POS 3703 - 0008: Scope and Methods of Political Science
Department of Political Science
College of Sciences, University of Central Florida

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor:	Jessica Racine Jacques, Ph.D.	Term:	Fall 2016
Office:	Howard Phillips Hall, 311E Lou Frey Institute 12443 Research Parkway Suite 406 Orlando FL 32826	Class Meeting Days:	T/TH
Phone:	407-823-3072	Class Meeting Hours:	4:30-5:45pm
E-Mail:	Racine.Jacques@ucf.edu**, please use Webcourses Mail to contact me**	Class Location:	HPH 310
		Credit Hours:	3 credit hours
Office Hours:	HPH 311E: Tuesday: 6:00pm-7:00pm Thursday: 12:00pm-1:00pm Lou Frey Institute: by appt.		

I. University Course Catalog Description

The scope and methodology of political analysis. Extensive examination of the discipline, research design, and methodology. Prerequisites: POS 2041 or CI.

II. Course Overview

Welcome to Scope and Methods! This course is an introduction to social science research. Throughout the semester, we will explore the logic and mechanics of research design and research methodology in political science. Students will learn quantitative analysis techniques including hypothesis construction and testing, statistical inference, and regression techniques. Students will also gain experience in data analysis using SPSS software. By the end of this class, students will be able to construct a research question, form a testable hypothesis, choose the correct method of analysis, analyze the data, and correctly interpret the results.

One of the research tools we will cover is the use of the computer and other forms of technology to create and analyze data. You will learn how to use SPSS, a statistical analysis program. We will devote time each week to the instruction of SPSS.

III. Course Objectives

- Students will understand how to construct a proper research question and form testable hypotheses
- Students will develop a basic understanding of quantitative and qualitative strategies to answer research questions and test hypotheses, and be able to determine which one is best
- Students will be able to correctly interpret the results from quantitative analysis techniques
- Students will develop a basic understanding of how to use SPSS for data analysis

IV. Required Texts and Materials

- Pollock, P. (2016). *Essentials of Political Analysis (5th edition)*. Washington DC: CQ Press.

- Pollock, P. (2016). *An IBM SPSS Companion to Political Analysis (5th edition)*. Washington DC: CQ Press

- Flash Drive: the computers in the lab are cleaned nightly so you should save everything to a flash drive or Dropbox/some other device in the cloud.

V. Basis for Final Grade

There are a total of 500 points in this class. Grades are based on a +/- system. The final grade will be determined as follows:

Assessment	Portion of Final Grade
Homework Assignments 10 @ 20 points each	200pts.
Exams 2 @ 100 points each	200pts.
Attendance/In Class Assignments 10 @ 10 points each	100pts.
	500pts.

Grading Scale			
463-500	A	363-382	C
448-462	A-	348-362	C-
433-447	B+	333-347	D+
413-432	B	313-332	D
398-412	B-	298-312	D-
383-397	C+	Below 298	F

VI. Course Policies: Grades

Your Grades:

You may access your grades at any time using the Grades function of Webcourses (login at https://webcourses.ucf.edu). Do not wait until the semester is over to be concerned about your grade. If you are concerned about your grade at any point in the semester, please do not hesitate to come discuss this with me during my office hours or by making an appointment. If you wait until the end of the semester, I will not be able to provide assistance.

Late Work Policy:

Late work will **NOT** be accepted. Please take note of all due dates and exam times. Assignments are turned in at the beginning of class on the day that they are due. Exceptions to this would be in cases of emergency which include hospitalization, car accident, death in the family, etc. These emergency events will be evaluated on a case by case basis to determine if the assignments will be accepted. Documentation is required for this to be considered. If you are unable to attend class on the day an assignment is due, make sure that you either turn it in early or send it with a classmate. All assignment due dates are listed in the syllabus.

Grades of "Incomplete":

The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. Your instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the "I" will automatically be recorded as an "F" on your transcript.

