POS 6736 Conduct of Political Inquiry
Fall 2018

Instructor: Professor Kenicia Wright
Class Location: TBD
Class Meeting: Monday, 6-8:50pm
Office: HPH305B
Office Hours: Wednesday and Friday, 1-3pm, and by appointment
Email: `Kenicia.Wright@ucf.edu`

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Prerequisites: Graduate standing or consent of the instructor (3 credit hours)

This is a graduate-level seminar aimed at introducing graduate students to research design and introductory data analysis used in political science research. Students enrolled in this course will be introduced to the logic of inquiry, the basic elements of empirical research, and methodology commonly applied in the social sciences. The assigned readings and assignments in this course were selected in order to help students evaluate existing research, while critically thinking about their own research interests. Students will learn how to formulate research questions, develop theories to answer research questions, derive hypotheses from their theories, as well as the empirical "tools" necessary for hypothesis testing. We will cover an array of topics, including: the design of social inquiry, data collection, hypotheses, concepts, and variables, descriptive statistics, and causal inference.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students who successfully complete this course should:

- Gain increased understanding of the nature of political science research
- Be more aware of the research strategies scholars across disciplines commonly use
- Have the ability to read, understand, and critically evaluate scholarly research
- Effectively use the tools that are necessary to complete an original political science research paper

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Baglione, Lisa A. *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science: A Practical Guide to Inquiry, Structure, and Methods.* CQ Press. Third Edition, 2015.
   ISBN-13: 9781483376165.
   - This text is available at the UCF library and for under $25 on Amazon.

2. King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press. 1994. ISBN-13: 978-0691034713.
    - This text is available at the UCF library and for around $15 on Amazon.
3. I will also assign scholarly articles. These articles can be accessed through the UCF Library website.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE BREAKDOWN

Attendance, Preparation, and in-class participation: 100 points

This is a graduate-level seminar, so all students are expected to prepare and attend class, and to participate during class. The discussion questions in this syllabus offer students *starting* points for in-class discussion.

Quizzes: 200 points

There will be 10 quizzes in this course. Quizzes will consist of true/false, multiple choice, and open ended questions and will be randomly given throughout the semester, **at the start of class**. The purpose of these quizzes are to ensure students understand course material before submitting their final paper for this course. Make-up quizzes will not be allowed, unless a student does not attend class because s/he is participating in university activities, observing a religious holiday, or fulfilling a legal obligation. Be sure to provide the professor with the proper documentation *before* missing a class session, if possible.

Research Paper: Students will need to complete a research paper for this course. The paper should include an introduction, literature review, theory, data and methods, and conclusion sections. I understand that this will be the first research paper for many students in this course, so there are several optional deadlines students can choose to complete that will help them complete their paper by the due date. I will be available throughout the semester to offer students any additional help they need with completing this paper.

- Literature Review and Theory: 50 points (Sept. 24th, start of class)
- Data and Methods: 50 points (Oct. 22nd, start of class)
- First Paper Draft: 200 points (Nov. 5th, start of class)
- "Final" Research Paper: 250 points (Must be submitted by Dec. 5th at 11:59pm to Turnitin link in Webcourses.ucf.edu.)

Conference: During the week of finals, students will present their papers in a conference style presentation. Discussants will be assigned and additional details will be given as the semester progresses.

- Attendance and Participation: 50 points Participation points are earned when students ask a minimum of **TWO** questions during two separate presentations.

- Discussant comments: 100 points

Grading:
A: 930 - 1000 points
A-: 900 - 920 points
B+: 870 - 890 points
B: 830-860 points
B-: 800-820 points
C+: 770-790 points
C: 730-760 points
C-: 700-720 points
D+: 670-690 points
D: 630-660 points
D-: 600-620 points
F: 590 points and below

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
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, Ferrell Commons Room 185, Phone: (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

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 with you on your 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.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT
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. Plagiarism includes not properly citing sources, passing off someone else's work as your own, submitting a paper written for another class, etc. See the UCF Golden Rule, the FTCL page on academic integrity, and the library web-site for further information. I will adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so do not ask or expect me to change your grade illegitimately. Expect penalties for failing for academic dishonesty, plagiarism, or cheating; penalties can include a failing grade on an assignment

or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a "Z Designation" on a student's official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, see http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade.

