

POLITICAL SCIENCE 30D Spring 2015

POLITICAL INQUIRY

Lectures M W, 11-11:50 Center Hall 216

No Final: Final Computer Assignment due by **Wednesday, June 10, 7PM** through TurnItIn facility

Note: minor changes may be made to this syllabus throughout the quarter (especially the first two weeks). You are responsible for any changes mentioned in class, even if you are absent. Changes will also be posted on TED.

Peter Galderisi

Office Hours: SSB 449 (subject to change—start week 2)

Wednesday 3-5+ for POLI 30 questions

Wednesday 12:30-3 for non-class, open hours—all but weeks 3 and 7

Email:

Class matters: **only** through the [message](#), not email (tools) link on ted.ucsd.edu

Other matters (internships, the meaning of life, etc.): pgalderisi@ucsd.edu

--please feel free to email me with questions/concerns at any time. I generally read my emails each morning and continue through early evening until 6 PM (Fridays excluded—my one day with my wife).

Graders: Office Hours to TBA (check TED)

Garrett Bredell

Brian Tsay

Jason Wu

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 cover several stages of the research process. We will first 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. Mainly, you will 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 a data set or sets that I will provide (more on this later in class).

I have been trying something different recently, and the final revision of my book reflects it. Instead of dealing with each of the aforementioned stages in sequence, we will merge the discussion of each throughout the quarter. This should make for a more fluid transition from week to week. This also will require that we start our computer work by week three (at the latest).

REQUIREMENTS:

I. READ THE SYLLABUS!!!! I probably spend twenty hours the first several weeks answering questions that are clearly specified in the syllabus. If you ask such questions, I and the TAs will most likely answer with “read the syllabus.” We would rather spend that time answering questions about the class or, heaven forbid, enjoying life.

II. READINGS:

A. Two ‘books’ (I’ll explain this in class) are available for purchase through the campus bookstore:

Galderisi Understanding Political Science Statistics: Of Observations and Expectations
Galderisi Understanding Political Science Statistics Using SPSS

These two texts are available at the Bookstore. Although they will not be both available at the same time, I have negotiated with my publisher to only charge you the reduced, package price. That \$20 reduction is reflected in the price of the main text.

- All royalty proceeds from the sale of these books to my students will be placed in a special, UCSD scholarship fund.

You will be able to download the SPSS data files later this quarter from the course TED page. Full instructions will be given.

B. Several readings will also be required and are listed later in this syllabus with their respective urls. Some can be accessed directly through any internet link. For others, you must access them on campus through the secure internet server (not guest) or, from home, by way of a proxy server or VPN connection. The TAs will explain this in the first week of section. Guides for configuring the UCSD VPN for your operating system of choice can be found at the following URL:

<http://blink.ucsd.edu/technology/network/connections/off-campus/VPN/>

- We **STRONGLY** suggest reading the material both **before and after** the appropriate class or section.
- We **STRONGLY** suggest going through the sample questions at the end of each chapter. Answers to all odd number questions can be found at the end of the text.

III. SOFTWARE

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 data 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 22-- over \$2000 (thought not)
2. Purchase and download a PC or MAC based 6 month license for the SPSS **BASE** (not standard) GradPack for \$39.25 (plus download fee) from estore.onthehub.com.
 - Click on the **Data Analysis** tab on the top of the listing
 - Click on **IBM SPSS** on the left
 - Click on **IBM SPSS Statistics 23 Grad Pack**
 - From the Pull Down Menu, choose your operating system (OS)--
 - after choosing the proper OS/Platform, check for compatibility with your version of your OS (listed) by clicking on **IBM® SPSS® Statistics Base GradPack 23**
 - Then click on the System Requirements tab
 - If your OS and system meet the requirements, you can add the proper version (Windows or MAC) to your cart for purchase

PLEASE check the website for compatibility with your operating system version and hardware. **I do not sell the software and thus cannot issue you a refund if you purchase the wrong version.**

This is fairly cost effective, especially for those of you who can't spend much time on campus but have a PC or Apple/MAC at home.

