POLITICAL SCIENCE 30
POLITICAL INQUIRY
Lectures MW 12-12:50 Warren Lecture Hall 2001

Note: minor changes may be made to this syllabus throughout the quarter (particularly the order of the statistics readings/presentations). You are responsible for any changes mentioned in class, even if you are absent.

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Office Hours: Tuesday 10:30-3:30 SSB363
Email: For class related questions—use the email facility in WebCT for this course
For other, non course related questions: pgalderisi@ucsd.edu
--please feel free to email me with questions/concerns at any time. I will check them at least every morning and *early* evening (and usually throughout the day), except Fridays.

TAs: Section and Office hours TBA

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INTRODUCTION

This class will lead us through an intellectual odyssey. We will learn how to pose an interesting question, how to narrow it for purposes of research, how to devise creative ways of getting the information pertaining to the question, and how to analyze the information gathered. With the objective of developing these skills, we will review (in order to learn by example) the methodology, the methods, and the tools employed by political scientists to study political events and relationships.

This course is akin to what, at other institutions, is often called "Scope and Methods." "Scope and Methods" often has a sinister reputation (note the initials). We won't try to change that reputation here--the survivors of the course deserve something to tell their grandchildren about.

Our odyssey will proceed through several stages. In the first few weeks we will deal with the aspects of scientific research--how one can ask questions that can be logically answered--and the use of the 'scientific method' in the study of political events. We will review several common methods of acquiring the necessary data for our answers, discuss the benefits of and the problems with each, and review the basics of standard research design. You will then be introduced to the use of elementary statistics as tools sometimes necessary for the analysis of political data. As we cover statistics, you will all be able to apply what you have learned by carrying out analyses, using PSPP software, of data sets that I will provide (more on this later in class).

REQUIREMENTS:

I. **READINGS:**

A. Two 'books" are available for purchase from University Readers (order online at http://www.universityreaders.com/students-- the first few sections (20%) will be available through an online link while you wait for delivery). I will explain why I shifted to these volumes during the first class.

Note: do not buy old copies of Pollock's *Essentials of Political Analysis nor the SPSS Companion package*.

-- for the methods and stat part of this class, we will be using a compilation of chapters from others as well as draft chapters from my own statistics text.
-- for the computer part of this class (about 1/2-2/3rds), we will be using my own work. I have processed and checked and written a manual on how to use a program called PSPP--a free, if not as elegant (it's FREE) version of SPSS. The data sets and syntax code are exactly duplicative of SPSS--so, if you're on campus, you can switch between the two.

To purchase the two volumes

Step 1: Log on to www.universityreaders.com.

Step 2: Click on the white "STUDENTS BUY HERE" button located in the "Student Store" section (upper right-hand corner of the page).

Step 3: Create an account or log in if you have an existing account to purchase.

Step 4: Easy-to-follow instructions will guide you through the rest of the ordering process. Payment can be made by all major credit cards or with an electronic check.

Orders are typically processed within 24 hours and the shipping time will depend on the selected shipping method and day it is shipped (orders are not shipped on Sundays or holidays). If you experience any difficulties, please email orders@universityreaders.com or call 800.200.3908.

B. A number of additional reserve readings, marked by an *, will also be required. To keep costs to a minimum, all of these can be found either online directly or through the UCSD library server (access on campus or at home through a proxy server--http://webproxy.ucsd.edu/proxy.pl – directions for different platforms/operating systems at
http://blink.ucsd.edu/Blink/External/Topics/Policy/0,1162,24528,00.html)

We **STRONGLY** suggest reading the material both **before and after** the appropriate class or section.

II. **ATTENDANCE AND EFFORT:**

A. **Show up in class and the MANDATORY discussion sessions on a daily basis.** Class lectures will proceed in a logical, progressive fashion (much more so than in any other class). One missed class (there are only 18 more) can lead to a total lack of comprehension over the next series of classes. Discussion sections are mandatory and attendance and participation in them will be worth 10% of your grade. During these sections you will turn in your assignments, take quizzes, review class materials, work on your computer analyses and, perhaps, cover additional information to that provided in class. If you don't expect your class and discussion attendance to be consistent, **don't** sign up.

