POLI 205
Doing Research in Political Science
Spring 2013
Monday/Wednesday/Friday 12:00-12:50
Education Center 108

Instructor: Kendra Stewart, Ph.D.
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Email: stewartk@cofc.edu
Office: The Riley Center - 284 King Street
Office Hours: MWF 11:00-12:00
or by appointment

Course Description
This course is the second in a six credit hour sequence that is required of all Political Science majors. The first half of the sequence provided an introduction to the conceptual and historical development of normative political thought. POLI 205 is an introduction to the techniques and strategies researchers in politics use to study and understand the political world. In this class we will pay careful attention to how normative and empirical analysis differ and complement one another in the study of politics and throughout the discipline of political science. The course is intended to help you develop the habits of mind of a social scientist. Most essential to this endeavor is the capacity to make reasoned judgments based on systematic inquiry and the appropriate application of evidence.

The course will include an overview of what political scientists study and will examine the various approaches to inquiry that we employ. In surveying the scope of political science we will address the important concepts, areas of specialization, and controversies in the field. Since we cannot cover all of the significant questions political scientists raise, those selected will address the primary objective of this course: to better understand the complexity and ambiguity of the systematic study of politics. Our aim is to develop the ability to read, analyze and discuss political science research that you will likely encounter in upper division course work in political science and other social science fields. A secondary goal is to prepare you to undertake independent research and analysis.

We will work towards 1) learning how to ask questions and 2) exploring the various methods to appropriately answer these questions through both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This is not a statistics class, but we will be using the statistical software SPSS to experiment with some data analysis.

Student Learning Outcomes
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

Required Course Materials


Other readings can be found electronically on Oaks and JSTOR.

Attendance and Participation: *Regular class attendance is absolutely necessary* in any course, but is critical in this class because skills are cumulatively developed over the semester. This course is NOT that difficult, but will challenge you to think in ways that may be new to you. You must keep up with the reading, in-class assignments, and homework in order to be successful in this course. Please feel free to ask questions in class – I will do everything I can to help you succeed so do not hesitate to come see me if you are struggling or falling behind. I am more than willing to meet with you at times other than my office hours if you contact me via email or phone to schedule an appointment.

Assignments and Grading
Students are expected to read all assignments prior to class and participate in discussions. Your final grade will be based on the following components of the course:

**Homework/Class Assignments:**
There will be regular homework as well as in-class assignments. You will be able to drop your lowest homework/in-class grades and count your 10 highest for your final grade. If you are not in class, your homework/in class grade for that day will be zero unless you have a University sanctioned excuse. I will not accept homework outside of class. *Homework grade total: 100 points*

**Course Exams:**
Knowledge of the course readings and discussions will be tested on two in-class exams that are listed on the course schedule worth 100 points each. You will receive a study guide one week prior to this exam. I encourage you to study in groups for this exam. Make-up exams will not be given unless permission is received prior to the exam, or there is a documented medical emergency. *Exam total: 200 points*
Research Question & Annotated Bibliography:
You will develop a research question relative to an area of political science that interests you. In support of that research question, you will produce a substantial annotated bibliography. Instructions on this will be given separately. This assignment is due **February 18th** at the beginning of class. **Research Question & Annotated Bibliography total: 100 points**

Literature Review:
Based on the topic you’ve chosen and the research question you’ve posed, you will write an integrated review of the literature in this area. You should start with the sources you have identified in the annotated bibliography – and you may go beyond these as well. Instructions on this assignment will be given separately. This assignment is due in class on **March 22nd. Literature Review total: 100 points**

FINAL PROJECT: Research Design

*Research Design*
In place of a cumulative final exam, you will produce a comprehensive research design of about 10-15 pages in length based on a topic and research question of your choice. I recommend using the same topic as you selected for the bibliography and literature review, but that is up to you. Detailed instructions on how to produce a research design will be distributed separately. This assignment is due **May 1st. Research Design Draft total: 200 points**

*All late assignments will be marked down one letter grade for each day they are late. Assignments that are more than 5 days past due will not be accepted.*

The course grade will break down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework/In-class Assignments</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two Exams</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Question/Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Research Design</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>700</strong></td>
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The following grading scale will be used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>651-700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>630-650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>616-629</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>581-615</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>560-580</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>546-559</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>511-545</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>490-510</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>476-489</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>441-475</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>420-440</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>419 and below</td>
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**Academic Honesty**
Plagiarism, or presenting another’s works or ideas as one’s own, is a form of stealing. The instructor reserves the right to examine any source used by the student before giving
a grade on an assignment, and to give and “incomplete” in the course if necessary, to allow time to obtain sources. Students should be prepared to show source material to the instructor for the purpose of verifying information. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and students will receive an F on any assignment or exam the instructor determines is in violation of the academic honesty policy. Academic dishonesty includes the following offenses:

