POLITICAL SCIENCE 30 Spring 2012
POLITICAL INQUIRY
Lectures MW 12-12:50 Peterson 108

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. Changes will also be posted on TED.

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 12-3 (W 2-4 for non class hours)
Email: For *class related* questions—use the message (not email) facility in TED 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 *early* evening (and usually throughout the day), except Saturdays (my one day with my wife).

TA Assignments: TBA

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 SPSS software, of data sets that I will provide (more on this later in class).

REQUIREMENTS:

I. READ THE SYLLABUS!!!!! I probably spend twenty hours the first several weeks answering questions that are clearly specified in the syllabus. I would rather spend that time answering questions about the class.

II. READINGS:

A. Two 'books" are available for purchase from University Readers (order online at http://www.universityreaders.com/store-- the first few sections (30%) will be available through an online link while you wait for delivery).

Political Science 30: Political Inquiry (3rd ed.)
Introduction to SPSS (copyright 2012)

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

To purchase the textbook and SPSS Guide, please follow these instructions. Please keep in mind that our institution adheres to copyright law, so any copyrighted material should not be copied or duplicated in any manner.

To purchase the books, please follow the instructions below:

Step 1: Log on to https://students.universityreaders.com/store/.
Step 2: Create an account or log in if you have an existing account to purchase.
Step 3: 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.
Step 4: After purchasing, you can access your partial e-books (FREE 30% PDF) by logging into your account and clicking My Digital Materials to get started on your readings right away.

You should also be given an alternative to purchase both volumes in e-book format (at a $7 savings for the text, $4 for the SPSS Guide + no shipping cost).

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 ext. 503.

You will be able to download the SPSS data files later this quarter from the same site.

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 get back your assignments, 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' will be posted and mentioned in class on a regular basis. They are not 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. I will also post, within TED, self-graded quizzes. Again, they are meant for your own preparation and will not count towards your final grade.

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. TAKE-HOME ASSIGNMENTS* (changes in schedule of dates to be announced at least one week in advance, but expect an assignment every other week or so). We have found that the class works better with several short assignments than less periodic larger ones. Late assignments will be penalized 5% if turned in late on the due date. Later (next day) assignments will *not* be accepted without a valid, university-sanctioned excuse--and then it will be a makeup assignment. I intend to have full answer guides out to you by each Sunday after the assignments are due. This will give you immediate reinforcement and get you prepared for your next assignment.

1. **(20%)** Two take-home research design assignments: Developing researchable statements (5%), research designs and conclusions (15%)

You will be (1) asked to convert a series of basic statements into scientific ones, i.e., ones that are fully researchable. You will also be (2) asked to comment on the conclusiveness of certain outlined research findings. Are the results conclusive? Or is the design flawed?

2. **(20%)** Two take-home statistics assignments (10%/10%):

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.

3. **(30%)** You will turn in three, computer based analyses throughout the quarter that will coincide with our statistics instructions. (10%/10%/10%)

*All assignments must be typed (keyboarded), with an exception made for mathematical calculations (but these must be legible). After teaching this class for 30+ years, I have found that typed responses tend to be better as students take them more seriously and don't wait until a few minutes before class to finish them.

4. You will be also be asked to turn in a preliminary, trial SPSS exercise. It will not be graded but failure to do so will result in a 5 point deduction to your overall grade. This allows us to help you with computer problems before a real assignment is due. It will be simple and straightforward.

IV. FINAL (**25%)** Cumulative, final exam, scheduled for Wednesday, June 13, 11:30a - 1:30PM. ***No early finals will be given.*** If you can't make that time, please drop the course. -- Room TBA, but most likely our classroom. For ease of grading, the exam will be multiple choice and, perhaps, some short answers. Calculations will be necessary.

V. <u>MANDATORY</u> SECTIONS

(10%) Section attendance and participation.

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). You must wait until at least one day *after* your assignment is returned to request the review (no impulsive actions) but you must request it no later than one week from its return in section.

FINAL GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Understanding the difficulty of this class for many, the grade curve, especially at the low, passing end, is rather generous. Also remember that these are the *number of total points* received out of *105*. A few A+ grades will be also be given to the top students in class and sections.

A	≥94	C+	72-74
A-	90-93	C	68-71
B+	85-89	C-	65-67
B	80-84	D	60-64
B-	75-79	F	below 60

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 or look through the following university web site:

http://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/consequences.html

WEB PAGE:

You must all learn how to access this class's web page on the University's TED server site. 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, quizzes, etc. will be listed on them. Consult it on a regular (i.e., daily) basis.

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, and only sometimes, 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.

INTRODUCTION TO USING SPSS FOR DATA ANALYSIS

SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) is a general program which allows people with limited or nonexistent programming skills to produce some fairly sophisticated output from computer based date sources.

There are several ways to use the SPSS statistical package. They are ordered in reverse price order.

1. Purchase a full license for SPSS 19 for home use-- over $2000 (thought not)

2. Purchase an almost full 'GRAD PACK' at your campus store (usually around $99 for a one year license). This is *only* recommended for those individuals who will wish to continue using SPSS after your class is finished, e.g., for a senior thesis.