VII. Course Policies: Technology and Media

Email and Class Website: I would expect that students check their email several times during the week. You are welcome to email me in regards to class material and assignments. Please make sure to use proper grammar and etiquette in your correspondence. Emails will be answered within 24 hours during normal business hours (M-F 9am – 5pm)

The class website is available through Webcourses. Announcements, articles, assignments and your grades will be posted on this site. It is your responsibility to check this site regularly for important announcements including changes to the class schedule.

UCF Apps: UCF Apps is a service available to all students. You can use SPSS from your favorite device, whether you have a desktop, laptop, or tablet. As long as you have a good internet connection, you can access UCF Apps. UCF Apps is funded by the Technology Fee, so there is no additional cost for you to use this service.

Note: for the best experience, save your work to the Knight Drive (K). The Knight Drive is networked file space that is available on every device on which you use UCF Apps, as well as the Library and other campus public lab spaces.

For support: If you have issues, questions, or feedback regarding UCF Apps, visit http://apps.ucf.edu. For additional help, you can also visit the Student Support Desk in Technology Commons, or contact the UCF Service Desk at 407-823-5117.

Lab Access: To complete your assignments, you will need to download the datasets that come with your book. You can access SPSS through UCF Apps on your home computer or HPH 310 is also available for political science undergraduates when classes are not held. The schedule for lab hours is posted on the door. There are other computer labs on campus; however, it is important that you do not try to work on different versions of SPSS. Make sure the version you are using is SPSS 21.0 or SPSS 22.0

Electronics Usage: Please refrain from using cell phones/ipods/other gadgets in class. I expect you to engage in respectful and honest class discussions. A ringing cell phone is very distracting and disrespectful to your classmates and instructor. Students are expected to be courteous and respective of their classmates. Students who are disruptive or disrespectful in class may be asked to leave the classroom.

VIII. Course Policies: Student Expectations

Disability Access:

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.

Attendance Policy:

Class attendance will be taken on a regular basis. You are expected to attend the entire time for each class. It is distracting and disrespectful to your classmates and instructor to come in late or leave early. Students who have work that conflicts with this class meeting time will not be excused from missing class. If you know your work schedule is going to conflict, I would advise you to drop this class. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain the information covered from a fellow classmate. **Poor attendance/participation will negatively impact your final grade.**

Academic Conduct Policy:

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook (http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/) for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. At the instructor's discretion, you may also receive a failing grade for the course.

Z Designation for Academic Dishonesty: The University Undergraduate Policy and Curriculum Committee of the Faculty Senate have approved the use of the Z designation policy. Adopting the Z designation reaffirms the importance of civic responsibility by faculty and students to ensure that degrees earned at UCF are of high quality and subject to clear and high standards.

.

Action and Assignment of "Z" Designation: As a result of academic dishonesty in a course, an appropriate grade will be assigned to a student that is preceded by the letter Z.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances. You will be taught in this class how to avoid plagiarizing. This class will utilize the turnitin.com service for the literature review assignment.

IX. Important Dates to Remember

Last Day to Add Classes:	August 26
Last Day to Drop Classes:	August 25
Grade Forgiveness Deadline:	October 31
Withdrawal Deadline:	October 31
Last Day of Classes:	December 3
Final Exam:	**December 8, 4:00pm – 6:50pm**

XII: Tracking Student Participation for Financial Aid

As of Fall 2014, all faculty 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 Diagnostic Survey on Webcourses by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than August 26th. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

