Syllabus
Scope and Methods of Political Science
POS 3703 0W57
Fall 2018

Additional Information from Official Schedule of Classes

Credit Hours: 3 (3, 0)

Prerequisites: POS 2041 or C.I.

Class Meeting Days and Time: August 20 to December 8 2018, with the course website normally available 24 hours a day.

Class Location: The course website can be found at www.webcourses.ucf.edu.

Modality: This is a "W" course that is done completely online with no face to face meetings.

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Aubrey Jewett

Office: Howard Phillips Hall (HPH) 302 E

Office Hours: Online by e-mail or in person T & R from 9 to 11 am or by appointment

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Public Description of Course

Information Published in the UCF Undergraduate Catalog: The scope and methodology of political analysis. Extensive examination of the discipline, research design and methodology.

Course Scope and Purpose: Scope and Methods of Political Science class examines the scientific study of politics, the discipline of political science, and the skills needed for political analysis. We outlines the multi-step research process and compares various types of quantitative and qualitative research design. We discuss unit of analysis, the measurement of concepts and variables, formulating and testing hypotheses, covariation, and causation. We cover survey research, survey questions, and sampling. We review statistical topics including the univariate distribution, bivariate and multivariate analysis (including cross-tabulations, measures of association, and regression), and significance testing. Students receive ongoing practice to

develop these skills, including statistical software, and produce their own original quantitative research project at the end of the course.

Course Goals (Student Learning Outcomes)

Students who successfully complete Scope and Methods of Political Science should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of basic facts, definitions and concepts related to the discipline of political science and political research methods including: foundations of empirical research, the design and structure of research, techniques for data collection, and methods for processing and analyzing data.

2. Use and apply appropriate research skills including statistical analysis with MicroCase.

3. Think critically about political data, issues, research findings and methods and discuss these issues in a professional academic manner, and show respect for other people who may hold different views.

4. Produce their own original quantitative political science research using the techniques accepted by the discipline.

Course Materials/Required Texts

1. Michael K. Le Roy, *Research Methods in Political Science: An Introduction Using MicroCase*, 8th ed., Boston: Wadsworth Cengage, 2013. ISBN-13: 9781133309307

You should only buy a new version of the book. This is a workbook with each chapter containing exercises that are completed using MicroCase software and with a one-time use code that allows access to the MicroCase Statistical Analysis Software. Each paperback book comes with pages that tear out so the assignment can be turned in and so used books are often missing pages. You can purchase a traditional new hard copy of the book, rent a new copy, or you can get a new e-version of the book if you prefer. New copies are available for purchase or rent in both hard back and digital versions at the on-campus bookstore and off-campus college bookstores and at a variety of websites (including the publisher – Cengage).

Currently the best deal for access to a new version of the book is the e-version available directly from the publisher (Cengage) for just $21.00: https://www.cengage.com/c/research-methods-in-political-science-8e-le-roy

If you buy an E-Version of the book or a used copy you will need to download the Microcase statistical package from our class website. Cengage is still selling the e-version of the workbook but is no longer providing the software to do the exercises with it (and obviously if you decide to get a used book against my advice you will not get the one time use code to obtain the software). So, once you are in our course website (Module 1) you will need to download the software and data sets which you will need to do the exercises (this will to some degree replace the section titled "getting started" in the workbook).

MicroCase software does not work on Apple Computers. You will need access to a Microsoft based computer to install and run the software. As an alternative to using your own computer, the political science computer lab on the 3rd floor of Howard Phillips Hall can also be used to do these assignments (the software is preloaded on the lab computers). Check the department website for lab hours each semester.

Assessment, Grading Procedures, Expectations and Support

Assignments and Grading Weights:

Overview: This course has 12 Modules – approximately one per week. Each Module will require reading a chapter from MicroCase, completing and submitting a MicroCase computer assignment, reading the information I post in the online module, doing an extension assignment and posting it into discussion, and providing feedback to your classmates in discussion. In addition there is a midterm exam and a final exam. And last there is an original research project (which is MicroCase computer assignment 13).

Here is the percent of your total grade for each type of assignment:

*Twelve MicroCase Computer Assignments – 30% of your total grade (I will drop the one lowest grade before computing your percent – but you would be wise to do all of them since they give you the skills you need for the original research project). You will do the statistical analysis required by the workbook and upload your answers. For each module you may fill in the actual worksheets in the book, scan them and upload them as one PDF document or you may type up the answers in a MS Word document and upload that. If you choose to type your answers into an MS Word doc you must approximate the format of the answer sheet in the book so that I can grade it quickly and efficiently.

