Carleton University
Department of Political Science
https://carleton.ca/polisci/

Fall 2025

PSCI 2701A

How to Do Research in Political Science

Wednesdays, 9:35 a.m. to 11:25 p.m. Please confirm location on Carleton Central.

I <u>General information</u>

Instructor: Conrad Winn

Office Hours and Communication:

- a. Course Description Communications channel mainly F2F in campus classroom
- b. Predictable consulting availabilities, each meeting pre-booked as per below in (d):
 - o Campus Wednesdays 1:30-2:30 p.m.
 - o Campus Thursdays 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
 - o Zoom (telephone as backup) Mondays 7-8 p.m.
 - Possibly other campus/Zoom/telephone availabilities.
- c. Your email please follow Carleton rules and kindly use your Carleton email.
- d. Your content please explain briefly by email your dilemma, need or ambition and please list three times when able to speak in case your first two preferences were previously scheduled.
- e. Destination email cljwinn@cunet.carleton.ca, a channel that will elicit a quicker response.
- f. Text-messaging in time-sensitive situations 437-553-4705.

II Course Description

PSCI 2701A is devoted to empirical research methods. That includes introductory methods of quantitative analysis plus high quality qualitative analysis in those situations that call for it.

All empirical methods require satisfying ethical standards as do all fields taught in universities. One dilemma is that universities have not been consistently democratic-minded. They have not always been impervious to anti-democratic pressure from corporate, government, religious, anti-religious and cultural organizations and well as adversary dictatorships that favour actions that might seem corrupt, discriminatory or even self-destructive.

Devoted to empiricism, each class will have three main themes:

- a. skill advantage quantitative/qualitative methods using Prof. Scott Bennett's textbook,
- b. knowledge advantage using empirical thinking to understand phenomena that may be misunderstood/downplayed/ignored in the absence of adequate thinking, skill or knowledge;
- c. career advantage deploying empirical skills to raise graduate school/job prospects.

The discussion of skill advantage will involve empirical methods and Professor Bennett's book. Opinion surveys or data from governments/parties/journalists/universities/corporations/ charities/researchers and other sources – even secret government proxies – are potentially valuable too.

Quantitative and/or qualitative methods can both be used, e.g. in an opinion survey. A quantitative question could ask respondents to score their feelings towards, say, a Prime Minister on a 5 point scale. A qualitative analogue could invite respondents to describe how they feel about a Prime Minister in their own words – an open-ended question. Qualitative answers can be transformed into quantitative ones by creating a quantitative answer from the intensity or frequency of a respondent's words.

Non-survey data are available too, e.g.

- a. official government figures e.g. GDP growth, government debt, income taxes, fertility, marriage, crime, mental health, spending, immigration, emigration, etc.,
- b. corporate data sometimes analogous to government data,
- c. content analysis data e.g. a researchers' quantitative transformation of qualitative data in news media, movies, novels, open line shows, media discussions, university text books, conversations, advertising, popular songs and many other sources,
- d. consumer behaviour data e.g. residential decisions, housing prices, transportation choices, and other consumer-related phenomena, and
- e. miscellany e.g. the health, taste, price and/or availability of food.

Mastering empiricism and analysing data offer occupational and income advantage. Quantitative content analysis may require less skill or training than, say, opinion research. The development of skill may facilitate publication in research journals or mass media, thereby contributing to career, graduate school, business or other prospects. It may facilitate your excellent understanding of vital issues that others ignore, downplay, or misunderstand. It may facilitate your ability to spot faulty analysis by others and even faulty data.

III <u>Course Format</u>

Each lecture and accompanying questions and answers and/or discussion will take place weekly in class at the scheduled lecture time with three exceptions via Zoom.

IV <u>Learning Outcomes</u>

The main short-term learning outcomes are intended to be greater awareness of and skills with respect to

- a. your own potential, quantitative research using survey or other data,
- b. contracting out data collection (e.g. field work for a survey designed and analysed by you),
- c. conducting survey research in dictatorships (most countries),
- d. ensuring that the empirical data of others (e.g. governments/corporations/universities) are honest and not misleading,
- e. qualitative data how to transform into quantitative data,
- f. accuracy about causation ensuring that you identify the correct independent variable that affects the dependent variable (scores you are trying to explain) and
- g. gaps in news, data, analysis and the priorities of governments/corporations/unions/universities how to spot gaps and how to publish for your own advantage.

Your potential benefits may include better skills, higher grades, higher publication/grad school/career/business prospects.

