

# POLS 3600 – RESEARCH METHODS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

*Tuesdays and Thursdays: 1:30 – 3:20 pm*

*LART 403*

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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We, the UTEP Department of Political Science, acknowledge that we are in the unceded territories of the Indigenous Peoples who, along with countless generations of ancestors, are the guardians and keepers of this land, both throughout history and in contemporary times: the Tigua, Mansos, Sumas, Ndé, the Piros, Mescalero Apache, Chiricahua Apache, Tarahumara, Yaqui, Jumano, Comanche, Kiowa, Rarámuri, Tohono O’odham, Yaqui, Kickapoo, Diné, Hopi, Zapotec, Mixtec, Aztec-Nahua-Mexica, Huichol, Tepehuan, Coahuilteco, Chichimeca, and the other Native communities who comprise our multinational region. As scholars and people who reside and work in these lands, we respect and honor the millennia-long history of Native peoples on this land and their ongoing presence today.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will help students learn how to carry out research and write papers in political science. Topics include the scientific method, research design, data sources, data manipulation, statistics, and quantitative and qualitative research. The course introduces appropriate formats for papers in the discipline and reinforces writing skills. The purpose of this class is to make students familiar with the basic research techniques employed by political scientists as well as many other social science disciplines. In this class, students will learn how to analyze a variety of quantitative data, prepare graphs and tables to summarize data, and how to utilize and interpret basic statistical techniques, including ordinary least squares regression. Students will be expected to complete an original, professional research paper including quantitative analysis.

## UTEP EDGE

This course encompasses activities associated with UTEP EDGE, including (1) **problem-solving** and (2) **critical thinking** through class discussion, applied methodological homework, and research experience. This course enables and requires (3) **research and scholarly activity**, as well as (4) **creativity** in assignments that challenge students to think in innovative ways to produce original arguments and evaluate problems. (5) **Teamwork** is encouraged through class assignments, where students aid each other to learn, execute, and apply class material. Finally (6) **communication** is emphasized through

the completion of the original research paper, where conveying and explaining the theoretical arguments, methodologies, and quantitative results are crucial.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Over the course of the semester students will have:

- An understanding of how to generate research questions and appropriate research designs, research techniques, data collection, and measurement/operationalization
- Learned how to summarize, describe, and depict data
- Learned to execute basic statistical analysis (including using statistical software)
- Developed their ability to digest and critically/analytically evaluate political science and social science research
- Developed original research ideas and execute original research, generating an original research paper (including analysis) at the college level
- Developed professional skills and appropriate resumes

### REQUIRED READINGS

- Kellstedt, Paul M., and Guy D, Whitten. 2018. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. Third edition. Cambridge University Press.

### RECOMMENDED READINGS

- Acock, Alan C. *A Gentle Introduction to Stata*. Stata Press.
- Baglione, Lisa A. 2020. *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science*. 4th edition. CQ Press.
- Wheelan, Charles. 2014. *Naked Statistics*. W.W. Norton & Company.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation in this course will be based on the following components:

Comprehension Questions	15%
Practice Questions	15%
Research Sections	10%
Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%
Final Research Paper	25%

The grading scale is as follows:

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 and below	F

### **Comprehension Questions**

Comprehension Questions are a short series of questions that evaluate student comprehension of class material. These assignments thus allow the instructor to evaluate and remedy any confusion in a timely manner. Students are evaluated by the completion and quality of effort of the assignment. Incorrect answers are not penalized as these assignments are designed to assess understanding of the material. Answers should be in student's own words. If outside references or resources are used, then please cite these sources in the assignment.

### **Practice Questions**

Practice Questions are performance-based assessments that go beyond basic comprehension by asking students to apply their knowledge and skills to new scenarios. As such, these assignments evaluate student performance via application to real-world and simulated problems. These assignments can include essay or short answer questions, and may include statistical analysis questions. Students are evaluated by the completion and quality of effort of the assignment. Incorrect answers are not penalized as these assignments are designed to assess adequate application of course themes. If outside references or resources are used, then please cite these sources in the assignment.

### **Exams**

Exams are take-home exams that are **cumulative** and will cover material learned in the class lectures, assignments, discussion, and the assigned readings. **Students may use whatever resources they need to complete the assignments as long as these sources are cited appropriately, but students cannot work together.** Plagiarized work and collusion will receive a failing grade (see Academic Dishonesty below). Each exam must be completed individually. These exams will include academic performance assessments via comprehension and application questions, and may or may not include questions similar to previous assignments (such as comprehension questions and practice questions).

