

POLS 5300 Quantitative Research Methods I/ PAD 5351 Applied Stats for Public Admin

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Class Hours: W 6-8:50pm
Classroom: LART 403

Course Description

In this graduate seminar, you will learn how to conduct research in political science and public administration. Many of you entered this graduate program with research interests, which you hope to develop into research papers, grant proposals, or publications. But for these to happen, you need a solid foundation of research methods. You need to be a scholar who asks important questions, knows the literature well, builds good theories, and tests them with creative research designs.

This course has two objectives. First, it aims to familiarize you with the steps you take to turn an idea into a well-crafted research paper. Second, it aims to equip you with important techniques along these steps, with an emphasis on statistical techniques. The assignments, exams, and replication project will facilitate the achievement of these objectives.

Required Texts

- Paul M Kellstedt and Guy D. Whitten. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. Cambridge University Press, New York, NY, 3rd edition, 2018
- Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry : Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1994
- Alan C. Acock. *A Gentle Introduction to Stata*. Stata Press, College Station, TX, 6th edition, 2018

Other readings are available through Blackboard.

Computer Software

We will use Stata for statistical analysis. You can access Stata in Political Science Lab in Benedict Hall or many other labs on campus. You may also purchase a 6-month student license for \$48. More purchase options can be viewed on https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/ServiceCatalog/SOFT_AllSoftware.html.

Course Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. understand the fundamentals of political science or public administration research;
2. construct and manage datasets using Stata;
3. conduct basic statistical analyses

Course Requirements

All assignments that are completed outside the classroom must be typed using Times New Roman font size 12, page-numbered, and double-spaced, with a one-inch margin on all four sides. All data and ideas not your own must be properly cited both in the text and bibliography. All written assignments must be properly edited before submission. Grades will be discounted for poor editing.

All assignments must be submitted on Blackboard by the deadlines. Late assignments will be accepted with a grade reduction of 10 percent per day of delay, counting immediately after the assignment is due.

1. Reading Assignments

You must complete the readings before each class (reading schedule can be found at the end of this syllabus) **because I will teach the class assuming that you have done the readings**. I may assign supplemental readings throughout the semester as appropriate. Supplemental readings may not appear on the schedule but I will announce them in advance.

2. Class Participation

This is a graduate seminar so your active in-class participation is expected. You will be evaluated on both the quality and quantity of your participation.

3. Course Exams

There will be a midterm exam on **October 23** and a final exam on **December 11**. Both will be held online on Blackboard.

4. Critical Reviews

You will write two critical reviews on two articles that can be found in the reading schedule. The reviews should be two to three pages and should identify at least the following: (1) the primary research question and its significance; (2) theory and/or hypotheses; (3) dependent and independent variables; (4) research methods; (5) the unit of analysis; and (6) major findings. In addition, you need to discuss the weaknesses of the study (e.g., variable measurements and operationalization, alternative rival hypotheses, etc.) and how you would improve it.

5. Homework Assignments

There are four homework assignments for you to practice statistical techniques. Specific instructions will be posted on Blackboard.

6. Replication Project

You will replicate the data analysis of an existing study as a hands-on practice of conducting quantitative research. A detailed instruction that include the paper and its original dataset will be posted later in the semester. You should submit the your replicated results in a Word document along with your Stata do file. You are expected to get the same results as in the paper. When your results differ from those in the paper, you should explain what might have caused the differences.

Grading Policy

Your final grades will be determined as follows:

- 15%: Midterm exam
- 15%: Final exam (cumulative)
- 10%: Critical reviews (5% each)
- 30%: Homework assignments (7.5% each)
- 20%: Replication project
- 10%: Class participation

Your letter grade will be assigned as follows:

| Letter Grade | |
|--------------|---|
| [90, 100] | A |
| [80, 90) | B |
| [70, 80) | C |
| [60, 70) | D |
| [0, 70) | F |

Course Policies

Electronic Devices

Computers and tablets are allowed only for class-related activities such as taking notes or accessing readings. Phones are prohibited for the good of your mind and eye.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person's as one's own. And, collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Office of Student Life for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. Refer to <http://www.utep.edu/dos/acadintg.htm> for further information.

Accommodations for Disabilities

Accommodations will be made for students with disabilities. Please discuss with me in person as soon as possible about any needs you might have. Or you may contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (phone: 5148, Email: cass@utep.edu) at 302 Union East within the first two weeks of classes.

Course Schedule

Week 1, 8/28: Course overview

Week 2, 9/4: The Scientific Study of Politics

- Kellstedt and Whitten Ch. 1
- King et al. Ch. 1 (1.1)

Week 3, 9/11: The Art of Theory Building

- Kellstedt and Whitten Ch. 2
- King et al. Ch. 1 (1.2 & 1.3)
- Alfred Tat-Kei Ho and Wonhyuk Cho. Government communication effectiveness and satisfaction with police performance: a large-scale survey study. *Public Administration Review*, 77(2):228–239, 2017
- Critical review on Ho and Cho (2017) **due midnight Friday 9/20.**

Week 4, 9/18: Causal Relationships

- Kellstedt and Whitten Ch. 3
- King et al. Ch. 3
- Paul M Kellstedt. Media framing and the dynamics of racial policy preferences. *American Journal of Political Science*, 44(2):245–260, 2000
- Critical review on Kellstedt (2000) **due midnight Friday 9/27**

Week 5, 9/25: Research Design

- Kellstedt and Whitten Ch. 4
- King et al. Ch. 4

Week 6, 10/2: Introduction to Stata

- Acock Ch. 1-4

Week 7, 10/9: Evaluating Measurement and Variations

- Kellstedt and Whitten Ch. 5, 6
- Acock Ch. 5
- Homework 1 assigned, **due midnight Friday 10/18.**

Week 8, 10/16: Probability and Statistical Inference

- Kellstedt and Whitten Ch. 7
- Acock Ch. 7
- Homework 2 assigned, **due midnight Friday 10/25**
- Midterm exam review

Week 9, 10/23: Midterm Exam on Blackboard

Week 10, 10/30: Bivariate Hypothesis Testing

- Kellstedt and Whitten Ch. 8
- Acock Ch. 8 (8.1-8.5), Ch. 9

Week 11, 11/6: Bivariate Regression Models

- Kellstedt and Whitten Ch. 9
- Acock Ch. 8 (8.6-8.8)
- Homework 3 assigned, **due midnight Friday 11/15**

Week 12, 11/13: Multiple Regression I

- Kellstedt and Whitten Ch. 10
- Acock Ch. 10 (10.1-10.4)
- Replication Project assigned, **due midnight Friday 12/6**

Week 13, 11/20: Multiple Regression II

- Kellstedt and Whitten Ch. 11
- Acock Ch. 10 (10.5-10.13)
- Homework 4 assigned, **due midnight Friday 11/29**

Week 14, 11/27: No class.

Week 15, 12/4: Replication Project Tutoring Session

- Final exam review

Week 16, 12/11: Final Exam on Blackboard