*Twelve Extension Assignments Including Discussion with Classmates – 15% of your total grade (I will drop the one lowest grade before computing your percent but you would be wise to do all of them since they give you practice on skills you will need for the tests). After posting your assignment you should read what other classmates have posted and discuss the assignment with them.

*Two Exams – 40% of your total grade (the midterm and the final exam are each worth 20%). The exams will be multiple choice and problem solving. The final exam is cumulative as the scope and methods class is a skills course that builds over the semester.

*Original Research Project (MicroCase Chapter 13) -15% of total your grade

Grades and Grading Scale: Students can view grades in Mygrades. I use a ten-point grading scale.

100-90 A (Outstanding, superior work)
89-80 B (Excellent, above average work)

79-70 C (Good, average work)
69-60 D (Below average or incomplete work)
59-0 F (Poor work or missed assignment)

Missed Quizzes, Missed or Late Assignments and Make-Up Policy:

- Make-up Assignments for Authorized University Events or Co-curricular Activities – Students who miss exams/assignments because they are representing UCF in authorized events or activities will be offered reasonable opportunity to complete the work with no penalty applied. It is the student's responsibility to provide the instructor with a copy of the Program Verification Form (which lists the names of students participating in the authorized event or activity) prior to the class in which the absence occurs.

- Religious Observances – A student who desires to observe a religious holy day of his or her religious faith must notify all of his/her instructors at the beginning of the term to be excused from classes to observe the religious holy day. The student is responsible for any material covered during the excused absence, but will be permitted a reasonable amount of time to complete any work missed.

- Tests – I do not drop either test grade and tests automatically lock at the due date and time. Under normal circumstance I will not reopen the test. If you miss a test and want a chance to make up the test email me as soon as possible (normally within 24 hours). If you have a verifiable extenuating circumstance (i.e. illness with a doctor's note, accident with a police report, or death in the family with documentation) I will let you make up one test with no grade penalty. You should complete the test in a reasonable amount of time (usually within one week). If you do not have a verifiable extenuating circumstance (you forgot, overslept, were too busy etc.) I may allow you <u>one</u> make up in a reasonable amount of time (usually within one week) as long as you contact me quickly (usually within 24 hours), take responsibility for what happened, and have been showing a good faith effort to complete previous work. However, I deduct ten points from the score in fairness to classmates who completed the test on time.

- Microcase Computer Assignments – I will drop your <u>one</u> lowest Microcase Computer Assignment when I compute your final grade. Thus this part of your grade is based on your 11 highest scores. This will provide you a measure of protection should something happen that prevents you from doing an assignment (computer glitch, illness, vacation etc.) or should you do poorly on an assignment. Because I drop the lowest grade, I normally do not accept late Microcase assignment. If you have an extraordinary situation which causes you to miss more than one Microcase assignment you may email me with the pertinent information and I will make a decision based on being fair to you but also to all the other students in the class that are meeting the deadlines.

- Extension Assignments – I will drop your <u>one</u> lowest Extension Assignment score when I compute your final grade. Thus this part of your grade is based on your 11 highest scores. This will provide you a measure of protection should something happen that prevents you from doing an assignment (computer glitch, illness, vacation etc.) or should you do

poorly on an assignment. Because I drop the lowest grade, I normally do not accept late Extension assignments. If you have an extraordinary situation which causes you to miss more than one Extension assignment you may email me with the pertinent information and I will make a decision based on being fair to you but also to all the other students in the class that are meeting the deadlines. You may post your Extension Assignment up to two days late after the initial deadline, but there will be a 10 point penalty for each day the initial posting is late. So 10 points off for one day late and 20 points off for two days late. Discussion with others is available until the module closes and will not be reopened.

Workload and Deadlines: Many students are apprehensive about taking Political Science Scope and Methods. Quite frankly that is probably a good thing because Scope and Methods for many students is the most difficult course they will take for their major. It is more difficult than other political science courses because it has many unfamiliar terms and concepts, requires competency in statistical analysis (especially the last third of the course), and is primarily about learning a set of skills used by political scientists for political research rather than learning about the content of a substantive area.

In addition, taking scope and methods online adds a level of difficulty since you will not have face to face interaction with the professor and in-class lectures. In order to succeed in this class and really learn the information you may need to put in 8-12 hours a week, read and re-read the material as some of it is quite difficult, keep up with all deadlines without being reminded, do all assignments regularly without missing any, and give your best effort all semester especially on the tests and the original research project. Do not wait until the last minute to do assignments. Computer problems and Internet connection problems will happen. They are not acceptable excuses for missing due dates and deadlines. Due times for graded assignments are usually 11 pm Eastern Standard Time. I give a 59 minute grace period until 11:59 pm before I start assessing the late penalty on the initial extension posting.