I reserve the right to determine whether a make-up exam is offered to individuals based upon their situation and timely request. I reserve the right to alter the questions for make-up exams.

The final exam is scheduled by the university, and in under no circumstances can the final be rescheduled for after its original date. Students with schedule conflicts should contact me to reschedule the final; in other words, the final exam may be taken prior to the scheduled date upon arrangement but cannot be rescheduled after the date.

### **Research Paper**

Due on the last day of class, students must submit an 10-20 page research paper of original design. Students should have a research question explicitly identified, why this question is important, a developed theory, hypotheses, data identification and sampling procedure, variable operationalization for all variables, appropriate methodology (i.e., OLS statistical analysis), results and diagnostics, and conclusion. References and in-text citations (APSA style) must be included. References are not counted towards the page limitations. This

paper will be evaluated on clarity and specification of the research question and theoretical argument, the synthesis of the literature review (**15 sources minimum required**), the appropriateness of the research design and methods, the quality of the statistical analysis, the proper interpretation of results, the presence and quality of diagnostic analyses, and writing clarity (such as appropriate organization, sentence syntax, spelling, and grammar). I welcome the submission of drafts to me prior to the deadline for revisions and feedback.

### Research Sections

Research Sections are the sections that generate students' final research papers. These sections ensure the timely completion of the final paper and allow students to receive feedback on each section prior to their final submission of their research paper. These assignments are graded by the completion and quality of effort of the assignment. Because each section builds upon previous sections (i.e., Research Question, Theory, Hypotheses, Research Design, Data and Methods, Results, Diagnostics, Conclusions), I recommend that each section submitted is appended to previous sections. In other words, when the Data and Methods section is due, the entire document including Research Question, Theory, Hypotheses, Research Design, and Data and Methods (i.e., the whole paper thus far) is submitted. While I will only evaluate the Data and Methods section officially (for that section grade), submitting the entire document will ensure that I am aware of changes in previous sections that may impact the newly drafted section. In this manner, I can provide more effective, holistic feedback and monitor progress to diagnose any problems in a timely fashion.

- A. *Research Question:* Each student must submit to typed, hard-copy research question that is falsifiable and testable using an appropriate dependent variable for OLS. The dependent variable must be continuous. Students should also include why this research question is important and thus worth examining.

You will use the dataset provided via Blackboard. Use the codebook to identify possible variables for your research question. **The codebook is the .pdf file, and the Stata (.dta) file is the actual data that you will use for analysis.**

- B. *Theory and Hypotheses:* This section explains their theory and causal mechanism linking their main independent variable(s) of interest with their dependent variable, along with possible covariates, interactive effects, and conditions. This discussion needs to be in as much detail as possible, considering how X affects Y, under what conditions, for whom, and what else impacts that effect or directly impacts Y. One should also consider how time impacts this relationship. How long does it take X to affect Y?

Theory also includes discussion of relevant literature (that is, existing peer-reviewed scholarship) to supplement your arguments. *This is not be a separate section.* Literature should be synthesized within your theory so as to assist your arguments by supplementing with explanations, evidence, and examples. Your theory determines and organizes the literature you cite. It is analogous to where

your theory is the skeleton and the literature is the muscle, “fleshing out” your theory and how it fits within existing scholarship.

The UTEP library and website offers a rich trove of articles and books for you to find articles, as does Google Scholar (<https://scholar.google.com>). Go to UTEP’s library website and click on the Articles and Databases tab. That will take you to a screen of the alphabet, where you click the letter that represents the beginning letter for the journal you wish to access. I recommend JSTOR (<http://0-www.jstor.org.lib.utep.edu>) as the best starting places to find articles. While it does not have the most recent articles, it has articles from a variety of journals. To access it, you would go to the UTEP library website, click the Articles and Databases tab, click the ‘J’, scroll down to the “JSTOR” link and click it, then click the “JSTOR” link on the information page. That will take you to JSTOR, where you can use the search function to find articles by subject, title, and author.