V <u>Texts</u>

The sources of textual information are:

- Scott Bennett, Public Affairs Research Methods: a Quantitative Introduction (Queenston: Edwin Melon, 1996), available at no cost;
- SPSS the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences; download available free of charge at https://carleton.ca/its/2018/ovpri-and-its-collaborate-to-support-researchers/. Online and offline advice may be useful for statistical analysis;
- A great variety of news and information sources available in the PPT's. Furthermore your preferences with respect to news/information themes will be sought by polling.
 Adjustments may be made on non-statistical themes in light of you're your advice too.

VI <u>Evaluation at a Glance</u>

Date	Туре	% Course Grade
Sept. 25	MCT = Multiple choice test	7
Sept. 26	Research Proposal	8
Oct. 1	MCT	7
Oct. 15	MCT	7
Oct. 20-24	Break Week	nil
Nov. 12	MCT	7
Nov. 28	MCT	7
Dec. 3	MCT	14
Single authors –For family names beginning A to L, submission is requested on Nov. 19 but no penalties unless submitted after Nov. 26. For families M to Z, the requested submission date is Nov. 26, penalties thereafter.	Essay	43
Teams of two co-authors – same as above using the family name of the co-author first in alphabetical order	Same as above	Same as above
Teams of three or more co-authors not permitted.	NA	NA
Based on thoughts shared in class and TA group, the combined oral contribution grade will only affect a student's course grade if higher than the remainder of the person's course grade. If lower, it is not considered for the course grade.	Oral contributions	20

VII <u>Evaluation in detail</u>

Doub.	T	%	Likely ETA of	Contant
Date	Туре	Course Grade	Grade or Feedback	Content
Sept. 25	MCT = Multiple choice test	7	Next morning	Lecture, text/readings, news
Sept. 26	Research Proposal	8	Approx. a week after submission	
Oct. 1	MCT	7	Next morning	Lecture, text/readings, news
Oct. 15	MCT	7	Next morning	Lecture, text/readings, news
Oct. 20-24	Break Week	NA	NA	NA
Nov. 12	MCT	7	Next morning	Lecture, text/readings, news
Nov. 28	MCT	7	Next morning	Lecture, text/readings, news
Dec. 3	MCT	14	Next morning	Lecture, text/readings, news
Single authors – for family names beginning A to L, submission is requested on Nov. 19 but no penalties unless submitted after Nov. 26. For families M to Z, the requested submission date is Nov. 26, penalties thereafter.	Essay	43	Feedback approx. two weeks after submission	For more detail, see "Essays – late," below.
Teams of two or more co-authors – same as above using the family name of the co-author first in alphabetical order	 Same dates as above Please note that expectations of quality rise in proportion to number of authors 	Same as above	Same as above	For more details, see "Essays – late," below.
Based on thoughts shared in class or TA group, the oral contribution grade will only affect course grade if higher than the remainder of course grade.	Oral contributions	20	End of term on request	 Any comments relevant to lectures, methods, news or discussions. Please see grading detail to far left.

Data	% Likely ETA of			
Date	Type Course Grade or Content Grade Feedback			
Tests – missed	 For one missed test, grade will be imputed as average of all others. For a second and subsequent missed test, to avoid a zero grade the student is asked to please provide the instructor with a physician's note or a successful case. If deemed appropriate by the instructor, a student may also have an option of submitting an academic-consideration-for-coursework request form at https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-consideration-coursework-form/. 			
Research Proposals and Essays	 A student's initial intention should be to follow up a research proposal with a research essay on the same topic partly because a link would receive feedback and improve quality while reducing effort but Students would have freedom to change themes. 			
Essays – Quant vs. Qual	 Quant – any quantitative analysis involving survey/opinion research or content analysis or data from government or another largely legitimate source of quantitative data including possibly your own OR Qual – any qualitative analysis (i.e. non-quantitative analysis) where your purpose might be to assess, for example, media reporting or non-reporting on a single phenomenon relevant to politics. 			
Essays – Media topics to Illustrate Quant vs Qual	 Media topics are offered below only to illustrate quant vs. qual with no pressure to opt for a media topic. A qual approach could examine a few key newspapers in small number of years on only a few subthemes while a quant approach could either explore many newspapers OR a few key newspapers on many sub-themes OR a few key newspapers on a few key themes across many years. Media reporting themes could be related to economic issues, e.g. inflation's magnitude and causes, intergenerational inequality, government debt, or the relative decline of Europe, freedom, e.g. rights to speak freely and avoid censorship, women, e.g. centuries of unfairness, gender inequality across nations or in Canadian history, another related gender issue, democracy vs. dictatorship, e.g. differences of performance, confirmed, large genocides (at least 500,000) such as Belgium on Congo, Ottomans on Christians, Japan on Chinese, Soviet gulag, Mao against Chinese, Soviet gulag or in Crimea, Nazis against Germans with disabilities and Jews, Cambodia OR precursor genocides such as Germans in their southern African colony. 			
Essays – requirements	 Page notes, not end notes Maximum 4 pp plus bibliography/appendix Appendix may contain tables/charts Bibliography limited to items in page notes Many examples to be discussed in class with some detail posted. 			
Essays – Advice in and	Conrad Winn will happily o discuss essay options in class and			

