POS 3703.DW60. SCOPE AND METHODS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE (59090)
Summer 2024

Professor: Dr. Barbara Sgouraki Kinsey
SPSIA Office: Phillips Hall 302
Phone: (407) 823-2608
Email: barbara.kinsey@ucf.edu
Office Hours via Email/Phone/Zoom: Tuesday 12:00-2:00 PM; Wednesday 12:00-1:00 PM; or by appointment. Please contact me to set an appointment (via phone or zoom, or course chat).

GTA Name and Contact Information: Mr. George Kotlik George.kotlik@ucf.edu &
Mr. Uchenna Okwara Uchennahillprieston.okwara@ucf.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an introduction to the logic and methods of social science research in general and political science in particular. Emphasis will be placed on the logic of research design and data analysis. Students in this class

- will be introduced to principles of research design
- learn techniques of quantitative analysis including statistical inference, hypothesis testing, and regression analysis
- analyze political datasets using statistical software
- learn to interpret and evaluate quantitative work

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Philip H. Pollock III & Barry C. Edwards. 2020. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. 6th Edition. Sage & CQ Press

Philip H. Pollock III and Barry Edwards. 2023. *An R Companion to Political Analysis*. 3rd Edition. CQ Press

Additional readings will be distributed.

STATISTICAL SOFTWARE R:

We will be using the **R** program in this course. I assume that you have no prior experience with this software. R is a free program that works well with either Windows or Mac OS platforms. For information on how to install the program on your computer please see *An R Companion to Political Science* (listed in the required texts list above), "Introduction: Getting Started with R."

ZOOM R LABS (Optional)

The **class will meet via Zoom (Day/Time TBA)**, for lab time. These labs will instruct students on the use of the R statistical software for the weekly assignments and answer student questions. Please note that this class is fully online; these meetings are **not** required (please see grade distribution in Syllabus), but certainly they are recommended. In case of a scheduling conflict, the lab may be rescheduled. These zoom meetings will be recorded for future viewing.

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

The assignments are weekly and include quizzes and writing assignments; they are designed to test your understanding and knowledge of the module material. **The content of each module including description of assignments will be available on Friday of each week (except for the Module 8 assignments due on Saturday, 7/6) ; you will have a week to submit your assignments (assignments are due by 11:00 PM on the following Friday).** After a discussion or writing assignment closes, comments on your assignment, a class announcement with general grading comments, an assignment grade, and a total grade for the module will be released *by* Thursdays, ***at least*** nine business days following the assignment's due date; more details to follow in the weekly module overviews.

MISSED ASSIGNMENTS/MAKE-UPS

To submit late work the student will have to obtain the instructor's permission *first*; permission will be granted depending on the *circumstances* that resulted in late submission. The student will have **at most one week** from the assignment's deadline to submit the work. There will be a penalty of one letter grade for all late work (except for cases involving overriding and **well documented** circumstances).

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>

Other overriding circumstances include own or family medical emergencies, religious holidays, severe weather conditions, military obligations, or legal obligations (i.e. jury duty). Pertinent, official documentation will be required if you plan on requesting to make up a quiz or assignment due to such circumstances.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Course grades are determined by:
(1) Eight modules' assignments
(3) One exam*

*The exam will cover all the material in the course.

Grades are a weighted average of the following requirements:

Requirement:	Weight:
Module 1 Assignments	5%
Modules 2-8 Assignments	80%
Exam at end of class (July 12)	15%

The plus/minus grading system will apply in this course:

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

Students must fulfill the following tasks:

1. Complete reading/watching all the module materials.
2. Complete **eight modules'** assignments on time.
3. Take exam at end of class (July 12)

In case you think you are failing the course, please contact the professor right away.

A grade of "**I**" is only given in cases of extreme emergency or special and well documented circumstances late in the semester, provided that you have been making satisfactory progress.

FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID REQUIREMENT: RECORDING ACADEMIC ACTIVITY POLICY

UCF must comply with a federal financial aid regulation that states that in order to receive federal aid, students must be actively academically engaged (according to a federal definition) in each course in which they are enrolled. All faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. Without verification of this engagement, students will not receive their aid.

In order to document that you began this course, please **complete the assignments for Module One** by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course, but **no later than Friday, May 17**. **Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.**

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS

This course may use Zoom for meetings during office hours (or by appointment).

Please take the time to familiarize yourself with Zoom by visiting the UCF Zoom Guides at <https://cdl.ucf.edu/support/webcourses/zoom/>. You may choose to use Zoom on your mobile device (phone or tablet).

