

POL 138 – Quantitative Reasoning in Political Science
Fall 2019
Monday-Wednesday-Friday, 1:00 – 1:50 PM
Schroeder 212

Instructor: Dr. Carl L. Palmer
Office: 433 Schroeder Hall
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 3:00-4:00, or by appointment
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Course Objectives:

The goal of this course is to familiarize students with social scientific research methods. Whether your goal is to go on to Graduate School and pursue a research agenda of your own, or not, you are here because you have some interest in politics. The material in this course is designed to not only stimulate your ability to think critically about not only academic work produced by social scientists, but also about the world itself.

By the end of the course, students should be able to critically evaluate theoretical arguments regarding the measurement of and factors that influence citizen voting behavior, articulate arguments about these issues both orally and in writing, identify normative concerns regarding citizen behavior based upon the arguments we have read, and be capable of synthesizing research literature on a given topic in order to identify lacunae in the literature and conduct a research study to bridge those gaps.

To accomplish these goals, it is expected that students will attend class having already done the required reading for that day's class. Coming prepared to engage the material is imperative in order to get the most out of lecture.

Required Readings:

- Forestiere, Carolyn. 2017. *Beginning Research in Political Science*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Additional readings will be made available via the course website on ReggieNet (or may be downloaded from www.jstor.org, or from the Milner Library website: <http://library.illinoisstate.edu/>).

Course Policies:

1. Exams must be taken at the times specified in the syllabus; makeup exams will be given only in the most extreme circumstances, with provided documentation of the absence. Makeup exams will consist of four essay questions. If you know you cannot make any one of the exam dates listed in the syllabus, you should not take this class.

2. Students will be expected to bring all readings to class to facilitate discussion.
3. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please see the university's policies regarding plagiarism and cheating online at the Dean of Students Office website.
4. All assignments must be submitted *at the beginning of class* on the due date in the syllabus; late assignments will lose 10% credit per day late. All assignments *must* be typed unless otherwise instructed.
5. To be considered for a regrade assignments or exams must be accompanied by a no greater than 1 page (single spaced) memo detailing your claim. Memos must provide justification for a change of grade using examples from course material, and will only be accepted after a 24-hour *cooling-off* period. Memos must be submitted within one week of the initial return date for the assignment or exam.
6. Usage of cell phones in lecture will not be permitted. Please silence all cell phones before coming to class. If I see anyone using a cell phone in class I will administer a pop quiz which will affect your participation grade. Laptop computers and tablets are permissible so long as they are used for *academic* uses during lecture.
7. Students may not photograph or use audio or video devices to record classroom lectures or discussions or visual materials that accompany them (e.g., lecture slides, whiteboard notes/equations). Students with disabilities who need to record classroom lectures or discussions must contact Student Access and Accommodation Services to register, request and be approved for an accommodation. Students who violate this policy may be subject to both legal sanctions for violations of copyright law and disciplinary action under the University's Code of Student Conduct.
8. If you have special needs that require accommodation for exams, please let me know early on so that the appropriate measures can be taken. You will be required to provide documentation of your requirements.
9. If you have any questions at any point in the class, PLEASE ask. I will be happy to answer any questions about the course material. This includes if lecture is moving too quickly, or simply do not understand something. Keep in mind that this is YOUR responsibility.
10. Email: I strongly encourage email questions and comments. However, when you write you are expected to write as you would in any professional correspondence: Capital letters to start the first word of a sentence, "Dear Professor Palmer" (or "Hi Professor Palmer") to open the email, correct spelling, capital letters in the correct places, punctuation, etc. ("Hey" is not appropriate.) It is likely that I will not answer emails phrased inappropriately or that include misspellings, etc., or I may give you a two-word response, "Course Expectations," meaning that you should re-write your email in a more appropriate form and resend it. I will not answer questions that can be answered if you read the syllabus. I will either not answer or write back a one-word response: "syllabus". See <http://www.phdcomics.com/comics.php?f=1795>.
11. Lecture slides will not be posted online. Students missing class will be expected to obtain notes from other students in the class.

Course Requirements:

There will be 100 total points available in this course. Final grade breakdowns are as follows:

- A: 90-100
- B: 89-80
- C: 79-70
- D: 69-60
- F: 59 and below.

Final grades will **not** be rounded

Points for the course will be allocated as follows:

- Assignments (25%): There will be five short assignments; the due dates are listed on the syllabus
- Midterm 1 (25%): Multiple choice, short answer, and identification questions.
- Midterm 2 (25%): Multiple choice, short answer, and identification questions.
- Final Exam (25%): The final exam *will* be cumulative, and will consist of multiple choice, calculations, and an essay question.

Course Schedule:

Week 1

Aug. 19 – Introduction and syllabus

Aug. 21 – Reading scholarly work

- <https://www.ameliahoovergreen.com/uploads/9/3/0/9/93091546/howtoread.pdf>
- <http://blogs.swarthmore.edu/burke/permanent-features-advice-on-academia/how-to-read-in-college/>

Aug. 23 – What makes Science *really* a ‘Science?’

- Lupia, Arthur. 2000. “Evaluating Political Science Research: Information For Buyers and Sellers.” *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 33(1): 7-13.

