

Political Science 290
Introduction to Political Analysis
Fall, 2006

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Course Description: Introduction to Political Analysis is designed to provide you with the basic building blocks to understanding the scientific method and processes. We will discuss the basics of the logic of science, how scientists develop and test predictions about reality, and we will learn some of the baseline statistical procedures used in political science. One of the most important parts of the course will be the section on hypothesis developing and testing. In order to understand why political scientists ask the questions they ask, you need to become proficient at the process yourself. We will conduct several exercises over the course of the semester to make you comfortable with the process, both in groups and individually.

The goal of the course is NOT to make you into a hardcore statistical researcher, nor is it to make you a philosopher of science. The goal of the course is simply to provide you with a taste of how political science goes about answering some of the fundamental questions within our discipline.

In addition to helping you understand the nature of scientific inquiry, part of the goal of this course is to help you develop your writing skills. We will address issues of structure, citation style, how to summarize with plagiarizing, and how to find scholarly books and journal articles. When we the course is complete, you should have a grasp of what a good research paper should look like.

Required Texts:

Pollock, The Essentials of Political Analysis CQ Press, 2005 (2nd Edition).
Pollock, An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis, CQ Press, 2005 (2nd Edition).
Scott and Garrison. The Political Science Writer's Manual, 4th ed., Prentice Hall, 2001.

There are three required texts for the course. The Pollock book will serve as our primary text for first part of the semester. The SPSS add-on will be used when we are in the computer lab. The Scott book is an excellent resource for all political science majors and will prove very helpful to you as the course progresses, especially as we tackle the various aspects of writing a research paper.

E-mail: I use e-mail regularly to contact my classes, so you need to get into the habit of checking yours. You will receive reminders about exam dates, assignments, and other information I believe will be of value to you. I will also post assignments on my web pages on occasion—when I do so, I will inform you by e-mail. You cannot receive e-mail from me unless you are registered for the class, so please verify your registration status in the course.

Desire2Learn: Portions of the course materials will be made available through the Desire2Learn system. You must be registered for the course in order to get access to the Desire2Learn materials. We will walk the class through the basics of how to use Desire2Learn. If you need more training, you can contact the BITS office @ 836-5157 or visit their office in OL 1102.

Course Requirements: There are a wide variety of assignments in the course. The variety is intended to provide you with several opportunities to demonstrate your skills. The assignments are as follows:

Assignments	Points
Examinations	200
Assignments	130
Statistics Assignments	70
Research Paper	300
Total Points	700

The examinations will consist of short answer identification questions and longer essay questions. The examinations are NOT comprehensive. The dates are listed on the semester outline. The instructor reserves the right to change the dates and content as needed for the course. Make-up examinations will be long essay exams given at the discretion of the instructor. Attendance is mandatory for the scheduled exams. Make-up exams will NOT be given unless you contact the instructor prior to the regularly scheduled time AND only if your inability to take the exam on time is for good reason. If a genuine emergency prevented prior contact, see, call or e-mail the instructor as soon as possible after the exam. Failure to take an exam will result in zero points on that exam.

The Research Project: The research project will be the culmination of your work in the course. It should be at least 15 pages long typed with a complete bibliography, charts, and tables as needed. The project will require you to do the following:

- 1--Develop an interesting and testable question;
- 2--Write a literature review on the topic. This review must include at least five scholarly articles and one book that address your question (or are at least connected to it);
- 3--Develop explicit hypotheses about the question and explain how you intend to test the question;
- 4--Produce a brief statistical analysis of the data and explain the results.

Due to the length of the project, we will proceed through it as a class in several stages. Each stage will build on the previous one. The stages should be completed as follows:

Hypothesis Statement Due	9/22
Finish Gathering Literature Sources	10/20
Turn In Rough Draft of Design and Lit Review	10/27
Finish Compiling Data Set	11/10
Turn In Rough Draft of Data Analysis	12/8
Final Draft Of Paper Due	12/15

All of you will meet with the instructor individually to ensure you are making proper progress towards completion of the paper. These meetings are mandatory and failure to attend the meetings will impact your grade on your paper.