This is an important and serious course and so if you do not think you are up to doing all of these things then I would strongly suggest you drop this course and sign up for an in-person section. If you do not follow all of these suggestions than your apprehension about this course is warranted as you will most likely not do well in this class. Conversely if you follow these guidelines, then you will find that you have most likely done well by the end of the course and be justifiably proud of your efforts and achievement.

Professional Communication & Online Etiquette: I expect professional communication whether face to face, by email, or in online discussions. When communicating with me, please address me by my title (Dr. Jewett or Prof. Jewett), politely explain the purpose of your communication, courteously provide evidence or background information as appropriate, and respectfully ask your question or make your statement or request. DO NOT make demands or unsubstantiated claims, issue threats or accusations, or question my motives. During discussion DO NOT personally attack other students (or the professor) for their opinions. Political disagreements are normal, but be scholarly and civil, focus on the material, explain your position calmly and rationally, and show respect for the sincerely held beliefs of others.

Questions for Professor Jewett: If you have general questions about the course or material do not e-mail me initially. Instead post your question in the Discussions section of the web site. Once in Discussions select the topic “Questions for Professor Jewett” and then click in the

"Reply" box and type in your question and then hit "Post Reply." I have linked my email to this discussion forum so it will forward to me almost immediately, but by posting the question here (and my answer) we will allow other students to gain more information (if you have a question, chances are another student also has the same question). You should review this section before asking your question as someone else may have already asked it. Of course if your problem is personal (related to your health or to your quiz or discussion grade for instance) or involves not being able to get on the site (and hence unable to get to Discussions) feel free to e-mail me at my normal e-mail address.

Instructor Response Time: Under normal circumstance I will respond to a posted question or an email within 24 hours. Quizzes are automatically graded and you will received immediate feedback on your score. I seek to provide substantive feedback in the discussion to your initial policy analysis within 24 hours of the due date. Once a module closes I typically have Compare, Contrast, Update & Discuss graded and provide suggestions to improve within 48 hours.

Seeking Help from Other Students: If you would like to seek the help of fellow students go to Discussions and select the topic "Students Seeking Help from Students" and post your question as above. This can be a technical question about computer problems or a subject matter question.

Students Needing Technical Support: If you need technical support with Webcourses you can go to https://cdl.ucf.edu/support/. Phone support is available at 407-823-0407. Email support is available at webcourses@ucf.edu.

UCF Core Syllabus Statements

Academic Integrity:

I expect ethical academic behavior from all my students. Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Rules of Conduct at <http://osc.sdes.ucf.edu/process/roc>. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in

a) Unauthorized assistance: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating.
b) Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means: The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else's efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.
c) Commercial Use of Academic Material: Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor's PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.
d) Falsifying or misrepresenting the student's own academic work.

e) Plagiarism: Using or appropriating another's work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.
f) Multiple Submissions: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.
g) Helping another violate academic behavior standards.

For more information about Academic Integrity, students may consult The Center for Academic Integrity <http://www.academicintegrity.org/icai/assets/FVProject.pdf>.

For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices" <http://wpacouncil.org/node/9>.

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating:

I uphold and enforce academic standards. Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, *The Golden Rule* <http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/docs/goldenrule.pdf>. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to academic misconduct. Penalties can include a failing grade in 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>.

Course Accessibility:

The University of Central Florida and I are committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need disability-related access in this course should contact the professor as soon as possible. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) <http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/> (Ferrell Commons 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone 407-823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable. Determining reasonable access and accommodations requires consideration of the course design, course learning objectives and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student.

Campus Safety Statement:

Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise during class, everyone needs to work together. Students should be aware of their surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.
- Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Students should make a note of the guide's physical location and review the online version at <http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html>.

- Students should know the evacuation routes from each of their classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency.
- If there is a medical emergency during class, students may need to access a first-aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those are located, see <http://www.ehs.ucf.edu/workplacesafety.html> (click on link from menu on left).
- To stay informed about emergency situations, students can 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 toolbar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on the Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including 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.
- To learn about how to manage an active-shooter situation on campus or elsewhere, consider viewing this video (<https://youtu.be/NIKYajEx4pk>).

Deployed Active Military Status:

A deployed active duty military student who feels the need for a special accommodation due to that unique status should contact their instructor to discuss the circumstances.

Assignment Due Dates

I make an effort to follow the posted schedule. However, this outline may change during the semester due to unforeseen events or for pedagogical reasons. It is your responsibility to read class announcements and emails and keep informed.

Pretest due by Friday 8/24 at 5:00 pm EST.

