

Dr. Sara McLaughlin Mitchell
544 Bellamy
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday, 1:00-2:00pm
or by appointment.

Summer 2000, Session B
334 RBB
MTWTF 2:00-3:15pm

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Research Methods in Political Science POS 3713

Course Description

This course is designed to acquaint students with research methods used by social scientists. Students will study terms and concepts used in research (e.g., theories, null and alternative hypotheses, independent and dependent variables, validity, reliability, generalizability), and research design (including experimental and quasi-experimental designs, survey design, and sampling). Students will be introduced to basic statistical techniques for analyzing data and the interpretation of coefficients and statistical tests (frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, measures of association, spurious correlation, regression, confidence intervals and tests of significance).

Course Requirements

The best way to learn this material is to have read the assigned readings **BEFORE** the class date in which they are discussed. This will enable you to be familiar with new concepts as I discuss them in lecture and for you to ask questions. I expect this class to be quite relaxed, so jump in and ask questions or make remarks at anytime. There is **NO** such thing as a stupid question.

Your course grade is based on your performance on 3 exams and several homework assignments. The distribution of your final grade in the class is as follows:

Midterm Exam #1	20% (100)
Midterm Exam #2	20% (100)
Final Exam	20% (100)
<u>Homework</u>	<u>40% (200, 40 pts each)</u>
Total	500 points

1. Homework (40%): There are a total of 5 homework assignments (see class schedule). These homework assignments will be computer lab assignments that utilize SPSS (a statistical program) to analyze a dataset. You can access SPSS in the College of Social Sciences Computing Laboratory located on the ground level of the Bellamy Building. You will be provided with datasets and detailed instructions for each assignment. The assignments will be handed out in class on Monday of the relevant week (beginning on Monday, May 15th) and will be due in class the following Monday (except the final assignment). In other words, you have one week to complete each assignment. On Friday each week, we will hold class in Room 65 Bellamy (next door to the computer lab). I will spend some time going over the computer assignments and answering any questions you have. Assignments turned in late will **not** be accepted under any circumstances.

2. Midterm Exam #1 (20%): The first midterm exam is scheduled on Thursday, May 18th. The problems on all exams will include problem solving, short answer, and multiple choice.

3. Midterm Exam #2 (20%): The second midterm exam is on Thursday, June 1st.

4. Final Exam (20%): The final exam is scheduled for the last day of class on Friday, June 16th. It will **not** be comprehensive.

The grading scale is as follows:

93-100	A	73-76	C
90-92	A-	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
83-86	B	63-66	D
80-82	B-	60-62	D-
77-79	C+	59 or below	F

Textbooks and Required Materials

Manheim, Jarol B. and Richard C. Rich. 1995. *Empirical Political Analysis: Research Methods in Political Science (4th Edition)*. New York: Longman Publishing Group.

Healey, Joseph F. 1999. *Statistics: A Tool for Social Research (5th Edition)*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

<u>Class Schedule</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Required Reading</u>
Monday, May 8 th	Introduction	
Tuesday, May 9 th	Scientific Method & Theory Building	M&R, Chapters 1-2
Wednesday, May 10 th	Research Designs: Experiments and Sampling	M&R, Chapters 3 & 5
Thursday, May 11 th	Research Designs: Survey Research	M&R, Chapter 7
Friday, May 12 th	Sampling	M&R, Chapter 6
Monday, May 15 th	Operationalization & Measurement Lab Assignment 1: Data Processing (Due 5/22)	M&R, Chapters 4 & 12
Tuesday, May 16 th	Operationalization & Measurement	M&R, Chapter 14 Healey, Chapter 1
Wednesday, May 17 th	Basic Descriptive Statistics	Healey, Chapter 2 M&R, Chapter 15
Thursday, May 18 th	Midterm Exam #1	
Friday, May 19 th	Introduction to SPSS, Class in Room 65 Bellamy	
Monday, May 22 nd	Measures of Central Tendency & Dispersion Lab Assignment 2: Descriptive Statistics, Central Tendency, and Dispersion (Due 5/30)	Healey, Chapters 3-4

<u>Class Schedule</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Required Reading</u>
Tuesday, May 23 rd	Normal Curve	Healey, Chapter 5
Wednesday, May 24 th	Sampling	Healey, Chapter 6
Thursday, May 25 th	Confidence Intervals	Healey, Chapter 7
Friday, May 26 th	Hypothesis Testing: The One Sample Case Class in Room 65 Bellamy	Healey, Chapter 8
Monday, May 29 th	No Class, Memorial Day	
Tuesday, May 30 th	Hypothesis Testing: The Two Sample Case Lab Assignment 3: Hypothesis Tests (Due 6/5)	Healey, Chapter 9
Wednesday, May 31 st	More on hypothesis testing	
Thursday, June 1 st	Midterm Exam #2	
Friday, June 2 nd	Analysis of Variance Class in Room 65 Bellamy	Healey, Chapter 10
Monday, June 5 th	Chi-Square Lab Assignment 4: Measures of Association and ANOVA (Due 6/12)	Healey, Chapter 12
Tuesday, June 6 th	ANOVA and Chi-Square (continued)	
Wednesday, June 7 th	Statistics for nominal and ordinal data	M&R, Chapter 17 Healey, Chapter 13
Thursday, June 8 th	Statistics for nominal and ordinal data Lab Assignment 5: Regression (Due 5/16)	Healey, Chapters 14 & 15
Friday, June 9 th	Computer Lab, Class in Room 65 Bellamy	
Monday, June 12 th	Measures of association: interval variables	Healey, Chapter 16
Tuesday, June 13 th	Regression	Healey, Chapter 18
Wednesday, June 14 th	Multivariate Regression	Healey, Chapter 18 (continued)
Thursday, June 15 th	Review for Final Exam	
Friday, June 16 th	Final Exam (334 RBB)	