3. **RECOMMENDED:** Use SPSS **for free** on campus. SPSS is available in the following Windows labs (that I know of—these are always subject to change). Note, however, that you cannot access these labs anytime a class is scheduled in them. You can check lab class schedules on the UCSD ACMS web site.

ERC 117
Geisel 1 Tunnel, 2 East, 2 West
Sequoyah 142

IV. 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* after the first introductory day) 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. Remember, we only have two lectures per week—each covering 5% of the course material. You are allowed one missed section without an authorized university excuse. Any others must have proper, university required, documentation—illness, family tragedy, representing UCSD as an athlete, club member, etc.

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 (well, that ship has sailed for me, but as the immortal albeit still living Jimmy Buffett wrote: "If we all weren't crazy, we'd all go insane").

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, quizzes 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.

V. EXAMS AND WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

1. (25%) You will take six (6) online quizzes, each worth 5 points of your total grade (100 points). Your lowest quiz score will be dropped. They will be a combination of multiple choice, T/F, short answer, and small essay-like paragraphs. The MC and T/F items will be immediately graded--with an explanation of why any wrong answer is wrong (of course, you will always get every question right, won't you?). You will also be given a study guide for each quiz at least one week before the relevant start date. You will have twenty minutes to one hour to complete each quiz. You may take the exam any time over a four day period (Thursday-Sunday) to accommodate your schedules and/or religious observances, but you **must complete** each exam in one sitting. The final day and time for submission of each quiz will be Sunday at 5PM.

2. (30%) Three statistics assignments, each worth 10 points:

You will be asked to calculate and interpret statistical procedures. Computers will not be necessary for these calculations, but calculators might help. Along with the exams, these will act as prologue to the computer-based research assignment. Submission:

- Preferable-- fully typed and turned in via the TED TurnItIn facility by 7PM on the Friday listed for each.
- Acceptable-- at the **beginning** of class on the Wednesday before that Friday date.

We have generally found that, in taking the time to type out your calculations and answers, you actually do a better, more professional job (see NOTE below).

3. (35%) Three computer based projects, each worth 10-15 points:

You will start with a basic hypothesis, then be guided through different ways to confirm/disconfirm your chosen hypothesis using different variables, different statistics and different data sets. Short of a literature review, you will have all of the makings of a full research project. These are due, through the TurnItIn facility by 7PM on the Friday listed for each.

4. You will complete a non-graded trial computer run during your section time in the listed lab. If you cannot complete it in time, then you need to turn it in, via the TurnItIn facility the Sunday following your lab by 7PM. This will give us time to help you with any problems/glitches you may have before a real computer assignment is due. This will not be graded, but you will lose 1 course point if this "trial run" is late.

PLEASE NOTE: All exams and assignments are to be treated as in-class exams. You can help each other through correspondence or face-to-face with general concepts, **but you are not allowed to copy from others, check answers with others, etc.** The latter will be considered plagiarism and will be treated as such (I'm from New York, so don't try me).

PLEASE NOTE: Due dates, unlike stop signs for many in California, are **not to be treated as suggestions**. They are firm. Any late assignments will be docked 10% of the total number of allocated points if turned in any time after the specified due date and time, even if by one minute. An extra 10% will be docked for every extra day up to a maximum penalty of 30% of the full grade.

PLEASE NOTE: All assignments must be typed (keyboarded). 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.

VERY STRONG SUGGESTION: DO NOT wait until the last minute to read the materials needed for the quizzes or assignments (students who do poorly in this class are those who generally fall into this category). Read them well in advance, go through the examples (if applicable) at the end of each chapter, and then message (through TED) one of us with questions *before* a quiz or assignment is due. Also—do NOT wait until the last minute to start your computer assignments. Just like the man (woman, your view of a divine order) upstairs, we can only help those who help themselves. To reinforce this point, we will not answer any questions after 5 PM the day before an assignment or quiz is due.

