UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
COLLEGE OF SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

POS 3703.0007 - SCOPE & METHODS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE (Credit: 3 Units)
Fall 2019 (MoWeFi 12:30PM - 1:20PM HPH 310)

Instructor	Dr. Kyungkook Kang (pronounce Key-young-cook or K3)
Office	302J Phillips Hall
Office hours	MoWeFr: 8:20AM-9:20AM & 11:30AM-12:30PM (or by appointment) Please tell me a day before visit to help you avoid waiting in line or being crammed into a room.
Main office phone	407-823-5082
Instructor E-Mail	Kyungkook.Kang@ucf.edu
Correspondence	The best way of all correspondence with me will be via Canvas of Webcourses@UCF instead of regular email account, which can lead to delayed feedback. Please use Inbox, which is the global communication function in Canvas. I will normally respond within two business days. If you send a message to my UCF email address, I will make my reply only to the emails sent from your UCF Knights Email account (No Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo Mail, etc. please).
Recommended Textbooks	Philip Pollock, The Essentials of Political Analysis, either 5th or 4th Edition (Both editions will suffice). Philip Pollock, A Stata Companion to Political Analysis, 3rd Edition

IMPORTANT!!! - NEW POLICY REGARDING YOUR FINANCIAL AID

All faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to receive the earliest financial aid disbursement, you MUST complete **the non-credit assignment of syllabus quiz** (can be found in Quizzes on webcourse@UCF) **during the first week of class**. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

WELCOME! In this course, we will explore the mechanics of analytical research design and methodology in contemporary political science. Particularly, we will focus on the issues of measurement, research design and empirical analysis. We will also evaluate what are the acceptable and valid means to accumulate our findings and knowledge in the scientifically testable forms. The students will gain experience and understanding of data analysis with STATA computing package.

COURSE GOALS

Specifically, you will be introduced to the process of developing testable and falsifiable theories and hypotheses, aided by statistical analysis software. I have four goals for the course:

a) That each student come to understand how to ask important and answerable questions in political science;
b) That each student be able to move from a question to a testable hypothesis;
c) That each student have a basic understanding of a variety of alternative strategies for testing that hypothesis and whether one is better suited to a question than another;
d) That each student be able to use these designs with computational skills effectively.

COURSE DESIGN

The techniques of analytical research methods are imparted principally through taking classes and doing problem sets, rather than independent reading. Therefore, we believe that a student who has performed well in the classes will be well-prepared for the exam. The exams and assignments will consist of required questions which test the material of texts and lecture notes.

Our classes 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 the class.

We will be using STATA, a general-purpose professional statistical software package, for data analysis in this course. I assume that you have no prior experience with this software but a basic knowledge of MS Office is required to facilitate your implementation of tasks.

To complete the take-home assignments using STATA, you must use PCs in the HPH 310 computer lab OR purchase the software and install it on your own PC or laptop

You can purchase Stata at:

http://www.stata.com/order/new/edu/gradplans/student-pricing/
The recommended version is Stata/IC 15 (Intercooled, the base model).
** Caution !! Do not purchase Small Stata because it cannot handle the large datasets we will use in class.

The Webcourses site of Canvas has a discussion board. This board provides an opportunity to post questions regarding the course material and/or computing. In addition to precepts and office hours, please use this board on the course website when asking questions about lectures, problem sets, and other course materials. This will allow students to see other students' questions and learn from them. I will regularly check the board and answer questions posted, although everyone else is also encouraged to contribute to the discussion. A student's respectful and constructive participation on the forum will count toward his/her class participation grade. Do not email your questions directly to me unless they are of personal nature — I will not answer them!

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is required. Regular attendance is crucial to being successful in this course. The material covered in this course is inherently cumulative. If you do not keep up, you will quickly find yourself too far behind to catch up.

You should arrive to class on time: it will start promptly at its assigned time. Do not leave early. Late arrivals and early departures may count as absences (or at the course instructor's discretion, partial attendance may result in). For further information please refer to UCF Academic Regulations and Procedures (http://catalog.ucf.edu/policies/academic-regulations).

MAKE-UP EXAM & ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Make-up exams and assignments will be granted only in the case of an emergency (only for documented reasons) and/or a university documented absence. I always investigate the claims and make sure the documents are authentic. If such documentation is provided, it is up to the instructor's discretion to grant a make-up exam or to excuse the student from taking the exam without penalty.

No extra credit expected individually. If I decide a substantial portion of the class would benefit from an additional opportunity, it will be offered to everyone. But I will not select some individuals out for special treatment.

If exam or assignment dates conflict with a religious holiday, please notify the instructor about this at the beginning of the class. I will seek to accommodate you. For further information please refer to UCF Academic Regulations and Procedures (http://catalog.ucf.edu/policies/academic-regulations).

