

POS 3713: Homework Assignment #1
Spring 2000
Due at the beginning of class on Monday, January 31st

Instructions: Type your answers to the following questions.

- 1) What is a random sample? Suppose you wanted to conduct a study of FSU students' attitudes about parking on campus. How could you collect a random sample? (Assume that you cannot simply go to the registrar and get a complete listing of all enrolled students.) What problems might you encounter with your designs for random sampling?
- 2) Find a research article from the past 10 years (1989-1999) in one of the following Political Science journals. You must find an article that tries to empirically test one or more theoretical hypotheses. **Attach a copy of the article you have selected for your assignment.**

General Journals/American Politics/Policy: *American Political Science Review, American Journal of Political Science, Journal of Politics*

International Relations Journals: *Journal of Conflict Resolution, International Studies Quarterly, International Organization*

Comparative Politics Journals: *British Journal of Political Science, Comparative Political Studies, World Politics*

- a. What is the research question the author(s) is addressing?
- b. Describe one of the theoretical hypotheses the author(s) is testing. In your opinion, are there any rival hypotheses that the author(s) has omitted?
- c. What is the dependent variable? What is the independent variable(s)?
- d. Is the research based on a population or a sample from some population? What is the relevant population? How large is the sample?
- e. Can the findings be generalized to some population, and if so, how would this be useful?
- f. How does the author(s) operationalize or measure each concept? Are these measures nominal, ordinal, or interval level measures?
- g. What is the source of information for each variable? Do you think the particular measures the author(s) has selected make sense?
- h. Restate the hypothesis as a working hypothesis using the indicators the author(s) has selected.
- i. What statistical techniques are used? Try to follow the statistical analysis and see how much you can understand. Save the article and read it again after you finish this course and see if you do any better.