You never need to pay for access to articles, so if you find an article that you don’t have access to, simply copy and paste the title into one of these websites. I would also recommend talking with library staff who can help you locate literature, the Writing Center, and other resources that are crucial in the research paper process. If there is an article that you want but cannot find, email me that information and I will try to locate it for you. **NEVER PAY FOR AN ARTICLE!**

*D. Data and Methods Section:* This section identifies the data used. It identifies the sample (countries/elections and time frame) and unit of analysis. It then identifies the dependent variable and explains its operationalization (that is, how it is measured, how it is coded, and brief descriptive statistics). The dependent variable for any OLS method must be continuous. The section then continues to operationalize all the independent variables and control variables (that is, how they are each measured, coded, and brief descriptive statistics for each). The section will then conclude with a statement that “Because the dependent variable of <insert concept/variable> is continuous, I use OLS estimation.” Then the section should have the OLS model equation written out for your specific model specification. (After this you will later add the Results section and Conclusion.)

## **SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS**

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at [www.sa.utep.edu/cass](http://www.sa.utep.edu/cass). CASS’ Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

**Absolutely no form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated.** The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence. In all matters of intellectual pursuit, UTEP faculty and students must strive to achieve excellence based on the quality of work produced by the individual. In the classroom and in all other academic activities, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of scholastic dishonesty is an affront to the pursuit of knowledge and jeopardizes the quality of the degree awarded to all graduates of UTEP. It is imperative, therefore, that the members of this academic community understand the regulations pertaining to academic integrity and that all faculty insist on adherence to these standards.

Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. *Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.* Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) and available in the Office of the Dean of Students and the homepage of The Dean of Students at [www.utep.edu/dos](http://www.utep.edu/dos), may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to failing a grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others.

## UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

The University Writing Center is a useful tool each of student should take advantage of in for all written/paper assignments. While not required, your paper will be improved following a consultation with the staff. The staff sees students through appointments or walk-ins, though appointments are preferred. For more information, go to: <http://uwc.utep.edu/index.php/hours-location>. For appropriate assignments, **I offer up to 10 points extra credit** if you consult the writing center. **In order to be eligible for this credit, you must show evidence of your consultation and evidence of the revisions suggested and those you made. You must also provide a reflection as to what you learned from the experience** (for instance, what types of errors do you systematically make and how can you correct them). Hence, credit will only be possible with adequate evidence and thoughtful reflection of the writing and revision process.

## COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

The center, located at 202 Union West, offers confidential counseling services in English or in Spanish. They also provide group and individual counseling for currently enrolled UTEP students. For more information, go to: <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/>.

## ADELANTE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Child care is available for children of all students of the University. The Adelante Child Development Center is located at 314 W. Schuster and is managed and operated by

Adelante Childcare, Inc. Children aged three months to 12 years are accepted, depending on space availability (Hourly, daily and weekly care are available and the Center offers a Summer Camp for school-age children). Age-appropriate early childhood developmental programs are offered in the curriculum. The Adelante Child Development Center is licensed by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. Financial assistance is available for qualifying parents through Child Care Services. For more information, please call: **915-532-1114** or **contact:** [studentaffairs.utep.edu/childcare](http://studentaffairs.utep.edu/childcare). If, for any reason, you cannot find a care-taker for your child(ren), you are welcome to bring them to class.

### **COVID STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

You must **STAY AT HOME** and **REPORT** if you (a) have been diagnosed with COVID19, (b) are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or (c) have had recent contact with a person who has received a positive coronavirus test. Reports should be made at [screening.utep.edu](http://screening.utep.edu). If you know anyone who should report any of these three criteria, encourage them to report. If the individual cannot report, you can report on their behalf by sending an email to [COVIDaction@utep.edu](mailto:COVIDaction@utep.edu).

- Complete self-screening ([screening.utep.edu](http://screening.utep.edu)) prior to every campus visit.
- Complete COVID-19 student training at [this site](#).
- Contact instructor if temporary accommodations due to COVID-19 are needed (i.e., due to positive COVID-19 test, symptoms, or exposure).
- If unable to wear a face covering (e.g., medical reasons), the best course of action is to enroll in courses that are entirely online or to work with academic advisors, if necessary, to identify alternative courses. If this is not possible, request an accommodation from [Center for Accommodations and Support Services \(CASS\)](#) prior to coming to campus for in-person activities. Students who receive an accommodation to not wear a face covering must share this with the professor and work to minimize contact with others in the class.

