**Empirical Political Analysis (POS 3713-004)**

**Spring 2016**

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**Course Description**

This course is an introduction to methods used in political science research. In this course students will learn how to analyze political phenomena in a scientific manner. In addition, this course will provide students with a strong foundation in basic statistical reasoning that will help them in more advanced courses. This course consists of two different components: research design and statistics.

In the first part, students will learn how to construct appropriate research questions, a relevant hypothesis, and a research design, determining what methodologies are appropriate. The second part provides students statistical tools for empirical political analysis. Students will learn and apply the following: descriptive statistics, graphical analysis, confidence intervals, hypothesis testing, analysis of variance, correlation, and simple regression analysis. Students will use both manual computation and SPSS to analyze data provided in class and homework assignments.

**Required Readings and Software**

**Textbook:**

-- Janet Johnson and H.T. Reynolds. *Political Science Research Methods*, 6th edition. (The textbook is denoted as **“J&R”**.)

\*Additional readings and handouts are available through CANVAS.

**Software:**

-- SPSS: We will use the SPSS program to analyze data. You can purchase the software from the campus computer store ($10) or access it on apps.usf.edu for free.

-- SPSS tutorials are available on the CANVAS course website (Atomic Learning: search for SPSS and check out SPSS 22-Basic Training).

**Course Management**

I will use the **CANVAS** system to post announcements, assignments, and supplementary materials for this course. I encourage you to check the course website regularly for additional materials I will post there. **All grades will be posted to CANVAS**.

**Evaluation**

The grade in this class will be based on two exams, homework assignments, and quizzes. The breakdown is as follows:

* **Two exams (25% each for a total of 50%)** consist of multiple choice questions. **No make-up exam will be given.**
* **Assignments (30%)** are a series of individual assignments that facilitate your learning of each topic. The due date for each assignment is on the syllabus. Late assignments will be awarded half credit. In order to get half credit, you have to submit any late assignment within a week of the original due date. **All assignments must be uploaded on CANVAS by 11:59 p.m. of each due date.**
* **Quizzes (20%)** test your understanding on important concepts and ability to apply these concepts. **No make-up quiz will be given.**
* **Extra credits:** You can earn extra credits by participating in several discussions. The extra credits will be added to your exam scores.
* **Writing advice**: If you are concerned about your writing skills, USF offers writing assistance through the Writing Center located in the library. Tutors are available to help you with written assignments. **Spelling and grammatical errors will negatively affect your grade.**

**Final grades will reflect the plus/minus grading system.**

**Scholastic Dishonesty**

Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit must be the student's own work. You are encouraged to study together and to discuss information and concepts covered in lecture and the sections with other students. However, this permissible cooperation should never involve one student having possession of a copy of all or part of work done by someone else, in the form of an email, an email attachment file, a diskette, or a hard copy. Should copying occur, both the student who copied work from another student and the student who gave material to be copied will both automatically receive an academic dishonesty grade (FF) for the course. During examinations, you must do your own work. Talking or discussion is not permitted during the examinations, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any collaborative behavior during the examinations will also result in an academic dishonesty grade (FF) for the course.

**Plagiarism:** The University of South Florida has an automated plagiarism detection system. This system searches the Internet and a number of document databases for signs of plagiarism. The instructor receives a report showing whether a student’s assignment submitted to myUSF was plagiarized. For more information about plagiarism, go to <http://www.ugs.usf.edu/catalogs/0304/adadap.htm#plagiarism>.

**Online Proctoring:** In an effort to verify the identity of online students and ensure academic integrity, tests and/or quizzes within this course may require online proctoring. Students are required to have a **webcam with a microphone** (either USB or built into your computer). Additional information regarding online proctoring setup and process will be provided prior the test/quiz.

**Students with Disabilities**

If you have any conditions such as a physical, emotional, medical, or learning disability, please notify me. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so that arrangements can be made.

**Academic Continuity in the Event of Campus Closure**

“In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USF to suspend normal operations.  During this time, USF may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: CANVAS, Elluminate, Skype, and email messaging and/or an alternate schedule. It’s the responsibility of the student to monitor CANVAS site for each class for course specific communication, and the main USF, College, and department websites, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information.”