VI. FINAL -- NONE – the last computer assignment will be due finals week.

VII. MANDATORY SECTIONS

(10%) Section attendance and participation.

TOTAL GRADE BREAKDOWN:

- 5 of 6 quizzes at 5 points = 25 points
- 3 stat assignments @ 10 each = 30 points
- 3 Computer Assignments (varies) = 35 points
- Section attendance/participation = 10 points

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 100 based on the distribution above. 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

INCOMPLETES

The university grants me precious little discretion here. In order to qualify for an incomplete I must demonstrate that you have been doing passable work and you must demonstrate a reason for requesting an incomplete that conforms to university guidelines (documented illness, death or emergency in the family, unexpected military deployment, etc.). Again, the university makes this decision—not me nor the TAs.

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. We will make it a point not to answer any messages that are covered in the syllabus or on TED.

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 one's 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. Last, you will acquire or refine a set of skills sets deemed valuable in the real world that can actually make you more employable.

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.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS—everything is from my text or SPSS manual unless listed with “available for free online” or a url. 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)

I’ll have the full syllabus with dates by Wednesday after I receive the latest copy of my text and manual.

I: Introduction to the Science of Politics (Week 1)

A. Introduction: What is science? What is political science?

Ernest Nagel, “Introduction: Science and Common Sense,” *The Structure Of Science*, 2nd ed. (Hackett, 1979) available on the TED website.

B. The language of scientific research: concepts, hypotheses, and theories:

Text—Chapter 1

Kelly (2004), “Predicting the presidential election with baseball.”

Available for free online at:

<http://americanhistory.about.com/od/elections/a/baseballpres.htm>

Section: logistics

Is Political Science a Science?

Quiz 1 on Chapter 1, Nagel and section discussion--20 minutes—April 9-12

II: Research Design and Beginning Data Analysis (Week 2)

A. *Text*—Chapter 2

SPSS— start to familiarize your selves with SPSS (pages to be listed).

McDonald and Popkin (2001), “The myth of the vanishing voter”

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/3117725.pdf>

Note: from this point I reserve the right to reschedule quizzes and assignments by 1 week

III: Central Tendency and Variation (Weeks 3- 4)

Text--Chapters 3-4 (skip pp. 81-88), Odd Numbered Sample Exercise Answers/Interpretation in Back *SPSS*—pp. 49-63

View video on “Running Simple SPSS Analyses”

Quiz 2—30 minutes—April 23-26

Statistics Assignment 1—due in class Wednesday, April 29 or through TurnItIn by 7PM, May 1

Computer Assignment 1—due, through TurnItIn, by 7PM, May 6

IV. Standardization and the Concept of Inference (Week 5-6)

Text—Chapters 5-6, 8 (pp. 164-171), Odd Numbered Sample Exercise Answers/Interpretation in Back

SPSS—pp. 63-65, 76-78

Squire (1988), "Why the 1936 *Literary Digest* poll failed."

Quiz 3 – 45 minutes—May 7-10

Statistics Assignment 2— due in class Wednesday, May 13 or through TurnItIn by 7PM, May 15

V. The Concept of Association-2 variables (Week 7-8)

Text --Chapters 7, 9, Odd Numbered Sample Exercise Answers/Interpretation in Back

SPSS—pp. 66-74, 82-89

View video on "Running and Analyzing T-Tests" "SPSS: Interpreting Lambda and Chi-Square"

Quiz 4 – 45 minutes – May 14-17

Statistics Assignment 3—due, in class Wednesday, May 27 or through TurnItIn by 7PM, May 29

Computer Assignment 2—due, through TurnItIn, by 7PM, June 3

VI. The Concept of Association-controls: Research designs and dilemmas-design (Week 8-9)

Text –Chapter 10, Odd Numbered Sample Exercise Answers/Interpretation in Back

SPSS--pp. 89-90

View video on "Running and Interpreting Controlled Crosstabs"

Gerber and Green (2001), "Do phone calls increase voter turnout? A field experiment."
(*POQ*, Vol. 65: 75-85)

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3078786>

Addonizio et al. (2007), "Putting the party back into politics" (*PS*, v40: 721-727)

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20452057>

Summary available for free online at:

<http://gotv.research.yale.edu/?q=node/40>

Dubner and Levitt (2005), "The search for 100 million missing women."