Statistical Work: We will use the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences for Windows (SPSS). This software is available in SSS210 as well as other labs on campus. Prior knowledge of statistics is not required nor will we be involved in learning how to calculate statistics. The software program will do that for us. The course will focus on which statistical tests to use under which circumstances and how to interpret the results of those tests. We will have several class meetings in the computer lab on the second floor (SSS 210) of Schneider.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend class, but no formal attendance will be taken. Be warned, however, that failure to attend will impact your grade. In addition, a substantial portion of the exams will be based on material covered ONLY in the classroom. Consistent failure to attend will lower your grade dramatically. You are responsible for ALL information covered in lecture, including changes in the reading assignments, changes in test dates, and in-class homework assignments.

Students With Disabilities: Any student who has a disability that will in any way impede his or her completion of the course needs to speak to the instructor as soon as possible about alternative arrangements. All possible arrangements will be made to accommodate students in need of assistance.

Cheating and Plagiarism: These are serious offenses, and any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will be punished to the fullest extent of the university code. This should seem obvious, but it must be made clear. Cheating is defined as attempting to improve your grade through any method considered unethical by the university, including copying another student's test, bringing crib sheets for exams, writing notes on your hands or on the brim of your baseball cap, etc.

Plagiarism is defined as claiming any other author's intellectual work as your own. This can include copying parts of another written work and not giving the original author credit for it; using summaries of work written by others and claiming it as your own, etc. Plagiarism is NOT limited to copying another author's work word-for-word. If

you use the author's IDEAS without giving the author credit for them, you are just as guilty as if you had Xeroxed the statements and put yourself down as author.

The instructor reserves the right to ask for any written assignment in electronic format. The submitted electronic version **MUST** be an exact match for the paper version. All papers may be submitted to turnitin.com and/or any other website addressing plagiarism issues. Failure to provide the electronic copy of any assignment is grounds for disciplinary action in the course.

Grade Distribution

Letter Grade	Percentage	Letter Grade	Percentage
A	92.0%-100.0%	C-	70.0%-71.9%
A-	90.0%-91.9%	D+	68.0%-69.9%
B+	88.0%-89.9%	D	62.0%-67.9%
B	82.0%-87.9%	D-	60.0%-61.9%
B-	80.0%-81.9%	F	0.0%-59.9%
C+	78.0%-79.9%		
C	72.0%-77.9%		

The instructor reserves the right to alter the grade distribution as needed. Such adjustments will only be made to the benefit of the students. These percentages are provided to you so that you may generate an accurate assessment of your progress in the course. These percentages are not negotiable and will never be altered for the benefit of a single student. Any and all changes to the grade distribution will be applied to everyone in the course.

STANDARDS FOR GRADING

A: designates work of extra-ordinarily high quality; reflects thorough and comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; arguments are clearly organized with supporting ideas.

B: designates work of high quality; reflects a clearly organized but less than comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; presents organized arguments that are supported by ideas.

C: Designates work which meets the minimal requirements of the assignment; written work reflects adequate organization and development of ideas, but arguments are communicated in a superficial or simplistic manner.

D: Designates work of poor quality which meets the minimum requirements of the assignment, but demonstrates poor organization of ideas and/or inattention to development of ideas, grammar, and spelling; treatment of material is superficial and/or simplistic; may indicate that the student has not read assignments thoroughly.

F: Designates work of poor quality that does not meet the minimum requirements of the assignment or task; fails to reflect an understanding of the issues at hand; fails to present organized arguments or fails to adequately support arguments with ideas; or which is not handed in on time.

Course Outline

P=Pollock S=Scott and Garrison SPSS=Pollock SPSS supplement

9/4 Introductions No Readings

9/6 What Is Political Science? Readings: S 1-17
Defining the discipline and what it means to study political science

9/8 History of the Discipline Reserve-Most
A brief overview of the history of political science from Aristotle through Gary King

9/11-9/13 Theories in Political Science
An examination of the four dominant theories in the field: institutionalism, positivism, behavioralism, and rationalism.

