POS3703 – Scope and Methods
Spring 2019
Department of Political Science

Credit: 3 hours
Instructor: Professor Kenicia Wright
Class Location: HPH0310
Class Day and Time: MWF 1:30-2:20pm
Office Location: HPH305B
Office Hours: MW 3pm – 5pm (first come, first served, or by appointment)
Email: Kenicia.Wright@ucf.edu
TA: Email, Office Hours: TBD

Course Overview

In this course, students will learn the basic research methodology commonly used in political science research. Data is used everywhere and the political world, particularly, involves data analysis and the scientific method. The goal of this course is to give students the tools necessary to read, understand, and conduct their own research on political science related research questions. I do not expect students to be master statisticians by the end of this course, but students will be able to examine understand scholarly research and engage in critical thinking to identify political science research. The first half of the semester covers the philosophy of scientific inquiry, the scientific method, and data interpretation. In the second half of the semester, students will learn the basics of drawing inferences and writing a research paper.

Course Objectives

Students who complete this course will learn how to:

- Read and evaluate scholarly research
- Generate descriptive statistics for data using statistical software program
- Identify an original research question and theory
- Examine relationships between key variables
- Produce and interpret findings related to your research question

Required Course Material

1. Johnson, J. B., Reynolds, H. T., & Mycoff, J. D. (2015). *Political Science Research Methods*. CQ Press. (REQUIRED; referred to as *PSRM* in Schedule below)
2. Lewis-Beck, C., & Lewis-Beck, M. (2015). *Applied Regression: An Introduction* (Vol. 22). Sage Publications. (REQUIRED)
3. Baglione, L. A. (2015). Writing a Research Paper in Political Science: A Practical Guide to Inquiry, Structure, and Methods. CQ Press. (RECOMMENDED)
4. I will also assign additional scholarly articles.

Course Assignments

1. Required Academic Activity – complete in the first week of class (0 points)
2. Introductory Quiz (must be completed by Monday of Week 2 at 11:59pm) (10 points)
3. Attendance and in-class participation (0 points)

a. I will not take attendance and there is no penalty for missed class, however, given the material we will cover in this course – students will have difficulty being successful in this course if they do not attend class. You are responsible for getting any material covered in class. **Contact your "partner" first, the GTA for this course second, and the professor of this course third.**

4. Seven Quizzes (140 points – 20 points each)
    a. The instructor will give quizzes at the end of each of the seven lab exercises. Quizzes may consist of multiple choice questions, true/false questions, and open-ended questions.
5. One Exam (100 points) – 3/8/2019
    a. The exam for this course will cover key concepts we have discussed in the semester. Similar to quizzes, the exams in this course may consist of multiple choice questions, true/false questions, and open-ended questions.
6. Research Paper
    - 3 Research Questions (RQ) and theory (Optional; 0 points - due 1/18 at 11:59pm)
    - RQ Selection and citations and summary of three scholarly sources (Required; 50 points – due 2/1 at 11:59pm)
    - Literature Review, Theory, and Hypotheses, 6 to 9 pages / approximately 1,500 words (Required; 100 points - due 2/22 at 11:59pm)
    - Data Collection & Measures, 2 to 4 pages / approximately 500 to 1,000 words (Required; 125 points - due 3/22 at 11:59pm)
    - Methodology, 1 to 2 pages / approximately 250 to 500 words (Required; 125 points – due 4/12 at 11:59pm)
    - Full Paper Draft, 12-20 pages / approximately 3,000 to 5,000 words (Required; 350 points – due 4/24 at 11:59pm)
        - Include a title and section headings for the following required sections:
            I. Introduction
            II. Literature Review and
            III. Theory and Hypothesis/es
            IV. Data and Methods
            V. Statistical Tests and Results
            VI. Conclusion
        - We will cover the required components in each of these sections throughout the course. Your paper should be in 12 pt Times New Roman, double-spaced, and APA Citation Format. Students will upload their final paper drafts to the Turnitin link provided in Webcourses.

Grades:

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		

Contacting Me

There are several ways to contact me. Students can: 1) Email me at Kenicia.Wright@ucf.edu. We will cover the appropriate structure for emailing a professor during the first week of this course. Follow that structure when contacting me via email. I will respond to all emails in 24-48 hours; if I do not respond within two days, feel free to send me a follow-up email. 2) Use the "Inbox" tool in Webcourses. Students should follow the same structure as email correspondence and should allow 24-48 hours for a response. 3) Stop by my office hours. Office hours are first come, first serve, and there is NO appointment required.

Check your UCF email and the "Announcements" in Webcourses DAILY, as I will primarily use these methods to contact the students enrolled in this course.

