

# **Research in Political Science**

Fall 2018

Department of Political Science  
University of Texas – El Paso  
POLS - 3600

Instructor – Todd A. Curry, Ph.D

Lecture – TR – 10:30-12:20 LART 403

Office – Benedict Hall 304

Office Hours – T/R – 12:30 – 1:30pm or by appointment

E-mail – [tacurry@utep.edu](mailto:tacurry@utep.edu)

## **Course Description (from Undergraduate Catalog)**

Help students learn how to carry out research and write papers in political science. Topics include the scientific method, research design, data sources, statistics, and qualitative research. The course introduces appropriate formats for papers in the discipline and reinforces writing skills.

## **Course Overview and Objectives**

The purpose of this class is to make the student familiar with the basic research techniques employed not only by political scientists, but also many other social science disciplines. In this class, the student 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 up to and including ordinary least squares regression.

## **Course Learning Objectives**

This course will be difficult but help from me and our TA will be plentiful. By the end of this course you will be able to:

- write original research papers at a college level
- digest political science (and other social science) research
- engage in basic statistical analysis
- present original research in public

## **UTEP Edge**

The UTEP Edge is our philosophy that acknowledges the many assets our students bring to the University. We provide a variety of high-impact experiences both in and out of the classroom through work of our faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners that build on these assets and talents. Many of the assignments and discussions in this class will

further develop the talents you bring to this class such as developing your communication skills, teamwork, critical thinking, and problem solving.

- Communicate information clearly and effectively (orally and written)
- Use real world data and digital tools to conduct original statistical analysis
- Use team work for collective learning in order to produce better outcomes

### Texts

King, Gary, Koehane, Robert R., and Sidney Verba. 1994. Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research. Princeton University Press

Pollock, Philip H. 2015. The Essentials of Political Analysis, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. CQ Press

Pollock, Philip H. 2015. An STATA Companion to Political Analysis, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. CQ Press

### Grading

Weekly assignments at 5% each: 45%

Seminar style discussion/participation: 10%

Resume – 5%

Topic chosen from available data sources **Due September 11 via email** – 5%

Literature Review **Due October 23** - 5%

In Class Presentation – 10%

Final paper **Due December 6** – 15%

Final Exam – 5%

### Policies

The student who chooses not to attend class does so at their own peril. While attendance will not be formally recorded, your grade will most certainly drop if you do not attend.

Information for the students will be communicated in two ways 1. In class; 2. Through email. The only email address I will use to contact you is your official “utep.edu” account. This means as a requirement of this course you will need to regularly check this account if you do not already. “I did not receive notification,” is not a valid excuse.

I fully understand that the homework assignments will likely be completed in a group setting. **However, each individual is responsible for their own write up.** What this means is that I expect zero borrowing from other students with regards to what is turned in to me. See the Academic Honesty and Integrity section below if there are any questions.

### **Grading Scale:**

The following numerical averages translate into final course grades:

- 90: A (4.0)
- 80-89: B (3.0)
- 70-79: C (2.0)
- 60-69: D (1.0)
- 60: F (0.0)

### **Academic Honesty and Integrity:**

Per UTEP policy: 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.

### **Special Needs:**

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.*

### **Course Outline**

August 28 - Introduction/Syllabus/Intro to Stata

August 30 – The Science of Political Science

KKV Chap 1 - More Data Exploring

Sept 4 – The Description of Quantities

KKV Chap 2

Sept 6 – What Causality Means and Does not Mean

KKV CHP 3

Sept 11 – Observing and Choosing what to Observe

KKV Chp 4 (Paper Topic Due to Professor’s Email)

Sept 13 – Mistakes Not to Make

KKV Chp 5 (Resume due in class to workshop with others)

Sept 18 – How to Increase Observations and Why it is Important

KKV Chp 6 (Resume due to Prof.)

Sept 20 – Conceptual and Operational Definitions

Essentials Chp 1 & 2

Sept 25 – In Class Lab time

Companion 2

**SEPT 27 – NO CLASS**

Oct 2 – Hypothesizing and Comparing

Exercise from Companion CHP 2 due. Essentials CHP 3

Oct 4 – In Class Lab time

Companion CHP 3

Oct 9 – The Logic for Controls

Exercise from Companion CHP 3 due. Essentials CHP 4

Oct 11 – In Class Lab time

Companion CHP 4

Oct 16 – Employing the Logic of Controls

Exercise from Companion CHP 4 due. Essentials CHP 5

Oct 18 – Controls cont. In Class Lab time

Essentials 5 cont, Companion Chp 5

Oct 23 – In Class Lab time

Companion CHP 5. Literature Review Due (two copies)

Oct 25 – The Math and Logic of Statistical Inference

Exercise from Companion CHP 5 due. Essentials chp 6

Oct 30 – In Class Lab time

Companion CHP 6

Nov 1 – Tests of Significance

Exercise from Companion CHP 6 due. Essentials chp 7

Nov 6 – In Class Lab time

Companion CHP 7

Nov 8 – Correlation Analysis

Exercise from Companion CHP 7 due. Essentials CHP 8

Nov 13 – Linear Regression

Essentials CHP 8 cont

Nov 15 – In Class Lab time

Companion chp 8

Nov 20 – In Class Lab time

Exercise from Companion CHP 8 due. Companion Chp 9.

Nov 27 – Paper workshop

Bring at least 3 copies of your paper to class

Nov 29 – Student Presentations

Dec 4 – Student Presentations

Dec 6 – Review Session for exam

Final Paper Due

**Final December 13<sup>th</sup> 10:00am-12:45pm**