9/15 A Brief Discussion of Paradigms
An overview of how paradigms influence the development of a discipline.

Assignment #1 Due 9/20

9/18 Scientific Knowledge
A look at the primary criteria that define scientific knowledge and separate science from rumor, myth, and opinion.

9/20 Finding Literature
How to find literature sources using the library and the web.

Assignment #2 Due 9/27

9/22 Hypotheses and Variables Readings: P Ch. 1-3
The development of scientific relationships, types of variables, and the types of hypotheses.

9/25-9/27 Understanding Causality Readings: P Ch. 4
What defines causal relationships, understanding temporal relationships, covariance, and necessary & sufficient conditions.

9/29 NO CLASS

10/2-10/4 Issues of Measurement
How do we measure things in order to study them? Reliability, validity, and levels of measurement.

Assignment #3 Due 10/9

10/6-10/9 Historical/Archival/Case Study Research Readings: S Ch. 9
A look at traditional forms of research.

Assignment #4 Due 10/16

10/11-10/16 Survey Research Readings: P ch. 5
An overview of issues and methods involved in survey research.

Assignment #5 Due 10/23

10/18-10/23 Experimental Research
How experiments are constructed and the limits on their usefulness.

Assignment #6 Due 10/30

10/25-10/27 Direct & Indirect Observations

10/30 Secondary Data Collection

**** MIDTERM EXAMINATION TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR 11/1 ****

11/3-11/8 Individual Paper Meetings—No Class

Assignment #7 Due 11/10

For All Statistical Classes, assignments will be handed out as needed

<i>11/10</i>	<i>Introduction to SPSS</i>	<i>SPSS ch. 1</i>
<i>11/13</i>	<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>	<i>SPSS ch. 2, P. ch. 3</i>
<i>11/15</i>	<i>Significance & Association</i>	<i>P ch. 6, SPSS ch. 7</i>

Assignment #8 Due 11/22

<i>11/17</i>	<i>Cross Tabulations</i>	<i>SPSS ch. 3 & 5</i>
<i>11/20</i>	<i>Correlation & Tests of Means</i>	<i>SPSS ch. 8 & 10</i>
<i>11/22</i>	<i>Regression</i>	<i>P ch. 7</i>
<i>11/27-12/8</i>	<i>In-Class Stats Work on Papers</i>	

12/11	Interpreting and Writing About Statistical Results	P ch 9
12/13	Wrap-up and review	

**** FINAL EXAM: Friday, December 22nd at 3 PM in computer lab ****

For all dates listed in *italics*, the class will meet in the computer lab (SSS 210) rather than the regular classroom.

Assignment Handouts

Throughout the semester, we are going to gradually work on skills to help you develop as a student of political science. These assignments are designed to build upon all of the previous assignments. Each assignment is due at the beginning of class on the day listed. Late assignments **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**.

Assignment #1: Application of Theory—**DUE 9/20**—10 points

Write four brief paragraphs applying the four theories discussed in class to one of the following issues: voter turnout, nuclear disarmament, how a bill becomes a law, how wars start, or how someone gets elected president. Each paragraph should explain how a scholar using this theory would view the question and develop a general explanation using the theory as the foundation.

Assignment #2: Finding Sources—**DUE 9/27**—10 points

The purpose of this assignment is to get you comfortable with finding literature in the library. Your assignment is to pick two (2) of the topics listed below and find three scholarly journal articles and one book related to each topic. At least one of the articles must be from before 1985, and at least one must be from after 1995. Please note the restriction on scholarly journals. *Newsweek*, *Time*, *The National Review*, and any other “news” magazines do NOT meet this standard. If you have any doubt about your sources, consult me.

