This course is designed to introduce you to the world of social science and political science in particular. As a student in this course you will gain an understanding of what it means to be “science literate”, learn how to formulate a research question and figure out how to answer it using the proper research methodology. You will also be required to understand how to look at quantitative data and understand what it means. This can sound scary to political science majors- trust me…. I know…. I used to be one. My job is to convince you that research is awesome (it really is) and teach you how to go about the research process in the most efficient way possible.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

a. Enhance social science literacy by distinguishing between scholarly and non-scholarly approaches and identifying the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative study designs (such as internal vs. eternal validity.)

b. Write a literature review that summarizes and synthesizes scholarly sources

c. Demonstrate some of the methods used by scholars of politics such as measurement, controlling procedures and sampling procedures.

d. Design a research project (posing an empirical question through research design set up) that could be carried out in a Senior seminar class, a Bachelors Essay or an Independent study.

Item A will be assessed with Participation, Paper Part I and Paper Part 2
Item B will be assessed with Participation, Paper Part I and Paper Part 2
Item C will be assessed with Topic Email, Paper Part I and Paper Part 2
Item D will be assessed with IV/DV assignment, controlling assignment, measurement assignment, regression assignment, Paper Part I and Paper Part 2
Item E will be assessed with IV/DV assignment, controlling assignment, measurement assignment, Paper Part I and Paper Part 2
*The Big Question! How Does This Online Course Work?*

The course is divided up into “modules” (little sections) which are posted in the Content area of OAKS. The modules are organized by week. Sometimes each week contains one small “piece” or “unit” of the research process, but some pieces are longer than others and will spill into a second week. Each module will “open” and become visible at 12:01 AM on the day it begins and will not close down. Since this course builds on itself I always want you to have access to the information so you can revisit it - but you should be aware that I can see the timestamp of your work and when you are reading/answering discussion questions/contributing etc. You need to be keeping up with the modules and participating DURING THE WEEK of that module- not later after everyone else has worked through it. Everyone should be doing the same work at the same general time point- no serious lagging behind or jumping ahead- just like a regular class.

Each module will have some combination of the following activities in it:

- **Wrap Up video from previous module**  
  - If questions/comments/clarifications arise during the previous module, I'll add a short wrap-up video to the beginning of the next module.

- **Required reading**  
  - These will help you answer questions in the video lectures for participation points.

- **Video lectures**  
  - Most video lectures will be Voice Thread. Each about 10-15 minutes long so they are easy to digest. VoiceThread allows you to click through each slide one at a time. Occasionally I will ask you to “leave a comment” on a slide- this might relate to the material I am explaining in that lecture OR the homework reading you should have done prior to watching the lecture. This type of participation is voluntary and akin to raising your hand in class. You do not get points for each comment you leave. Instead, this factors into your general participation grade that I decide at the end of the semester (see below). Note that comments submitted after a module ends will not count even though the modules remain open.

- **Discussion board questions**  
  - As stated above: If you comment on the discussion boards after the module is “over”, it will not count.

- **Check- In Surveys/One Fun Thing**  
  - I’ll try to end each module with something that does not involve hard course material. I’ll either give you a little survey to see how things are going/get any feedback you have OR I’ll do “one fun thing” to lighten the mood during this bizarre semester. This will probably be an informal video of me doing something goofy or entertaining! I’ve got some tricks up my sleeve.

**Note:** Not all modules will have every bullet point listed above, and some may have multiple readings or multiple video lectures, but they will all be in the order you need to complete them in. PLEASE stick to the order or it will not make sense. Each task will also be linked so you can simply click it rather than searching through OAKS to find material. There are no online quizzes or online tests. Everything is set up to see if you can apply the material meaningfully way rather than memorize it and spit it back out.
Homework Assignments:

**Small Assignments:** You will have a number of homework assignments that focus on a specific piece of the research puzzle. Instructions for these assignments will be given when the times comes.

**Big Assignments:** Your big project for the course is a research design paper. This paper will be done in two parts. The first draft (a literature review) is worth less than the second draft (a revised lit review WITH a research design) so that you can improve the literature review section and use my feedback for the final iteration. Extensive instructions will be given during the semester for these assignments. You should begin thinking NOW about an area of political science that excites you the most (Supreme Court, protest behavior, civil wars, the prison system, elections etc.) because you will need to start reading about this topic area to develop a research question early in the course.

Attendance Policy

This is an online course where you have some leeway to work at your own speed as long as you hit module deadlines. Therefore, there is no real “attendance.” There is simply a participation grade. You have to summon the will power to get your work done and meet the deadlines (similar to a regular course), but I am MORE than happy to help give you extra motivation and guidance if needed.

Grading Breakdown (10 points=One letter grade so turn everything in!)

All due dates for the starred assignments can be seen in the course agenda below in this syllabus

- **1 point- Topic email**
- **9 points – Online Participation (breakdown below)** This is a subjective grade I give you at the end of the course based on the overall quality of your commenting in the discussion boards and on the slides within VoiceThread that solicit comments/responses.
  - Discussion board comments (4 points)
  - VoiceThread comments (5 points): Sometimes I will have questions embedded into the video lecture slides. They may be questions I ask during the lectured content or questions that have to do with the readings that need to be read prior to the lecture slides. It is not mandatory for you to answer these questions, but you should be able to, especially if you do the readings. Therefore, this is just like answering a question in a regular class setting except you’re typing your answer and don’t have to say it in front of a room!
- **10 points- IV/DV/Unit homework (small assignment)**
- **10 points - Controlling homework (small assignment)**
- **10 points - Measurement homework (small assignment)**
- **10 points- Regression homework (small assignment)**
- **20 point- First draft of lit review (big assignment)**
- **30 points – Final Paper (big assignment)**
**Grading Scale for Final Grades**

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**Late work policy**

As previously stated, I want to be as empathetic and flexible as possible during this unprecedented semester. However, there still need to be some rules in place for turning work in. There will be a 5% deduction for each 24 hours an assignment comes in late. However, if you are having a health, family, work or personal issue and need an extension, please let me know and we'll talk it through. I will assess each request on a case-by-case basis. If you anticipate an issue, you should let me know ASAP so we can work together and strategize. If you want until the last week of class to tell me that something happened weeks ago, it's going to be more difficult.

