Syllabus
POS 3703: Scope and Methods of Political Science
Spring 2024

Instructor Contact

Instructor	Nathan Ilderton
Office	305A Howard Philips Hall
Office Hours	9:30am- 11:00am Tuesday, 2:00pm-5:00pm Thursday During office hours I will be available in the course chat room. Zoom meetings are available upon request.
Phone	407-823-2608
E-mail	Please contact me via the email function within webcourses for all class related emails. Click my profile under people and select send message. If webcourses is down you can reach me via my University email: Nathan.Ilderton@ucf.edu.

Course Information

Course Name	Scope and Methods of Political Science

Course ID & Section	POS 3703 Section W61
Credit Hours	3
Semester/Year	Spring 2024
Location	Online

Catalog Description

The scope and methodology of political analysis. Extensive examination of the discipline, research design and methodology.

Prerequisite: POS 2041 or consent of the instructor.

Detailed Course Description

This course is an introduction to research methods used in political science. We will examine the use of the scientific method in the study of politics. This includes examining the measurement of concepts, research design, and hypothesis formation. We will also several techniques used to test hypotheses in political science. This will include a study of comparisons, significance tests, and an introduction to the OLS regression models.

Learning Outcomes

The objective of this course is to teach students to apply objective scientific analysis to political problems. Students will also learn to understand and critically evaluate statistical analyses they will encounter in their future course work, research, and everyday consumption of political information.

Required Text

- Paul M. Kellstedt and Guy D. Whitten, *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*, 3rd edition, (Cambridge University Press).
- Paul M. Kellstedt and Guy D. Whitten, *An SPSS Companion for the Third Edition of the Fundamentals of Political Science Research*, (Cambridge University Press).

It is critical that you purchase the correct editions. Part of your grade will be to complete exercises found in these books, and the exercises change between editions.

Course Requirements

The course is divided into seven segments. The first four will be two week segments, the final two will be available for three weeks each. During these periods a module with two lectures will be available. You will be required in each period to complete one or two exercises. Many of these, particularly in the second half of the class, will utilize the statistical software SPSS. Between modules three and four a midterm exam will be available for a week. After module six you will be given one week to complete the final exam. Modules will typically open on Tuesdays and close on Mondays at 11:59 pm. Module 5 is open during Spring Break and will therefore be available for three weeks. Due to the amount of material covered, Module 6 will be available for three weeks. The final exam will close on Monday, April 29th.

Missed Assignments/Make-Ups/Extra Credit

I will not allow missed assignments to be made up without a documented university excused absence. If you know ahead of time that you will be unable to complete a module on time please inform me prior to the closing time. If you cannot inform me ahead of time, please inform me within one business day of the closing of the module either via phone or email. Date and time of makeup modules will be determined by the instructor on a case by case basis. I reserve the right to change the format and questions of makeup modules at my discretion.

If you miss an assignment without a documented university accepted excuse, I will accept assignments with penalty. These penalties begin at 10% per business day that the assignment is late. I encourage you to contact me as quickly as possible if you miss an assignment to make arrangements for late submission.

Evaluation and Grading

Each module will consist of two lectures with reading and lecture materials you will be required to read or watch. Accompanying each module will be two exercises, each corresponding to one of the lectures. Modules 4 and 5 consist of one topic spread across two lectures, and there will only be one exercise associated with these two modules. There will be a total of 9 workbook assignment exercises (the syllabus quiz attached to lecture one does not count toward the final grade). Most of the exercises will utilize the *SPSS Workbook* book and the IBM SPSS statistical program. Instructions on accessing this program and the datasets can be found on the "Getting Started with SPSS" page. These exercises will be submitted via the quizzes link where portions of assigned exercises will be replicated for ease of submission. Exercises will be worth twenty points each. Your two exercises with the lowest percentage grade will be dropped.

The course paper assignment is available to you for the entire semester. This will be a critique of a political science research article. The details of the paper assignment are available here. I encourage you to choose an article and begin work on the paper early in

the course. The course paper may be submitted beginning April 15th and must be submitted by 11:59pm on April 22nd.

