POS 3703: SCOPE AND METHODS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
Fall 2015
Monday 6:00-8:50 pm, BC 235

Professor: Barbara Sgouraki Kinsey
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Office Hours: ***Cocoa***: Monday 3:00-5:00 PM;
Orlando: Tuesday 10:00 – Noon; Thursday 1:00 – 3:00 PM;
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.

You can access the SPSS software on your PC computer or laptop via UCF Apps. For information please visit the links below:

Information: http://apps.ucf.edu

Login: http://my.apps.ucf.edu

Cocoa Computer Lab: SPSS is installed on the computers at the Cocoa computer lab.

Computer La	**Suite 184, Building 3**
Hours	**(321) 433-7971**
Monday – Thursday	8:30 AM—6 PM

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Course grades are determined by ten homework assignments and two in-class **open-book** exams. 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. Ten Assignments	50%
2. Two Exams	50%

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

Letter Grade	Points
A	93 – 100 points
A-	90 – 92 points
B+	87 – 89 points
B	83 – 86 points
B-	80 – 82 points
C+	77 – 79 points
C	73 – 76 points
C-	70 – 72 points

D+	67 – 69 points
D	63 – 66 points
D-	60 – 62 points
F	59 and below

Students must fulfill the following tasks:

1. Complete reading assignments on time.
2. Complete **ten** assignments on time.
3. Take **two** open-book exams in class: an exam on ***Monday, October 26***, and a second exam on ***Monday, December 14.***

There will be "extra work/credit" to improve your grade.
In case 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 and make arrangements with the professor prior to the scheduled final exam on Monday, **December 14.**

Recording Academic Activity Policy

As of Fall 2014, 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 assignment on the online page of the course by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than August 28. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Disability Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371 TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116**.**

Laptops (or Substitutes)

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**, it is up to the student to contact the professor for clarification.** Also, it is the student's responsibility to be informed of any announcements made in class.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

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

Reading assignments in the schedule refer to *The Essentials of Political Analysis**

Week	**Topics Covered:**	**Assignments:**
August 24	Introduction to Course	
August 31	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 7	***Labor Day***	No Class
September 14	Research Design: Experiments	Pollock: Chapter 4 (also review pp. 84-97 ***Assignment 1 Due: 9/14***
September 21	Measurement Sampling ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 1, pp. 14-22 Chapter 2, pp. 28-32 Pollock: Chapter 6, pp. 122-128 ***Assignment 2 Due: 9/21***
September 28	Description of Data ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 2, pp. 32-44; Chapter 6, pp. 128-133 ***Assignment 3 Due: 9/28***

October 5	Probability The Normal Distribution	Reading to be distributed in class Pollock: Chapter 6, pp. 133-140 ***Assignment 4 Due: 10/5***
October 12	Inference ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 6, pp. 140-151 ***Assignment 5 Due: 10/12***
October 19	Locating Data **Review for First Exam**	***Assignment 6 Due: 10/19***
October 26	**First Exam**	**First Exam: Monday, October 26**
November 2	Hypothesis Testing Error Types ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 7, pp. 155-164
November 9	Contingency Tables (SPSS lab)	Pollock: Chapter 3, pp. 58-63 Chapter 5 Chapter 7, pp. 164-169 ***Assignment 7 Due: 11/9***
November 16	Correlation ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 8, pp. 182-187 ***Assignment 8 Due: 11/16***
November 23	Regression Analysis ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 8, pp. 187-196 ***Assignment 9 Due: 11/23***

November 30	Regression Analysis ***(SPSS lab)***	Pollock: Chapter 8, pp. 196-201
December 7	***Extra Credit: Show & Tell*** ***Review for Second Exam***	***Assignment 10 Due: 12/7***
December 14	***Second Exam***	**Second Exam: Monday, December 14**