PSCI 2701A
Introduction to Research Methods in Political Science

Mondays, 12:35-2:25 pm
Location: Check Carleton Central

Instructor: Dr. Vandna Bhatia
Contact: D685 Loeb Building
520-2600, ext. 1360
Vandna.Bhatia@carleton.ca
Office Hours: Mondays 2:30-4:00 pm

Course Description

This course introduces students to concepts and techniques of empirical inquiry for political science research. Upon completion, students should have an understanding and appreciation of the general principles, processes, concepts, and issues associated with empirical social science. Beginning with an introduction to significant developments in the 'science' of politics, we will move to techniques of logical argumentation, and then explore issues in designing research, including: research ethics, framing researchable questions and hypotheses, selecting cases for study, measuring social and political phenomena, and analyzing (primarily) qualitative data. We will also discuss issues related to the range and selection of research methods, focusing primarily on non-quantitative approaches, and their application in political science.

By the end of the course, students should:

• Understand the major theoretical and philosophical approaches to political science research;
• Be familiar with and able to discuss the principles of empirical social scientific research, including the ethics of doing research with human beings;
• Be able to describe and discuss various social scientific research methodologies in the context of political science;
• Be able to identify and apply the tenets of research design and methodology, including systematic data gathering and analysis, in a research paper;
• Be able to find, read and critically assess published research and on-line materials.

Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1: Analyzing Arguments</td>
<td>October 2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2: Theory, Concepts, and Measurement</td>
<td>October 30</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 3: Content Analysis</td>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Line Quiz</td>
<td>November 13</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial attendance and participation</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>TBA</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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The quiz will be available on-line over a 7-day period, and students must complete the quiz within a continuous 2-hour window. Detailed instructions and guidelines for the quiz and written assignments will be discussed in class and distributed via CULearn. Assignments must follow accepted bibliographic and citation formats. Grades will be posted and graded work will be returned to students via CULearn. The final exam will be held during the exam period in December. The exam will be cumulative and include a combination of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions.
Policy on Late Assignments – Written assignments are due on-line, through CULearn ONLY, unless alternative arrangements are made with the instructor in advance. E-mailed assignments will not be accepted. Late submission of assignments will be penalized, to a maximum of 5 days. Assignments submitted more than 5 days late will be given a 0. Late penalties will be assessed on a daily basis, including weekends. Extensions are usually granted only on medical grounds, and appropriate documentation may be requested.

Course Readings and Schedule

The required textbooks for this course are available as a package, or may also be purchased individually. They are:


The texts are on order at Haven Books (located at 43 Seneca Street, at Sunnyside), and are also available (including electronic versions) for purchase online at Amazon, Chapters and OUP Canada. Texts will be supplemented with additional required and optional readings, which are available from MacOdrum Library.

Lecture/Tutorial Schedule

The course is organized to enable flexibility in covering the course material while moving at a pace that is comfortable for both students and instructor. The proposed schedule is to serve as a tentative guide only. At the discretion of the instructor, some changes may be made.

Schedule In Brief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Tutorial</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11-Sept</td>
<td>The Science of Politics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18-Sept</td>
<td>Philosophy of Social Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>25-Sept</td>
<td>Causation, Argumentation and Theory</td>
<td>Tutorial 1: Analyzing Arguments</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-Oct</td>
<td>Theories and Questions</td>
<td>Tutorial 2: Theories &amp; Hypotheses</td>
<td>Assignment #1 Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-Oct</td>
<td>Thanksgiving – No Classes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16-Oct</td>
<td>Concepts and Measurement</td>
<td>Tutorial 3: Operationalizing Variables</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-Oct</td>
<td>Fall Reading Week – No Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-Oct</td>
<td>Ethics in Social Research</td>
<td>Tutorial 4: Research Ethics</td>
<td>Assignment #2 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-Nov</td>
<td>Selecting Cases and Comparisons</td>
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<tr>
<td>13-Nov</td>
<td>Textual Analysis</td>
<td>Tutorial 5: Content Analysis</td>
<td>On-Line Quiz Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-Nov</td>
<td>Interviews and Focus Groups</td>
<td>Tutorial 6: Interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>27-Nov</td>
<td>Survey Research</td>
<td>Tutorial 7: Survey &amp; Question Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-Dec</td>
<td>Observation and Field Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-Dec</td>
<td>Experiments in Political Science</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment #3 Due</td>
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Part I: Introduction to the Fundamentals of Inquiry

Lecture 1: The Science of Politics (Monday September 11)
Introduction; the scientific approach and the study of politics

Required Readings:
• BA, Chapter 1 (The Scientific Approach to Politics)

Optional/Supplementary:

Lecture 2: Philosophy of Social Science – Knowledge and Knowing (Friday September 18)
How we know what we know; ontology and epistemology in political science; quantitative and qualitative approaches

Required Readings:
• BA, Chapter 2 (Observing the Political World)
• MM, Introduction (Valuing the Political Argument)
• MM, Chapter 1 (Importance of Research in Political Argument)

Optional/Supplementary:
• Mahoney J. and G. Goertz (2006). A tale of two cultures: Contrasting quantitative and qualitative research, Political Analysis 14:227-249

Lecture 3: Causation, Argumentation and Theory Development (Monday September 25)
The form and structure of arguments: generalizations, logic and causation

Tutorial #1: Analyzing Arguments

Required Readings:
• MM, Chapters 2-5, and Conclusion

Optional/Supplementary:

Part II: Designing Research

Lecture 4: Theories and Questions (Monday October 2)
Theory and causal arguments; framing research; reviewing literature; developing research questions and hypotheses.

