POS 3733
DESIGNING POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
FALL 2017

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

INSTRUCTOR: CHRISTOPHER M. FAULKNER
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CLASS TIME: T & R 3:00 PM – 4:15 PM
CLASS LOCATION: HEC 0111
OFFICE HOURS: T & R 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

UCF Catalogue Description
Designing Political Science Research: PR: POS 2041 or INR 2002 or C.I. Logic of inquiry, research design, literature review; research ethics; case studies and case selection; other qualitative methods, such as interview techniques and content analysis

Course Goals
Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

- Identify basic components of research methodology and techniques used by political scientists.
- Develop testable research questions in political science and relatable fields.
- Formulate theoretical arguments and testable hypotheses.
- Identify ethical considerations in political science research.
- Locate academic resources using the library.
- Evaluate, critique, and improve upon political science research.
- Improve students' writing, communication, and research skills.

Course Description
This course will introduce students to political science research and will familiarize students with the fundamentals of research design in political science. The course will start with an overview of what research looks like in academia and the logic of social inquiry. Following the course will cover a variety of topics including the formulation of research topics and questions, proper strategies for reviewing relevant literature, theory and hypotheses development, the design of data collection activities, and basic qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques with a focus on the former methods.

The course will expose students to a number of empirical approaches to political science research including experimental and quasi-experimental designs, large-N survey research, small-N case selection, and comparative analysis. Topics will be broad, covering many areas of political science such as domestic politics, comparative politics, and international relations.

Required Text
This course has only one required textbook:

Blaikie, Norman. 2009. *Designing Social Research*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

*The book is on back-order in the UCF bookstore so it may be useful to look at other outlets to purchase or rent the book:

https://www.amazon.com/Designing-Social-Research-Norman-Blaikie/dp/0745643388

Additional Readings

In addition to the required text, we will also read selections from the following text (to be made available by the instructor):

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. (Referred to as KKV in the schedule)

Johnson, Janet Buttolph, Henry T. Reynolds, and Jason D. Mycoff. 2015. *Political Science Research Methods*. 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. ((Referred to as BMWR in the schedule)

***Additional readings will come from books, journal articles, or newspaper articles. Students should work to locate these readings using library resources. The instructor will also work to provide students with an online folder for readings that are difficult to access and any book chapters which are not readily available through the UCF library.

Assignments

The course is structured around the in-class lectures. Students are expected to *attend all classes*. To participate you must be present. The student's participation will depend on the student's conduct and the quality of their participation. In order to fully engage in this course, students will be expected engage with other students in discussions and activities.

10% - Attendance and In-Class Participation

10% - Research Design

Students will submit a three to five page research design which they will use as the starting point for their research paper. The design will clearly articulate the research question, the contribution to the literature, theory and hypotheses, and the strategy that will be adopted to test the hypotheses/answer the research question. Students who have taken POS 3703 - Scope and Methods, or who have experience with quantitative data are welcome to pursue a large-N project. Students who have not had this course are recommended to pursue a small-N project. Detailed instructions will be provided in class during the second week of classes and made available on webcourses.

15% - Research Design Review/Critique

Students will select from a list of 10 academic articles provided by the instructor and will outline the key components of the research design including research question, contribution to the literature, theory and hypotheses, and main dependent and independent variables. Students will also provide a critique of the design—specifically highlighting limitations of the theory and/or data section. Detailed instructions will be provided in class and made available on webcourses. This assignment can be submitted

15% - Research Paper Presentations
Paper presentations will take place the final week of classes. Students will present their research papers with a major focus on how they developed and processed through designing the research process, investigating literature, decisions on hypotheses testing, etc. The length of the presentations will be announced following the drop/add period. Detailed instructions will be provided in class and made available on webcourses.

20% - Research Paper.
Due the last week of classes. Papers should be submitted online through Webcourses. A detailed overview of the paper requirements will be provided the second week of classes and made available on webcourses.

30% - Exams (2 exams – midterm/final – 15% each).
Exams will draw from concepts, vocabulary, short-answer essay questions on readings and lectures, closed book and closed note. All reading materials are 'fair-game' for the exam.

Letter/Grade Equivalencies:

93% - 100%	A
90% - 92.99%	A -
87% - 89.99%	B +
83% - 86.99%	B
80% - 82.99%	B -
77% - 79.99%	C +
73% - 76.99%	C
70% - 72.99%	C -
60% - 69.99%	D
Below 60%	F

Miscellaneous Policies

Class Participation/Attendance:
Don't just show up…. show up and contribute.
Students learn better when that learning is active. Regular attendance is required for this course and attendance will be taken each class period. Students are permitted to miss 2 classes for any reason deemed necessary (sickness, family emergency, etc.). However, after two absences have occurred, the student will begin losing points for attendance/participation.

