction and Syllabus" and "Assignment Directions and Links"

Participation (15%):

Attendance Policy: Students should check in on the webcourse at least twice per week.

In order to fully engage in this course, students will be expected *engage with other students* in online discussions—that is, these are discussions between students on which I will occasionally comment. For each discussion, a student is required to post at least one initial 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.

*Grades for participation are based on both the **quantity** and the **quality** of the posts. Doing the bare minimum number of posts does NOT guarantee you an A.* A-level work is excellent, B-level work is good, and C-level work is satisfactory. While one can (theoretically) have a stellar/excellent single reply, it is far better to 'hedge your bets' on overall quality with multiple replies—remember the goal is to engage and discuss with your classmates. Any disruptive behavior, inappropriate comments, activities not related to the course, etc. will *reflect poorly on the student's participation grade*.

Posting something someone else has already said, saying I agree, etc. is **not** considered a quality post. Furthermore, initial posts should be relevant to the assigned topic—technical questions should be posted in the technical questions forum, questions on course concepts and content should be posted in the course content discussion, questions for me should be posted in the general discussion forum or emailed to me, questions about assessments, your grades, etc. should be emailed to me.

The discussions are intended to promote Active Learning. Meaning, you are interacting with each other and sharing ideas, etc. in order to fully grasp material. Active learning has been shown to enhance student outcomes (i.e. information retention and learning). By only replying to one student you aren't really engaged in the material as much as you would be if you had a full conversation. Because this is an online course, discussions are one of the only ways to achieve this type of learning—hence the need to fully engage in the discussions.

Note: I am looking for thought provoking posts that show you are engaged in the material. These discussions lead up to your final assignment. Doing a good job on them will help you prepare for that paper.

Workbook Exercises (25%)

You will complete a series of workbook exercise sets, then answer questions about the exercises using the "Quiz" tool in the Webcourse. Each set is designed to work alongside the lectures and the Pollock textbook. The questions are taken directly from the workbook exercises or are applications/extensions of the exercises. You must **complete the workbook exercise sets before you begin answer the questions**—each set of activities will take you at least a few hours to complete.

There are 8 workbook exercise question sets. The workbook exercise question sets are each worth 10 points. The number of questions for each set varies between 5 and 13. I will drop your lowest score and average the remaining 7 scores for your workbook exercises grate.

Content Quizzes (30%):

There are a total of 3 content quizzes, each is worth 10 %. Each quiz is **cumulative**, and may contain any material that has been assigned, covered, read, discussed, announced, completed, etc. for that module or any previous module. Be sure to do all the required readings, activities, etc. before you take the quiz—the readings, activities, etc. will take you at least a few hours. There are no questions from the workbook exercises in the content quizzes.

Article Assessment (25%)

Students will write a 2 page (single-spaced) paper analyzing an article assigned by the professor. It must be turned in by the due date in an openable, readable WORD file in the provided upload link in the Assignment dropbox in the webcourse. If your paper is not consistent with the "openable, readable WORD file" stipulations it will not be accepted. Follow the directions in the Article Assessment Directions page in the Webcourse.

Will the professor read drafts of the article assessment?
In general, no. If you want help on your writing, go to the writing center. If you have specific questions about articles, ask your fellow classmates (via the course content discussion) or send me an email message at least two weeks prior to the due date. You may also bring your questions into my face-to-face office hours at least two weeks (or more) before the paper is due. If you wait until the last minute (i.e. less than two weeks prior to the due date), do not expect complete feedback. I need time to respond, and you will need time to make changes.

Extra credit: There is no extra credit in this course. Do not expect any deviation from this policy.

Some Notes on Grading:

The fact that you are in college suggests that you were a decent student in high school. It does not, however, mean you will be getting an A in this course. Enrollment in this

course does not mean you earned an A in this course. *Earning an A* might require more diligence than you are used to. The letter grade "A" is reserved for excellence, "B" for good, and "C" for satisfactory. Doing the bare minimum is not A-level work.

For an undergraduate course, it is expected that you spend at least 3 hours outside of class time for every course credit hour studying, preparing, completing work, etc. So, if you only spend 9 hours outside of class time doing these things, you are doing the bare minimum. Also, beyond spending enough time studying, etc. you should be using your time effectively. Spending 9 hours studying is not a guarantee of an A.

In addition, this course is difficult (even in a face-to-face environment). You should plan ahead on assignments and assessments. **DO NOT wait until the last minute**. You will probably realize (too late) that you should've started earlier. I don't accept late work of any kind.

Grade Breakdown:

Introductory Quiz	5%
Participation	15%
Workbook Exercises	25%
Content Quizzes	30%
Article Assessment	25%

Grading Scale:

94-100	A
90-93	A-
88-89	B+
84-87	B
80-83	B-
78-79	C+
74-77	C
70-73	C-
68-69	D+
64-67	D
60-63	D-
0 - 59	F

Late Work & Make-ups

As noted at the top of this page, **I do not allow for late work or make-ups**. Do not anticipate any deviation from this policy. I do make exceptions for extenuating

circumstances on a case-by-case basis (see below). **The general rule is no late work, no make-ups.**

Under exceptional circumstances and with *my permission* a make-up might be granted. I must be informed, be provided with legitimate documentation for the request and need for the make-up, and give permission prior to the due date. Furthermore the request must conform to University Policy (for example, final exams are governed by stricter rules and will not be given before the University scheduled final exam period or after the University scheduled final exam period), the learning objective for that assignment must still be able to be fulfilled, and there must be a reasonable accommodation that can be made to make-up the missed work. If all these stipulations are met, then I may grant a make-up. In that case, the make-up may not be the same as the original.