**Netiquette (Network Etiquette)**

To maintain a respectful and supportive environment, please uphold these rules of netiquette if you make a comment on a slide or on the discussion boards.

- **Be kind and ethical.** Avoid using sexist, racist, and homophobic language in your communication with others; it will not be tolerated. Ask yourself, “Would I say this to the person’s face?”
- **Be aware** of how your communication may be perceived by others. For example, if you use ALL CAPITAL LETTERS, will folks feel like you are angry or shouting? Or, if you have a dry sense of humor, will your sarcasm be evident or might folks misinterpret your message?
- **Be forgiving.** We all make communication faux pas, so ask clarifying questions rather than attacking. But if you experience any questionable or outright inappropriate behavior from your colleagues, please let me know.
- **Respect disagreement from peers.** I expect everyone in the class to respect others’ rights to speak, to listen attentively to what is said, and to use discretion and sensitivity when speaking. This does not mean you have to agree with everything said. Debate is a valuable component of a learning community. However, I expect you to be respectful of me and of your colleagues.

**Disability/SNAP Accommodations:**

Any student eligible for and needing accommodations because of a disability is requested to speak with the professor during the first two weeks of class or as soon as the student has been approved for services so that reasonable accommodations can be arranged.

**Honor Code and Academic Integrity:**

[Link](http://deanofstudents.cofc.edu/honor-system/pdf/honor-code-sample-language-for-syllabi.pdf)

“Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when suspected, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved. Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to misunderstanding and confusion will be handled by the instructor. The instructor designs an intervention or assigns a grade reduction to help prevent the student from repeating the error. The response is recorded on a form and signed both by the instructor and the student. It is forwarded to the Office of the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having
knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive an XXF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This status indicator will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the XX to be expunged. The F is permanent.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at: http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php.”
Part I: Understanding Political Science

**All modules open at 12:01AM on the day they begin and do not close, but beware of module deadlines regarding participation (see above)**

Week 1 Module: Monday August 24- Sunday August 30
- Introduction and Course Overview
- Understanding Political Science: Vocabulary
- Thinking Like a Researcher

Week 2 Module: Monday August 31- Sunday Sept 6
- Identifying a Question and Formulating Hypotheses
- Variables and Units of Analysis
RESEARCH PAPER SUB-TOPIC DUE TO ME BY EMAIL BY END OF MODULE

Week 3 Module: Monday Sept 7- Sunday Sept 13
- Writing a Literature Review
DV/IV/UNIT HOMEWORK DUE BY END OF MODULE

Part II: Research Design

Week 4 Module: Monday Sept 14- Sunday Sept 20
- Measurement

Week 5 Module: Monday Sept 21- Sunday Sept 27
- Small N Designs
- Observational Studies (Cross Sectional designs and “controlling”)
MEASUREMENT HOMEWORK DUE BY END OF MODULE

Week 6 Module: Monday Sept 28- Sunday October 4
- Observational Studies continued (Longitudinal designs: time series and panel)

Week 7 Module: Monday October 5- Sunday October 11
- Experiments (general set ups)
- Lab Experiments
CONTROLLING HW DUE BY END OF MODULE

Week 8 Module: Monday October 12- Sunday October 18
- Survey Experiments
- Field Experiments
Week 9 Module: Monday October 19- Sunday October 25
- Experimental Games
- Content Analysis

LIT REVIEW FIRST DRAFT DUE BY END OF MODULE

Week 10 Module: Monday October 19- Sunday October 25
- Content Analysis Continued

Week 11 Module: Monday October 26- Sunday Nov 1
- Sampling

Week 12 Module: Monday Nov 2- Sunday Nov 8
*Tuesday Nov 3 is Election Day and there are no classes. Therefore, this week will have a reduced work load.

This week is also being intentionally left blank at the beginning of the semester in case we have a storm evacuation, cancelled classes and need to re-arrange the syllabus.

Part III: Data Analysis

Week 13 Module: Monday Nov 9- Sunday Nov 15
- How to Deal with Data
- Hypothesis Testing

Week 14 Module: Monday Nov 16- Sunday Nov 22
- Bivariate Linear Regressions
- Regressions with Control Variables

Week 15/16 Module: Monday Nov 23- FRIDAY Dec 4 (LAST DAY OF CoC CLASSES)
* The last 2 weeks of class are combined and have a reduced work load due to Thanksgiving break*
  - Linear Regressions with Control Variables continued
  - Why We Do What We Do: Class Wrap Up

** FINAL PAPER IS DUE BY THE END OF MODULE WHICH IS A FRIDAY!!!**
**REGRESSION HW IS DUE BY MONDAY DECEMBER 7TH BY 11:59PM ON OAKS**
GRADES ARE DUE FOR INSTRUCTORS BY 5PM ON WED. DEC 16TH