

Research in Political Science

Spring 2017

Department of Political Science

University of Texas – El Paso

POLS - 3500

Instructor – Todd A. Curry, Ph.D

Lecture – TR – 4:30-5:50 LART 403

Office – Benedict Hall 304

Office Hours – TR – 11:30 – 1:00pm or by appointment

E-mail – 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

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, 5th Edition. CQ Press

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

Grading

Weekly assignments at 5% each: 45%

Seminar style discussion/participation: 10%

Topic chosen from available data sources **Due Jan. 31 via email** – 5%

Literature Review **Due March 9** - 10%

Final paper **Due May 4** – 20%

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 17 - Introduction/Syllabus/Intro to Stata

Jan 19 – The Science of Political Science

KKV Chap 1 - More Data Exploring

Jan 24 – The Description of Quantities

KKV Chap 2

Jan 26 – What Causality Means and Does not Mean

KKV CHP 3

Jan 31 – Observing and Choosig what to Observe

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

Feb 2 – Mistakes Not to Make

KKV Chp 5

Feb 7 – How to Increase Observations and Why it is Important

KKV Chp 6

Feb 9 – Conceptual and Operational Definitions

Essentials Chp 1 & 2

Feb 14 – In Class Lab time

Companion 2

Feb 16 – Hypothesizing and Comparing

Exercise from Companion CHP 2 due. Essentials CHP 3

Feb 21 – In Class Lab time

Companion CHP 3

Feb 23 – The Logic for Controls

Exercise from Companion CHP 3 due. Essentials CHP 4

Feb 28 – In Class Lab time

Companion CHP 4

Mar 2 – Employing the Logic of Controls

Exercise from Companion CHP 4 due. Essentials CHP 5

Mar 7 – Controls cont.

Essentials 5 cont

Mar 9 – In Class Lab time

Companion CHP 5. Literature Review Due

Mar 13 – 17 - Spring Break

Mar 21 – The Math and Logic of Statistical Inference

Exercise from Companion CHP 5 due. Essentials chp 6

Mar 23 – Statistical Inference cont.

Essentials 6 cont

Mar 28 – In Class Lab time

Companion CHP 6

Mar 30 – Tests of Significance

Exercise from Companion CHP 6 due. Essentials chp 7

Apr 4 – More on Significance

Essentials chp 7 cont

Apr 6 - Class Canceled

Apr 11 – In Class Lab time

Companion CHP 7

Apr 13 – Correlation Analysis

Exercise from Companion CHP 7 due. Essentials CHP 8

Apr 18 – Linear Regression

Essentials CHP 8 cont

Apr 20 – In Class Lab time

Companion chp 8

Apr 25 – In Class Lab time

Exercise from Companion CHP 8 due. Companion Chp 9.

Apr 27 – Logistic Regression, intro

Exercise from Companion CHP 9 due. Essentials CHP 9

May 2 – Logistic Regression, cont.

May 4 – Catch up Day (May be cancelled if everything runs on time)

Final Paper Due

Final May 9 – 4:00pm – 6:45pm

Exercise CHP 10 due at final