

POLSC 700-B Fall 2015
Research Methods in Political Science
Eisenhower 227: TH: 2:30 to 5:20 pm

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Office Hours: Tuesday: 11:00am-noon am, Thursday: 1:00 pm-2:00 pm or By Appointment

This course is designed to expose you to some empirical tools that will aid you in your efforts to systematically study politics. Political science is a wide field of scholarly inquiry. A broader classification divides the field into general headings including American Politics, International Relations, Comparative Politics, and Public Policy. More specifically studying politics means analyzing the politics of governmental institutions, focusing on intra-workings of legislatures, executives, bureaucracies, or courts; examining the interactions between governments and their people, seeking to understand public opinion, voting and running for office, or unconventional forms of participation like protests, political violence, or civil wars. For still others, this means studying diplomacy, war, peace, trade, development, democratization, revolutions, and beyond. The essence of political inquiry is studying the causes of political phenomena. This course is designed to help you **understand, consume and produce** the empirical knowledge of the social sciences generally and of political science more specifically.

Purpose and Learning Objectives: The purpose of this course is to immerse you in the “science” and “methods” sides of political science. This course is designed to enhance your research skills by introducing you to a variety of quantitative methods that form the foundation for much of the literature in political science. This will enable you to:

- Access, read, and digest the literature across a wide spectrum of the sub-disciplines in political science.
- Conduct your own independent research in your area of interest using these methods.
- Develop a fuller understanding of political science as a discipline.

The course starts with a brief review of everything you should have learned in your undergraduate research methods course. If you have not had an undergraduate research methods course, the first three weeks will give you enough of a primer to easily survive. This review covers the elements of social scientific thinking, hypothesis formulation, measurement, and inferences. These first three weeks will be reading intensive. Make sure that you plan ahead and don't fall behind. For the rest of the course, we will focus our attention on “statistics.” That's right. Every bit of your waking moments, from the time you rise in the morning, till go to bed at night will be spent living, breathing, enjoying statistics and their application in political science. By the end of the semester, you will know the meaning of CHI Square, t-test, OLS, BLUE, heteroscedasticity, TSCS, and logistic regression. You will also learn how to use STATA, a statistical software package.

Required Textbooks, Software, and Storage Devices:

Required Texts

1. Paul M. Kellstedt and Guy D. Whitten. 2009. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research (2nd edition)*. NY: Cambridge University Press.
2. Phillip H. Pollock. III. 2015 (*3rd edition*). *A Stata Companion to Political Analysis*. Washington, DC: Sage-CQ Press.
3. William D. Berry & Mitchell S. Sanders. 2000. *Understanding Multivariate Research*, Coulter, CO: Westview Press.

Stat Package

We will be using STATA, a powerful statistical software, throughout the course. The latest version is:

STATA 14: SE or IC (For most cases IC will be sufficient. Consult with me if you are not sure).

You may buy STATA on line at www.stata.com. You have the option of buying a perpetual license or lease it for 6-12 months. The website will guide you in the cost and purchasing options.

**** If you know how to use R, then you do not need to buy STATA. All exercises can be done in R, but you will have to figure the code on your own for completing the exercises.**

Requirements

Because the only way to learn is by doing, you will be doing a lot. Absolutely no complaining!
Golden rules for success:

- Plan ahead
- Stay organized
- Complete the tasks on time
- Ask questions when you are not sure

Readings: Almost every week you will have multiple reading assignments that include chapters from the textbooks and published research articles. Please note that most of the research articles can be accessed at K-State libraries online. Chapters from non-required textbooks will be posted on CANVAS.

Attendance and Participation (15%): I expect full attendance in all sessions. Only documented medical emergencies and university related activities will count toward excused absences. Your participation is required throughout the semester. In some weeks, I will do the lecturing due to the nature of the material. In other weeks, the lectures will be discussion based (particularly the first half of the class). I will ask some questions or introduce puzzles during the class and I expect you to respond. In addition, when we discuss the answers to the exercises in the beginning of the class, I may call on students randomly for answering a question or clarifying a solution.

Exercises (25%): There will be many weeks when you will be given a conceptual or statistical exercise. In some of these exercises, you will be required to answer questions presented at the end of specific chapters in the textbooks. In others, your job will be to calculate the statistic and/or produce statistical results using STATA. At the beginning of the class period we will grade and discuss the assignments. *This is when your participation is especially expected and encouraged.* These assignments are graded based on a gradual plus system. You are required to obtain a “+” on all weekly exercises and assignments. If your grade falls below a “+” in one assignment, you are required to revise this exercise or assignment. If you don’t receive a “+” on an assignment, I will deduce 5% from your overall grade. Therefore, I strongly encourage you to revise the assignments if your grade falls below a “+” in a given assignment.

