POS 3703 - Scope and Methods of Political Science

Section: 0W61

College of Sciences

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

Course Information

Term: Spring 2025
Class Meeting Days: ASC
Class Meeting Location: Online
Modality: WW
Credit Hours: 3.00

Instructor Information

Nathan Ilderton
Title: Associate Lecturer
Office Location: Remote
Office Hours:
Office hours will be virtual via Zoom on Monday and Wednesday, 10:00am to 1:00pm. I will be available in this Zoom room:

https://ucf.zoom.us/j/9454354959?pwd=cUs0N3lObWJleVl4NXdyMnpua0R4dz09

You do not need an appointment to join this meeting, but you will be placed in a waiting room and admitted in the order that you joined.

Meetings at other times are by appointment.
Email: Nathan.Ilderton@ucf.edu

Course Description

POS 3703 COS-POLS 3(3,0) Scope and Methods of Political Science: PR: POS 2041 or C.I. The scope and methodology of political analysis. Extensive examination of the discipline, research design and methodology. Fall, Spring.

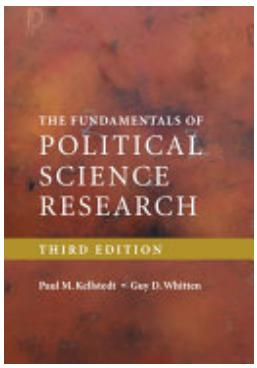
This course is an introduction to research methods used in political science. We will examine the use of the scientific method in the study of politics. This includes examining the measurement of concepts, research design, and hypothesis formation. We will also several techniques used to test hypotheses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

Student Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- apply objective scientific analysis to political problems
- understand and critically evaluate statistical analyses
- understand the common statistical tools used in political science research

Course Materials and Resources



The Fundamentals of Political Science Research
ISBN: 9781108645188
Authors: Paul M. Kellstedt, Guy D. Whitten
Publisher: Cambridge University Press
Publication Date: 2018-07-26
Edition: 3

An SPSS Companion for the Third Edition of The Fundamentals of Political Science Research
ISBN: 9781108567114
Authors: Paul M. Kellstedt, Guy D. Whitten

Publisher: Cambridge University Press
Publication Date: 2020-04-23

Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

The course is divided into six modules. These will be available for two 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 free to complete the term paper. Details of the paper assignment are available on a separate page in the syllabus module. Modules will typically open on Tuesdays and close on Mondays at 11:59 pm. The final exam will be available during the designated final exam period (**Tuesday, April 21st through Monday, April 28th**).

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 in the syllabus module. 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 on the paper assignment page in the syllabus module. 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 21st

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 exam, though not cumulative, will require the application of concepts covered by the midterm exam to material from the second half of the course. A study guide for each exam will be available beginning the day the exam opens. This course requires the use of the LockDown Browser for exams (see details below).

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.

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.shtml

Download Instructions
Download and install LockDown Browser from this link:

https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=472413933

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.

Grading Scale

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

Policies for Course Grade

Makeup Work Policy/Missed/Late Assignments

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.

Course Accessibility

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) (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.

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Code of Conduct at Student Conduct and Integrity Office. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

a. Academic misconduct is defined as any submitted work or behavior that obstructs the instructor of record's ability to accurately assess the student's understanding or completion of the course materials or degree requirements (e.g., assignment, quiz, and/or exam). Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to: plagiarism, unauthorized assistance to complete an academic exercise; unauthorized communication with others during an examination, course assignment, or project; falsifying or misrepresenting academic work; providing misleading information to create a personal advantage to complete course/degree requirements; or multiple submission(s) of academic work without permission of the instructor of record.

b. Any student who knowingly helps another violate academic behavior standards is also in violation of the standards.

c. Commercial Use of Academic Material. Selling of course material to another person and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the University and the instructor of record. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, the instructor of record's slide deck, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, and handouts.

d. Soliciting assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements. The solicitation of assistance with an assignment, lab, quiz, test, paper, etc., without authorization of the instructor of record or designee is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to asking for answers to a quiz, trading answers, or offering to pay another to complete an assignment. It is considered Academic Misconduct to solicit assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements, even if the solicitation did not yield actual assistance (for example, if there was no response to the solicitation).

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 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 and Academic Integrity, 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.

Title IX

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 Let's Be Clear and UCF Cares.

For more information on diversity and inclusion, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF’s complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – OIE – Office of Institutional Equity & askanadvocate@ucf.edu
- Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services – Student Accessibility Services & sas@ucf.edu
- Access and Community Engagement (including the Ginsberg Center for Inclusion and Community Engagement, Military and Veteran Student Success, and HSI Initiatives)
- UCF Compliance and Ethics Office – Compliance, Ethics, and Risk Office & complianceandethics@ucf.edu
- The Ombuds Office is a safe place to discuss concerns.

Reporting an Incident or Issue

If you believe you have experienced abusive or discriminatory behavior by any faculty or staff member, contact the Office of Institutional Equity online or at 407-823-1336. You can also choose to report using the UCF Integrity Line and can report anonymously or as yourself at 1-855-877-6049 or using the online form. UCF cares about you and takes every report seriously. For more information see the Reporting an Incident or Issue Webpage.

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.

Campus Safety

At UCF Public Safety and Police, safety is the top priority. Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise, it's important to be familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In an emergency, always dial 911.
- Every UCF classroom has an **Emergency Procedure Guide** posted on a wall near the door, which will show you how to respond to a variety of situations. This guide can also be found online here.
- In the event of an active threat, remember **AVOID, DENY, DEFEND**. Choose the best course of action and act immediately. Watch the video here to learn more.
    - **AVOID**. Pay attention to your surroundings and have an exit plan. Get as much distance and as many barriers between you and the threat as quickly as possible.
    - **DENY.** When avoiding is difficult or impossible, deny the threat access to you and your space. Lockdown by creating barriers, turning the lights off and remaining quiet and out of sight. Make sure your cell phone is silenced, but do not turn it off.

    - **DEFEND.** When you are unable to put distance between yourself and the threat, be prepared to protect yourself. Commit to your actions, be aggressive and do not fight fairly. Do whatever it takes to survive.
- For emergencies on campus, UCF will utilize the UCF Alert system. All UCF students, faculty and staff are automatically enrolled to receive these email and text alerts, however, it's a good idea to frequently ensure your contact information is up to date.

Financial Aid Accountability

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 this activity 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.

Class Schedule

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

Module
1
2

	3
	4
	5
	6

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 10th or as soon as possible after adding the class. Syllabus quiz will not count toward assignment grade or final

course grade.

**Extra week for module 5 is due to Spring Break (March 17th-22nd).