You do NOT need to read the articles—the goal is simply to learn the library system. For the assignment, you must turn in a bibliography formatted according to the guidelines handed out in class. The topics you may choose from are:

African-American Voting	Democracies & War	Male vs. Female Candidates
Trust in Government	Emerging Democracies	Dictatorships in Latin America
Campaign Finance Reform	Presidential Primaries	Multilateral Treaties
UN Interventions/Peacekeeping	Welfare Policy	Congressional Committees
Political Culture in the US	Arab-Israeli Conflict	Presidential Approval Ratings

Please note that you may need to use additional search terms when looking for these articles—these are merely topics, NOT keywords for you to use in your search.

Assignment #3: Developing Hypotheses—**Due 10/9**—20 points

For each set of variables, develop one of each of the three hypothesis types (null, directional, and causal). Also write a sentence or two describing WHY you believe each hypothesis is accurate. Please copy this on to a separate sheet of paper (typed or NEATLY written).

Example:

Variable List:	home runs	stolen bases	runs batted in	batting average
	Team wins	strikeouts	height	weight

Null hypothesis: There is no relationship between a baseball player's height and whether or not his team wins the World Series. Baseball is a team game, and the height of an individual player should have no effect on the performance of the team.

Directional Hypothesis: The more a player weighs, the fewer bases he will steal. The causal link is unclear—do people who steal few bases not worry about their weight, or do players who steal a lot of bases spend more time paying attention to their weight? In either case, the directional relationship is clear.

Causal Hypothesis: The more strikeouts a player has, the lower his batting average will be. Since strikeouts count against batting average, as the number of strikeouts goes up, batting average should go down. The reverse (fewer strikeouts and higher batting average) should also be true.

LIST ONE:

War	economic deprivation	size of the army	population
Nuclear capacity	oil reserves	government type	border length

LIST TWO:

Number of previous convictions	gender	age	race
Likelihood of being executed	lawyer's ability	state	type of crime

LIST THREE:

Age	gender	likelihood of voting	party	trust in government
Region	race	registration laws	income	interest in campaign

Assignment #4: **Due 10/16**—10 points

For each of the following, determine the type of hypothesis (null, directional, or causal) & identify the independent and dependent variables. Please copy this on to a separate sheet of paper (typed or NEATLY written).

1—Lack of interest in politics results in lower voter turnout.

Type: NULL DIRECTIONAL CAUSAL
IV _____ DV _____

2—As the number of nuclear weapons in a country increases, the desire to go war among the leaders increases.

Type: NULL DIRECTIONAL CAUSAL
IV _____ DV _____

3—Getting access to membership on legislative committees is not determined by seniority in Congress.

Type: NULL DIRECTIONAL CAUSAL
IV _____ DV _____

4—Female judges are more likely to be lenient to convicted criminals than male judges.

Type: NULL DIRECTIONAL CAUSAL
IV _____ DV _____

Assignment #5: **Due 10/23**—20 points

For each of the following variables, determine the appropriate level of measurement and explain why you decided upon that level. Then, IF POSSIBLE, use an alternate level of measurement and briefly describe how it would look.

Example: Temperature

Interval level: The differences between degrees are equal, but temperature is not multiplicative. 90 degrees is NOT twice as hot as 45 degrees.

Alternate level: Ordinal: Very Cold—Cold—Warm—Very Warm—Hot. The levels can still be ordered, but the differences between levels are not equal.

Age

Height in Inches

Murder Rate Per 1000 Persons

Net Income In Dollars

Level of Democracy (Scaled from 1=No Democracy to 5=Complete Democracy)

Driving Speed in Miles per Hour

Education by Years in School

Liberalism (Scaled from 1=Very Liberal to 7=Very Conservative)

Political Participation—Count of voting, use of lawn signs, and bumper stickers

Gender

Assignment #6: Annotated Bibliographies—20 points-**Due 10/30**

This assignment is designed to work on the process of summarizing without plagiarizing. Choose 3 of the following 5 articles and write one-paragraph summaries of each. The summary should begin with a bibliographic citation, and it should include a brief description of the question being studied, the methodology used, and the conclusions of the research. Also include a brief (1-2 sentence) comment on the article. Use the examples handed out in class as a template. Your article choices are:

Burden, Barry C. & Anthony Mughan. 1999. "Public Opinion and Hillary Rodham Clinton." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 63:237-250.

