POS 3703 - Scope and Methods of Political Science

Section: 0002

College of Sciences

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

Course Information

Term: Spring 2026
Class Meeting Days: TR
Class Meeting Time: 12:00PM - 01:20PM
Class Meeting Location: HPH O310
Modality: P
Credit Hours: 3.00

Instructor Information

Name: Nikola Mirilovic
Title: Associate Professor, School of Politics, Security, and International Affairs (SPSIA)
Office Location: 311 D, Howard Phillips Hall
Office Hours
Tue 1:30-2:30 PM & Thu 1:30-3:30 PM (or by appointment)
Email: Nikola.Mirilovic@ucf.edu; please contact me via Webcourses mail for course related emails

Teaching Assistants

GTA: Kassadi Smith. Contact: via Webcourses mail.

Office hours: Wed 1-2 PM (or by appointment). Location: HPH 215

Office Hours

Time: Tue 1:30-2:30 PM & Thu 1:30-3:30 PM (or by appointment)

Location: 311 D Howard Phillips Hall

Course Description

POS 3703 COS-POL SCI 3(3,0)Scope and Methods of Political Science: The scope and methodology of political analysis. Extensive examination of the discipline, research design and methodology. Fall, Spr, Sum

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will improve their knowledge of the foundations of research design and of statistical analysis.

Students will learn to use the data analysis software Stata.

Required Course Materials and Resources

The Essentials of Political Analysis
ISBN: 9781506379616
Authors: Philip H. Pollock III & Barry C. Edwards
Edition: 6

A Stata Companion to Political Analysis
ISBN: 9781071815045
Authors: Philip H. Pollock III & Barry C. Edwards

Edition: 5

Datasets
Online Access: https://edge.sagepub.com/pollock5e/student-resources/data-sets

Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

Requirements

The final grade will be based on a midterm exam (30% of the grade), a final exam (40% of the grade), and lab assignments (30% of the grade). The midterm and final exams will take place in class. 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.

Lab Assignments and Writing

Lab assignments are individual rather than group assignments. Students can work together on assignments with classmates. However, each student must choose and write answers individually and in their own words.

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 professor's questions regarding class materials.

Assignment Schedule

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
	Lab Assignment 1	Assignment	100
	Lab Assignment 2	Assignment	100
	Lab Assignment 3	Assignment	100
	Lab Assignment 4	Assignment	100

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
	Lab Assignment 5	Assignment	100
	Lab Assignment 6	Assignment	100
	Participation (Extra Credit)	Assignment	5
1/16/26	Course Interest	Assignment	0
2/24/26	Midterm Exam	Assignment	100
4/30/26	Final Exam	Assignment	100

Grading Scale

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%
D	63-66%
D-	60-62%
F	0-60%

Policies for Course Grade

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

Late Assignments: 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. Assignments will be submitted by being uploaded on Webcourses.

Attendance: While attendance is not mandatory, regular attendance and work on the class materials is strongly encouraged. The class covers material that is cumulative and later chapters in the required books often build on earlier ones. Doing work regularly and avoiding falling behind is essential in this class. Furthermore, in class we will be working with and using Stata in a computer lab (our classroom). Regularly working on class materials and with Stata is key to developing a strong grasp of the class materials. The best way to do well in the course and develop a strong grasp of the material it covers is to attend the course regularly, read and carefully consider the required materials beforehand, and be prepared to analyze and discuss those materials in class.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is prohibited. Use of GenAI tools via website, app, or any other access, is not permitted in this class. All components of

assignments in this course must be independently and originally completed by the student. Representing work created by GenAI as your own will be treated as plagiarism.

Disability Access & Accommodations

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing equal access to all students with disabilities (ADHD, learning disabilities, Autism, chronic medical conditions, physical disabilities, etc.). To receive consideration for reasonable disability-related course accommodations, disabled students must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and complete the steps required for SAS to review accommodation requests. More information can be found on the UCF Student Accessibility Services website under the Start Here tab or by contacting SAS directly (Ferrell Commons 185; sas@ucf.edu; Phone - 407-823-2371).

Approved accommodations are shared with course instructors via the SAS Course Accessibility Letter. Implementing certain accommodations may require discussion about specific considerations of the course design, course learning objectives, and the individual academic and course challenges experienced by the student. While students with disabilities or chronic health needs are also encouraged to discuss any course concerns with professors in addition to contacting SAS, professors are not required to facilitate disability-related adjustments to the course unless the professor has received a Course Accessibility Letter from SAS that outlines approved accommodations.

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:

1. 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 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 assessment, 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.

2. Any student who knowingly helps another violate academic behavior standards is also in violation of the standards.
3. 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 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.
4. 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" designated 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 access and community engagement, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – ONAC – Office of Nondiscrimination & Accommodations Compliance & 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 discrimination by any faculty or staff member, contact the Office of Nondiscrimination & Accommodations Compliance via the ONAC website or at 407-823-1336. You can also choose to report using the UCF Integrity Line either anonymously or as yourself at 1-855-877-6049 or by using the online form. UCF

cares about you and takes every report seriously. For more information see the Reporting an Incident or Issue Webpage.