3. Purchase and download a 6 month license for the **Base** GradPack for $39.99 (including download fees) from:

http://e5.onthehub.com/WebStore/OfferingsOfMajorVersionList.aspx?ws=49c547ba-f56d-dd11-bb6c-0030485a6b08&vsro=8&pmv=123c1b20-14db-e011-b09a-f04da23e67f6&cmi_mnuMain=2ff73789-74c7-e011-ae14-f04da23e67f6&cmi_mnuMain_child=2a1143f0-74c7-e011-ae14-f04da23e67f6

Please make sure to download the proper software (PC or MAC).

5. MOST RECOMMENDED: Use SPSS *for free* on campus at several labs, including those in Sequoyah and ERC.

6. Download a program, PSPP, that runs similarly to SPSS (same syntax, same data files) from:

http://www.gnu.org/software/pspp/get.html

Make sure you download the file most compatible with your operating platform (Windows or MAC) and exact version of the operating system. PSPP and SPSS syntax instructions are exactly the same, and they share the same encoded data files. PSPP, however, does not have as good a GUI (graphic user interface--pull down menus) and its output is not as elegant. *BUT IT IS FREE.* You can use PSPP at home and then, with the same instructions, use SPSS in a campus lab to make your analysis more elegant.

Caveat--PSPP is often a bit more problematic but not difficult for MAC users.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS—everything is from the University Readers materials (PI or SPSS Guide). 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?
Political Science and the Scientific Method (*PI*--pp. 1-2)
Ernest Nagel (1979). "Science as Common Sense," *The Structure of Science*

B. The language of scientific research: concepts, hypotheses, and theories:
The Language of Science (*PI*--pp. 2-4)
The Structure of Hypotheses (*PI*--pp. 4-10)

Research Design Assignment 1, due at the beginning of section, Wednesday-Friday, April 18-20

Stage II: Research Design and Designing Research

A. Research designs and dilemmas-data:
The Logic of Causation (*PI*--pp. 11-14)
Herbert Asher (2001), "Chapter 3: Wording and Context of Questions," *Polling and the Public: What Every Citizen Should Know*.
McDonald and Popkin (2001), "The myth of the vanishing voter"
Squire (1988), "Why the 1936 *Literary Digest* poll failed."

B. Research designs and dilemmas-design

Research Design (*PI*--pp. 14-22)
Gerber and Green (2001), "Do phone calls increase voter turnout? A field experiment."
Addonizio et al. (2005), "Putting the party back into politics"
Kelly (2004), "Predicting the presidential election with baseball."
Freedman, "Ecological Inference and ecological fallacy"
Dubner and Levitt (2005), "The search for 100 million missing women."

Research Design Assignment 2, due at the at the beginning of section, Wednesday-Friday, May 2-4

Stage III: Statistics and the Use of Computer Software
(the order of B and C might be rearranged):

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

PI: chapters 2-5
SPSS Guide, pages TBA

Trial SPSS exercise and Statistics Assignment 1, due at the beginning of section, Wednesday-Friday, May 16-18
Computer Assignment 1, due at the beginning of section, Wednesday-Friday, May 23-25

B. The concept of inference

PI: chapters 6-9 (selected)
SPSS GuIde, pages TBA

Statistics Assignment 2, due at the beginning of section, Wednesday-Friday, May 30-June 1

C. The concept of qualitative association-2 variables

PI: chapter10
SPSS GuIde, pages TBA

Computer Assignment 2, due at the beginning of section, Wednesday-Friday, June 6-8

D. The concept of qualitative association-controls

PI: chapter 11 (draft to be distributed via TED)
Kract, "Simpson's paradox in basketball statistics."
S*PSS GuIde, pages TBA*

E. Correlation and regression analysis

Tufte, "Determinants of the Outcomes of Midterm Elections."
PI: Chapter 12 (draft to be distributed via TED)
SPSS GuIde, pages TBA

"**Computer" Assignment 3, due at the beginning of your final (June 13)**

Review session: TBA
F**inal: Cumulative, but mainly statistics-- Wednesday June 13, 11:30a - 1:30PM only**

TENTATIVE CALENDAR FOR ASSIGNMENTS/EXAMS:

WEEK	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	April 2	3 OH 11-3	4	5	6
2	9	10 OH 11-3	11	12	13
3	16	17 OH 11-3	18 RDA 1	19 RDA 1	20 RDA 1
4	23	24 OH 11-3	25	26	27
5	30	May 1 OH 11-3	2 RDA 2	3 RDA 2	4 RDA 2
6	7	8 OH 11-3	9	10	11
7	14	15 OH 11-3	16 SA 1	17 SA 1	18 SA 1
	21	22 OH 11-3	23 CA 1	24 CA 1	25 CA 1
9	28 Memorial day	29 OH 11-3	30 SA 2	31 SA 2	June 1 SA 2
10	4	5 OH 11-3	6 CA 2	7 CA 2	8 CA 2
FINALS	11	12	13 CA3 Final 11:30-1:30		