Please contact Webcourses@UCF Support at <https://cdl.ucf.edu/support/webcourses/> if you have any technical issues accessing Zoom.

Things to Know About Zoom:

- You must sign in to my Zoom session using your UCF NID and password.
- The Zoom sessions are recorded.
- Improper behavior is not tolerated within Zoom sessions and may result in a referral to the Office of Student Conduct.
- You can contact Webcourses@UCF Support at <https://cdl.ucf.edu/support/webcourses/> if you have any technical issues accessing Zoom.

PROFESSIONALISM AND STUDENT CONDUCT

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a civil and professional manner. Disrupted behavior, profanity, or any other offensive behavior will not be tolerated. All mobile devices must be turned off and put out of view during class meetings. Repeated violations of professionalism will result in a reduction in course grade.

If there is anything in the syllabus that is unclear, it is up to the student to contact the professor for clarification. Also, it is the student's responsibility to be informed of any announcements made in class meetings.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's 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.

For more information about Academic Integrity, students may consult The Center for Academic Integrity.
For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices."

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*. 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, click here.

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY

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 FOR STUDENTS IN ONLINE-ONLY COURSES

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 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.

VIRUSES

A virus can spell disaster. Your use of a reputable anti-virus program is a requirement for participation in this course (good ones include McAfee or Norton).

Also, **back up your files**: Hard drives do crash and it is really inconvenient when they do. However, this is not a valid excuse for failing to get your work in on time.

E-MAIL PROTOCOLS

E-mail will be an integral part of this course. Make sure you: Check your e-mail at least once every 48 hours during regular business hours (more often is better).

Be patient. Don't expect an immediate response when you send a message. Generally, 48 hours is considered a reasonable amount of time to receive a reply. Please note that your professor only checks and answers to e-mails during regular business hours.

In the "Subject" heading include the course number and your last name.

Be courteous and considerate. Being honest and expressing yourself freely is very important, but being considerate of others online is just as important as in the classroom.

Make every effort to be clear. Online communication lacks the nonverbal cues that fill in much of the meaning in face-to-face communication.

Do not use all caps. This makes the message very hard to read and is considered "shouting." Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation (you may want to compose in a word processor, then cut and paste the message into the discussion or e-mail).

Break up large blocks of text into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.

Sign your e-mail messages.

Never assume that your e-mail can be read by no one except yourself; others may be able to read or access your mail.

COPYRIGHT

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

For specific problems in any of the areas below or for further information go to the corresponding link for assistance.

UCF Home Page will help find UCF resources.

UCF Service Desk – You can also call the Service Desk at 407-823-5117.

Learning Online: This site provides information on study skills for distance learners, the library and the writing center.

Buying a new computer or upgrading your current equipment – http://www.cstore.ucf.edu/

Technical Discussion Topic: If you have technical questions and/or problems, please post a message to the Technical Discussion Topic. I encourage members of the class who are technically proficient to also monitor this discussion topic and assist your classmates.

If your equipment problems prevent you from using e-mail from home, there are many computer labs on campus and virtually every public library offers Internet access.

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 me to discuss your circumstances.

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>.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE Note: This schedule is subject to change depending on the needs of the class. Students are responsible for any changes in syllabus/schedule which are announced in class.

POS 3703.DW60 SCOPE & METHODS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE SUMMER 2024

Week of	Topics Covered:	Assignments:
May 13	**Module 1** • Getting Started • Scientific Study	**Module 1 Assignments** **Due: May 17, 11 PM**
May 20	**Module 2** • Elements of Research • Introduction to the R statistical software	**Module 2 Assignments** **Due: May 24, 11 PM**
May 27	**Module 3** • Research Design • Experiments	**Module 3 Assignments** **Due: May 31, 11 PM**

June 3	**Module 4** • Measurement • Sampling • Data Description	**Module 4 Assignments** **Due: June 7, 11 PM**
June 10	**Module 5** • Normal Distribution • Inference Confidence Intervals	**Module 5 Assignments** **Due: June 14, 11 PM**
June 17	**Module 6** • Hypothesis Testing	**Module 6 Assignments** **Due: June 21, 11 PM**
June 24	**Module 7** • Contingency Tables • Correlation	**Module 7 Assignments** **Due: June 28, 11 PM**
July 1	**Module 8** • Bivariate Regression	**Module 8 Assignments** **Due: Saturday, July 6, 11 PM**
July 8	**Module 9** • Multiple Regression and Dummy Variables	**Exam Due: July 12, 11 PM**