**Masks are encouraged but not required for class attendance.** If you feel ill, please stay home and get tested. Accommodations will be made for student illnesses. Your health and well-being are my top priority. Illness-related absences will not deduct your grade.

- **Get vaccinated!** Your health is not a partisan issue. Vaccinations are safe and effective at protecting against serious health complications and reduce the likelihood of hospitalization and death.
  - Vaccines do not cause COVID.
  - Vaccines are safe and were developed and tested appropriately.
  - Vaccines do not alter your DNA or affect fertility.
  - Vaccines do not include microchips or tracking devices.
  - Vaccines do not include hard metals or toxic ingredients.
  - You can still get COVID if vaccinated, and you can still spread COVID variants if vaccinated.

If you have any questions or concerns, I am happy to address them and/or point you to appropriate resources.

### **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

I expect all students to behave professionally in this class. You will be held responsible for all material covered in the textbooks, articles, videos, and the class discussions. If you miss a class, you are still responsible for the content of that day's information. I will not tolerate disruptive behavior, including (but not limited to) inappropriate computer use, reading newspapers, talking during lectures, using cell phones or pagers, and disrespecting classmates or the instructor. Additionally, I expect all students to attend class prepared and to show up on time. It is disrespectful to the instructor and the other students when individuals show up late or are not prepared to participate in the class discussion. I allow the use of laptops for class purposes only.

This class is designed to provide information and challenge students with new, and sometimes controversial, ideas and arguments. This class is designed to be a safe, open environment to express ideas, arguments, and opinions for learning purposes. However, **safe does not always mean comfortable**. This class does not give you knowledge—i.e., knowledge and understanding are not transfused to students by simply sitting in class. Learning is an interactive process, requiring engagement with the material. Assignments are designed to assist you in learning processes, which consist of understanding material, remembering material, and being able to clearly (and correctly) communicate that material. Learning also entails developing your own insights, and applying them to better your own livelihood and authentic self.

As a general policy, I do not offer incompletes, and I will not change final grades for the course under any circumstances, unless an error occurred on my part.

### **CIVILITY AND RESPECT**

Civility in the classroom and respect for the opinions of others is very important in an academic environment. It is likely you may not agree with everything which is said or discussed in the classroom, but courteous behavior and responses are expected. Our campus community reflects and is a part of a society comprising all races, genders, ethnicities, creeds, sexualities, and social circumstances. It is fundamental to our mission to create an unbiased community and to oppose vigorously any form of racism, religious intolerance, sexism, ageism, homophobia, heterosexism, and discrimination against those with disabling conditions. ALL identity groups (genders, sexualities, gender identities, races, ethnicities, colors, nationalities, creeds, religions, socioeconomic classes, etc.) must be discussed with respect.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

The following is a list of topics to be covered at each class meeting, and the readings, which should be completed in order to fully participate in class that day. You are required to read the material prior to the class. Literature not included in the textbook but listed on syllabus are the responsibility of students to locate (online) and read. Academic articles can often be found via the UTEP library's website under the "Articles and Database" tab, where you can search repositories like JSTOR and Sage as well as individual journal titles. **Under no circumstance should you pay to access an article.** If you need help locating a specific article, email me and I will help you.

While I give specific days on which certain topics will be discussed, the calendar is subject to change. Any alterations to the course schedule will be clearly announced. As a general rule, the course will follow this order of topics, regardless of date changes, unless otherwise announced. ***Readings due* and *Watch* are homework assignments due prior to class that day.**

### WEEK 1

January 18

Introduction

January 20

The Scientific Study of Politics

*Readings due:*

Kellstedt and Whitten (2018): Chapter 1

*Watch:* Ontology, Epistemology, and Theory

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1wUXs0e-NU>

Alternative Epistemologies and Methods

*Watch:* Indigenous Epistemologies and Methodologies

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSNpm9cYb2o>

Feminist Epistemologies and Methodologies

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1Yj3sN8dPw&t=6s>

- More information:

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-\\_ab71262po](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-_ab71262po)

Critical Theory

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xx9JM1gcc3E>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHJ\\_3uesiDQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHJ_3uesiDQ)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svj\\_6w0EUz4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svj_6w0EUz4)

## WEEK 2

January 25

Qualitative & Quantitative Methods

*Readings due:*

Kellstedt and Whitten (2018): Chapter 2

January 27

Research Questions

*Watch:* Research Puzzles

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gvD9zsrGG48>

## WEEK 3

February 1

Theory and Literature Review: Reading Articles

### **DUE: Comprehension Question #1 (using)**

- Helmke, Gretchen. 2002. The Logic of Strategic Defection: Court–Executive Relations in Argentina Under Dictatorship and Democracy. *American Political Science Review* 96 (2): 291-303.