Week 2

Aug. 26 – Designing Research Questions

- Avelsson, Mats, and Jörgen Sandberg. 2013. *Constructing Research Questions: Doing Interesting Research*. London: Sage Publications. Chapter 2 – available via Milner Library
- *BRPS*, Chapter 3

Aug. 28 – What is a theory?

- *BRPS*, Chapter 4, pp. 75-84.

Aug. 30 – **APSA Meeting, no class**

Week 3

Sept. 2 – **Labor Day Holiday – no class**

Sept. 4 – Literature Reviews

- *BRPS*, Chapter 2
- Knopf, Jeffrey W. 2006. “Doing a Literature Review.” *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 39(1): 127-32.

Sept. 6 – Developing and Operationalizing Hypotheses

- *BRPS*, Chapter 4, pp. 85-92
- Nicholson, Stephen P. 2003. “The Political Environment and Ballot Proposition Awareness.” 47(3): 403-10.

Week 4

Sept. 9 – Research Ethics

- Singer, Eleanor, and Felice J. Levine. 2003. “Protection of Human Subjects of Research: Recent Developments and Future Prospects for the Social Sciences.” *The Public Opinion Quarterly*. 67(1): 148-64.
- <https://www.vox.com/2018/6/13/17449118/stanford-prison-experiment-fraud-psychology-replication>

Sept. 11 – Research Design I

- *BRPS*, Chapter 5 pp. 97-110

Sept. 13 – Research Design II

- *BRPS*, Chapter 5 pp. 110-120
- Stouffer, Samuel A. 1950. “Some Observations on Study Design.” *The American Journal of Sociology*. 55(4): 355-61.

Week 5 – Assignment 1 due Friday, Sept. 20

Sept. 16 – Research Design III

- Lieberman, Stanley. 1991. “Small N’s and Big Conclusions: An Examination of the Reasoning in Comparative Studies Based on A Small Number of Cases.” *Social Forces*. 70(2): 307-20.

Sept. 18 – Research Design IV

- Geddes, Barbara. 1990. “How The Cases You Chose Affect The Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics.” *Political Analysis*. 2(1): 131-50.
- Seawright, Jason, and John Gerring. 2008. “Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options.” *Political Research Quarterly*. 61(2): 294-308.

Sept. 20 – Measurement I

- *BRPS*, Chapter 6

Week 6

Sept. 23 – Measurement II

Sept. 25 – Exam 1 review

Sept. 27 – Exam 1

Week 7

Sept. 30 – Surveys I

- Brady, Henry E. 2000. “Contributions of Survey Research to Political Science.” *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 33(1): 47-57.

Oct. 2 – Surveys II

- Wheelan pp. 169-83

Oct. 4 – Probability I

- Wheelan, Chapters 5, 5½
- Lynch, Chapter 5

Week 8 – Assignment 2 due Friday, Oct. 11

Oct. 7 – Probability II

Oct. 9 – Sampling

- Wheelan, Chapter 8

Oct. 11 – Data Analysis I - Descriptive Statistics

- *BRPS*, Chapter 7
- Wheelan Chapter 2

Week 9

Oct. 14 – Estimation and Uncertainty

Oct. 16 – Data Analysis II

- Pollock, pp. 13-24

Oct 18 – Inference I

- Wheelan, Chapter 9

Week 10 – Assignment 3 due Friday, Oct. 25

Oct. 21 – Inference II

Oct. 23 – Bivariate Analysis I

- *BRPS*, Chapter 8

Oct. 25 – Bivariate Analysis II

- Wheelan Chapter 4

Week 11

Oct. 28 – Bivariate Analysis III

- Pollock, pp. 41-45

Oct. 30 – Exam 2 review

Nov. 1 – Exam 2

Week 12

Nov. 4 – Regression I

- *BRPS*, Chapter 9, pp. 205-219

Nov. 6 – Regression II

- Wheelan, Chapter 11

Nov. 8 – Regression III

- Kish, Leslie. 1959. “Some Statistical Problems in Research Design.” *American Sociological Review*. 24(3): 328-38.
- Wheelan, Chapter 12

Week 13 – Assignment 4 due Friday, Nov. 15

Nov. 11 – Multivariate Analysis I

- *BRPS*, Chapter 9, pp. 220-230

Nov. 13 – Multivariate Analysis II

Nov. 15 – Multivariate Analysis III

Week 14

Nov. 18 – Formal Research Methods

- Fiorina, Morris P. 1975. “Formal Models in Political Science.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 19(1): 133-59.

Nov. 20 – Observational Data

- Walsh, Katherine Cramer. 2004. *Talking About Politics: Informal Groups and Social Identity in American Life*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Appendix 1

Nov. 22 – Written Records

- Ferree, Myra Marx, William Anthony Gamson, Jürgen Gerhards, and Dieter Rucht. 2002. *Shaping Abortion Discourse: Democracy and the Public Sphere in Germany and the United States*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press. Ch 3.

Week 15: Thanksgiving Break

Nov. 25, 27, & 29 – No class, Thanksgiving Break

Week 16 – Assignment 5 due Friday, Dec. 6

Dec. 2 – Qualitative Research Methods

- *BRPS*, Chapter 10

Dec. 4 – Creating Research

- *BRPS*, Chapter 11

Dec. 6 – Final Exam review – **Assignment 5 due**