XIII: Class Schedule*

Date	Activity	Readings	Assignments Due
Week 1 (8/23, 8/25)	Introduction to the class; Concepts and Measurement	Essentials: Intro, Ch. 1 Companion: Getting Started	
Week 2 (8/30, 9/1)	Concepts and Measurement II	Companion: Ch. 1, 2	Assignment 1 (Due 9/1)
Week 3 (9/6, 9/8)	Measuring and Describing Variables	Essentials: Ch. 2 Companion: Ch. 3	Assignment 2 (Due 9/6)
Week 4 (9/13, 9/15)	Hypotheses and Comparisons	Essentials: Ch. 3 Companion: Ch. 4	Assignment 3 (Due 9/13)
Week 5 (9/20, 9/22)	Hypotheses and Comparisons II		Assignment 4 (Due 9/20)
Week 6 (9/27, 9/29)	Research Design	Essentials: Ch. 4	Assignment 5 (Due 9/27)
Week 7 (10/4, 10/6)	Midterm Review Midterm Exam: 10/6		**For Tuesday (10/4)**: Bring in questions for review
Week 8 (10/11, 10/13)	Research Design II		
Week 9 (10/18, 10/20)	Controlled Comparisons *No Class 10/20*	Essentials: Ch. 5 Companions: Ch. 5	Assignment 6 (Due 10/18)
Week 10 (10/25, 10/27)	Controlled Comparisons II		Assignment 7 (Due 10/25)
Week 11 (11/1, 11/3)	Statistical Inference and Measures of Association	Essentials: Ch. 6, 7 Companion: Ch. 6, 7	Assignment 8 (Due 11/1)
Week 12 (11/8, 11/10)	Election Recovery Week! Statistical Inference and Measures of Association		**For Thursday (11/10)**: Bring in newspaper or internet articles about the election. We will discuss election results as they relate to our class.
Week 13 (11/15, 11/17)	Regression Analysis	Essentials: Ch. 8 Companion: Ch. 8, 9	Assignment 9 (Due 11/15)
Week 14 (11/22, 11/24)	Regression Analysis *No Class 11/24: Happy Thanksgiving!*	Essentials: Ch. 8 Companion: Ch. 8, 9	
Week 15 (11/29, 12/1)	Regression Analysis Course Wrap-Up and Review		Assignment 10 (Due 11/29)
Final Exam 12/8	Final Exam 4:00pm-6:50pm in HPH 310		

* Note: The Schedule is tentative and subject to revision at any time. Students are responsible for keeping track of any changes to the syllabus made by the instructor

Assignments

Homework Assignments: In this class you will be learning SPSS and will have homework assignments to complete that will give you practice using SPSS as well as practice thinking about the logic of data analysis. All assignments are drawn from your textbook (*Essentials of Political Analysis*) and your workbook (*An IBM SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*) unless otherwise denoted. Each assignment is worth 20 points.

Assignment 1 – *Essentials* Chapter 1 Exercises (pp. 18-20): 1, 3, 5, 6

Assignment 2 - *Companion* Chapter 2 Exercises (pp.29-37): 1, 2, 3, 8

Assignment 3 – *Essentials* Chapter 2 Exercises (pp. 44-46): 2, 5
Companion Chapter 3 Exercises (pp. 55-57): 1-3

Assignment 4 – *Essentials* Chapter 3 Exercises (pp.70-75): 2, 4
Companion Chapter 4 Exercises (pp.75-88): 2, 5, 9, 10

Assignment 5 – *Essentials* Chapter 3 Exercises (pp. 70-75): 5, 6, 7

Assignment 6 – Research Design Short Paper (*see Webcourses Assignment page)

Assignment 7 – *Essentials* Chapter 5 Exercises (pp.118-121): 1, 3
Companion Chapter 5 Exercises (pp.107-116): 1, 3

Assignment 8 – *Companion* Chapter 5 Exercises (pp. 107-116): 2, 4, 5

Assignment 9 – *Essentials* Chapter 6 Exercises (pp.153-155): 4, 5
Companion Chapter 6 Exercises (pp. 126-129): 1, 2
Chapter 7 Exercises (pp. 140-147): 1, 5

Assignment 10 – TBA

Exams: There will be a midterm and a final exam in this class. Exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. The final exam is NOT cumulative; you will only be tested on material covered after the midterm exam.

**Midterm Examination: Thursday, October 6
**Final Examination: Thursday December 8, 4:00pm – 6:50pm (note the earlier start time)

Attendance/In Class Assignments: I do not take regular attendance in this class. Instead, we will have 11 in class "pop" assignments over the course of the semester, usually consisting of one or two questions related to the readings and/or what we have discussed in class. Each one is worth 10 points. No laptops may be open during these assignments. I will drop your lowest in-class assignment grade for a total of 10 in class assignments worth 10 points each (100 total points).