Late Papers
Assignments are to be turned in by the day/time they are due. They should be submitted electronically through Webcourses unless requested otherwise by the instructor. Late assignments will face a point deduction. The deduction is as follows: a 30-minute grace period is granted for "technology issues." After 30 minutes, 5% will be deducted from the assignment. For every 24 hours that pass thereafter, an additional 5% of credit is lost, to a maximum of 40%. In short, to avoid senseless point deductions, submit on time.

Academic Integrity

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 contradict these values, and so are very serious academic offenses. Penalties can include a failing grade on an assignment or in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the university. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the University's Rules of Conduct (see http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/).

Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" 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 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 by 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 for one person that will not apply to everyone.

Academic Conduct Statement
UCF is committed to promoting a culture of academic integrity where faculty and students work together to meet our personal, professional, and social responsibilities. A degree from UCF is only valuable to the extent it reflects valid assessments of student learning. Misrepresenting your learning on tests, projects, reports, or papers invalidates your grades and tarnishes the credibility of UCF. While collaboration is encouraged in the learning and studying process, you should assume that all tests, quizzes, etc. require your individual effort unless explicitly directed otherwise. Unauthorized collaboration, whether voluntary or not, is cheating. Unauthorized use of materials during a test, quiz, or other assessment is cheating. Regarding papers and projects, one of the core fluencies that students need to demonstrate is the ability to discern information that is common to the public from the intellectual property of individuals. Use of protected ideas, processes, or language without attribution or proper citation is plagiarism.

Communication with Instructor Policy
In this course, our official mode of communication is through email located inside Webcourses. All communication between student and instructor and between student and student should be respectful and professional. It is the student's responsibility to check the "coursemail" tool frequently.

Accessibility
The University of Central Florida considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission. UCF expects every member of the university community to contribute to an inclusive and respectful culture for all in its classrooms, work environments, and at campus events. Dimensions of diversity can include sex, race, age, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, intellectual and physical ability, sexual orientation, income, faith and non-faith perspectives, socio-economic class, political ideology, education, primary language, family status, military experience, political beliefs, cognitive style, and communication style. The individual intersection of these experiences and characteristics must be valued in our community.

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at www.shield.ucf.edu

If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement, please notify the instructor as soon as possible and/or contact Student Accessibility Services. Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services - http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/ & sas@ucf.edu

University Writing Center

University Writing Center
Colbourn 105
Satellite Locations: Main Library, Rosen Library & Online
407-823-2197
http://uwc.ucf.edu/

The University Writing Center (UWC) offers writing support to UCF students from first-year to graduate in every discipline. Trained peer consultants provide help at every stage of the writing process, including understanding assignments, researching, drafting, revising, incorporating sources, and learning to proofread and edit. The UWC's purpose is not merely to fix papers or to make better writers, but to teach writers strategies to navigate complex situations for writing, both in and outside the University. Consultations are available for individuals and small groups. To make the best use of the UWC, visit far enough before your due date to allow yourself time to revise after your consultation, browse the writing resources on our website, and arrange a regular weekly appointment if you'd like long-term help. You may schedule a 45-minute appointment by phone or by using the TutorTrac scheduler on our website; walk-in consultations are also available. In addition, the UWC seeks graduate and undergraduate tutors from all majors; contact the UWC to learn more about peer writing consulting and ENC 4275/5276: Theory & Practice of Tutoring Writing, our three-credit tutor-education course.

Religious Observances

Students are expected to notify their instructor in advance if they intend to miss a class, the midterm exam, or the paper due date to observe a holy day of their religious faith. For a list of the major religious holidays in a number of faiths contact the Office of Diversity Initiatives at 407-823-6479.

Deployed Active Duty Military Students

If you are a deployed active duty military student and feel that you may need a special accommodation due to that unique status, please contact your instructor to discuss your circumstances.

UCF Cares

During your UCF career, you may experience challenges including struggles with academics, finances, or your personal well-being. UCF has a multitude of resources available to all students. Please visit UCFCares.com if you are seeking resources and support, or if you are worried about a friend or classmate. Free services and information are included for a variety of student concerns, including but not limited to alcohol use, bias incidents, mental health concerns, and financial challenges. You can also e-mail ucfcares@ucf.edu with questions or for additional assistance. You

can reach a UCF Cares staff member between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. by calling 407-823-5607. If you are in immediate distress, please call Counseling and Psychological Services to speak directly with a counselor 24/7 at 407-823-2811, or please call 911.

Laptops/tablets/phones/etc.
Students are welcome and encouraged to use computers or other devices for note taking during class. However, surfing the internet during class; "Facebooking" tweeting, or any other non-class related computer/phone activity is disruptive to the classroom environment. Failure to comply with this basic rule will result in a suspension of computer privileges in class.
Phones should be off or on silent.