February 3

Workshop: Locating and Reading Literature

## WEEK 4

February 8

Developing a Theory: Causal Mechanisms

*Readings due:*

Kellstedt and Whitten (2018): Chapter 3

*Watch:* Features of Good Political Science Theories

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UuznjQJmtcc>

Developing a Theory

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4y1BAqOnhMM>

February 10

Developing a Theory: Workshop

*Watch:* Credible Causal Mechanisms and Reverse Causality

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hODCuLYHo1g>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6thTgGVNW1w>

**Due: 5 academic articles on RQ (emailed to me)**

## WEEK 5

February 15

Hypotheses and Operationalization

*Readings due:*

Kellstedt and Whitten (2018): Chapter 4

*Watch:* Features of Good Hypotheses

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5SH5FHoHxA&t=1s>

**DUE: Comprehension Questions #2**

February 17

Research Design

*Watch:* Validity and Reliability

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=99aJYrmhTHk&t=148s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qKT2JOMrfRY>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTbuYOxnji8>

## WEEK 6

February 22 Hypotheses and Research Design: Workshop

**DUE: Comprehension Questions #3**

February 24 Measuring Concepts of Interest

*Readings due:*

Kellstedt and Whitten (2018): Chapter 5

*Watch:* Variables and Operationalization

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScqK-Xufyw>

Levels of Measurement

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CFnCbP4lxQ>

Unit of Analysis

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujurNc\\_ZPVU&t=3s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujurNc_ZPVU&t=3s)

## WEEK 7

March 1 Measuring Concepts of Interest

*Watch:* Dummy Variables and Interaction Variables

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTfMdCQJz4s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVny7a8AoA4>

**DUE: *Research Question, Theory and Hypotheses***

March 3 Getting to Know Your Data

*Readings due:*

Kellstedt and Whitten (2018): Chapter 6

**DUE: Practice Questions #1**

## WEEK 8

**March 8**

Introduction to STATA and Descriptive Statistics

**March 10**

Descriptive Statistics

*Watch:* Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Coefficient

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QoQbR4lVLrs>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LH-F4oveJmo>

**March 14-18**

**Spring Break**

## WEEK 9

**March 22**

Probability and Statistical Inference

*Readings due:*

Kellstedt and Whitten (2018): Chapter 7

*Watch:* Hypothesis Testing

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mUKqltFRiU0>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93n-Au\\_FOKI&t=3s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93n-Au_FOKI&t=3s)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWxUCt9Ppno&t=475s>

Type I and II errors

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93n-Au\\_FOKI&t=311s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93n-Au_FOKI&t=311s)

**March 24**

Probability and Statistical Inference

*Watch:* Sampling

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1FxWfFQZS0&t=3s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJkrCY9QYWc>

Normal Distributions, Central Limit Theorem

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzFX5NWoip0>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YAlJCEDH2uY>

Confident Intervals, Standard Error, P-value

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWxUCt9Ppno&t=47s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3ule2gFwkA>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ukcFrzt6cHk>

**DUE Exam #1**

## WEEK 10

**March 29**

OLS Regression

*Watch:* Bivariate Regression and Linear Regression

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmpNOgHG-Ng&t=309s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PaFPbb66DxQ>

**DUE: Practice Questions #2**

**March 31**

OLS Regression

*Readings due:*

Kellstedt and Whitten (2018): Chapters 8 and 9

## WEEK 11

**April 5**

OLS and Interpretation of Results

*Readings due:*

Kellstedt and Whitten (2018): Chapter 10

*Watch:* Interpreting Regression Tables and R-squared

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EfZsfHG8FU&t=233s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzNTNdzAebI>