There will be a midterm exam and a final exam. The midterm will be available for a week following module three, the final will be available for a week following the submission deadline for the paper. Exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Because of the nature of the material in this course, the final will include concepts covered by the midterm exam, though its focus will be on material from the second half of the course. This course requires the use of the LockDown Browser for exams (see details below). The midterm exam is due February 26th. The final exam is due April 29th.

There is a two hour time limit for the completion of exams. Also, be aware that you only get one attempt to complete an exam, i.e. once you start an exam you must complete it.

Assignments will be weighted in the following manner for calculating the final grade.

Assignment	**Percentage of Grade**
Exercises	20
Paper	20
Exam 1	30
Exam 2	30
Total	100

Final grades will be awarded according to the following scale.

Letter Grade	**Points**
A	93.5 - 100
A-	89.5 - 93.4
B+	86.5 - 89.4
B	83.5 - 86.4

B-	79.5 - 83.4
C+	76.5 - 79.4
C	73.5 - 76.4
C-	69.5 - 73.4
D+	66.5 - 69.4
D	63.5 - 66.4
D-	59.5 - 63.4
F	59.4 or below

Final grades are just that, final. I will not reconsider them except in a case where I made a computational error in calculating them (I have taught for many years and have yet to miscalculate a final grade). **Please do not email or call me asking for a grade change for another reason (including requesting extra credit), it will not happen.**

LockDown Browser

LockDown Browser Requirement
This course requires the use of LockDown Browser for the three exams. Note: This course requires only the lockdown browser feature, not the Respondus Webcam Monitor. Watch this video to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser:

https://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtmlLinks to an external site.

Download Instructions
Download and install LockDown Browser from this link:

https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=472413933Links to an external site.

Once Installed

- Start LockDown Browser
- Log into to Canvas
- Navigate to the exam

Note: You won't be able to access an exam that requires LockDown Browser with a standard web browser. If this is tried, an error message will indicate that the exam requires the use of LockDown Browser. Simply start LockDown Browser and navigate back to the exam to continue.

Guidelines
When taking an online exam follow these guidelines:

- Select a location where you won't be interrupted
- Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it (60 minutes), and also that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it
- Remain at your desk or workstation for the duration of the test
- LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted

Getting Help
Several resources are available if you encounter problems with LockDown Browser:

- The Windows and Mac versions of LockDown Browser have a "Help Center" button located on the toolbar. Use the "System & Network Check" to troubleshoot issues. If an exam requires you to use a webcam, also run the "Webcam Check" from this area
- Contact the UCF IT Service Desk or UCF Online Learning
- Respondus has a Knowledge Base available from support.respondus.com. Select "LockDown Browser & Respondus Monitor" as the product to view helpful articles.
- If you're still unable to resolve a technical issue with LockDown Browser, go to support.respondus.com and select "Submit a Ticket". Provide detailed information about your problem and what steps you took to resolve it

Student Engagement and Financial Aid

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 syllabus quiz by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

The syllabus quiz is a five question multiple choice quiz and can be found under the "Quizzes" tab. The only purpose of the syllabus quiz is to satisfy the financial aid requirement for this class. It will not be included in the calculation of your final grade.

UCF Creed

Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.

Integrity
I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.

Scholarship
I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.

Community
I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.

Creativity
I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.

Excellence
I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Rules of Conduct at <https://scai.sdes.ucf.edu/student-rules-of-conduct/>. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Falsifying or misrepresenting the student's own academic work.
5. 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.
6. Multiple Submissions: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.

7. Helping another violate academic behavior standards.
8. Soliciting assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements.

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* <https://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/>. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and respond to academic misconduct when necessary. Penalties for violating rules, policies, and instructions within this course can range from a zero on the exercise to an "F" letter grade in the course. In addition, an Academic Misconduct report could be filed with the Office of Student Conduct, which could lead to disciplinary warning, disciplinary probation, or deferred suspension or separation from the University through suspension, dismissal, or expulsion with the addition of a "Z" designation on one's transcript.