Tutorial #2: Theories and Hypotheses
Required Readings:
- BA, Chapter 3 (Theory-Oriented Research)
- MM, Chapter 2 (Research Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them)

Optional/Supplementary:

Lecture 5: Concepts and Measurement (Monday October 16)
*Conceptualizing and measuring the political world; finding and collecting data; selecting a research design*

Tutorial #3: Operationalizing Variables

Required Readings:
- BA, Chapter 4 (Defining the Political World: Concepts)
- BA, Chapter 5 (Defining the Political World: Measures)

Optional/Supplementary:

Lecture 6: Ethics in Social Research (Monday October 30)
*Ethical principles; doing research with human subjects; ethics of community-based research*

Tutorial #4: Research Ethics

Required Readings:
- BA, Chapter 6 (Research Ethics)

Optional/Supplementary:

Lecture 7: Selecting Cases and Comparisons (Monday November 6)
*Identifying and selecting cases; comparative designs*

No Tutorial

Required Readings:
- BA, Chapter 7 (Small-n Research)
- BA, Chapter 8 (Sampling the Political World)
Optional/Supplementary:

Part III: Research Techniques

Lecture 8: Textual Analysis (Monday November 13)
Analyzing documents and texts; content and discourse analysis techniques; analysis of qualitative data

Tutorial #5: Content Analysis

Required Readings:
- BA, Chapter 12 (Textual Analysis)
- BA, Chapter 13 (Analyzing Qualitative Data)

Optional/Supplementary:

Lecture 9: Interviews and Focus Groups (Monday November 20)
Interview formats and techniques; advantages and disadvantages of each; focus groups as a special form of interview

Tutorial #6: Interviews

Required Readings:
- BA, Chapter 9 (Interview, Focus Group and Observation Research)

Optional/Supplementary:
Lecture 10: Survey Research (Monday November 27)
Sampling and probability; designing survey instruments; question structure and format

Tutorial #7: Surveys and Questionnaire Design

Required Readings:
- BA, Chapter 10 (Survey Research and Official Statistics)

Optional/Supplementary:

Lecture 11: Observation and Field Research (Monday December 4)
Observational research; political ethnography; techniques; ethical issues

Required Readings:

Optional/Supplementary:

Lecture 12: Experiments in Political Science Research (Friday December 8)
Classical experimental design; field and natural experiments in social science

Required Readings:
- BA, Chapter 11 (Experimental Research)

Optional/Supplementary:
Please Note
Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

Academic Regulations & Student Resources

Plagiarism: The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be submitted directly to the instructor according to the instructions in the course outline and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at 4 p.m., stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

Grading: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Final standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>12-Point Scale</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>12-Point Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>63-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>57-59</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<td>73-76</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>53-56</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>70-72</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50-52</td>
<td>D-</td>
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Approval of Final Grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Carleton E-mail Accounts: All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via official Carleton university e-mail accounts and/or cuLearn. As important course and University information is distributed this way, it is the student’s responsibility to monitor their Carleton and cuLearn accounts.

Official Course Outline: The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.
Academic Accommodations

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

For Religious Observance: Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a letter of accommodation. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you need assistance with…</th>
<th>Refer to…</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>× Study skills</td>
<td>Student Academic Success Centre – Learning Support Services</td>
<td>302 Tory Building Tel: 613-520-7850 carleton.ca/sasc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>× Finding a tutor</td>
<td>Student Academic Success Centre – Academic Advising</td>
<td>302 Tory Building Tel: 613-520-7850 carleton.ca/sasc/advisingcentre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>× Peer-assisted subject coaching</td>
<td>Paul Menton Centre</td>
<td>501 University Centre Tel: 613-520-6608 carleton.ca/pmc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>× On-line, in-person workshops</td>
<td>Writing Tutorial Service</td>
<td>MacOdrum Library, 4th Floor Tel: 613-520-6632 carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>× Academic support and advice</td>
<td>Student Academic Success Centre – Learning Support Services</td>
<td>MacOdrum Library, 4th Floor Tel: 613-520-7850 carleton.ca/lss/english-conversation-groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>× Choosing, changing major</td>
<td>Research Help Desk MacOdrum Library</td>
<td>MacOdrum Library, Main Floor Tel: 613-520-2735 Email: <a href="mailto:askthelibrary@carleton.ca">askthelibrary@carleton.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>× Academic planning</td>
<td>Maps, Data, and Government Information Centre, MacOdrum Library</td>
<td>MacOdrum Library, 1st Floor 613-520-2600 x2749 Email: <a href="mailto:GIS@carleton.ca">GIS@carleton.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>× A disability</td>
<td>Health and Counseling Services</td>
<td>2600 CTTC Building Tel: 613-520-6674 carleton.ca/health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Carleton Political Science Society: The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit https://www.facebook.com/groups/politicalsciencesociety/ or come to our office in Loeb D688.

Updated: July 17, 2017