UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
COLLEGE OF SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
(JAN 3, 2016)

POS 6746.0001 – Quantitative Methods in Political Research (Credit: 3 Units)
Wed 6:00PM - 8:50AM HPH 310

Instructor	Dr. Kyungkook Kang (pronounce Key-young-cook or K3)
Office	302J Phillips Hall
Office hours	Wednesday 1:30 PM – 5:30 PM, or by appointment All office hours are first come, first served
Main office phone	407-823-5082
Instructor E-Mail	Kyungkook.Kang@ucf.edu
Correspondence	The best way of all correspondence with me will be via Canvas of Webcourses@UCF instead of regular email account, which can lead to delayed feedback. Please use Inbox, which is the global communication function in Canvas. I will normally respond within two business days. If you send a message to my UCF email address, I will make my reply only to the emails sent from your UCF Knights Email account (No Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo Mail, etc. please).
Required Textbooks	Philip Pollock, The Essentials of Political Analysis, 4th Edition Philip Pollock, A Stata Companion to Political Analysis, 3rd Edition

IMPORTANT!!! - NEW POLICY REGARDING YOUR FINANCIAL AID

As of the spring 2016, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to receive the earliest financial aid disbursement, you MUST complete **the non-credit assignment of syllabus quiz** (can be found in Quizzes on webcourse@UCF) **during the first week of class**. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class is required for graduate students who want to further develop their empirical skills to the necessary level required for high quality academic research as well as private/public sector employment using empirics. First, you will be introduced to the process of developing testable and falsifiable theories and hypotheses, aided by statistical analysis software. Then, the course will discuss a comprehensive introduction to regression analysis and its application to political science research. The essential background in statistics will be also reviewed in class.

Statistics is the widely accepted toolkit among social scientists to empirically investigate theory and behavior. Even though the topic of statistical methodology is vast and controversial, we will examine hypothesis testing procedure that form the core of the discipline of empirical political research. This method allows researchers to model and analyze the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables (bivariate analysis or multivariate analysis).

To implement computational statistical analysis, you will be actively involved with computer exercises using the STATA program available in the computer lab. Throughout the course I will use STATA to demonstrate a series of empirical exercise with various estimation and test procedures.

COURSE GOALS

In this course, our main goal is to explore the mechanics of analytical research design and methodology in contemporary political science. You will learn how to construct simple bivariate or multivariate models, estimate the parameters of those models, and interpret the parameter estimates we obtain. Based on solid understanding on standard methods, you will also focus on research design development, operationalization and lacunae in the existing empirical literature, and data applicability in answering certain types of research question.

.

COURSE DESIGN

The techniques of analytical research methods are imparted principally through taking classes and doing problem sets, rather than independent reading. Therefore, we believe that a student who has performed well in the classes will be well-prepared for the assignments. The assignments will consist of required questions which test the material of texts and lecture notes.

Our classes combines an examination of fundamental concepts and techniques of political science research with hands-on practical work applying those concepts and techniques. It is essential for students to regularly attend the class and to read and carefully consider the required materials before the class.

We will be using STATA, a general-purpose professional statistical software package, for data analysis in this course. I assume that you have no prior experience with this software but a basic knowledge of MS Office is required to facilitate your implementation of tasks.

To complete the take-home assignments using STATA, you must use PCs in the HPH 310 & HPH 409 computer labs OR purchase the software and install it on your own PC or laptop (a limited number of STATAs are also available in the Magruder Teaching Lab on the first floor of the College of Business Administration 1 in room 148A – temporarily closed for remodeling as of January 3, 2016).

You can purchase Stata at:

http://www.stata.com/order/new/edu/gradplans/student-pricing/

The recommended version is Stata/IC 14 (Intercooled, the base model).

The Webcourses site of Canvas has a discussion board. This board provides an opportunity to post questions regarding the course material and/or computing. In addition to precepts and office hours, please use this board on the course website when asking questions about lectures and other course materials. This will allow students to see other students' questions and learn from them. I will regularly check the board and answer questions posted, although everyone else is also encouraged to contribute to the discussion. A student's respectful and constructive participation on the forum will count toward his/her class participation grade. Do not email your questions directly to me unless they are of personal nature — I will not answer them!

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is required. Regular attendance is crucial to being successful in this course. The material covered in this course is inherently cumulative. If you do not keep up, you will quickly find yourself too far behind to catch up.

You should arrive to class on time: it will start promptly at its assigned time. Do not leave early. Late arrivals and early departures may count as absences (or at the course instructor's discretion, partial attendance may result in). For further information please refer to UCF Academic Regulations and Procedures (http://catalog.ucf.edu/policies/academic-regulations).

MAKE-UP EXAM & ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Make-up exams and assignments will be granted only in the case of an emergency (only for documented reasons) and/or a university documented absence. I always investigate the claims and make sure the documents are authentic. If such documentation is provided, it is up to the instructor's discretion to grant a make-up exam or to excuse the student from taking the exam without penalty.

No extra credit expected individually. If I decide a substantial portion of the class would benefit from an additional opportunity, it will be offered to everyone. But I will not select some individuals out for special treatment.

If exam or assignment dates conflict with a religious holiday, please notify the instructor about this at the beginning of the class. I will seek to accommodate you. For further information please refer to UCF Academic Regulations and Procedures (http://catalog.ucf.edu/policies/academic-regulations).

REQUIREMENTS

Your course grade will be based on three components:

- ✓ **Attendance & Participation. 10 Percent.** Attendance is required. This course will move fast; you will become confused if you do not attend regularly. Late arrivals and early departures may count as absences. The frequency and quality of individual attendance will be carefully recorded and reflected in the final grades.