Available for free online at: <http://www.slate.com/id/2119402/>

Kratt, "Simpson's paradox in basketball statistics." Available for free online at:

<http://www.math.kent.edu/~darci/simpson/bballexamples.html>

Quiz 5 – 45 minutes- May 28-31

VII. Correlation and regression analysis (Week 10)

Text --Chapters 11-12, Odd Numbered Sample Exercise Answers/Interpretation in Back
SPSS--pp. 93-108

View video on "Interpreting Regression Coefficients"

IF AVAILABLE—a selection from Edward Tufte's work on Regression. It sometimes is available on the web, sometimes not.

Quiz 6 – 30 minutes—June 4-7

Computer Assignment 3 -- due by 7PM, June 10 through TurnItIn

SPSS DATA SETS BY SECTION:

For this class, we will try something different (from U.S. data) and use a 2008 Eurobarometer data set. This massive file, with over 26,000 respondents is broken down with a random sample for each EU country. I will use the full data set in my examples. You will use the data set assigned to your TA. Each will be posted on TED or the publisher's web site for the text (I'm not sure of the copyright rules currently in force on this part of my work).

Garrett Bredell	Italy	EURO69I.SAV (N=1022)
Brian Tsay	Hungary	EURO69H.SAV (N=1000)
Jason Wu	Denmark	EURO69D.SAV (N=1005)

QUIZ 1 STUDY GUIDE: -20 minutes—online April 9-12

Text and class examples –Chapter 1

Make sure you understand and can respond to the following:

1. What differentiates science from 'common sense' or intuition?
2. Does 'common sense' play any role in the development of scientific thinking?
3. What are the major limitations in studying Political Science in a purely scientific way?

Let me add one additional clarification: we often lack the ability to 'control' our subjects because much of what we studied has already happened. We can't randomly assign one's gender or race, we can't go back and relocate citizens to live in different states, etc. What does this mean? We often can't have truly controlled, randomized experiments (more on this when we read about design), but that is also true of other disciplines (see note on astronomy).

4. What is the difference between a unit of analysis/fact and a property? Between a property and a category of that property?

E.G. If our analysis required us to measure the age of citizens legally eligible to vote in California:

Units of analysis: eligible voters in California

Total units: all eligible voters in California

Property: Age

Category: dependent on how we aggregate information:

- a. any individual year (46 or 60 or 72)
- b. if combined into groups--e.g., "65 and older" or, if defined elsewhere, "older"

Note: "citizens over 65" is *neither* a property nor a category. It represents several units of analysis (a complete universe if we are only concerned about these individuals or a subset of all citizens within a certain jurisdiction).

5. The nature/format of a hypothesis:
 - a. falsifiability (potential):
 - properties are clearly defined
 - explicit comparison
 - explicit direction of relationship
 - not a value judgment that is "true" based on faith
 - b. Not immediately verifiable:
 - general statement--not true/false on limited investigation
 - c. safety "test"--do you have two properties (also called variables once we get to the point of measurement)=one implied "independent" (potential cause) and one implied "dependent" (outcome)? If not, then you probably have a (immediately verifiable) statement -- t/f on limited investigation.
6. What role does a "theory" or "theory sketch" play in hypothesis testing? Theories explain WHY two properties SHOULD BE related the way our hypothesis suggests. Without a useful theory or theory sketch, we may just have an accidental or coincidental correlation. For example, is there any theoretical reason to believe that presidential victories should be influenced (as specified in the essay) by which league wins the World Series?