Syracuse University
Political Science 202
Introduction to Political Research
Fall 2016

Course Logistics
School of Management 302
M/W 1715 - 1835hrs

Instructor Info
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Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to help political science majors build skills for interpreting, conducting, and presenting political science research. These skills include: basic research and data collection practices, techniques for measuring political science concepts, hypothesis testing, interpretation of statistical evidence, and the presentation of findings in a clear and compelling manner.

Readings

The following book is required. It is available for purchase from the Syracuse University bookstore or from various online retailers.

- Pollock, Philip. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. CQ Press, 5th edition. 2016.

Be sure to obtain the correct edition if you do not purchase from the bookstore! Please note that other readings may also be assigned and will be made available for download via Blackboard.

Attendance Policy

There is no formal attendance policy for the course. The assumption is that you are here at SU to make the most of your educational opportunities and to prepare yourselves for your future careers. Over your years in college, tens of thousands of dollars are spent for you to have this opportunity. That should be motivation enough for you to take responsibility for your education. Given the level of difficulty of the course material, however, any absence will likely be reflected in your performance in the course. Also note below that some in-class assignments will constitute a portion of your final grade.

That said, I reserve the option of making lecture attendance part of the course grade by taking attendance or by giving in-class assignments. Under such circumstances, please note that absences due to medical reasons will require documentation from the Student Health Service or other relevant medical authorities.

Assignments and Grading

Students are expected to read all assignments. Readings should be completed concurrently with lectures. All homework assignments are expected to be handed in by the stated deadlines. *All*

submissions must be printed and stapled. Any submission not meeting this requirement will not be accepted. Homework is not to be turned in by email unless otherwise stated. Late submissions will be accepted until the assignment is graded & returned to the class, but will receive a 5 percentage point deduction per day.

Mid-term exams will be administered in-class on October 5 and November 28. The date of the final exam is listed below. Students should therefore plan ahead on attending all examinations.

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

> Select In-Class Assignments: 15%
>
> Problem Sets: 20%
>
> Mid-term Exam #1: 20%
>
> Mid-term Exam #2: 20%
>
> Final Exam: 25%

Note that only five in-class assignments will be graded, however, the actual assignments chosen for grading will only be announced on the day of issue. They are akin to in-class pop quizzes but are only graded as either 'completed' or 'not completed.' These assignments are design to not only enhance your practical knowledge of the course material but serve as an additional incentive to attend lectures.

Overall, grades of "A" are given for work that is excellent, showing mastery of the material and the ability to use it creatively. Grades of "B" are for work that is good, with solid understanding of the material and the ability to apply it according to direction. Grades of "C" reflect work that is average/fair. Lower grades are given for work that is poor or substandard.

Technology in the Classroom

During several classes throughout the semester ITS will be delivering laptops with statistical software to our classroom so that we may investigate real-life research design questions using statistical techniques introduced in lecture. The dates are listed in the schedule below.

Use of laptops or similar devices for note-taking purposes is permitted. However, students are expected to show common courtesy to avoid distracting fellow students. Any distracting use of electronic devices may lead to your dismissal from the classroom.

Office Hours

Office hours with the instructor are available by appointment only. Please email the instructor at least 24hrs prior to the time requested for a meeting.

Academic Integrity Statement

Syracuse University's academic integrity policy reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy defines our expectations for academic honesty and holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit. Students should understand that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific expectations, as well as about university-wide academic integrity expectations. The university policy governs appropriate citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. The policy also prohibits students from submitting the same written work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. The presumptive penalty for a first instance of academic dishonesty by an undergraduate student is course failure, accompanied by a transcript notation indicating that the failure resulted from a violation of academic integrity policy. The presumptive penalty for a first instance of academic

dishonesty by a graduate student is suspension or expulsion. SU students are required to read an online summary of the university's academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check-in on MySlice. For more information and the complete policy, see http://academicintegrity.syr.edu.

Accommodation of Disabilities Statement

If you believe that you need academic adjustments (accommodations) for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), visit the ODS website – http://disabilityservices.syr.edu, located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498 or TDD: (315) 443-1371 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting academic adjustments. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related academic adjustments and will issue students with documented Disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since academic adjustments may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

Lecture Schedule

August 29: Introduction & Course Mechanics

August 31: What is Political Science?

- Reading: Pollock, Introduction
- Problem Set #1 Distributed

September 5: Labor Day

- No class

September 7: Concepts and Measurement

- Reading: Pollock, Chapter 1

September 12: Variables

- Reading: Pollock, Chapter 2
- In-Class Active Learning: "Variables"

September 14: Hypotheses

- Reading: Pollock, Chapter 3
- In-Class Active Learning: "Hypotheses"
- Problem Set #1 Due
- Problem Set #2 Distributed

September 19: Qualitative Methods I – Overview of Qualitative Methodologies

- Reading: Pollock, Chapter 4

September 21: Qualitative Methods II – Qualitative Comparative Analysis

- Reading: John Gerring, "Methods" in *Social Science Methodology* [Blackboard]
- In-Class Active Learning: "Qualitative Comparative Analysis"

September 26: Experiments & Visual Presentation

- Problem Set #2 Due

September 28: Review of Part I of Course

October 3: Individual Exam Preparation

- No class, office hours only

October 5: Exam #1

- No office hours

October 10: Comparisons & Cross-Tabulations I

- Reading: Pollock, Chapter 5
- In-Class Active Learning: "Cross-tabs & Mean Comparisons"

October 12: Comparisons & Cross-Tabulations II

- *ITS Laptop Delivery*
- In-Class Active Learning: "SDA Archives"
- Problem Set #3 Distributed

October 17: SPSS Lab Exercise

- *ITS Laptop Delivery*
- In-Class Active Learning: "Using National Survey Data, Part I"

October 19: Sampling I

- Reading: Pollock, Chapter 6

October 24: Sampling II

- Reading: Pollock, Chapter 7 (read only pgs. 156-170)
- In-Class Active Learning: "Understanding Distributions"
- Problem Set #3 Due
- Problem Set #4 Distributed

October 26: Significance Testing

- In-Class Active Learning: "Difference of Means"

October 31: Correlations

- Reading: Pollock, Chapter 8

November 2: Linear Regression I

- Problem Set #4 Due
- Problem Set #5 Distributed

November 7: Linear Regression II

- In-Class Active Learning: "Regression Analysis"

November 9: SPSS Lab Exercise

- *ITS Laptop Delivery*
- In-Class Active Learning: "Using National Survey Data, Part II"

November 14: Z-Score Showdown

- Problem Set #5 Due

November 16: Review of Part II of Course

November 21-25: Thanksgiving Break

- No class or office hours

November 28: Exam #2

- No office hours

November 30: Political Research in Practice

- *ITS Laptop Delivery*
- In-Class Active Learning: "Independent Research Project"
- Reading: Pollock, Chapter 10

December 5: Conclusion & Final Exam Review

December 7: Individual Final Exam Preparation

- No class, office hours only

December 12: Final Exam

- Monday, December 12 (1715-1915hrs). Room location TBD.