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 following academic activity by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than Friday August 24th 5:00 pm EST. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Go to Quizzes and click on "Pretest" and then "Take the Quiz." You have 1 hour to take the pretest. Please do not study beforehand or look up answers when taking the pretest – if you do not know the answer then just make your best guess. I want to get an honest assessment of how much you know about the course material before we get started (so please do not just take 5 minutes for the whole quiz and randomly hit answers either – actually read the questions and see if you know the answer). Once you answer all the questions hit "Submit Quiz." The pretest quiz does not count towards your final grade.

Module 1 Political Science, the Scientific Approach and the Research Process: MicroCase Worksheet due by Sunday 8/26 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Monday 8/27 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Wednesday 8/29 11:00 pm

For Module 1 please read: MicroCase Chapter 1 A Brief Overview of Research Methods

Module 2 Conceptual Foundations: The Measurement of Political Concepts: MicroCase Worksheet due by Sunday 9/2 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Monday 9/3 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Wednesday 9/5 11:00 pm

For Module 2 please read: MicroCase Chapter 2 Measurement 1 Basic Ideas

Labor Day Holiday Monday 9/3 PLEASE NOTE: JUST BECAUSE SOME DUE DATES MAY FALL OVER THE LABOR DAY HOLIDAY DOES NOT MEAN YOU HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THEN TO DO THE ASSIGNMENT!

Module 3 Measurement and Types of Data in Political Science: MicroCase Worksheet due by Sunday 9/9 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Monday 9/10 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Wednesday 9/12 11:00 pm

For Module 3 please read: MicroCase Chapter 3 Measurement 2 Types of Data

Module 4 Basic Elements of Research: Variables, Covariation, and Hypotheses: MicroCase Worksheet due by Sunday 9/16 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Monday 9/17 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Wednesday 9/19 11:00 pm

For Module 4 please read: MicroCase Chapter 4 Variables Variation Explanation

Module 5 Survey Research and Questions (and a follow-up on Hypotheses): MicroCase Worksheet due by Sunday 9/23 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Monday 9/24 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Wednesday 9/26 11:00 pm

For Module 5 please read: MicroCase Chapter 5 Hypotheses

Module 6 Sampling: MicroCase Worksheet due by Sunday 9/30 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Monday 10/1 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Wednesday 10/3 11:00 pm

For Module 6 please read: MicroCase Chapter 6 Sampling

Module 7 Research Design, Data Preparation, and Entry: MicroCase Worksheet due by Sunday 10/7 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Monday 10/8 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Wednesday 10/10 11:00 pm

For Module 7 please read: MicroCase Chapter 7 Data Preparation and Entry

Midterm Exam Due by Monday 10/15 at 11pm

Module 8 The Univariate Distribution: Describing Political Phenomenon with Statistics: MicroCase Worksheet due by Sunday 10/21 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Monday 10/22 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Wednesday 10/24 11:00 pm

For Module 8 please read: MicroCase Chapter 8 Descriptive Statistics

Withdrawal Deadline Friday 10/26 11:59 p.m.

Module 9 Bivariate Analysis: Testing Hypotheses with Crosstabulations (Crosstabs): MicroCase Worksheet due by Sunday 10/28 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Monday 10/29 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Wednesday 10/31 11:00 pm

For Module 9 please read: MicroCase Chapter 9 Cross Tabs

Module 10 Significance Testing and Measures of Association: MicroCase Worksheet due by Sunday 11/4 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Monday 11/5 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Wednesday 11/7 11:00 pm

For Module 10 please read: MicroCase Chapter 10 Statistical Significance and Measures of Association

Module 11 Control, Elaboration, and Multivariate Analysis: Crosstabs with a Control Variable): MicroCase Worksheet due by Sunday 11/11 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Monday 11/12 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Wednesday 11/14 11:00 pm

For Module 11 please read: MicroCase Chapter 11 Controlling for a 3rd Variable

Veteran's Day Holiday Monday 11/12 PLEASE NOTE: JUST BECAUSE SOME DUE DATES MAY FALL OVER THE VETERAN'S DAY HOLIDAY DOES NOT MEAN YOU HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THEN TO DO THE ASSIGNMENT!

Module 12 Correlation and Regression Analysis: MicroCase Worksheet due by Sunday 11/18 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Monday 11/19 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Wednesday 11/21 11:00 pm

For Module 12 please read: MicroCase Chapter 12 Correlation and Regression

Thanksgiving Day Holiday Thursday and Friday 11/22 & 11/23

Final Exam Due by Monday 11/26 at 11pm

MicroCase Chapter 13 Worksheet (Original Research Project) Due by Monday Dec 3 at 11pm

Term Ends: Saturday December 8

Getting Started

Go to the home page, go to Quizzes and click on “Pretest” and then “Take the Quiz” (as described above to document your participation in the course). After that, to begin the graded part of the course, click on Modules and then read and follow the instructions for Module 1: Political Science, the Scientific Approach, and the Research Process.