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 Objectives:** Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

a. Identify and explain current academic research projects in politics
b. Enhance critical and social scientific thinking skills in order to distinguish between scholarly and non-scholarly approaches
c. Develop research questions that are answerable with a variety of methods
d. Demonstrate some of the methods used by scholars of politics – this includes how data is/can be collected & analyzed and the strengths and weaknesses of different methods.
e. Develop skills in designing a research project

Item A will be assessed with class participation, Paper Part I and Paper Part 2
Item B will be assessed with class 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

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance and participation counts towards of your grade- almost a half letter grade! Attendance will be taken during the first month or so of class to make sure that students are showing up, per the school’s attendance verification policy. It is critical that you attend class. Much of this course builds on itself so accumulated absences will take a toll on your understanding of the material.

**Accommodations and Special Circumstances**
If you are dealing with personal issues outside of class that are going to affect your work, you need to tell me in the beginning of the semester or right when the issue arises so we can discuss a path forward to make sure you are successful in the course. I am more than happy to do this and have done it for many students in the past. **If you wait until the last week of class or when grades to come out to tell me a dramatic story about something at home, I cannot help you.** I will not make special exceptions students who wait until the last minute to tell me that there is an ongoing, personal issue and beg for an extension, an incomplete or make-up work. Knowing this now is for your own benefit.
SNAP:
Please Note: If you are a SNAP student eligible for accommodations, you must provide me with a copy of the notification letter you have been given by the SNAP office well before the need for any accommodation arises. If you are a student athlete who will miss class time due to away events, you must follow the procedures set out by the College in order to expect due consideration.

I encourage you to utilize the Center for Student Learning’s (CSL) academic support services for assistance in study strategies and course content. They offer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study skills appointments, and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and they are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at http://csl.cofc.edu or call (843) 953-5635

Readings: Some days have readings and some do not. Please pay close attention to when readings are due. You should always come to class having done the readings. Instead of forcing you to purchase an expensive research textbook, I tried hard to organize this course “a-la carte” and find readings from many sources (including a couple textbooks for the more technical units) that compliment the lectures. Some of them are even….dare I say…..really interesting!

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 later in the course.

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 lit review WITH a research design proposal) 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 the first and final draft of this assignment.

Grading Breakdown (100 points total):
1 point- Topic email 10 points - Measurement assignment
4 points - Participation & Attendance 15 points- Regression assignment
10 points- IV/DV/Unit homework 20 points- Paper Part I: Lit Review Draft
10 points - Controlling assignment 30 points - Paper Part II: Revised Lit Review and Design

Grading Scale for Final Semester Grades
100-94 A 79-77 C+ 63-60 D-
93-90 A- 76-74 C 59-0 F
89-87 B+ 73-70 C-
86-84 B 69-67 D+
83-80 B- 67-64 D

Late Assignments, Incompletes, Extensions: ALL ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE POSTED TO OAKS. I WILL SOMETIMES ALSO REQUEST A HARD COPY. Late assignments will be docked 5 % per day (half letter grade), for each day that a project is late including weekends. The first 5 % kicks in immediately after class begins on the day it is due. I will not grant incompletes in
the course except in cases of emergency or where university policy applies. Doctor’s notes are expected for medical excuses if an assignment is due.

**Office Hours:** Having trouble? Have questions? Come on by. I promise it will be helpful. Email me to schedule a time to meet.

**Syllabus Policy:** I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus if necessary.

**Course Evaluation Statement:** You will have the opportunity to evaluate the course towards the end of the semester through an online evaluation system. I will remind you to bring laptops that day so they can be done during the final class.

**Extra Credit:** You will have the opportunity to earn extra credit by attending events put on by the Political Science department. Details to come.

**Academic Integrity**
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. Students must cite properly and conduct their own, original work without relying on the words of others. If I suspect you of academic dishonesty or plagiarism, I will report it to the Dean of Students and it will be sent to the Honor Board.

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](http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php)
Part I: Understanding Political Science

Wednesday, January 8 Introduction and Review of Syllabus

Friday, January 10 Understanding Political Science: An Empirical Approach
  - JRM pages 46-54
  - The Weekly Standard Makes a Fact-Free Argument about Political Science: Here are Some of Those Facts

Monday, January 13 Understanding Political Science: Motivated Reasoning
  - How Politics Makes Us Stupid (article from Vox.com)

Wednesday, January 15 Identifying a Question and Formulating Hypotheses
  - Reading and Understanding Political Science (ignore the content in the boxes that talks about activities)

Friday, January 17 NO CLASS- PROFESSOR OUT OF TOWN.