- ✓ **Presentation**. **20 Percent**. 30 minutes for the talk and another 30 minutes for the feedback from class discussion. Consider this practice as an equivalent to rough drafts of dissertation proposal or grant proposal. A brief summary of your potential research design will be sufficient. It specifies your questions, offers a plausible theoretical explanation for those hypotheses, and provides a detailed statement as to how you would carry out the research. Even though I don't expect you to carry out actual empirical analysis in class, your presentation will consist of:

  (a) A summary of your topic
  (b) A description of why your topic is worthy of study
  (c) One example of existing research related to your topic – either a book or an article.
  - Describe the research focus of the study, why it is significant, its general method and most important findings.
  - Identify the principal dependent variable and independent variables involved in the study and describe how they were measured.
  - Assess the findings. Did the study, on its own terms, succeed? The specification of dependent and independent variables and the form of expected relationship between them.
  (d) The specification of your hypothesis.
  - Describe your dependent and independent variables and the form of the expected relationship between them.
  (e) The operationalization of the variables
  -What are your principal variables and how do you propose to measure them?
  -Data gathering: Where will you get your data?

  A sign-up sheet with due dates/times will be posted on the webcourse.

- ✓ **Three Take-Home Assignments. 70 percent (20+20+30)**. You will be given three regular assignments during the term. Notice that for each take-home assignment, you will be given 24 hours to finish using your textbook, classroom notes, or other online resources. Each student is to attempt all problems individually before the assigned date: you will not be allowed to collaborate with anybody. The homework assignments will include a number of theoretical questions (multiple choices and short answers) as well as statistical computing exercises using STATA.

UCF 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.

UCF Rules of Academic Conduct

As reflected in the UCF creed, integrity and scholarship are core values that should guide our conduct and decisions as members of the UCF community. Plagiarism and cheating are very serious academic offenses. Please refer to the University's Rules of Conduct (available at: http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu) for more information on these issues. Failure to comply with university rules may subject violator(s) to appropriate action by university authorities and/or appropriate civil authorities. The penalty for students who plagiarize or cheat on an exam or an assignment will include a grade of F on that exam or assignment.

Professionalism Policy

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPads, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade (NO POINTS IN ATTENDANCE, SERIOUSLY!).

University 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.

GRADING

I will apply a 'curve' grading scheme to convert your exam score into the following numeric and letter scale, so each exam grade reflects your performance relative to your fellow students. In this way all exams should be equivalently graded. Graded tests and materials in this course will be returned individually only by request. You can access your scores at any time using the Grade Book function of Webcourses. Please note that scores returned mid-semester are unofficial grades. Your course grade will be determined by the following numeric scale:

Course Points Average	Letter Grade
90-100	A
85-89	A-
80-84	B+
75-79	B
70-74	B-
65-69	C+
60-64	C
55-59	C -
50-54	D+
45-49	D
40-44	D-
0-39	F

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Drop/Swap Deadline: Thursday, January 14, 2016 11:59 PM

Spring Break: Monday, March 07, 2016 - Saturday, March 12, 2016

Midterm Exam: TBD

International Studies Association Annual Meeting (No Class – Alternative On-Line Assignments will be distributed): Wednesday, March 16.

Withdrawal Deadline: Wednesday, March 23, 2016 11:59 PM

Classes End: Tuesday, April 26, 2016

Study Day (No Class): Wednesday, April 27, 2016

Final Exam: Friday, April 29, 2016 10:00 AM – 12:50 PM.

Grade Due in myUCF (Faculty): Monday, May 09, 2016

Grade Available on myUCF: Wednesday, May 11, 2016

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

On the following page a tentative course schedule is provided. I plan to cover most of the text. In addition, I will present a fair amount of material in lectures that is not in the book.

Week and Date	Topic	Essentials	Stata
1st Week (Jan 13)	Course Introduction, Concepts and measurement	Ch1	Getting Started
2nd Week (Jan 20)	Measuring and describing variables	Ch1, Ch2	Ch1, Ch2
3rd Week (Jan 27)	Explanations, hypotheses, comparisons I	Ch3	Ch3, Ch4
4th Week (Feb 3)	Explanations, hypotheses, comparisons II	Ch3	Ch3, Ch4
5th Week (Feb 10)	Research design and controlled comparison I	Ch4, Ch5	Ch3, Ch4, Ch5
6th Week (Feb 17)	Research design and controlled comparison II	Ch4, Ch5	Ch3, Ch4, Ch5
7th Week (Feb 24)	Inference and measures of association I	Ch6, Ch7	Ch5 , Ch6, Ch7
8th Week (Mar 2)	Inference and measures of association II	Ch6, Ch7	Ch5 , Ch6, Ch7
9th Week (Mar 23)	Inference and measures of association III	Ch6, Ch7	Ch5 , Ch6, Ch7
10th Week (Mar 30)	Regression analysis I	Ch8, Ch9	Ch8, 9, 10
12th Week (Apr 6)	Regression analysis II	Ch8, Ch9	Ch8, 9, 10
13th Week (Apr 13)	Regression analysis III	Ch8, Ch9	Ch8, 9, 10
14th Week (Apr 20)	Regression analysis IV	Ch8, Ch9	Ch8, 9, 10

***** Note: The content of syllabus and course schedule are subject to change and update at the instructor's discretion if necessary.**

Changes to the syllabus, if any, will be announced in class and the updated syllabus will be posted on Canvas.

Students are responsible for any changes in syllabus/schedule which are announced in class.