****I expect that the assignments will take a considerable amount of time to complete in the beginning. However, they should take less time as we move on. If you feel that you are struggling with completing these assignments on time after a while, then you need to let me know! You are allowed to discuss the questions in the exercises with other students, but each student should complete the exercises on her/his own. ****

Final Exam (30%): There will be one final, comprehensive exam. It will be a 24 hour open-book and open-notes exam. You are not allowed to discuss the exam questions and answers with anybody.

Research Paper (30%): Each of you will be required to write a research paper. The research paper should be about 20-25 pages long and it should utilize statistical techniques. You will be graded by how well you review the literature, state a formal set of hypotheses, use appropriate data and statistical methods (covered in the course) to test your hypotheses, and draw conclusions based on your findings. After determining your substantive interests, I will help you decide on a topic and find an appropriate data set. We will be working on this paper over the course of the semester. You may turn your paper early to obtain my comments prior to the assignment of a final grade. I also encourage you to submit your project as a poster to a political science conference. I can recommend venues friendly to graduate students if you are interested.

Grading Rules and Grading Scale

Attendance and Participation	15%
Statistical Exercises and Assignments	25% Gradual Plus System*
Final Test	30%
Research Paper	30%

*** You are required to obtain a “+” on all weekly exercises and assignments. If your grade falls below a “+” in one assignment, you are required to revise this exercise or assignment. If you don’t receive a “+” on an assignment, I will deduce 5% from your overall grade.**

Letter grades for the course will be assigned along the following scale:

- A: 90% or greater
- B: 80-89%
- C: 70-79%
- D: 60-69%
- F: Below 60%

****There will be no late assignments or exercises accepted in this course.****

Academic Honesty, Plagiarism, and Accommodation of Disabilities

You are allowed to collaborate with each other in discussing the assignments and exercises unless I say otherwise. I encourage you to consult with each other to get the right answer. But you must independently complete your assignment. One word of caution: If you become a leech, constantly taking advice but not contributing to your fellow classmates, you will not learn and most importantly, your student comrades will soon start to exclude you from their group. You are also allowed to consult with your classmates or another professor on your research paper. I encourage you to have others read your work, edit it, and provide you with comments. But, you must independently write your paper. This means that you may not write your paper with another student or borrow paragraphs of text from another student’s work.

You can only use sentence fragments or entire sentences from other published or unpublished studies with proper quotation and citation. If you are cutting and pasting from another study into your paper and fail to use quotations and citation, you are committing an act of plagiarism. Remember, in constructing a literature review, your job is to summarize the findings from other studies. I would advise that you do this by summarize the findings in your own words.

It is a violation of academic honesty of the highest order for you to represent a study as your own, when you have purchased or obtained the paper from another source. Please note, I will be working with you on your research project. **Thus, no matter how desperate you are, do not plagiarize or purchase a paper! For the record, I subject all the work to plagiarism detection software!**

You are not allowed to copy, consult, or work with any student or third party when taking the final test. If you violate academic honesty or plagiarize another person’s work, K-State’s code of conduct and rules on plagiarism apply. Ignorance is not an excuse.

Kansas State University has an Honor & Integrity System based on personal integrity which is presumed to be sufficient assurance in academic matters one's work is performed honestly and without unauthorized assistance. Undergraduate and graduate students, by registration, acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Honor & Integrity System. The policies and procedures of the Honor System apply to all full and part-time students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate courses on-campus, off-campus, and via distance learning. A component vital to the Honor & Integrity System is the inclusion of the Honor Pledge which applies to all assignments, examinations, or other course work undertaken by students. The Honor Pledge is implied, whether or not it is stated: "On my honor, as a student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work."

If you are in doubt, please ask. A grade of XF can result from a breach of academic honesty. The F indicates failure in the course; the X indicates the reason is an Honor Pledge violation. For more information, visit the Honor & Integrity System home web page at: <http://www.k-state.edu/honor/>

Any student with a disability that needs a classroom accommodation, access to technology or other assistance in this course should contact Disability Support Services and/or their instructor.

K-State Online

This course syllabus and other course material will be placed on K-State Online CANVAS. To access K-State Online create an account for yourself. If you already have an account, please make sure that all your personal data, including your email account, are up to date. The system is straight-forward to use, but if you need help, contact the K-State IT Help Desk. Once you are logged into K-State Online, you will find the syllabus and other course materials there.