1) Claiming as your own work a paper written by another student.
2) Turning in a paper that contains paraphrases of someone else’s ideas but does not give proper credit to that person for those ideas.
3) Turning in a paper that is largely a restatement in your own words of a paper written by someone else, even if you give credit to that person for those ideas. The thesis and organizing principles of a paper must be your own.
4) Turning in a paper that uses the exact words of another author without using quotation marks, even if proper credit is given in a citation, or that changes the words only slightly and claims them to be paraphrases.
5) Turning in the same paper, even in a different version, for two different courses without the permission of both professors involved.
6) Using any external source (notes, books, other students, etc.) for assistance during an in-class exam, unless given permission to do so by the professor.

**College of Charleston Honor Code and Academic Integrity**

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of the College’s Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are clearly related more to a misunderstanding will be handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed by both the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to 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 a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an
Unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information stored on a cell phone), copying from others’ exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

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.

Disability Statement
If there is a student in this class who has a documented disability and has been approved to receive accommodations through SNAP Services, please feel free to come and discuss this with me during my office hours. If you are in need of accommodations for this course due to a disability, please contact the Center for Disability Services at SNAP@cofc.edu or (843) 953-1431.

Course Schedule
The instructor reserves the right to make necessary adjustments to this schedule.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 9-11</td>
<td><em>Introduction &amp; Syllabus Review</em></td>
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<tr>
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<td>In class reading: “Are Men Smarter than Women?”</td>
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<td>January 14-18</td>
<td><em>The Research Process</em></td>
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<td>Manheim Chapter 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Freakonomics Introduction</em> (on Oaks)</td>
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<td>January 21</td>
<td><em>No Class – Martin Luther King Day</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>January 23-25</td>
<td><em>Theories, Hypotheses, Concepts &amp; Variables</em></td>
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<td>Manheim Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 28-February 1</td>
<td><em>Inquiry, Discovery, Research &amp; Topic Selection</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Manheim Chapters 3 &amp; 4</td>
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<td>“Getting Started on Political Research” by Benjamin Most (JSTOR)</td>
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<td><em>Writing in Political Science</em> Chp. 2 &amp; 3 (OAKS)</td>
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<td>February 4-6</td>
<td><em>Operationalization and Measurement</em></td>
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<td>Manheim Chapter 5</td>
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<td>“African American Churches and Political Mobilization” by Allison Calhoun-Brown (JSTOR)</td>
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<td>February 8</td>
<td><em>Considerations for Research Design</em></td>
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<td>Manheim Chapter 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 11</td>
<td><em>Library session</em></td>
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February 13-15  
**Sampling**  
Manheim Chapter 7  
“Entering the Arena: Gender and the Decision to Run for Public Office” by Fox and Lawless (JSTOR)

February 18  
**Qualitative Research: Observation,**  
Manheim Chapter 19  
“The Qualitative Foundations of Political Science Methodology” by George Thomas (OAKS)

**Research Question & Annotated Bibliography Due February 18th**

February 20  
**Qualitative Research: Focus Groups**  
Manheim Chapter 20

February 22  
**Qualitative Research: Interviews**  
Manheim Chapter 21

February 25  
**Literature Reviews**  

February 29  
**First Exam**

March 1  
**Quantitative Methods: Survey Research & Scaling**  
Manheim Chapters 8

March 4-8  
**No Class – Spring Break**

March 11-15  
**Quantitative Methods: Survey Research & Scaling**  
Manheim Chapter 9  
Best Chapters 1-3

March 18-22  
**Quantitative Methods: Content Analysis & Aggregate Data**  
Manheim Chapters 10 & 11  
Best Chapters 4-7  
**Literature Review Due March 22nd**

March 25  
**Quantitative Methods: Comparative Research**  
Manheim Chapter 12

March 27-29  
**Quantitative Analysis: Data Preparation, Processing, and Presentation**
Manheim Chapters 14 & 15

April 1-5 Quantitative Analysis: Univariate Statistics
Manheim Chapter 16

April 8-12 Quantitative Analysis: Bivariate Analysis
Manheim Chapters 17 & 18
“The Effect of the AFL-CIO’s ‘Voter Education’ Campaigns on the 1996 House Elections” by Gary Jacobson (JSTOR)

April 15 Second Exam

April 17-22 “The Visual Display of Quantitative Information”
(found on Web CT)
Freakonomics Chp 5 (OAKS)

April 24 Questioning Research & Wrap-Up
Final Steps for Revising & Completing Research Design – do not miss class!

Wednesday May 1 Final Research Design due by NOON