			%	Likely ETA of	
Date		Туре	Course	Grade or	Content
			Grade	Feedback	
outside class		o be available to provide help on essays, e.g. finding information or data,			
	minimizing effort while maximizing success.				
	0	Following univer	rsity rules,	late submissions	will be accepted til Dec. 5,
		2025. Two perce	entage poi	nts will be deduct	ed per day after Nov. 26
Feedure	irrespective of last name unless supported by an MD's note, evidence of				
Essays – late		disruptive circur	nstances, o	or other documer	ntation deemed adequate by
late	instructor or university.				
	0	 After midnight December 5, 2025, Prof. Winn will need persuasive 			
	evidence to accommodate submission.				
Essays –	o Carleton rules require written permission to (a) use AI at all or (b) re-use				
Al and Previous	data/data analysis/data interpretation from another of your term papers.				
Essays	Students face risks if AI used for fundamental content analysis or data				
LSSayS	analysis – to be discussed in class.				
	·				
Essays –					
other constraints					ansaction or
	0	not authored by	the stude	nt.	

VIII Course schedule

The course will tend to follow the themes outlined in the table immediately below. Some flexibility will be allowed, especially if we experience unexpected events in the news or if students prefer one or more of the supplementary topics listed in a poll of the class.

Each class will have three sections in approximate sequential order:

- Section 1 will normally focus on quantitative and qualitative methods including content from the relevant chapter(s) of Professor Scott Bennett's methods book (available on Brightspace);
- Section 2 will normally focus on news events that tend to be important but may be under-discussed or ignored in the legacy media, politics and even universities;
- Section 3 will explore how some, many, or all of you could create potential publication for your own competitive advantages based on themes in sections numbered 1 or 2 of the same lecture or based on any other research themes or news topics that you perceive as appropriate.

The approximate description of weekly classes below may have some flexibility, especially in light of your responses in class polling or news events. The long table, below, describes topics to be covered in a given class along with preparations. In the initial class, students may expect

Your Opinions Matter!

Please expect two or more polls on how the course might be adjusted for your benefit.

Why? Because your thoughts matter about best strategies for your career or entrepreneurial success.

- o an introduction to methods with the corresponding student preparation being the preface and chapter 1 in Professor Scott Bennett's book,
- o being a PPT presentation on the ease and origins of news censorship with the PPT slides transmitted before the lecture, and
- the third topic being potential research and/or publication by students for their own graduate school, career and/or business advantages – sometimes/often discussed during topics one and two.

Six of the 13 weeks will have a brief multiple choice test available towards the middle of the week.

Date	Topics	Preparations and/or	Communi-
	,	Presentations	cation
Sept. 3	 Introduction to methods News censorship – ease and origins Potential research/publication and/or career directions arising from news and information 	 Textbook: Preface and ch. 1 on Public Affairs (chapter titles are abbreviated) PPT slides sent in preceding days (Ease of Censorship plus) Great variety of media sources, henceforth "media" (please note the many sources in the PPT's) 	Classroom
Sept. 10	 Quantitative Methods Antagonists of Democracy (China) Potential research/publication and/or career directions arising from news and information 	 Textbook: Chapter 2, Quantitative Approach China PPT slides sent in preceding days Media and other sources 	Classroom
Sept. 17	 What's Good vs. Actual Policy Effects Health, Health Policy and Medicine Potential research/publication and/or career directions arising from news and information 	 Textbook: Chapter 3, Evaluation Context for Public Affairs Health PPT slides sent in preceding days Media and other sources 	Classroom
Sept. 24	 Generalizations and causation Crime, Corruption and Politics Potential research/publication and/or career directions arising from news and information 	 Textbook: Chapter 4, Research Problems Crime PPT slides sent in preceding days Media and other sources 	Zoom
Oct. 1	 Design and measurement False Data and False Information Potential research/publication 	Textbook: Chap. 5, Research Design; Chap. 6, Estimation and Measurement	Class canceled with content included in preceding and