Course Schedule:

8/27 Introduction and Course Logistics

9/3 Introduction to Social Scientific Inquiry
Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapters: 1, 2, and 3.
Clark, Golder, and Golder, What is Science, Chapter 2.

Exercise 1:

- Complete the following problems from Kellstedt and Whitten: Chapter 1: 2, 5, 6 and 7; Chapter 2: 2, 3, 5; Chapter 3: 3, 4, and 5

*****Exercise 1 Due in class*****

9/10 Experiments and the Logic of Social Scientific Inquiry
Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 4
Druckman et al, Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science, pp. 3-40
Holland, Paul W. "Statistics and causal inference." Journal of the American statistical Association 81.396 (1986): 945-960.

Exercise 2:

- Complete the following problems from Kellstedt and Whitten: Chapter 4: 1, 4, 9
- For the following paper, identify the research problem, describe the variables and the experimental design, the causal theory, and the main findings (maximum, 1 typed-page):

Ben-Nun Bloom, Pazit, Gizem Arıkan, and Marie Courtemanche. "Religious Social Identity, Religious Belief, and Anti-Immigration Sentiment." American Political Science Review 109.02 (2015): 203-221.

*****Exercise 2 due in class*****

*****One page summary of research paper due in class*****

9/17-9/24 Measurement and Variables & Introduction to STATA

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 5
Pollock, Chapters 1, 2, and 3

Exercise 3:

- Complete all problems from Pollock: Chapter 1, 2, and 3

*****Exercise 3 due in class on 9/24*****

10/1 Sampling and Hypotheses Testing

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 6
Pollock, Chapters 4 and 5

Exercise 4:

- Complete all problems from Pollock, Chapters 4 and 5

*****Exercise 4 due in class *****

10/8 Bivariate Statistics

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 7
Pollock, Chapters 6 and 7

Exercise 5:

- Pollock: chapter 6, ALL; chapter 7: Exercises 1 and 5
- Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 7: Exercises 8, 9, and 10

*****Exercise 5 due in class *****

10/15-10/22 Bivariate Regression and Correlation

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 8
Berry and Sanders, Chapters 1 & 2

Exercise 6:

- Pollock: Chapter 8, Exercise 1
- Kellstedt and Whitten: Chapter 8; Exercises 3-9

*****Exercise 6 due in class on 10/15*****

Exercise 7:

- Bivariate Regression Exercise, Handout

*****Exercise 7 due in class on 10/22 *****

10/29 Multiple Regression Analysis-I

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 9
Berry and Sanders, Chapter 3-5

Exercise 8:

- Multiple Regression Exercise, Handout

11/5 Multiple Regression Analysis-II: Assumptions

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 10, pp. 232-245
Kennedy, pp 133-144, 205-212 (online)
Lecture Notes (online)

Exercise 9:

Regression Assumptions Exercise, Handout

*****Exercise 8 due in class *****

11/12 Multiple Regression Analysis-III: Dummy Variables and Interaction

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 10, pp. 220-232

Berry and Sanders, Chapter 6, pp. 63-72

Pollock, Chapter 9

Recommended:

Brambor, Thomas, William Roberts Clark, and Matt Golder. "Understanding interaction models: Improving empirical analyses." *Political analysis* 14.1 (2006): 63-82.

William Berry, Matt Golder, & Daniel Milton. 2012. "Improving Tests of Theories Positing Interaction." *Journal of Politics* 74: 653-671

Exercise 10:

Pollock: Chapter 9: Exercises 1 and 3

*****Exercise 9 due in class *****

11/19 Advanced Topics I: Regression with Limited and Categorical Dependent Variables

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 11, pp. 247-255

Berry and Sanders, Chapter 6, pp. 72-76

Pollock, Chapter 10

Exercise 11:

Pollock: Chapter 10: Exercises 1 &2

*****Exercise 10 due in class *****

11/26 NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Break

12/3 Advanced Topics II: Introduction to Time Series and Structural Equation Modeling

Kennedy, pp. 301-318 (online)

Lecture Notes (online)

Kellstedt and Whitten, Chapter 11, pp. 256-269

Berry and Sanders, Chapter 6, pp. 76-78

Recommended:

Beck, Nathaniel, and Jonathan N. Katz. "Modeling dynamics in time-series-cross-section political economy data." *Annual Review of Political Science* 14 (2011): 331-352.

*****Exercise 11 due in class *****

**12/10 Final, Comprehensive 24 hour Take Home Exam
Open book and Open Notes**