Being found in violation of academic conduct standards could result in a student having to disclose such behavior on a graduate school application, being removed from a leadership position within a student organization, the recipient of scholarships, participation in University activities such as study abroad, internships, etc.

Let's avoid all of this by demonstrating values of honesty, trust, and integrity. No grade is worth compromising your integrity and moving your moral compass. Stay true to doing the right thing: take the zero, not a shortcut.

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 access to course content due to course design limitations 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). For students connected with SAS, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential course access and accommodations that might be necessary and 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. Further conversation with SAS, faculty and the student may be warranted to ensure an accessible course experience.

Campus Safety Statement

Though most emergency situations are primarily relevant to courses that meet in person, such incidents can also impact online students, either when they are on or near campus

to participate in other courses or activities or when their course work is affected by off-campus emergencies. The following policies apply to courses in online modalities.

- 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.

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.

Make-up Assignments for Authorized University Events

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 <https://policies.ucf.edu/documents/4-401.pdf>

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>.

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.

Unauthorized Use of Class Notes

Faculty have reported errors in class notes being sold by third parties, and the errors may be contributing to higher failure rates in some classes. The following is a statement appropriate for distribution to your classes or for inclusion on your syllabus:

Third parties may be selling class notes from this class without my authorization. Please be aware that such class materials may contain errors, which could affect your performance or grade. Use these materials at your own risk.

In-Class Recording Policy

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal educational use. A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject. Recording classroom activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance, and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct as described in the Golden Rule.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Deployed Active Duty Military Students

If you are a deployed active duty military student and feel that you may need a special accommodation due to that unique status, please contact your instructor to discuss your circumstances.

Title IX Policy

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu and http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/.

Schedule

Modules assignments and exams open at midnight on the open date and close at 11:59pm on the close date.

Module	Topic	Reading	Assignment	Open	Close
1	Thinking About Politics Scientifically	*Fundamentals,* Chapter 1	Syllabus Quiz*	January 8th	January 22nd
	Theory Building	*Fundamentals,* Ch. 2 *SPSS Companion* Ch. 1, 2	Workbook Assignment 1		
2	Causality	*Fundamentals,* Ch. 3 *SPSS Companion,* Ch. 3	Workbook Assignment 2	January 23rd	February 5th
	Research Design	*Fundamentals,* Ch. 4 *SPSS Companion,* Ch. 4	Workbook Assignment 3		
3	Measurement	*Fundamentals,* Ch. 5 *SPSS Companion,* Ch. 5	Workbook Assignment 4	February 6th	February 19th
	Descriptive Statistics	*Fundamentals,* Ch. 6 *SPSS Companion,* Ch. 6	Workbook Assignment 5		
	Midterm Exam			February 20th	February 26th
4	Statistical Inference	*Fundamentals,* Ch. 7 *SPSS Companion,* Ch. 7	Workbook Assignment 6	February 27th	March 11th
5	Bivariate Hypothesis Testing	*Fundamentals,* Ch. 8 *SPSS Companion,* Ch. 8	Workbook Assignment 7	March 12th	April 1st
6	Bivariate Regression	*Fundamentals,* Ch. 9 *SPSS Companion,* Ch. 9	Workbook Assignment 8	April 2nd	April 22nd
	Multivariate Regression	*Fundamentals,* Ch. 10, 11 *SPSS Companion,* Ch. 10	Workbook Assignment 9		

Paper Due April 22nd		
Final Exam	April 23rd	April 29th

Note: All dates and times are subject to change by Dr. Ilderton. Be informed and routinely check the Schedule and Class Email or Announcements for any changes or updates.

*Syllabus quiz for financial aid purposes due by January 12th or as soon as possible after adding the class. Syllabus quiz will not count toward assignment grade or final course grade.