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Course description
How do we conduct research in political science? This course provides an introduction to the theory and method of contemporary political analysis, with an emphasis on alternative analytical frameworks, concepts, variables, measurement, and quantitative analysis of political data. Topics include: conducting a literature review, formulating research questions and subsequent hypotheses, designing a research plan, determining what methodologies are appropriate, and performing the analysis.

Required reading
The text we will use for this class is:
Janet Johnson and H. T. Reynolds, Political Science Research Methods, 2004, CQ Press

The text should be available at the University book store, but it can be acquired online much more cheaply. (Try http://addall.com for a comparison of multiple new and used book stores).

Starting the second week of the quarter we will also be reading primary source articles (see below). All of the articles in the reading are available to you online (using a UCD machine) at: http://www.jstor.org/ or http://libcf.ucdavis.edu/ejournals/.

Requirements
Your evaluation will depend on your understanding of basic research methods and your ability to apply them to problems in political science. Your grade for this course will depend on four components:

1. Attendance and Participation
With the exception of our first course meeting, you should plan to do all of the readings prior to the class for which they are assigned. While this component is not graded, experience shows that it is highly correlated with exam performance. Some lecture topics will be in addition to material in the texts.

2. Midterm Exam (15%)
This will be a short answer and essay question exam in class on Monday, November 14th.

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3. Literature Review (25%) and Peer Review (10%)
Due October 31st are two copies of a literature review of some political science topic of your choosing. The literature review must be concise, thorough, and up-to-date. The paper should convince the reader that your topic is interesting and your question is important. The paper must be 1500 to 2000 words long (include a word count on the title page). We will exchange papers in class and then each student will be required to write a 500 word critique of one of their peer’s papers, describing its strengths and weaknesses. The critique will be due November 7th. We will discuss this assignment more in class.

4. Research Paper (25%)
Due December 7th (the last day of class) is a COAUTHORED research design proposal. The research design must pose a testable hypothesis and explain how it will be tested. The paper should briefly convince the reader that your topic is interesting, your question is important, and then show that the answer to the question is attainable with your research design. The paper must be 1500 to 2000 words long (include a word count on the title page). It can build on work you did previously for your literature review. We will discuss this assignment more in class.

5. Final Exam (23%)
This will be a cumulative in-class final exam 10:30am-12:30pm on December 12th.

6. Participation in a Political Science Study (2%)
You will have an opportunity to participate as a subject in a computer-administered political science study. We will discuss this opportunity 1-2 weeks prior to the administration of the study, but it will probably be in mid-late October.

Policies
I will only give incompletes or PTAs for compelling, unanticipated, and nonacademic reasons. Late assignments will be marked down the equivalent of a full letter grade for each 24 hour period in which they are late. I will only make an exception to this policy if 1) you contact me in writing a week in advance to discuss a conflict, or 2) you provide documentation of a severe illness or family emergency that prevented you from completing the assignment on time.

Tentative Schedule

Oct. 3rd Science and the Study of Politics
Johnson and Reynolds: Chapters 1-2.

Oct. 5th, 10th Hypotheses, Explanations, and Causal Inference
Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 4.
Oct. 12\textsuperscript{th}, 17\textsuperscript{th}  Describing Political Phenomena & Constructing Literature Reviews

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 5.

Oct. 19\textsuperscript{th}, 24\textsuperscript{th}  Experimental and Non-Experimental Research Designs

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 3.
Wantchekon, Leonard “Clientelism and voting behavior: Evidence from a field experiment in Benin.” \textit{World Politics} 55 (2003), 399–422. (also available at \url{http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/politics/faculty/wantchekon/research/WP_0331.pdf}

Oct. 26\textsuperscript{th}, 31\textsuperscript{st}  Measurement, Sampling, and Selection

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 6, 9.

Nov. 2\textsuperscript{nd}  Hypotheses, Concepts, and Variables

Nov. 7th, 9th   Collecting & Organizing Observations, Document & Archive Analysis

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapters 7, 8

Midterm Exam on Monday, Nov. 14th

Nov. 16th, 21st   Elite Interviews and Survey Research Principles

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 10.

No class Wednesday, Nov. 23rd (day before Thanksgiving Day)

Nov. 28th, 30th, Dec. 5th   Formal Models of Politics


Dec. 7th   Comparative Methodology