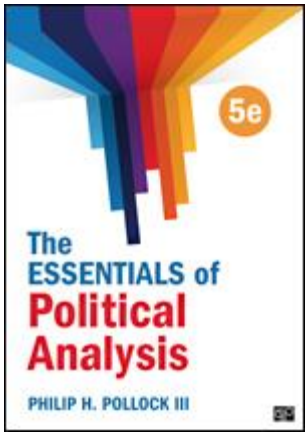
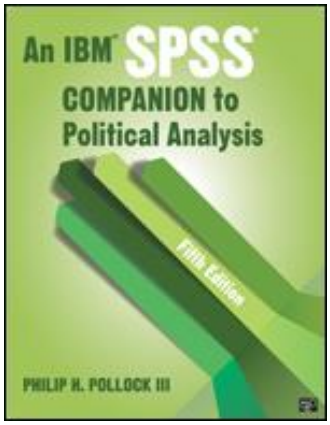
Scope and Methods of Political Science (POS3703.0008)
Pollock / Spring 2018

Office	302 Phillips Hall
Office hours	TTh 8-8:50 / 10:30-11:45 / and by appointment
Voice	407-823-2608
Email	Philip.Pollock@ucf.edu
Required resources:	
1. App	Top Hat (tophat.com)
2. Books	Pollock: *The Essentials of Political Analysis*, 5e + Pollock: *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*, 5e: 978-1-5063-2892-8 **You must obtain the 5th edition of these books.**
3. Website resources	PowerPoint slides and video lectures for all chapters in *Essentials*. Video lectures for all chapters in *SPSS Companion*. **You are responsible for the content of this material**.





In this course you will learn the elements of social scientific thinking—how to describe variables and measure complex concepts, how to create explanations, how to construct and test hypotheses, how to think analytically, and how to control for rival explanations of political phenomena. You will learn SPSS, powerful data analysis software. SPSS is available in most labs on campus, as well as on UCF Apps: http://apps.ucf.edu/

Class sessions include (a) lectures and (b) SPSS skill-set development. In order to do well in this course, you must have a thorough grasp of the reading, the lecture material, and the computer software. This is very important. Come to class every day. Take good notes. Ask questions. If you do not understand an idea or topic, visit me during office hours or send me an email. **You are responsible for all of the assigned course material, including the *Essentials* textbook, *SPSS Companion* workbook, PowerPoint slides, and video lectures.**

REQUIREMENTS:
(1) Engagement and participation (25 percent)
(2) Assignments (15 percent)
(3) Exams (60 percent)
(4) Academic activity verification (required by UCF administration)

(1) Engagement and participation: Top Hat. (25 percent of course grade.) Join code: **892061**. You will use the Top Hat classroom response system in this course (www.tophat.com). Top Hat Classroom requires a paid subscription: $26 for the semester. Note: When making the purchase, Top Hat may encourage you to buy additional content. **Purchase only the $26 subscription**. Do not purchase any additional Top Hat content.

Top Hat will perform three tasks. It will record your (i) *attendance* each day, and it will allow you to submit responses to in-class questions, which will be evaluated for (ii) *participation* (did you respond to the question?) and (iii) *correctness* (was your response correct?). You may use Apple or Android smartphones or tablets, laptops—or through text message. Here is how the 25 percent for engagement and participation is broken down:

Engagement & participation component	*Percentage of grade*
Attendance	15%
Participation	5%
Correctness	5%

Attendance (15 percent). Attendance is required. *Attendance will count 15 percent of your course grade.* Do not arrive late for class. Do not depart early from class. When you arrive each day, an attendance code will be displayed on the screen in front of the class. You will open Top Hat and enter the code, thus recording your attendance. At the beginning of class, I will close the attendance code, and you will no longer be able to record your attendance.