**April 7**

OLS and Interpretation of Results

**DUE: *Data and Methods Section***

**WEEK 12**

**April 12** STATA Workshop

**April 14** STATA Workshop

**WEEK 13**

**April 19** OLS Assumptions and Diagnostics  
*Readings due:*  
Kellstedt and Whitten (2018): Chapter 11

*Watch:* Assumptions of Linear Regression

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVe2F9krrWk>

**April 21** OLS Assumptions and Diagnostics

**Week 14**

**April 26** STATA Workshop

**DUE: Comprehension Questions #4**

**April 28** STATA Workshop

**WEEK 15**

May 3 Bringing Your Paper Together

May 5 Bringing Your Paper Together

**May 6 Research Paper Due 5 pm**

**May 9 Final Exam Due 5 pm**

## Research Paper Grading Rubric

Research Question	Research question is either undeveloped and/or not clearly stated. Goal of paper is unclear.  <b>0 points</b>	Research question is fairly well developed and articulated. Goal partially clear or evident only later in paper.  <b>3 points</b>	Research question is well developed and clearly articulated at the beginning of the paper. Goals of paper are clear.  <b>5 points</b>	____/5
Theoretical Argument	Paper lacks a clear theoretical argument <b>and/or</b> theory does not align with research question.  <b>0 points</b>	Paper has fairly well-developed theoretical argument, but is missing additional development, specificity, or clarity.  <b>10 points</b>	Paper has a clear, well-organized, well-specified theoretical argument.  <b>20 points</b>	____/20
Hypothesis	Paper lacks clearly stated hypothesis, <b>and/or</b> hypothesis does not align with theory, research question, or data.  <b>0 points</b>	Paper has explicit hypothesis but hypothesis is incomplete, unclear, or not fully aligned.  <b>3 points</b>	Paper has clearly stated hypothesis well-aligned to theory, research question, and data.  <b>5 points</b>	____/5
Literature (15 sources required at minimum)	Paper lacks minimum review of the literature <b>and/or</b> the most of literature reviewed is not clearly related to research question.  <b>0 points</b>	Paper has fairly well-developed literature review on relevant research, but fewer sources than required <b>and/or</b> weak synthesis or unclear relevance.  <b>5 points</b>	Review of literature clearly synthesizes existing research within the theoretical framework and achieves minimum number of sources required.  <b>10 points</b>	____/10
Data and Methods	Research design, data, and/or methods is not appropriate for research question, <b>and/or</b> data and methods are unclear or incomplete, <b>and/or</b> data and methods is absent.  <b>0 points</b>	Research design, data, and/or methodology is somewhat appropriate, clear, and complete— but section has minor errors or omissions.  <b>10 points</b>	Research design, data, and methodology are appropriate, well-justified, and complete so as to be replicable. Data is appropriate prepped, variables are clearly explained, and methods justified.  <b>20 points</b>	____/20

Statistical Analysis	Author fails to include appropriate statistical analysis <b>and/or</b> analysis is incorrectly executed or incomplete.  <b>0 points</b>	Statistical analysis is fairly well-executed with minor mistakes and/or omissions.  <b>5 points</b>	Statistical analysis is well-executed, complete, and clearly explained/justified.  <b>10 points</b>	____/10
Graphs and Tables	Paper lacks appropriate figures and tables <b>and/or</b> they are unclear, not labeled, or incomplete.  <b>0 points</b>	Figures and tables are mostly clear and complete, with minor errors or omissions.  <b>3 points</b>	Figures and tables are professional, clear, labeled, complete, and appropriate depictions of data and results.  <b>5 points</b>	____/5
Interpretation of Results	Author fails to include results <b>and/or</b> fails to correctly interpret results  <b>0 points</b>	Interpretation of results include minor errors or omissions <b>and/or</b> are unclear  <b>5 points</b>	Author correctly and clearly interprets all relevant results in an organized, consistent manner  <b>10 points</b>	____/10
Diagnostic Tests and Limitations	Author fails to include diagnostic tests <b>and/or</b> such diagnostic tests are incorrect or inappropriate <b>and/or</b> fails to discuss the limitations of the paper  <b>0 points</b>	Author includes some diagnostic tests with few errors or omissions <b>and/or</b> provides only superficial discussion of the limitations of the paper  <b>5 points</b>	Author includes all necessary, correctly executed diagnostic tests <b>and</b> presents the results of each <b>and</b> offers insightful and complete discussion of limitations of the paper  <b>10 points</b>	____/10
References	Author fails to include appropriate references  <b>0 points</b>	Author includes some references but is incomplete not alphabetized, or inappropriately formatted.  <b>3 points</b>	Author includes complete, alphabetized, and formatted references  <b>5 points</b>	____/5