Class Schedule

	Course Schedule
	January 13: Introductory Session (1 class) No readings
	January 15-20: Defining Concepts and Introducing Stata (2 classes) *Essentials*: Introduction and Chapter 1 *Stata Companion*: Introduction (Getting Started), Chapter 1
	January 22 - February 3: Variables (4 classes) *Essentials*: Chapter 2 *Stata Companion*: Chapter 2, 3
	February 5-17: Explanations, Hypotheses, and Comparisons (4 classes) *Essentials*: Chapter 3 *Stata Companion*: Chapter 4, 5 **February 19**: Midterm review **February 24**: Midterm exam
	February 26-March 12: Research Design and Controlled Comparisons (5 clas *Essentials*: Chapter 4, 5 *Stata Companion*: Chapter 7 **NOTE**: March 16-21: no class or office hours: UCF Spring break
	March 24-26: Foundations of Inference (2 classes) *Essentials*: Chapter 6 *Stata Companion*: Chapter 8, section 3
	March 31-April 2: Statistical Significance and Inferences about Sample Means *Essentials*: Chapter 7 p. 199-215; p. 222-223 *Stata Companion*: Chapter 9

	April 7-21: Regression Analysis (5 classes) *Essentials*: Chapter 8 *Stata Companion*: Chapter 11, 12 **April 23: Final Review** **Final Exam:** Thursday, April 30, 10:00 AM – 12:50 PM. Location: HPH 310 (our cla

In-Class Recording Statement

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.

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 arrangements.

Unauthorized Use of Websites and Internet Resources

There are many websites claiming to offer study aids to students, but in using such websites, students could find themselves in violation of academic conduct guidelines. These websites include (but are not limited to) Quizlet, Course Hero, Chegg Study, and Clutch Prep. UCF does not endorse the use of these products in an unethical manner, which could lead to a violation of our University's Rules of Conduct. 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 could be found in violation of academic conduct standards and could face course and/or University penalties. Please let me know if you are uncertain about the use of a website so I can determine its legitimacy.

Campus Safety

At UCF's 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 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.

Course Correspondence

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

Financial Aid Accountability

All instructors 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.

Required books note

Students can purchase required books at the bookstore or rent an electronic version via First Day (for more on First Day, please see below).

First Day

By placing your digital course materials on Webcourses@UCF, the UCF Campus Store and the publisher of your textbooks have discounted your course materials to bring you the **lowest price available**. To take advantage of this **discounted rate**, you will need to **Opt-In** to have the cost of these materials billed to your UCF Student Account under a

fee called “Digital Course Materials”. This means you can access the course materials today, and will not have to pay for them until the UCF fee payment deadline on your UCF Student Account.

UCF Student Accounts will bill you at the discounted price as a “Digital Course Material Fee” for this course.

It is recommended that you Opt-In as these materials are required to complete the course. You can choose to Opt-In on the first day of class, right within Webcourses@UCF. Be sure to Opt-In before the Add/Drop deadline to have access to your course materials at the discounted price.

Attention: VA Chapter 31/VRE students and other students using vouchers or PO#'s and Dual Enrollment students, DO NOT Opt-in. If you are a VA Chapter 31/VRE/Vocational Rehabilitation/DBS/Dual Enrollment Student with a voucher or PO#, please Opt-Out and visit the UCF Campus Store in-person or online at ucf.bncollege.com.

It is recommended that you Opt-In as these materials are required to complete the course. You can choose to Opt-In on the first day of class, right within Webcourses@UCF. Be sure to Opt-In before the deadline to have access to your course materials at the discounted price. If you do not Opt-In or miss the deadline, you will have to purchase your materials at the UCF Campus Store or other vendor at a significantly higher rate.

As part of the First Day program, the publisher content will be available for everyone during the first week of class. **If you do not take any action to Opt-In or you choose to Opt-Out, your access will be deactivated, and you will need to pay the retail price for reactivation.** Please do not assume you have Opt-In if you access the publisher free trial first during this period without clicking on “Course Materials” and selecting to Opt-In.

If you are using McGraw-Hill courseware [Connect, SIMnet, or ALEKS], **you MUST activate your digital account after you complete your Opt-In confirmation by the Opt-In deadline**. This means you must log into the courseware platform to enter your username and password. If you are new to McGraw-Hill digital, you’ll be guided through setting up your

account. If you do not activate your account after you opt in, you may encounter a “pay screen” in the future.

If you are using Pearson or Cengage courseware, your course materials will be loaded into the Modules. **Safari is not compatible.**

Compatible web browsers: Google Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer. **Safari is NOT compatible.**

For more information and FAQs go to customercare.bncollege.com.

Stata

This class requires the use of data analysis software Stata which can be accessed via UCF Apps.

Syllabus disclaimer

This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion if necessary.