CAMPUS SAFETY STATEMENT

Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise in our class, everyone needs to work together. Students should be aware of the surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts. To stay informed about emergency situations, sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to my.ucf.edu and logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the tool bar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on your Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert," fill out the information, including your e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK." Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

I expect all students to come to class with assigned class readings complete. At a minimum, students are expected to attend class with the ability to answer the following questions:

1. What is the research question being examined in the reading?
2. What is the main theory?
3. What are the hypotheses? How are the hypotheses tested?
4. What are the key variables? How are they measured?
5. What is the data collection process?
6. What are the findings? Does it support the authors argument?
7. Are you convinced by the argument? What would you change?

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1: August 20th - Course Introduction

Assigned Readings:

Hill, Kim Quaile. "Myths About the Physical Sciences and Their Implications for Teaching Political Science" *PS: Political Science & Politics* 37.3 (2004): 467-471.

Lupia, Arthur. "Evaluating Political Science Research: Information for Buyers and Sellers." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 33.1 (2000): 7-14.

Class Exercise: Finding and reading scholarly research

Week 2: August 27th - Research Question
Assigned Readings:
Baglione 2012, Ch. 2: "Getting Started: Finding a Research Question"
King et al. 1994, p.3 - p.23
Smith, Rogers. "Should We Make Political Science More of a Science or More About Politics?" *PS: Political Science & Politics* 35.2 (2002): 199-201.
Optional: **Come to class with three research questions and one related scholarly article you are interested in exploring for your paper.**

Week 3: September 3rd
NO CLASS - Labor Day

Week 4: September 10th
Assigned Readings:
Baglione 2012, Ch. 1: "So You Have to Write a Research Paper"
Baglione 2012, Ch. 3: "Learning Proper Citation Forms, Finding the Scholarly Debate, and Summarizing and Classifying Arguments: The Annotated Bibliography"
Anzia, Sarah F., and Christopher R. Berry. "The Jackie (and Jill) Robinson Effect: Why do congresswomen outperform congressmen?" *American Journal of Political Science* 55.3 (2011): 478-493
Optional: **Come to class with an outline of your paper. No longer than 2 pages.**

Week 5: September 17th - Theory and Hypothesis Development
Assigned Readings:
Baglione 2012, Ch. 4: "Making Sense of the Scholarly Answers to Your Research Question: Writing the Literature Review"
Campbell, Andrea Louise. "Policy makes mass Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science* 15 (2012): 333-351.
Lawless, Jennifer L. "Female Candidates and Legislators." *Annual Review of Political Science* 18 (2015): 349-366.
Lovenduski, Joni. "Gendering Research in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1.1 (1998): 333-356.
Simien, Evelyn M. "Doing Intersectionality Research: From Conceptual Issues to Practical Examples." *Politics & Gender* 3.2 (2007): 264-271.

Week 6: September 24th - Causality and Causal Inference
Assigned Readings:
Baglione 2012, Ch. 5: "Effectively Distilling Your Argument: The Thesis, Model, and Hypothesis"
King et al. 1994, p. 75-82 AND p. 99-109
REQUIRED: **Come to class with a draft of the literature review and theory**

sections of your paper.

Week 7: October 1st - Research Design
Assigned Readings:
King et al. 1994, p. 46-63
King et al. 1994, p. 115-139
Bring one example of qualitative research and one example of quantitative research to class. (Hardcopy or PDF is fine.)

Week 8: October 8th - Guest lecture from Prof. Jacques
Assigned Readings:
Grimmer, Justin, and Brandon M. Stewart. "Text as Data: The Promise and Pitfalls of Automatic Content Analysis Methods for Political Texts". 2013.
Laver, Michael, and John Garry. "Estimating Policy Positions from Political Texts." *American Journal of Political Science* 44.3 (2000): 619-634.
Screier, Margrit. "Qualitative Content Analysis."
Quiz credit for attendance and participation. Please bring your laptop to class.