## Research Paper Outline

<Title page>

### **I. Introduction**

- a. Discusses your research question, why this question is important, and any background information that is necessary to understand the question; will be relatively short section, usually 1-2 paragraphs long

### **II. Theory**

- a. Explicitly explains how your independent variable affects your dependent variable; includes the story of how the causal mechanism works between your variables, under what conditions, for whom, etc;
- b. Uses previous research (often referred as literature reviews) to help develop your arguments. Previous literature is used to supplement (NOT replace) your arguments to show how your theory fits within existing knowledge and offers examples and evidence to bolster your claims. You need to explain and justify everything—nothing speaks for itself. You need at least 15 peer-reviewed academic sources for the literature to appropriately engage with your theory.
- c. Ends with hypothesis (or multiple hypotheses) that are single sentence summaries of what you expect to see in the actual data/results. The hypothesis is the predicted observation based upon your theory.
  - i. The hypothesis tells me what you should see in the real world if your theory is true. Your theory tells me why this outcome should be predicted and how these causal mechanisms work in detail.
- d. **This is the bulk of your paper! (Roughly half of your paper)** So this will be the longest section, and you want to have a developed theory where I can see each step of how your independent variable affects your dependent variable. Like a recipe, your theory needs to take me step by step. This is the section that is most important for your grade since it reflects your understanding of material and your thinking like a scientist.

### **III. Data and Methods**

- a. Identifies data source and the geographic and temporal limits of data (eg. United States presidential elections from 1960-2016 or cross-country analysis from 1980-2008)
- b. Discuss the operationalization of your dependent variable (i.e. tie our concept to your variable in the data and how coded, any descriptive statistics)
  - i. What is the variables
  - ii. How is this variable most appropriate for this project
  - iii. How is the variable coded
  - iv. Where does this data come from
- c. Discuss the operationalizations for each of your independent variables and controls—usually **one paragraph** each, including each of the aspects above
  - v. Include descriptive statistics for each variable

1. Eg: What type of variable is each of your variables (continuous, categorical, binary, etc.)? Identify the minimum and maximum for each variable. How many observations does each variable have? What is the appropriate descriptive statistics for each variable and provide these values for each variable:
  - a. Mean, mode, or median
  - b. Variance or standard deviation
- d. Identify what type of analysis you are running and justify it (i.e. why is that specification the most appropriate)
  - vi. Everyone will be running OLS models but the model specification will differ
  - vii. Include the equation for your specific model

#### **IV. Results**

- a. Includes tables and figures (graphs) of your results, along with substantive interpretations of the results as text and in the form of predicted probabilities or marginal effects for all statistically significant variables
- b. Identify the extent to which your hypotheses are supported or not
- c. Include diagnostic tests at the end of the section, and discuss these results and their implications on your results

#### **V. Diagnostics**

- a. Ovttest, if significant then include:
  - i. Auxiliary regression (reg depvar e)
  - ii. Fit plots (fractional polynomial plots for each X on Y)
- b. Hetttest
- c. Vif
- d. Rvfplot
- e. Time-sequence plot
- f. Cook's D

#### **VI. Conclusions**

- a. Summarize the substantive meaning of this project's results and place within larger context
- b. Identify the limitations of the project
- c. Where should research go from here

#### **<References>**

- a. APSA style, alphabetized



When multiple sources are cited together, they are included in the same parentheses, but separated by semicolons. They should be alphabetized.

(Hochschild 2015; Jentleson 2015)

(Hauck 2000; Hauck and Vogelsong 2005; Hauck, Smith, and Vogelsong 2010; Jordan et al. 1999, 56–58; Walthall 2012)

Citations of multiple sources by the same author, but published in different years, can omit the name with the second source and beyond.

(Barbarosa 1973; 1978) (Barbarosa 1973, 18; 1978, 32)

If two or more sources are published by the same author in the same year, add lowercase letters to the publication year. To determine how to label the sources with the letters, alphabetize them by title.

(Frankly 1957a, 1957b)

A parenthetical citation to a statute or court case should include the name of the case (in italics except for v.) or statute and the year.

(*Baker v. Carr* 1962)

## References

The References section is the same as a Works Cited or Bibliography section at the end of the manuscript.

