Research in Political Science
Spring 2016
Department of Political Science
University of Texas – El Paso
POLS - 3500

Instructor – Todd A. Curry, Ph.D
Lecture – TR – 1:30pm – 2:50pm LART 403
Office – Benedict Hall 304
Office Hours – TR – 9 – 11am TA Office Hours MW – 1:30-2:50pm
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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 forthcoming. 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

Texts

Grading

Weekly assignments at 5% each: 45%
Seminar style discussion/participation: 10%
Topic chosen from available data sources Due Jan 28 – email Richie 5%
Literature Review Due March 3 - 10%
Final paper – 20% Due May 3
Final Exam – 10%

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, 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, 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. CASS’ Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

Course Outline

Jan 19 - Introduction/Syllabus/Intro to Stata

Jan 21 – KKV Chap 1 More Data Exploring

Jan 26 – KKV Chap 2.

Jan 28 – KKV CHP 3 (Paper Topic Due to Richie)

Feb 2 – KKV Chp 4

Feb 4 – KKV Chp 5

Feb 9 – KKV Chp 6 & Essentials Chp 1

Feb 11 - Essentials Chp 2

Feb 16 – Companion 2.
Feb 18 – Exercise from Companion CHP 2 due. Essentials CHP 3

Feb 23 – Companion CHP 3

Feb 25 – Exercise due. Essentials CHP 4

Mar 1 – Companion CHP 4

Mar 3 – Exercise due. Literature Review Due. Essentials CHP 5

Mar 7 – 11 Spring Break

Mar 15 – Essentials 5 cont

Mar 17 – Companion CHP 5

Mar 22 – Exercise due. Essentials chp 6

Mar 24 – Essentials 6 cont

Mar 29 – Companion chp 6

Mar 31 – exercise due. Essentials chp 7

Apr 5 – Essentials chp 7 cont

Apr 7 – Companion chp 7 (Run by TA)

Apr 12 – exercise due. Essentials chp 8

Apr 14 – Essentials chp 8 cont

Apr 19 – Companion chp 8


Apr 26 – Exercise chp 9 due. Companion chp 10

Apr 28 – Exercise chp 10 due Essentials Chp 9

May 3 – Essentials chp 9 cont Final paper due.

May 5 – Companion chp 10

Final May 12 – 1 pm

exercise chp 10 due. at final