

POS 3713, Section 3: Understanding Political Science Research
Thomas E. Sowers, II
Spring 2002

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Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to political science research methodology. My goal for the course is for students to develop basic research skills that are applicable to political science. This includes designing a research project, basic statistics, and computer applications. Students will be working on a research project throughout the semester to apply what they have learned in the class.

Course Requirements

The course requirements are as follows:

Exams - There are four exams in the class. Each is worth 150 points. The exams are not cumulative but do expect the students to have a grasp of the material covered on prior exams. Exams will be mostly multiple choice, but there will be some short answer and problem solving questions on some exams.

Research Paper - The research paper is divided into three assignments. The first is to develop a research question and conduct a literature review on the question. This should be between 4 and 5 pages and is worth 30 points. The second assignment is to develop a hypothesis or hypotheses to be tested. This should also include a description on the data and the variables you plan to use. This should be between 1 and 3 pages and is worth 20 points. The final assignment is the finished paper. Students are expected to have done actual analysis applying one of the tools that we learned in class. The first two assignments can be included in the final papers, but please make recommended revisions. Assignment one and two should be turned in with the final draft. The final draft is worth 100 points. The research paper assignment totals 150 points.

Homework - There are five homework assignments throughout the semester. Each is worth 50 points. The exact questions will be handed out on the dates specified on the syllabus.

Text Books

Healey, Joseph F. 2002. *Statistics: A Tool for Social Research*. Belmont, CA: Wadworth.

Manheim, Jarol B., Richard C. Rich, Lars Willnat. 2002. *Empirical Political Analysis*. New York: Longman.

Course Rules

Attendance - Students are expected to attend class. For every day beyond **three absences 20 points will be deducted** from your total class points. I do not have *excused absences*. Please do not bring in excuses. You may miss three classes for what ever reason you like. This includes sickness and accidents. If you have a problem that results in more than three absences (such as a hospital stay) please see me to make arrangements. If you need to leave class early please inform me or I will count you absent for the class. It is a student's responsibility to sign the attendance sheet.

Cheating - I take cheating very seriously. Students are expected to follow the Honor Code.

Make-Up Exam - In order to make up an exam you must notify me before the exam. If circumstances prevent you from notifying me you must notify me as soon as possible.

Late Assignment - Late assignments will be penalized a letter grade a day.

Completion of Assignments - **All assignments must be completed to pass the class.** This includes all homework assignments and the three assignments included in the research paper.

Grade Scale

A	=	930 - 1000	D+	=	670 - 699
A-	=	900 - 929	D	=	630 - 669
B+	=	870 - 899	D-	=	600 - 629
B	=	830 - 869	F	=	0 - 599
B-	=	800 - 829			
C+	=	770 - 799			
C	=	730 - 769			
C-	=	700 - 729			

Course Schedule

Month	Date	Subject	Reading
Jan	8	Introduction	
Jan	10	Writing a Political Science Research Paper	MRW Ch. 21
Jan	15	Scientific Method	MRW Ch. 1 & 2
Jan	17	Research Design Homework #1 Due 1/24	MRW CH. 3
Jan	22	Research Design Research Question & Literature Review Due	MRW CH. 5
Jan	24	Survey Research	MRW CH. 7
Jan	29	Hypotheses - Research Paper Homework #2 - Due 2/5	
Jan	31	Operationization and Measurement	MRW CH. 4
Feb	5	Exam I Hypotheses Due	
Feb	7	Descriptive Statistics	HL CH. 2; MRW 13
Feb	12	Measures of Central Tendency	HL CH. 3
Feb	14	Normal Curve and Dispersion Homework #3 - Due 2/21	HL CH. 4 & 5
Feb	19	Sampling	MRW CH. 6; HL CH. 6
Feb	21	Confidence Intervals	HL. CH. 7
Feb	26	Exam II	
Feb	28	Hypothesis Testing: One Sample	HL. CH. 8

Month	Date	Subject	Reading
Mar	7	Hypothesis Testing: Two Sample	HL. CH. 9
Mar	12	Spring Break - No Class	
Mar	14	Spring Break - No Class	
Mar	19	Analysis of Variance Homework #4 - Due 3/26	HL. CH. 10
Mar	21	Chi-Square	HL. CH. 11
Mar	26	ISA - No Class	
Mar	28	Anova & Chi-Squared	HL. CH. 11
Apr	2	Exam III	
Apr	4	Measures of Association: Nominal	HL. CH. 12 & 13
Apr	9	Measures of Association: Ordinal	HL. CH. 14
Apr	11	Measures of Association: Interval Homework #5 - Due 4/18	HL. CH. 15 & MRW CH. 15
Apr	16	Regression	HL. CH. 15 & MRW CH. 15
Apr	18	Multivariate Regression Research Paper with Analysis Due	HL. CH. 17
Apr	25	Final Exam	