Week 9: October 15th
Assigned Readings:
Broockman, David E. "Black politicians are more intrinsically motivated to advance Blacks' interests: A field experiment manipulating political incentives." *American Journal of Political Science* 57.3 (2013): 521-536.
Gilens, Martin. "Race and Poverty in America: Public Misperceptions and the American News Media." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 60.4 (1996): 515-541.
Joslyn, Mark. "The Determinants and Consequences of Recall Error about Gulf War Preferences." *American Journal of Political Science* 47.3 (2003): 440-52.
Kuklinski, James H., Michael D. Cobb, and Martin Gilens. "Racial attitudes and the 'New South"' *The Journal of Politics* 59.2 (1997): 323-349.
Presser, Stanley, Mick Couper, Judith Lessler, Elizabeth Martin, Jean Martin, Jennifer Rothgeb and Elanor Singer. "Methods for Testing and Evaluating Survey Questions." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 68.1 (2004): 109-130.

Week 10: October 22nd
Assigned Readings:
Adcock, Robert. "Measurement validity: A shared standard for qualitative and quantitative research." *American Political Science Review* 95.3 (2001): 529-546.
King et al. 1994, Ch. 6 "Increasing the Number of Observations"
***REQUIRED:* Come to class with drafts of your Data and Methods section. This section of your paper should include the steps you plan to take to collect data for your paper in the future (data sources, general description of experiment or**

case study you plan on using, or steps for qualitative research).

Week 11: October 29th
Assigned Readings:
Baglione 2012, Ch. 8: "Evaluating the Argument: The Analysis and Assessment Section"
Bowleg, Lisa. 2008. "When Black + Lesbian + Woman $\not\equiv$ Black Lesbian Woman: The Methodological Challenges of Qualitative and Quantitative Intersectionality Research." *Sex Roles* 59.5-6 (2008): 312-325.
Simien, Evelyn M. "Doing Intersectionality Research: From Conceptual Issues to Practical Examples." *Politics & Gender* 3.2 (2007): 264-271.
Zaller, John, and Stanley Feldman. "A Simple Theory of the Survey Response: Answering Questions versus Revealing Preferences." *American Journal of Political Science* 36.3 (1992): 579-616.

Week 12: November 5th
Assigned Readings:
Baglione 2012, Ch. 7: "Making Your Plan and Protecting Yourself from Criticism: The Research Design"
King et al. 1994, Ch. 5 "Understanding What to Avoid"
REQUIRED: **First full paper draft is due TODAY. Papers must be turned in by the start of class.**
Students will be given details about the conference (time limits, example of presentations, assigning discussants, structure of discussant comments, etc.).

Week 13: November 12th
NO CLASS - Veterans Day

Week 14: November 19th
Assigned Readings:
Baglione 2012, Ch. 9 "Bringing the Paper Together in Three Essential Ways: The Conclusion, Introduction, and Title"

Week 15: November 26th
Assigned Readings:
Baglione 2012, Ch. 6 "Revising and Editing Your Work: It Ain't Over 'til It's Over"
REQUIRED: **Each student must EMAIL their paper to the assigned discussant with the professor "cc'ed" by the START of class.**

Finals Week: December 3rd
Student Conference

We will have a conference where each student is expected to present their research paper. The conference will offer students a "final" opportunity to receive feedback on their paper from their colleagues as well as the professor. Each student enrolled in the course is expected to attend the conference and will earn participation points by asking a minimum of **TWO** questions during two different student presentations.
A final version of the paper with all required sections - including paper title, introduction, theory, data / methods, and conclusion - must be submitted to the provided Turnitin link in webcourses.ucf.edu by **December 5th at NOON**.

NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule, assigned readings, etc., at any point during this semester.