

Political Science 3001
“Approaches to the Study of Politics”

Instructor: Leonard Ray
Office: Stubbs 208 C
Office Hours: M,F 9:00-11:40; T TH 9-10:15
or by appointment.

Semester: Fall 2015
Time: T TH 10:30 – 11:50
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Catalog Description:

Survey of ways political scientists try to generate knowledge about the political world.

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the methods and processes of conducting research in political science. The course surveys the variety of research approaches employed in Political Science before settling into a focus on empirical work. We will explore the elements of research design including hypothesis formation, measurement, sampling, and causal inference. We will also learn about the various methods of data collection, including experimentation, survey research, field research, and the use of available data. A reading knowledge of elementary data analysis techniques and a discussion of research ethics conclude the course. This course prepares you to more fully understand material presented in senior-level courses. More importantly, the course should also help you to analyze public policy choices we are confronted with as citizens of a democracy.

Course Objectives:

Students in this course learn to:

- Understand social science research.
- Make and evaluate claims
- Interpret texts
- Think theoretically about social and political events and forces

Textbooks:

Johnson and Reynolds, *Political Science Research Methods*, 7th edition, CQ Press 2011 (**PSRM**)
Theodoulou and O'Brien *Methods for Political Inquiry: The Discipline, Philosophy and Analysis of Politics*, Pearson 1998 ISBN-13: 978-0136755623 (**MPI**)
Other readings will be posted online via Moodle.

Graded work:

5 Short writing assignments: 10% each
Attendance and participation 10%
Mid Term Exam: 20%
Final Exam: 20%

Grading Scale:

A+ ≥ 98 > A ≥ 92 > A- ≥ 90
90 > B+ ≥ 88 > B ≥ 82 > B- ≥ 80
80 > C+ ≥ 78 > C ≥ 72 > C- ≥ 70
70 > D+ ≥ 68 > D ≥ 62 > D- ≥ 60
60 > F

Writing Assignments

Political Theory/ Textual Interpretation paper
Literature review paper
Observational Research Report
Archival Research Report
Statistical Research Report

Credit hours:

This is a three credit hour course. Per university policy, for each of the three weekly hours of classroom time, students should expect to spend at least two hours outside of class reading course material, and completing writing assignments.

Course Schedule and Topics:**Aug 25, 27 Introduction to Political Science Research**

MPI Ch 1 and 2. PSRM Ch. 1, 2, 15

Sept 1, 3: Types of political research

MPI Ch.5, 9, 10 PSRM Ch. 2

Sept 8, 10: The research process, asking questions and prior literature

PSRM Ch. 3; MPI Ch. 11, 14

Sept 15, 17: Interpretation and close reading

MPI Ch.6-8; Leopold and Stearns *Political Theory: Methods and Approaches* Chs. 3, 7

Sept 22, 24: Formal and Game Theory

Fiorina "Formal Models in Political Science" in MPI

Is Nuclear Deterrence Rational? Steven J. Brams; D. Marc Kilgour PS Vol. 19, No. 3 (Summer, 1986), pp. 645-651

Sept 29, Oct 1: Concept formation and measurement

PSRM Ch. 4 and Ch. 5.

S. Stevens, "On The Theory of Scales of Measurement" Science Volume 103 Issue 2685 (June 7 1946) 677-680.

Oct 6, 8: Research design for hypothesis testing

PSRM Ch. 6

Oct 13: Experimental research

Abney and Hill. Natural Disasters as a Political Variable: The Effect of a Hurricane on an Urban Election
The American Political Science Review, Vol. 60, No. 4. (Dec., 1966), pp. 974-981.

Albert Cover and Bruce Brumberg Baby Books and Ballots: The Impact of Congressional Mail on
Constituent Opinion The American Political Science Review 76: 347 – 359.

The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment

Alan S. Gerber and Donald P. Green The American Political Science Review Vol. 94, No. 3 (Sep., 2000), pp. 653-663

Oct 15: Midterm Exam

Oct 20, 22: Sampling and Survey research

PSRM Chs. 7, 10

Ivor Crewe, 1992. "A Nation of Liars: Opinion Polls and the 1992 Election" Parliamentary Affairs v. 45
No. 4. 475-496.

Oct 27: Observation

PSRM Ch. 8

L. Sandy Maisel. 1993. "The Platform-Writing Process: Candidate Centered Platforms in 1992."
Political Science Quarterly V. 108 Issue 4. 671-698.

Richard Fenno. 1977. "US House Members in their Constituencies: An Exploration" American Political Science Review Vol. 71. Issue 3. p 833-917.

Nov 3, 5: Documents and archival research

PSRM Ch. 9

Jeffrey Segal and Albert Cover. 1989. Ideological Values and the Votes of US Supreme Court Justices American Political Science Review V. 83 Issue 2 557-565.

Edwin Amenta, Kathleen Dunleavy, and Mary Bernstein. 1994. "Stolen Thunder? Huey Long's 'Share Our Wealth,' Political Mediation, and the Second New Deal" American Sociological Review Vol. 59 678-702.

Nov 10, 12: Statistical description of data and relationships

PSRM Chs. 11-12; MPI Ch. 13

Nov 17, 19: Statistical measures of relationships

PSRM Chs. 13-14; MPI Ch 12

Nov 24, Politics of Research

Louis Morton "National Security and Area Studies: The Intellectual Response to the Cold War" The Journal of Higher Education Vol. 34, No. 3 (Mar., 1963), pp. 142-147

L. Sandy Maisel; Walter J. Stone "The Politics of Government-Funded Research: Notes from the Experience of the Candidate Emergence Study" PS: Political Science & Politics Dec. 1998

Dec 1, 3: Ethics of Research

MPI Ch.5

LSU IRB video

<http://mediasite.outreach.lsu.edu/CEMediaSite/Play/43da41c90e8e440281bd726743e9ceac>

Allan M. Brandt. 1978. Racism and research: The case of the Tuskegee Syphilis study. The Hastings Center Report 8(6): 21-29.

Milgram, Stanley "Behavioral Study of obedience." The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, Vol 67(4), Oct 1963, 371-378.

Final Exam M Dec 7, 10:00 - Noon