Professor Nikola Mirilovic

Scope and Methods of Political Science (POS3703.0002)

Credit: 3 Units
University of Central Florida, Fall 2019
Tue/Thu 12:00 pm – 1:15 pm
Howard Phillips Hall (HPH) 310

Office	Phillips Hall 311 D
Office hours	Wednesdays noon-2:50 PM; Thursdays 2:50-4:00 PM; or by appointment.
Voice	407 823-2984
Email	Via the course page on Webcourses
Required books	Philip Pollock, *The Essentials of Political Analysis,* 5th Edition. ISBN: 9781506305837. Available at the Bookstore. Philip Pollock and Barry Edwards, *A Stata Companion to Political Analysis,* 4th Edition. ISBN: 9781506379708. Available at the Bookstore.

GTA: Mia Warshofsky. Email: via Webcourses mail. Office hours: Tuesdays 10-noon, HPH 312.

Course Description: This course covers the foundations of political science analysis and of statistical testing. The topics and concepts it examines include variables, hypotheses, research design, controlled comparisons and regression analysis. The students are introduced to and learn to use the data analysis software Stata.

Course Goals: Learning the foundations of research design and of statistical analysis provides a number of benefits to students. These skills can be a foundation of future independent research. They can help students assess more thoroughly debates and materials covered in their other social science classes. Finally, these skills can help students become even more informed citizens –politicians often use statistics to try to persuade voters.

Course Design: This course combines an examination of fundamental concepts and techniques of political science research with hands-on practical work applying those concepts and techniques. It is therefore essential for students to regularly attend the class and to read and carefully consider the required materials before coming to class.

Requirements: The final grade will be based on attendance (10% of the grade) a midterm exam (25% of the grade), a final exam (35% of the grade), and lab assignments (30% of the grade). The final exam will be cumulative and include a writing component. Lab assignments will be given out regularly throughout

the course. When calculating the overall lab assignment grade, I will drop the lowest of your individual lab assignment grades.

Participation and Extra Credit: You may receive an additional bonus towards your final grade, up to 5%, for class participation. The extent of extra credit received (from 0 to 5%) depends on the extent to which students participate in class discussions consistently throughout the class in particular by answering questions raised by the professor regarding class materials.

Attendance Policy: Attendance is required. As stated above, regular attendance is crucial to being successful in this course. Please arrive to class on time: the class will start promptly at its assigned time. Late arrivals or early departures count as absences. Every three unexcused absences will lower your attendance grade by 10 points (e.g., a student with three unexcused absences will receive an attendance grade of 90, a student with six unexcused absences will receive an attendance grade of 80, etc.). Absences can be excused if they are due to university documented activities or documented health issues.

Course Correspondence: All correspondence with the instructor will be via Webcourses. I will usually respond to your message within 48 hours on business days.

Make-up Exam Policy: Make up exams will be granted only in the case of an emergency and/or a university documented absence.

Make-Up Assignments for Authorized University Events or Co-curricular Activities: Students who represent the university in an authorized event or activity (for example, student-athletes) and who are unable to meet a course deadline due to a conflict with that event must provide the instructor with documentation in advance to arrange a make-up. No penalty will be applied. For more information, see the UCF policy at <http://policies.ucf.edu/documents/4-401.2MakeUpAssignmentsorAuthUnivEventsorCocurricularActivities.pdf>

Lab Assignment Lateness Policy: the penalty for submitting a lab assignment late is 10 points (one letter grade) for each calendar day of lateness (i.e., an A lab assignment submitted a day late will receive a grade of B; if submitted two days late it will receive a grade of C, etc.). Assignments submitted after a graded assignment has been returned to the other students will not be accepted.