Deadlines:

Do not wait until the last minute to complete your work. The work in this class takes a long time to complete.

If you wait until the last minute and have a technical (i.e. webcourses@UCF, Library Information Literacy Module, etc.) or any other type of issue, do not expect any deviation from the NO late work policy. Begin to complete your assigned tasks with more than enough time in case you run into troubles or take longer to complete the task than you anticipated. Your failure to plan is not my emergency.

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.

Academic Honesty (and Misconduct)

Don't Plagiarize (not properly citing sources, passing off someone else's work as your own, handing in a paper written for another class, etc.). Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" or 0 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, the FTCL page on academic integrity, and the library web-site 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 in any way (including but not limited to 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. ALL work MUST be your own.

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. 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 or videos, checking scores, playing games or poker, 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.

Schedule*

Date Range	Due Date (11:59 pm)	Activities & Graded Items	Module & Topic
			MODULE 1: Introduction and Basics
8/24 to 9/2		*Lectures*: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 & 1.4 *Textbook*: Introduction & pages 48-58	• Foundations of Political Science Research • Theory & Research Question • Variables & Hypotheses
	***8/28** 9/2*	****Academic Activity 5pm****	

	9/2	***Introductory Quiz*** ***Discussion 1: Initial Post***	
9/3 to 9/9		*Lectures*: 1.5, 1.6 & 1.7	• Literature Review & Library Research
	9/9 ***9/9***	***Discussion 1: Reply post*** ***Content Quiz 1***	
			Module 2: **Data & Methods**
9/10 to 9/16		*Lectures*: 2.01, 2.02, 2.03 & 2.04 *Textbook*: Chapters 1 & pages 28-32 *Workbook*: Chapters 1 & 3	• Data & Measurements
	9/16	***Workbook Exercise*** ***Question Set 1***	
9/17 to 9/23		*Lectures*: 2.05, 2.06, & 2.07 *Textbook*: pages 32-46 *Workbook*: Chapter 2	• Describing Variables
	9/23	***Workbook Exercise*** ***Question Set 2***	
9/24 to 9/30		*Textbook*: Chapters 3, 4 (86-99), Chapter 5 Workbook: Chapters 4 & 5	• Cross-tabulations • Control variables • Interactions
	9/30 ***9/30***	***Discussion 2: Initial post*** ***Workbook Exercise*** ***Question Set 3***	
10/1 to 10/7		*Lecture*: 2.08 *Textbook*: Chapters 6 & 7	• Tests of Significance

		Workbook: Chapter 6	
	10/7 ***10/7***	***Discussion 2: Reply*** ***Workbook Exercise Question Set 4***	
10/8 to 10/14		*Lectures*: 2.09, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12 & 2.13 *Textbook*: Chapters 5 & 8 *Workbook*: Chapters 7 & 8	• Chi-Square • Measures of Association • Correlation • Bi-variate regression
	10/14 ***10/14***	***Workbook Exercise Question Set 5*** ***Workbook Exercise Question Set 6***	
10/15 to 10/21		*Lectures*: 2.14, 2.15, 2.16 & 2.17 *Textbook*: Chapters 9 & 10 *Workbook*: Chapters 8 & 9	• Multi-variate regression • Logistic regression • Communicating results
	10/21 ***10/21***	***Workbook Exercise Question Set 7*** ***Workbook Exercise Question Set 8***	
			MODULE 3: Research Design
10/22 to 10/28		*Lectures*: 3.01 & 3.02 *Pollock Textbook*: Chapter 4	• Cross-Sectional & Time Series Analyses • Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs
	10/28	***Content Quiz 2***	
10/29 to 11/4		*Lectures*: 3.03, 3.04, 3.05, 3.06 & 3.07	• Surveys

	11/4	***Discussion 3: Initial post***	
11/5 to 11/18 *Veteran's Day falls on 11/11		*Lectures*: 3.08, 3.09, 3.10, & 3.11 *Pollock Textbook*: Chapter 6	• Sampling
	11/18	***Discussion 3: Reply post***	
11/19 to 11/25		*Lectures*: 3.12, 3.13 & 3.14	• Qualitative Research
11/26 to 12/2		*Lectures*: 3.15	• Content Analysis
	12/2	***Article Assessment***	
12/3 to 12/9		*Lectures*: 3.16, 3.17, 3.18 & 3.19	• Ethics
	12/9	***Content Quiz 3***	

*NOTES:
All graded items are due by 11:59 pm on the due date unless otherwise noted.
All dates and times are subject to change by Professor Vieux. Be informed and routinely check the Schedule, Announcements, and Discussions for any changes or updates
**These items fall on a holiday. Plan accordingly.