REQUIREMENTS

Your course grade will be based on three components:

- ✓ **Attendance (frequency & quality). 10 percent.** Attendance is required. This course will move fast; you will become confused if you do not attend regularly. Late arrivals and early departures may count as absences (or at the course instructor's discretion, partial attendance may result in). The frequency and quality of individual attendance will be carefully recorded and reflected in the final grades.

- ✓ **Two Take-Home Assignments. 40 percent.** You will be given two regular research practice assignments during the term. They will include a number of analytical questions as well as statistical computing exercises using STATA. In addition to the tables and graphs generated from the distributed datasets, I expect you to address the following points in your assignments (about 1,000-1,300 words per each):

(a) The description of the particular methods used for the study.
(b) The specification of the causal paths between the key variables.
(c) The operationalization and measurement of the variables.
(d) The result of analysis with rigorous interpretations.
(e) An thoertical assessment of implications.

Each student is to attempt all problems individually before the assigned date. The penalty for submitting a lab assignment late is 10 points (one letter grade approximately) for each calendar day of lateness. You may work together on all homework assignments, but your final product must be your own. The assignment deadlines will be announced in class – I will allow you to have at least two weeks to complete your assignments.

- ✓ **Two In-Class Exams 50 percent.** You will be given two "In-Class" midterm and final exams covering the topics discussed in class. The exams are likely to reflect the homework assignments closely although you are not asked to run STATA program yourself during the exams – I will provide the results of STATA analysis and ask you to interpret them with statistical inference. The final would be a unit-exam that includes only material since the midterm exam. The data and time of the exams will be announced at least two weeks before.

UCF DISABILITY STATEMENT

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 with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center, Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

UCF RULES OF ACADEMIC CONDUCT

As reflected in the UCF creed, integrity and scholarship are core values that should guide our conduct and decisions as members of the UCF community. Plagiarism and cheating are very serious academic offenses. Please refer to the University's Rules of Conduct (available at: http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu) for more information on these issues. Failure to comply with university rules may subject violator(s) to appropriate action by university authorities and/or appropriate civil authorities. The penalty for students who plagiarize or cheat on an exam or an assignment will include a grade of F on that exam or assignment.

PROFESSIONALISM POLICY

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPads, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade (NO POINTS IN ATTENDANCE, SERIOUSLY!).

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 individually with you on anything you're 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.

GRADING

I will apply a 'curve' grading scheme to convert your exam score into the following numeric and letter scale, so each exam grade reflects your performance relative to your fellow students. In this way all exams should be equivalently graded. Graded tests and materials in this course will be returned individually only by request. You can access your scores at any time using the Grade Book function of Webcourses. Please note that scores returned mid-semester are unofficial grades. Your course grade will be determined by the following numeric scale:

Course Points Average	**Letter Grade**
94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C -
67-69	D+
63-66	D
60-62	D-
0 – 59	F

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

On the following page a tentative course schedule is provided. I plan to cover most of the text. In addition, I will present a fair amount of material in lectures that is not in the book. In the event that the instructor needs to cancel class, an e-mail will be sent via all students' webcourse accounts (as maintained by the registrar) prior to class time.

Sessions	**Topic**	**Essentials**	**Stata**
1st Session	Course Introduction, Concepts and measurement I	Ch1	Getting Started
2nd Session	Concepts and measurement II	Ch1	Ch1, Ch2
3rd Session	Measuring and describing variables	Ch2	Ch1, Ch2
4th Session	Explanations, hypotheses, comparisons I	Ch3	Ch3, Ch4
5th Session	Explanations, hypotheses, comparisons II	Ch3	Ch3, Ch4
6th Session	Research design I	Ch4	
7th Session	Research design II	Ch4	
8th Session	Review & In-Class Midterm Exam	**Exam Time & Date TBA two weeks prior to exam.**	
9th Session	Controlled comparisons I	Ch5	Ch5
10th Session	Controlled comparisons II	Ch5	Ch5
11th Session	Inference and measures of association I	Ch6, Ch7	Ch6, Ch7
12th Session	Inference and measures of association II	Ch6, Ch7	Ch6, Ch7
13th Session	Regression analysis I	Ch8	Ch8
14th Session	Regression analysis II	Ch8	Ch8
15th Session	Regression analysis II & Class Wrap-up	**Exam Time & Date TBA two weeks prior to exam.**	

<u>* Note: The content of syllabus and course schedule are subject to change and update at the instructor's discretion if necessary.</u>**

<u>Changes to the syllabus, if any, will be announced in class and the updated syllabus will be posted on Webcourse</u>.

<u>Students are responsible for any changes in syllabus/schedule which are announced in class.</u>