Changes to the Syllabus
In the event that there is a need for there to be any changes to the syllabus, an e-mail will be sent to all students' Webcourses mail accounts and will be mentioned in class meetings. Changes become effective immediately after their mention in class, or the sending of the e-mail.
In the event that the instructor needs to cancel class, an e-mail will be sent to all students' knights-mail accounts (as maintained by the registrar) prior to class time.
**The instructor will notify students of any additional readings no later than a week prior to the day they will be covered in class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Introduction to the Course

August 22nd - August 24th
Readings: Johnson, Reynolds, Mycoff, Chapter 1

- Class Intro and Syllabus Overview
- Drop/Swap Deadline on myUCF (Last day to drop and request full refund)
  Add Deadline (August 25th)

Preparing Research

August 29th - August 31st
Readings:
Blaikie, Chapter 1
How to Write a Research Proposal
https://depts.washington.edu/pswrite/Handouts/HowtoWriteResearchProposals.pdf
Dissecting an Academic Article:
Pape, R. 2003. The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism. *American Political Science Review* 97(3) 343-361.

Designing Social Research

September 5th - September 7th
Readings:
Blaikie, Chapter 2
Johnson, Reynolds, and Mycoff, Chapter 2, pp. 58-67
Mahoney, J., Kimball, E., & Koivu, K. L. (2009). The logic of historical explanation in the social sciences. *Comparative Political Studies*, *42*(1), 114-146.

Research Questions and Purpose

September 12th - September 14th
Readings:
Blaikie, Chapter 3
Powell, J. (2012). Determinants of the Attempting and Outcome of Coups d'état. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution, 56*(6): 1017-1040.

Concepts, Operationalization, Theories, Hypotheses

September 19th - September 21st
Readings:
Blaikie, Chapter 5
Dolan, T. (2013). Unthinkable and Tragic: The Psychology of Weapons Taboos in War. *International Organization, 67*(1), 37-63.

Strategies for Answering Research Questions
Case Studies and Small N Research

September 26th - September 28th
Readings:
Blaikie, Chapter 4
King, Keohane, and Verba. Chapters 4 & 6
Mahoney, J. 2012. The logic of process tracing tests in social science. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 41(4) 570-597.
Seawright and Gerring, "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research," *Political Research Quarterly*, 2008.

Sources and Selection of Data

October 3rd - October 5th
Readings:
Blaikie, Chapter 6
EXAM 1
Dataset Overviews – Reviewing the pros and cons of different data sources.

Methods for Answering Research Questions

October 10th - October 12th
Readings:
Blaikie, Chapter 7
RESEARCH DESIGN DUE
Mintz et al. 2006. Can We Generalize from Student Experiments to the Real World in Political Science, Military Affairs, and International Relations? *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 50(5) 757-776.

Sample Research Designs

October 17th - October 19th
Readings:
Blaikie, Chapter 8
RESEARCH DESIGN REVIEW/CRITIQUES CAN NOW BE SUBMITTED

Presenting Research – Presentations from the Department

October 24th - October 26th
(Monday, Oct. 30th- Withdrawal Deadline)

Readings:
Boutton, A. 2014. US foreign aid, interstate rivalry, and incentives for counterterrorism cooperation. *Journal of Peace Research* 51(6) 741-754.
REVIEW OF RESEARCH DESIGNS (resubmission due)

Fieldwork & Experimental Design

October 31st - November 2nd
Readings:
BWMR, Chapter 6
Tezcür, Günes M. 2016. "Ordinary people, extraordinary risks: Participation in an ethnic rebellion." *American Political Science Review*, 110(2): 247-264.
Stevenson, Randolph. 2001. "The Economy of Policy Mood: A Fundamental Dynamic of Democratic Politics?" *American Journal of Political Science*. 45(3):620-33.
Li, Quan and Rafael Reuveny. 2003. "Economic Globalization and Democracy: An Empirical Analysis." *British Journal of Political Science*. 33(1):29-55.
Hsueh Jensenius Newsome 2014 - Fieldwork in Political Science Encountering Challenges and Crafting Solutions.
Tentative - Guest Lecture – Clayton Besaw

Content Analysis

November 7th - November 9th
Readings:
BWMR, Chapters 10 & 14

Survey Research and Interviewing

November 14th - November 16th
Readings:
Johnson, Reynolds, and Mycoff, Chapter 10

Research Ethics

November 21st - No Class Thursday, November 23rd (Thanksgiving)
Readings:
Stanford Prison Experiment Discussion
Research Ethics 101: Dilemmas and Responsibilities
RESEARCH DESIGN CRITIQUES MUST BE SUBMITTED BY MIDNIGHT ON NOVEMBER 23RD.

Research Paper Presentations

November 28th - November 30th
RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Final Exam

Thursday, December 7, 2017
1:00 PM – 3:50 PM