Monday, January 20 MLK DAY-NO CLASS

Wednesday, January 22 Identifying a Question and Formulating Hypotheses II
  - EMAIL WITH TOPIC DUE BY 5PM TODAY

Friday, January 24 Identifying a Question and Formulating Hypotheses III
  - No reading

Monday, January 27 Variables and Units of Analysis
  - Blais: What Affects Voter Turnout? (This is a review article)

Wednesday, January 29 Units of Analysis, Writing a Literature Review I
  - No reading

Friday, January 31 Writing a Literature Review II
  - Public Attitudes Towards Immigration THIS IS A TYPE 1 LITERATURE REVIEW
    - Take general notes on these findings so we can discuss in class

Monday, February 3 Writing a Lit Review III
  - Religion and Immigration Policy Attitudes THIS IS A TYPE 2 LITERATURE REVIEW
    - WITHIN AN EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ARTICLE. READ UNTIL IT SAYS “METHODOLOGY”

Part II: Research Design

Wednesday, February 5 Measurement I: Explanation Day
  - DV/IV/UNIT HOMEWORK DUE ON OAKS BY CLASSTIME
Friday, February 7 Measurement II
• JRM Chapter 5 (until page 143)

Monday, February 10 Measurement III: Examples and Practice
• JRM Chapter 5 (page 143-151)

Wednesday, February 12 Measurement IV: Recent Political Examples

Friday, February 14 Small N Designs
• No reading

Monday, February 17- NO CLASS. PROFESSOR OUT OF TOWN
• MEASUREMENT HOMEWORK DUE IN DROP BOX BY START OF CLASS

Wednesday, February 19 Observational Studies I
• No reading

Friday, February 21 Observational Studies II
• Bartels and Achen: Blind Retrospection Electoral Responses to Drought, Flu and Shark Attacks (Read to page 19 where it says DROUGHTS AND Floods)

Monday, February 24 Observational Studies III
• No reading

Wednesday, February 26 Observational Studies IV
• Trust in Government in the Aftermath of 9/11

Friday, February 28 Experimental Studies I
• No reading

Monday, March 2 WORKSHOP DAY
• We will get into groups and help each other develop your projects

Wednesday, March 4 Experimental Studies II
• Southern Accent as Heuristic in Campaigns and Elections

Friday, March 6 Experimental Studies III
• Irrelevant Events Affect Voters Evaluations of Government Performance: http://www.pnas.org/content/107/29/12804.full
Monday, March 9  **Experimental Studies IV: Field Experiments**

- Lit Review Draft due by start of class on Oak.

Wednesday, March 11 **Experimental Studies V: Games**

- Watch the TED Talk Video called Does Money Make You Mean?

Friday, March 13 **Content Analysis I**

- Controlling homework due in Dropbox by start of class - please bring a hard copy too.

**Monday, March 16- Friday, March 20 SPRING BREAK NO CLASS**

Monday, March 23 **Content Analysis II**

- Virginia’s Invisible Candidate: News Coverage of the Virginia 2013 Gubernatorial Campaign

Wednesday, March 25 **Content Analysis III**

- Hate Online: A Content Analysis

Friday, March 27 **Content Analysis IV**

- No reading

Monday, March 30 **Sampling I**

- No reading

Wednesday, April 1 **Sampling II**

- JRM Chapter 9

Friday, April 3 **Sampling III: Bad Science Examples!**

- Pollsters for Sun’s Jihad Story Called List of Muslim Names
- Is a Poll Scientific if it Excludes Half the Population?

**Part III: Data Analysis**

Monday, April 6 **Making Sense of Data**

- JRM Chapter 11 (pages 361-384)

Wednesday, April 8 **Computer Day- Descriptive Statistics**

- No reading
Friday, April 10  **Hypothesis Testing**
  •  *What a Nerdy Debate about P Values Shows about Science – and How To Fix It:*

Monday, April 13  **Linear Regression w/ one IV**
  •  *Bivariate Regression Chapter*

Wednesday, April 15  **Linear Regression w/ IV + Controls**
  •  *No reading*

Friday, April 17-  **NO CLASS. PROFESSOR AT MPSA CONFERENCE**

Monday, April 20  **Linear Regression w/ IV + Controls**
  •  *No reading*

Wednesday, April 22  **Linear Regression w/ IV + Controls Finish**
  •  *CHECK OAKS*

Friday, April 24  **TBD**
  •  *REGRESSION HOMEWORK DUE ON OAKS*

Monday, April 27  **TBD**

Wednesday, April 29  **Why We Do What We Do: Class Wrap Up and Evals**
  •  *FINAL PAPERS DUE IN DROPBOX BY START OF CLASS*