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 not required, but are recommended. 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 website 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 a "Z" comes before the final grade for this course. 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 emergencies, 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 emergencies should speak with their instructors outside of class.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (1/7/2019 to 1/11/2019)

M: Course Introduction

Before class read: Course syllabus

Student introductions, Review of syllabus, Assignment of “partners” (sharing contact information), Discussion of scholarship opportunities

W: The Scientific Method

Before class read: “The Weekly Standard Makes a Fact Free Argument about Political Science. Here are Some Facts” (locate using Google search), Hill, Kim Q. "Myths About the Physical Sciences and Their Implications for Teaching Political Science." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 37, no. 3 (2004): 467-471, and How to email a professor: https://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor and http://web.wellesley.edu/SocialComputing/Netiquette/netiquetteprofessor.html,

F: Examples of Political Science Related Research Questions

Lab Exercise 1 and Quiz 1: Finding scholarly research (UCF Library, Web of Science, JSTOR, Google Scholar, Webcourses - Research Guides)

Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 1*

Assignment: Complete Required Academic Activity in Webcourses by 11:59pm

Week 2 (1/14/2019 to 1/18/2019)

M: The Empirical Approach

Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 2, p.46-60*

Assignment: Complete the Introductory Quiz by Monday at 11:59pm

W: NO CLASS (SPSA conference) - *work on your research questions and theory*

F: NO CLASS (SPSA conference)

Assignment: Email THREE RQs and Theory to Kenicia.Wright@ucf.edu (optional)

Week 3 (1/21/2019 to 1/25/2019)

M: No class (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)

W: Starting the Research Process

Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 3*

F: Starting the Research Process (cont’d)

Lab Exercise: Available datasets

Before class read: McMenamin, I. (2006). Process and text: Teaching students to review the literature. PS: Political Science & Politics, 39(1), 133-135.

Week 4 (1/28/2019 to 2/1/2019)

M: Hypotheses, Concepts, and Variables

Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 4*

W: Hypotheses, Concepts, and Variables (cont'd)
F: Lab Exercise 2 and Quiz 2: Cross tabulations
Assignment: Email ONE RQ, citation, and summary of THREE scholarly sources to Kenicia.Wright@ucf.edu by Friday at 11:59pm (required)

Week 5 (2/4/2019 to 2/8/2019)
M: Measurement
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 5*
W: Measurement – Day 2
F: Measurement – Day 3
Before class read: Carpini and Keeter 1993 "Measuring Political Knowledge: Putting First Things First", King et al. 2004 "Enhancing the Validity and Cross-Cultural Comparability of Measurement in Survey Research", Schneider and Bos 2014 "Measuring Stereotypes of Female Politicians"

Week 6 (2/11/2019 to 2/15/2019)
M: Causal Inference
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 6*
W: Causal Inference – Day 2
F: Causal Inference – Day 3
Before class read: Understanding Causality (from "A Political Science Guide" - https://politicalscienceguide.com/research/causality/), Braumoeller et al. 2018 "Flexible Causal Inference for Political Science", Druckman et al. 2006 "The Growth and Development of Experimental Research in Political Science"

Week 7 (2/18/2019 to 2/22/2019)
M: Sampling
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 7*
W: Sampling (cont'd)
F: Lab Exercise 3 and Quiz 3: Sampling and generalizability
Assignment: Email Literature Review drafts to Kenicia.Wright@ucf.edu by Friday at 11:59pm (required)

Week 8 (2/25/2019 to 2/29/2019)
M: Qualitative Methods
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 8*
W: Qualitative Methods (cont'd)
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 9*
F: Lab Exercise 4 and Quiz 4: Ethics

Week 9 (3/4/2019 to 3/8/2019)
M: Survey Research
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 10 (p294-336)*
W: Survey Research (cont'd)
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 10 (p336-345)*
F: Exam I

Week 10 (3/11/2019 to 3/15/2019)
No class; Spring Break

Week 11 (3/18/2019 to 3/22/2019)
M: Analyzing Data, Part I
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 11 (p348-361)*
W: Analyzing Data, Part I (cont'd)
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 11 (p361-386)*
F: Lab Exercise 5 and Quiz 5: Descriptive statistics
Assignment: Email Data Collection and Measures draft to Kenicia.Wright@ucf.edu by Friday at 11:59pm (required)

Week 12 (3/25/2019 to 3/29/2019)
M: Statistical Inference
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 12*
W: Statistical Inference (cont'd)
F: Lab Exercise 6 and Quiz 6: Understanding statistical significance
Before class read: Lewis-Beck, Ch. 1

Week 13 (4/1/2019 to 4/5/2019)
M: Bivariate Relationships
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 13 (p412-448)*
W: Bivariate Relationships (cont'd)
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 13 (p449-478)*
F: No class – *Bivariate Relationships (cont'd)*
Read: *PSRM, Ch. 13 (p478-515)* AND Lewis-Beck, Ch. 2
In lieu of class, I will post slides in Webcourses for students to review.

Week 14 (4/8/2019 to 4/12/2019)
M: Multivariate Analysis
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 14 (p516-558)*
W: Multivariate Analysis
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 14 (p559-582)*
F: No class (MPSA conference)
Lab Exercise 7 and Quiz 7: Identifying control variables, interaction terms, cross-sectional vs. time series data
Before class read: Lewis-Beck, Ch. 3
Assignment: Email Methodology section of your paper to Kenicia.Wright@ucf.edu by Friday at 11:59pm (required)

Week 15 (4/15/2019 to 4/19/2019)
M: Examples of Research Reports
Before class read: *PSRM, Ch. 15*

Assignment: Before Monday's class email the instructor TWO scholarly articles (PDFs) related to your research topic – one must be qualitative and the other must be quantitative (participation points)

W: Discussion of student articles

F: Discussion of student articles (cont'd)

Week 16 (4/22/2019 to 4/26/2019)

M No class - work on your full paper drafts

W No class – Final paper DUE by 11:59pm. Submit to Turnitin link in Webcourses.

Note: This syllabus is subject to change. I will discuss changes in class or will post them in Webcourses. Students are responsible for staying up to date on all announcements or handouts given out by the instructor.