B. Hard work and perseverance. Remember, research methodology and especially statistics are like a foreign language. Without constant exposure, practice, and repetition, languages are hard to master, especially in ten (or fewer) weeks. The same is true here. Statistics additionally utilize an abstract and foreign alphabet. And they may require you to use the dormant half of your brain. Conclusion? Expect to work hard at the beginning of this class, harder in the middle, and harder still at the end. Payoff? You may actually understand this stuff, and we may all maintain what little sanity we have left.

C. Informal 'preparation assignments' and online quizzes will be posted and mentioned in class on a regular basis. They do not have to be submitted, nor will they be graded. They will, however, serve as examples for discussion at the beginning of the next class or in discussion sections. If you complete them you will get more out of this class--and you will be better prepared for the sections and assignments.

D. You will learn the most from this class if you actively participate in lecture and discussions sections (again, think about learning a foreign language). Each of you **must** bring a calculator to class for the statistics lectures, and you must **use** it. A simple, cheap, garden variety will do. As long as it can add, subtract, multiply, divide, compute squares and square roots, it will suffice.

III. QUIZZES AND TAKE-HOME ASSIGNMENTS (schedule of dates to be announced at least one week in advance, but expect an assignment or quiz every week or so). We have found that the class works better with several short assignments than less periodic larger ones:

A. You will be given **(2) two,** two-part take-home assignments during the quarter, each worth 20% of your grade. All assignments must be turned in when due. Exceptions will only be made for extreme emergency situations. The second assignment will require calculations, the first will not.

1. Developing researchable statements, research designs and conclusions (20%):

You will be asked to convert a series of basic statements into scientific ones, i.e., ones that are fully researchable. You will also be asked to comment on the conclusiveness of certain outlined research findings. Are the results conclusive? Or is the design flawed? This assignment will be handed out in two parts, allowing you to start working as soon as possible.

2. Take-home statistics assignment (20%):

You will be asked to calculate and interpret statistical procedures. Computers will not be necessary for these calculations. Again, the assignment will be handed out in two parts.

B. You will turn in three, short, computer based analyses throughout the quarter that will coincide with our statistics instructions. Each will be worth 10% of your grade.

C. Final exam, scheduled for June 9, 11:30a - 2:29. *No early finals will be given.* If you can't make that time, please drop the course. -- Room TBA (25% of your grade)

D. Section attendance and participation (10%)

Note—add the percentages above. This is called the POLI 30 "curve," although it is not really a curve (it's a bump). It's also your first math test.

A NOTE ON GRADING:

Any request for a grade review must be made to your TA in writing (typed) with a full explanation of why you are requesting the review. Note that any review may result in a higher or lower grade (or no change).

A NOTE ON THE USE OF STATISTICS:

I will not attempt in this class to indoctrinate you into believing that only statistically-based research is valid research. Obviously, such an undertaking would be methodologically ludicrous. One begins ones research by asking theoretically important questions. Sometimes, <u>and only sometimes</u>, statistics can help us to answer those questions. Statistics are merely a summary tool. They help us with our research, but they are not the driving force behind it. Learning statistics yields some valuable results. First, you will have a greater choice of research questions to ask. You will no longer need to shy away from at least some questions that require statistically-based answers. Second, you will be better able to evaluate others' scholarly research. We sometimes have a tendency to accept others' statistical findings as gospel, or reject them as trivial when, in fact, we make no attempt to try to understand what the researcher tried to accomplish. Ignorance may be bliss, but it is not academically virtuous. Third, you will acquire the foundation needed to do advanced work in statistical methods if you so choose. I will be more concerned with teaching you the basic how and why of statistical generalization, than in making sure that we cover every statistic available.

This course will be neither as mathematically rigorous as some, nor as 'cookbook' and applications only oriented as others. Rather, a middle route will be taken, requiring just enough mathematical (basic algebra) understanding to prevent the misuse and abuse of statistical methods. The basic premise of this training follows sound methodological guidelines: statistics can sometimes help us to answer certain questions; therefore we need to understand exactly which question each statistic answers. And remember, statistics can never substitute for the English (or any other) language--they only complement it by serving as summary tools. Before these tools can be employed, theoretically useful questions about the relationships between and among well-defined and measurable concepts must first be asked.

POLICY ON CHEATING:

Failure--no exceptions. Cheating includes working together on the take-home assignments. You can help each other with general questions about basic concepts, facts, readings, lectures, etc. In fact, I strongly suggest you do so on a regular basis. On the other hand, collaborating on the assignments themselves, either in preparation or final production, is *strictly* forbidden. If you are not sure about the distinction, please ask me to clarify.