Dahl, Robert. 1994. "Democratic Dilemma: System Effectiveness Versus Citizen Participation." *Political Science Quarterly* 109(1):23-34.

Encarnacion, Omar G. 2000. "Tocqueville's Missionaries: Civil Society Advocacy and The Promotion of Democracy." *World Policy Journal* 17(1): 9-18.

Lang, Daniel G. 1995. "International Commitments and Democracy: The United States and The Federal Republic of Germany." *The Review of Politics* 57: 309-335.

Owen, James M. 1994. "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace." *International Security* 19(2):87-125.

Assignment #7: Annotated Bibliographies II—20 points—**Due 11/10**

This assignment is designed to work on the process of summarizing without plagiarizing. Choose 3 of the following 5 articles and write one-paragraph summaries of each. The summary should begin with a bibliographic citation, and it should include a brief description of the question being studied, the methodology used, and the conclusions of the research. Also include a brief (1-2 sentence) comment on the article. Use the examples handed out in class as a template. Your article choices are:

Blanchard, Kenneth C., Jr . 2000. "The Enemies of Socrates: Piety and Sophism In the Socratic Drama." *The Review of Politics* 62(3): 421-449.

Koch, Jeffrey W. 1998. "The Perot Candidacy and Attitudes Toward Government and Politics." *Political Research Quarterly* 51(1): 141-153.

Majstorovic, Steven . 1997. "Ancient Hatreds or Elite Manipulation? Memory and Politics in the Former Yugoslavia." *World Affairs* 159:170-182.

Myers, Peter C. 1995. "Between Divine and Human Sovereignty: The State of Nature and the Basis of Locke's Political Thought." *Polity* 27: 629-649.

Smith, Eric R A.N., & Richard L. Fox. 2001. "The Electoral Fortunes of Women Candidates For Congress." *Political Research Quarterly* 54(1): 205-221.

Assignment #8: Combining Sources—20 points—**Due 11/22**

In this assignment you will work on constructing cohesive paragraphs that summarize several arguments both succinctly and accurately. The goal here is to go to the next step beyond the annotation process and begin to synthesize a series of related arguments. For this project, pick one of the sets of articles below. Read the articles within the set and write a single paragraph that summarizes the arguments of all of the authors. Make certain to include proper in-text citation.

Trust In Government

Miller, Arthur H. 1970. "Political Issues and Trust in Government: 1964-1970." *The American Political Science Review* 68(3): 951-972.

Citrin, Jack. 1974. "Comment: The Political Relevance of Trust in Government." *The American Political Science Review* 68(3): 973-988.

Citrin, Jack, Donald Green. 1986. "Presidential Leadership and the Resurgence of Trust In Government." *British Journal of Political Science* 18: 431-453.

Political Culture

Inglehart, Robert. 1988. "The Renaissance of Political Culture." *The American Political Science Review* 82(4):1203-1230.

Jackman, Robert A. & Ross A. Miller. 1996. "The Poverty of Political Culture." *American Journal of Political Science*, 40(3): 697-716.

Rice, Tom W. & Jan L. Fledman. 1997. "Civic Culture and Democracy from Europe to America." *The Journal of Politics* 59(4): 1143-1172.

Democracies and War

Lake, David. A. 1992. "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War." *The American Political Science Review* 86(1): 24-37.

Spiro, David. 1994. "The Insignificance of the Liberal Peace." *International Security* 19(2): 50-86.

Farber, Henry S. & Joanne Gowa. 1997. "Common Interests or Common Polities? Reinterpreting the Democratic Peace." *The Journal of Politics* 59(2): 393-417.