**Course Schedule**

**(*May change as we proceed through the semester*)**

**Part I. Foundations of Political Science Research**

Jan. 11-15 *Introduction & Scientific Research on Politics*

* + - * (J&R) Chapters 1&2
			* Anne Milgram: Why smart statistics are the key to fighting crime: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJNESMhIxQ0>
			* Hans Rosling's 200 Countries, 200 Years, 4 Minutes - The Joy of Stats - BBC Four: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbkSRLYSojo>

Jan. 18-22 The Research Question and Literature Review

* + - * (J&R) Chapter 6
			* Manheim et al. 2008. “Writing (and Reading) the Research Report.” In *Empirical Political Analysis*. Jarol B. Manheim, Richard C. Rich, Lars Willnat, and Craig Leonard Brians. New York: Pearson Longman. (Ch. 22)
			* Youtube: Developing a Research Question (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWLYCYeCFak&feature=youtu.be&list=PL1RbSZmPBu3mXj05XxlQgJ-paHvppPKGc)
			* Gabriel, Trip. “Plagiarism Lines Blur for Students in Digital Age” New York Times, August 1, 2010.

**Quiz1**

Jan. 25-Feb. 5 *Important Concepts in Political Science Research*: *Causation, Hypotheses, and Variables*

* + - * (J&R) Chapter 3
			* Michael Hiltzik, “See some hilarious charts showing that correlation is not causation,” LA Times, May 12, 2014, retrieved May 5, 2015, from http://www.latimes.com/business/hiltzik/la-fi-mh-see-correlation-is-not-causation-20140512-column.html
			* Tyler Vigen, “Spurious correlations,” tylervigen.com, retrieved May 5, 2015, from http://www.tylervigen.com/spurious-correlations

**Quiz2**

Feb. 8-12 *Conceptualization and* *Measurement*

* + - * (J&R) Chapter 4
			* Malcolm Gladwell, “Examined Life: What Stanley Kaplan Taught us about the S.A.T.,” *The* *New Yorker*, December 17, 2001.
			* Frances Stewart, “Against Happiness: Why ‘Happiness’ is not a Good Measure of Progress,” Oxford Human Rights Hub, March 17, 2014. Retrieved May 5, 2015, from http://ohrh.law.ox.ac.uk/against-happiness-why-happiness-is-not-a-good-measure-of-progress/

**Quiz: 3**

Feb. 15-19 *Survey Research and Sampling*

* + - * (J&R) Chapters 7&10
			* Drew Desilver, “Facing challengers, pollsters broaden experiments with new methodologies,” *PewResearchCenter*, November 24, 2014. <http://pewrsr.ch/1Fjttqz>

**Quiz: 4**

**Part II. Descriptive Analysis and SPSS**

Feb. 22-26 *Descriptive Statistics*

* + - * (J&R) Chapter 11 (pp. 351-392)

Feb. 29-Mar. 4 *Data Preparation and Descriptive Statistics using SPSS*

* + - * Manheim: *Data Preparation and Data Processing*
			* SPSS 22-Basic Training: <http://www.atomiclearning.com/highed/spss-22-basic-training> (the sessions of Introduction, Data Entry, and Data Management) from my.usf.edu software tutorials
			* SPSS 22-Basic Training: <http://www.atomiclearning.com/highed/spss-22-basic-training> (the session of Statistical Analysis) from my.usf.edu software tutorials: 1 through 15

**Mar. 12** **Midterm (8:00 to 9:15p.m.)**

**Mar. 14-18 Spring Break**

**Part III. Inferential Analysis**

Mar. 21-Apr. 1 *Two Ways to Make Statistical Inference: Sampling Distribution, Confidence Intervals and Hypothesis Testing*

* + - * (J&R) Chapter 11 (pp. 393-425)
			* Caldwell: Chapter 4
			* Sampling Distribution of the Sample Mean from Khan Academy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXZ2O1Lv-KE

 **Due Apr. 1: Descriptive Statistics**

Apr. 4-15 *Examining Relationships Between Two Variables: Crosstab, Difference-of-Means Test, Analysis of Variance, and Correlation*

* (J&R) Chapter 12
* Chi-square test in SPSS + interpretation by BrunelASK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfIfEWMJY3s>
* SPSS 22-Basic Training: <http://www.atomiclearning.com/highed/spss-22-basic-training> (the sessions of Statistical Analysis) from my.usf.edu software tutorials
	+ 21. Conducting an independent-samples T test
	+ 23. Conducting a one-way analysis of variance
	+ 18. Computing a bivariate correlation coefficient

Apr. 18-22 *Examining Relationships Among Several Variables: Simple and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis*

* (J&R) Chapter 13

**Due Apr. 22: Crosstabs, Difference-of-Means Test, and ANOVA**

**Apr. 30** **Second Exam (8:00 to 9:30p.m.)**

**The distribution tables (z, t, chi-square, and F(α=.05)) are required for the second exam.**

**Due May 2: Regression Analysis**