WEB PAGE:

You must all learn how to access this class's web page on the University's WebCt server. The fact that you are reading this indicates that you have already mastered this task. It won't be fancy, but it will be complete. All assignments, class notes, date changes, completion dates, etc. will be listed on them. Consult it on a regular (i.e., daily) basis.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS—everything is from the University Readers materials unless otherwise noted. Each day I'll mention which readings should be finished for the next lecture or discussion session (and post it on the class web page):

Stage I: Introduction to the Science of Politics

A. Introduction: What is science? What is political science?
A note on Political Science as a science
Ernest Nagel (1979). "Science as Common Sense," *The Structure of Science* (pp. 1-14).

B. The language of scientific research: concepts, hypotheses, and theories:
The Language of Science
The Structure of Hypotheses
Bernstein and Dyer (1992), "Explanations and Hypotheses," *An Introduction to Political Research* (pp. 1-17)

Ungraded Preparatory Quiz 1
Graded Assignment 1.1

Stage II: Research Design and Designing Research

A. Research designs and dilemmas-data:
The Logic of Causation
W. Phillips Shively, "Chapter 4: Problems of Measurement: Accuracy," *The Craft of Political Research*, 4th ed., Prentice Hall, 1998. Pp. 37-52.
Herbert Asher, "Chapter 3: Wording and Context of Questions," *Polling and the Public: What Every Citizen Should Know,* 6th ed., CQ Press, 2004. Pp. 50-68.
*McDonald and Popkin (2001), "The myth of the vanishing voter" (*APSR*, V95: 963-974)
*Squire (1988), "Why the 1936 Literary Digest poll failed." (*Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 52: 125-133

B. Research designs and dilemmas-design
Shively Examples
Shively Examples Expanded
Research Design
Jarol B. Mannheim, Richard C. Rich, Lars Wilnat and Craig Leonard Brians, "Chapter 6: Working from a Plan: Considerations in Research Design," *Empirical Political Analysis: Research Methods in Political Science*, 6th ed., Pearson Longman, 2006. Pp. 87-108.
*Gerber and Green (2001), "Do phone calls increase voter turnout? A field experiment."
http://www.yale.edu/isps/publications/phonecalls.pdf
*Addonizio et al. (2005), "Putting the party back into politics"
http://www.yale.edu/isps/publications/hooksett.pdf
*optional—Campbell (1969), "Reforms as experiments.
http://www.pipsproject.org/Documents/CEM/publications/downloads/CEMWeb027%20Reforms%20As%20Experiments.pdf
*Kelly (2004), "Predicting the presidential election with baseball."
http://americanhistory.about.com/od/elections/a/baseballpres.htm
*Dubner and Levitt (2005), "The search for 100 million missing women."
http://www.slate.com/id/2119402/

Ungraded Preparatory Quiz 2
Graded Assignment 1.2

Stage III: Statistics and the Use of Computer Software

(the order of B and C might be rearranged)—appropriate selections from the *PSPP* Guide will be mentioned before each class:

A. Introduction to statistics: frequency distributions, basic descriptive statistics, and the concept of standardization

Galderisi chapters 1-4
PSPP MANUAL – pp. 1-2, 37-46, 3-18

Ungraded Quiz 3
Graded Stat Assignment 1.1
Computer Assignment 1

B. The concept of inference

Galderisi chapters 5, 6, 8
PSPP MANUAL – pp. 26-32

Ungraded Quiz 4
Graded Stat Assignment 1.2
Graded Computer Assignment 2

C. The concept of association-2 variables

Galderisi chapter 9
PSPP MANUAL – pp. 19-25

D. The concept of association-controls

Galderisi chapter 10 tables
*Kract, "Simpson's paradox in basketball statistics." Available online at:
http:www.math.kent.edu/~darci/simpson/bballexamples.html
*Kernell. Presidential popularity and negative voting
http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/1956953.pdf

Graded Computer Assignment 3

E. Correlation and regression analysis

Optional: *PSPP MANUAL* – 33-36
*Tufte, "Two variable linear regression." Available online at:
http://www.edwardtufte.com/tufte/dapp/chapter3.html (pp. 65-107)
*Tufte, "Determinants of the Outcomes of Midterm Elections." Available online at:
http://www.edwardtufte.com/tufte/elections

F**inal: Mainly statistics-- June 9, 11:30a - 2:29**