All references should be alphabetized by author last name. Single-authored sources precede multi-authored sources beginning with the same last name. Multi-authored sources with the same name (first and last) of the first author should continue to be alphabetized by the second author's first name. When a source cannot be alphabetized by the author's name, alphabetize it by (in descending order): year (oldest to newest), editor's name, title, or descriptive phrase. When alphabetizing by article title, an initial article is ignored. Undated or forthcoming books follow all dated works.

All sources included in in-text citations should also appear in the References.

Each part of a reference is separated by a period, except when otherwise indicated. Each part begins with a capital letter unless it is a lowercase part of an author's, editor's, or translator's name. The general format is:

author last name, author first name. year of publication. "Title of article or chapter." *Book or Journal Title* Volume (issue number): page number range.

If the source was published by an organization, association, or corporation and does not carry an author's name, the organization is listed as the author, even if it is also the publisher.

When no author is associated with a source, but an editor(s) or translator(s) is, those names take the place of the author's name. The abbreviations *ed.* or *eds.*, or *trans.* follows the name(s), preceded by a comma.

If the source does not have an author, editor, translator, organization, association, or corporation that sponsored it, the title should be used in place of the name.

When the year of publication cannot be located, *n.d.* must take its place. When the publication is forthcoming (that is, not yet published), the term *forthcoming* takes the place of the year.

### ***Examples***

#### *Journal examples*

Aldrich, John H. 1980. "A Dynamic Model of Presidential Nomination Campaigns." *American Political Science Review* 74 (3): 651–69.

Chambers, Simone. 2018. "Against Democracy. By Jason Brennan." Review of *Against Democracy*, Jason Brennan. *Perspectives on Politics* 16 (2): 503–5. doi: 10.1017/S153759271800066X.

Prufer, Olaf. 1964. "The Hopewell Cult." *Scientific American*, December 13–15.

#### *Book Chapter examples*

Halchin, L. Elaine. 2001. "And This Parent Went to Market: Education as Public Versus Private Good." In *School Choice in the Real World*, eds. Robert Maranto, Scott Milliman, Frederick Hess and April Gresham, 39–57. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Halchin, L. Elaine. 2001. "And This Parent Went to Market: Education as Public Versus Private Good." Chap. 1 in *School Choice in the Real World*, eds. Robert Maranto, Scott Milliman, Frederick Hess and April Gresham. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Hall, Peter Dobkin. 2006. "A Historical Overview of Philanthropy, Voluntary Associations, and Nonprofit Organizations in the United States, 1600–2000." In *The*

*Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook*, 2nd edition, eds. W. W. Powell and R. Steinberg, 32–65. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Hermann, Margaret G. 1984. “Personality and Foreign Policy Decision Making: A Study of Fifty-Three Heads of Government.” In *Foreign Policy Decision Making*, eds. Donald A. Sylvan and Steve Chan, 133–52. New York: Praeger.

Book examples

Davidson, Roger H., Walter J. Oleszek, Frances E. Lee, and Eric Schickler. 2016. *Congress and Its Members*, 14th edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Website/Blog/Social Media example

Sides, John. 2008. “Who Will Win the Nominations?” *The Monkey Cage* [blog], January 3. [http://themonkeycage.org/2008/01/who\\_will\\_win\\_the\\_nominations/](http://themonkeycage.org/2008/01/who_will_win_the_nominations/).

Dissertation or thesis example

Munger, Frank J. 1955. “Two-Party Politics in the State of Indiana.” PhD diss. [or Master’s thesis.] Harvard University.

Conference paper (unpublished) example

Mefford, Dwain, and Brian Ripley. 1987. “The Cognitive Foundation of Regime Theory.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago.

## **How to Read and Evaluate Academic Articles**

- 1) What is the research question?
- 2) What is the theoretical argument and/or thesis?
- 3) What is the dependent variable?
- 4) What are the main independent variables?
- 5) Do the variables match the theory? Are they appropriate? Do they measure what the authors claim?
- 6) What data is utilized and is it appropriate?
- 7) Did the authors include all relevant variables and exclude irrelevant variables? Are there confounding variables? Are there omitted variables?
- 8) What method of analysis was employed? Qualitative or quantitative? Is this method appropriate for the research question?
- 9) What are the results? How strong are these results?
- 10) What are the limitations of the theory, methods, and results?
- 11) How generalizable are the results?
- 12) How persuasive is the article? Why?