Stata and Computer Lab: Use of Stata is required in this class. Stata is available in the HPH 310 computer lab (our classroom) and in HPH 312. The information about the hours when HPH 310 is available to students will be posted on Webcourses. HPH 312 is open M-F 8-5 with seven stations available for students. Students should either plan to regularly visit one of the computer labs, or access Stata on their computer. After August 30, you can request access to Stata (for free) from UCF Apps (http://apps.ucf.edu) by calling the UCF Service Desk at 407-823-5117; inform the service desk that use of Stata is required in this class. Alternatively, you can rent (for $48) Stata IC for mid-sized datasets for six months at: https://www.stata.com/order/new/edu/gradplans/student-pricing/

Datasets: Students should download the datasets we will use regularly in this class at: https://edge.sagepub.com/node/24855/student-resources/a-stata%C2%AE-companion-to-political-analysis-4th-edition/datasets

Academic Activity and Financial Aid: All instructors/faculty 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 no later than Friday, August 30: on the course page on Webcourses, post a brief description (up to a paragraph) of why you are interested in taking this course. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid (but this academic activity is not graded and has no impact on your final grade).

Course Prerequsites/Corequisites: Prerequisite(s): POS 2041 or C.I. Corequisite(s): None.

UCF Academic Integrity Statement: 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

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.

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.

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.

Falsifying or misrepresenting the student's own academic work.

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.

Multiple Submissions: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.

Helping another violate academic behavior standards.

For more information about Academic Integrity, consult the International Center for Academic Integrity http://academicintegrity.org

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

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>.

In-Class Recording Policy
Outside of the notetaking and recording services offered by Student Accessibility Services, the creation of an audio or video recording of all or part of a class for personal use is allowed *only* with the advance and explicit written consent of the instructor. Such recordings are only acceptable in the context of personal, private studying and notetaking and are not authorized to be shared with *anyone* without the separate written approval of the instructor.

Unauthorized Use of Class Materials
There are many fraudulent websites claiming to offer study aids to students but are actually cheat sites. They encourage students to upload course materials, such as test questions, individual assignments, and examples of graded material. Such materials are the intellectual property of instructors, the university, or publishers and may not be distributed without prior authorization. Students who engage in such activity are in violation of academic conduct standards and may face penalties.

Course Accessibility Statement: The University of Central Florida is 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/AEDlocations-UCF (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 https://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 Duty Military Students: Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Religious observances: Students must notify their instructor in advance if they intend to miss class for a religious observance. For more information, see the UCF policy at <http://regulations.ucf.edu/chapter5/documents/5.020ReligiousObservancesFINALJan19.pdf>.

Grading Scale:

Letter Grade	Points
A	93 – 100 points
A-	90 – 92 points
B+	87 – 89 points
B	83 – 86 points
B-	80 – 82 points
C+	77 – 79 points
C	73 – 76 points
C-	70 – 72 points
D+	67 – 69 points
D	63 – 66 points
D-	60 – 62 points
F	59 and below

Course Schedule

August 27: Introductory Session (1 class)

No readings

1) August 29 – September 3: Defining Concepts and Introducing Stata (2 classes)

Essentials: Introduction and Chapter 1

Stata Companion: Getting Started, Chapter 1

2) September 5-17: Variables (4 classes)

Essentials: Chapter 2

Stata Companion: Chapter 2

Stata Companion: Chapter 3

3) September 19 - October 3: Explanations, Hypotheses, and Comparisons (5 classes)

Essentials: Chapter 3

Stata Companion: Chapter 4

October 8: Midterm review

October 10: Midterm exam

4) October 15-29: Research Design and Controlled Comparisons (5 classes)

Essentials: Chapter 4

Essentials: Chapter 5

Stata Companion: Chapter 5

5) October 31-November 5: Foundations of Inference (2 classes)

Essentials: Chapter 6

6) November 7-12: Statistical Significance and Inferences about Sample Means (2 classes)

Essentials: Chapter 7

Stata Companion: Chapter 6

7) November 14-26: Regression Analysis (4 classes)

Essentials: Chapter 8

Stata Companion: Chapter 8

Note: Thursday, November 28: Thanksgiving – no class

December 3: Final Review

Final Exam: Thursday, December 5, 10:00 am – 12:50 am. Location: HPH 310 (our classroom).

Note: This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion if necessary, in which case an updated syllabus will be posted on Webcourses.