Date	Topics	Preparations and/or Communi- Presentations cation
	and/or career directions arising from news and information	 False data PPT slides sent subsequent in preceding days classes Media and other sources
Oct. 8	 Sample size and instrument design Communication and Deception Potential research/publication and/or career directions arising from news and information 	Textbook: Chap. 7, Collection, Measurement and Storage Comm/Deception PPT slides sent in preceding days Media and other sources
Oct. 15	 Types of Statistical Analysis Education and Miseducation Potential research/publication and/or career directions arising from news and information 	Textbook: Chap. 8, Types of Statistical Analysis Education PPT slides sent in preceding days Media and other sources
Oct. 22	Break Week 1. Popular Culture	1. Textbook: Chap. 9,
Oct. 29	 Genocides, Religiosity and Atheism Potential research/publication and/or career directions arising from news and information 	Univariate 2. Genocides PPT slides sent in preceding days 3. Media and other sources
Nov. 5	 Variables changing together Medicine, Health, and Power Potential research/publication and/or career directions arising from news and information 	 Textbook: Chap. 10, Correlation Medicine PPT slides sent in preceding days Media and other sources
Nov. 12	 Regression and causation Iran and Empire Potential research/publication and/or career directions arising from news and information 	 Textbook: Chap. 11, Regression Iran PPT slides sent in preceding days Media and other sources
Nov. 19	 Different ways of gauging relations between two variables Dictators and Deception Potential research/publication and/or career directions arising from news and information 	Textbook: Chap. 12, Mean Differences Dictator PPT slides sent in preceding days Media and other sources Classroom
Nov. 26	 Reporting results – where and why Organization for communication as a career strategy 	 Textbook: Chap. 13, Reporting on Results Strategies PPT slides sent in preceding days Media and other sources

Date	Topics	Preparations and/or Presentations	Communi- cation
	3. Potential research/publication and/or career directions arising from news and information		
Dec. 3	 Miscellaneous issues crying out for research Strategies to benefit you Potential research/publication and/or career directions arising from news and information 	 Consult friends and think hard Brainstorm about strategies for your benefit. PPT's may be provided. Thinking about impact options for your benefit 	Classroom

Political Science Course Outline Appendix

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Student Mental Health

As a university student, you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus):

https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/

Carleton Resources:

Mental Health and Wellbeing: https://carleton.ca/wellness/

Health & Counselling Services: https://carleton.ca/health/

Paul Menton Centre: https://carleton.ca/pmc/

Academic Advising Centre (AAC): https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/

Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS):

https://carleton.ca/csas/

Equity & Inclusivity Communities:

https://carleton.ca/equity/

Off Campus Resources:

Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/

Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-

0991, http://www.crisisline.ca/ Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389,

https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-

counselling-services/

ood2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, https://good2talk.ca/

The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: https://walkincounselling.com

Academic consideration for medical or other extenuating circumstances: Students must contact the instructor(s) of their absence or inability to complete the academic deliverable within the predetermined timeframe due to medical or other extenuating circumstances. For a range of medical or other extenuating circumstances, students may use the online self-declaration form and where appropriate, the use of medical documentation. This policy regards the accommodation of extenuating circumstances for both short-term and long-term periods and extends to all students enrolled at Carleton University.

Students should also consult the <u>Course Outline</u> <u>Information on Academic Accommodations</u> for more information. Detailed information about the procedure for requesting academic consideration can be found <u>here</u>.

Pregnancy: Contact your Instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, please contact Equity and Inclusive Communities (EIC) at equity@carleton.ca or by calling (613) 520-5622 to speak to an Equity Advisor.

Religious obligation: Contact your Instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details <u>click</u> here.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: 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, please request your accommodations for this course through the Ventus Student Portal 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). Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For final exams, the deadlines to request accommodations are published in the **University Academic** Calendars. 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).

Survivors of Sexual Violence: As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services.

Accommodation for Student Activities: Carleton
University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the

individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to write a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may apply within three working days to the Registrar's Office for permission to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully supported by the appropriate documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered. See Undergraduate Calendar, Article 4.3

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

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). Permissibility of submitting substantially the same piece of work more than once for academic credit. If group or collaborative work is expected or allowed, provide a clear and specific description of how and to what extent you consider collaboration to be acceptable or appropriate, especially in the completion of written assignments.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

Please reference the Academic Calendar for each term's official withdrawal dates

OFFICIAL FINAL EXAMINATION PERIOD

Please reference the Academic Calendar for each terms Official Exam Period (may include evenings & Saturdays or Sundays). For more information on the important dates and deadlines of the academic year, consult the Carleton Calendar.

GRADING SYSTEM

The grading system is described in the Undergraduate Calendar section 5.4.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is an essential element of a productive and successful career as a student. Students are required to familiarize themselves with the university's Academic Integrity Policy.

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:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, 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 that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts 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 can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

RESOURCES (613-520-2600, phone ext.)

Department of Political Science (2777)

Registrar's Office (3500)

Centre for Student Academic Success (3822)

Academic Advising Centre (7850)

Paul Menton Centre (6608)

Career Services (6611)

B640-Loeb

300 Tory

4th floor Library

302 Tory

501 Nideyinàn

401 Tory