Participation (5 percent) and Correctness (5 percent). During lecture, I will periodically pause my presentation and present short quiz questions, primarily using a multiple choice format. You will have a brief amount of time to respond to each question, using the Top Hat app. After the question times out, you will no longer be able to record your answer. Most questions will be worth 1 point each: .5 points for participation (did you respond?) and .5 points for correctness (was your response correct?). At my discretion, I will display aggregated and anonymized results for each question, allowing us to revisit any points of confusion or misunderstanding.

To reemphasize: Top Hat is a core pedagogical technology for this course. You are responsible for bringing a ready-to-use device to class each day: an Apple, Android smartphone, tablet, or laptop.

- During the time that you are in class, you must use your phone, etc. for attendance and classroom engagement. **You must not use your phone, etc. for any other purpose**.
- I strongly recommend that you bring a **second device as back up**, in the unfortunate event that your primary device is not functioning or fails during class. Your personal device is now a lifeline to 25 percent of the total points for the course.
- **I will not accept "No functioning device" as an excuse for unrecorded attendance, unrecorded participation, or unrecorded correctness.**
- Tutorial here: https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Top-Hat-Overview-and-Getting-Started-Guide

(2) Assignments. (15 percent of course grade). You will complete regular online assignments during the term. Assignments must be completed and posted during the online availability window. I will not accept handed-in or emailed assignments. No make-up assignments. No extra credit.

(3) Exams (60 percent). You will take two in-class exams and two take-home exams during the semester. Relevant dates and grading weights for the exams:

Exam	*Percentage of grade*	*Date(s)*
In-class1	15%	February 27
Take-home1	10%	Due: March 1, 11:50 a.m.
Take-home2	10%	Due: April 22, 11:50 a.m.
In-class2	25%	April 26, 10 a.m. -12:50 p.m.

Exams will be graded in a timely manner and exam grades will be posted on Webcourses. *If you know that you will be unable to take any of the exams on the scheduled dates*: Drop the course. No early exams and no make-up exams will be given. No "extra credit" work will be assigned or accepted. *If you want to look at your exam*: Come to my office during office hours. Bring the following materials to my office—your textbook, your notes on the reading, and the notes you have written during lecture.

(4) Academic activity verification (required by UCF administration). All faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, you must complete the academic activity verification activity—posted as an Assignment on Webcourses—by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than **Friday, January 12, 2018 by 11:59 p.m.** For details: http://online.ucf.edu/teach-online/resources/financial-aid/

GRADING SCALE

Numeric	**90-above**	**87-89**	**80-86**	**77-79**	**70-76**	**67-69**	**60-66**	**59-below**
Letter	**A**	**B+**	**B**	**C+**	**C**	**D+**	**D**	**F**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND DISHONESTY

You must adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity and conduct, as specified in UCF's Rules of Conduct (UCF-5.008). **Any student who violates these standards will receive an F in the course**.

Schedule for the term.

Class of:	*Topic*	*Essentials**	*Companion**
Jan9 Jan11 Jan16 Jan18	Concepts and measurement	Introduction, Ch1	
Jan23 Jan25 Jan30	Measuring and describing variables	Ch2	Getting Started, Ch1, Ch2
Feb1 Feb6 Feb8	Explanations, hypotheses, comparisons	Ch3	Ch3
Feb13 Feb15 Feb20 Feb22	Making comparisons		Ch4

Feb27 **Mar1**	**In-class exam 1** **Take-home exam 1 due, 11:50 a.m.**		
Mar6 Mar8 *[Break]*	Research design	Ch4	
Mar20 Mar22	Understanding controlled comparisons	Ch5	
Mar27 Mar29	Making controlled comparisons		Ch5
Apr3 Apr5	Inference and measures of association	Ch6, Ch7	Ch7
Apr10 Apr12 Apr17 Apr19	Regression analysis	Ch8	Ch8
Apr22 **Apr26**	**Take-home exam 2 due, 11:50 a.m.** **In-class exam 2, 10 a.m. – 12:50 p.m.**		

*Video lectures of material also is required.