

**PCSI 2701 B**  
**Introduction to Research Methods in Political Science**  
**Monday 9:35 – 11:25**  
**Online Class**

Instructor: Said Yaqub Ibrahim  
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### **Course Description**

This course introduces students to concepts, methods, and processes of qualitative research in political science. The course contains both theoretical and empirical issues including the philosophy of social sciences, the nature and structure of argument, theory-building, research design, case selection, and multiple types of data collection and analysis. At the end of the course, students are expected to express a general understanding of qualitative research methods in political science and be able to use those methods in conducting their research. This course is taught in-person every Friday in fall 2022. Every class includes a two-hour lecture by the instructor and a fifty-minute tutorial by teaching assistants.

### **Textbooks**

1. Loleen Berdahl and Jason Roy (2021). *Explorations: Conducting Empirical Research in Canadian Political Science*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Marc Menard (2016). *Political Argument: A Guide to Research, Writing, and Debating*. Oxford University Press

### **Course Evaluation**

Course evaluation includes three assignments, tutorials, and a final exam and will be calculated on the following basis:

**A. Assignment 1: Argument (10%)**

Select a political science topic/concept and develop an argument about it. Your argument should include a major premise and two or more minor premises and lead to a logic conclusion. A list of topics/concepts with detailed instruction will be posted at Brightspace in due course. Select your topic/concept with the assumption that you will work on it in your second and third assignments. This assignment should not exceed 2-3 pages (double-spaced in 12-point font).

**B. Assignment 2: Measurement (15%)**

This assignment is an opportunity for students to operationalize a political science concept. Students will use the concept which they have worked on in their first assignment, conduct a review of 3 relevant scholarly sources, and explain how the concept is operationalized in each source. You should be able to identify two or more variables that explain the concept. This assignment should not exceed 3-4 pages (double-spaced in 12-point font).

**C. Assignment 3: Final Paper (25%)**

Students are required to write a research paper by putting together the argument, the concept, and the measurements that they have developed in previous assignments. Students should conduct a literature review of 8 to 10 scholarly sources to write a well-organized mini-research paper that should not exceed 10-12 pages (double-spaced in 12-point font).

**D. Tutorial (20%)**

All tutorials.

Tutorial participation is a critical component of this course. Tutorials are led by teaching assistants who will evaluate students' attendance and participation.

**E. Final Exam (30%)**

Open book online examination. Final examination will take place in the scheduled examination period. The format and instructions for the final exam will be discussed in the last class. The exam will be scheduled during the regular exam period.

**F. Citation**

Assignments must follow standard bibliographic and citation formats including MLA, APA, and Chicago Manual of Style. For each assignment select one citation format and use it consistently throughout the paper.

**G. Submission Policy**

All assignments should be submitted electronically in Brightspace. E-mailed assignments will not be accepted. Late submissions will be penalized 3 percent per 24 hours. If you need an extension for an assignment, contact the instructor or the TA prior to the due date.

## Course Summary

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Tutorial</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
<b>Part 1: Fundamentals of Research Methods</b>			
<i>Jan. 8</i>	Course Introduction	<i>No Tutorial</i>	
<i>Jan. 15</i>	Research Methods & Philosophy of Social Sciences	Is Political Science a Science?	
<i>Jan. 22</i>	Argument, Causation & Theory Development	Argument	
<b>Part 2: Research Design</b>			
<i>Jan. 29</i>	Research Question & Hypothesis	Answering RQ	<b>Assignment 1 Due</b>
<i>Feb. 5</i>	Concept & Measurement	Measurement	
<i>Feb. 12</i>	Case Study & Comparative Research	Comparative Research	
<i>Feb. 19</i>	<b>Statutory Holiday &amp; Winter Break</b>		
<i>Feb. 26</i>	Research Ethics	<i>Ethics in Research</i>	<b>Assignment 2 Due</b>
<b>Part 3 Research in Practice</b>			
<i>March. 4</i>	Textual Analysis	Discourse Analysis	
<i>March. 11</i>	Interview & Focus Group	Interview	
<i>March. 18</i>	Observation & Field Research	Ethnography	
<i>March. 25</i>	Survey	Survey	
<i>April. 1</i>	Experimental research	<i>Experimental Research</i>	
<i>April 8</i>	Course Overview and final Exam Instruction	<i>No Tutorial</i>	<b>Assignment 3 Due</b>

## Course Schedule

### Lecture 1: Course Introduction

The instructor reviews the syllabus and discusses the course content, requirements, and organization.

*No required reading*

### Lecture 2: Research Methods and Philosophy of Social Sciences

*Required Reading:*

Berdahl and Roy, Chapters 1 & 2.

### **Lecture 3: Argument, Causation & Theory Development**

*Required Reading:*

Berdahl and Roy, Chapter 2 (read only *constructing an argument*)

Marc Menard, Chapter 4

*Optional:*

Baxter-Moore, N., Carroll, T. and Church R. *Studying Politics: An Introduction to Argument and Analysis* (Toronto: Copp Clark Longman, 1994), Chapters 2 & 3 (available electronically in Ares)

### **Lecture 4: Research Question and Hypothesis**

*Required Reading:*

Sandra Halperin and Oliver Heath (2012). *Political Research: Methods and Practical Skills*. Oxford University Press. Chapters 5 & 6 (available electronically in Ares)

### **Lecture 5: Concept and Measurement**

*Required Reading:*

Berdahl and Roy, Chapter 4

### **Lecture 6: Case Study & Comparative Research**

*Required Reading:*

Berdahl and Roy, Chapter, 10.

*Optional:*

John Gerring, What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good For? *American Political Science Review* 98 (2), 2004: 341-354.

### **Lecture 7: Ethics in Political Science Research**

*Required Reading:*

Berdahl and Roy, Chapter 3.

*Optional:*

Esikot F. Idorenyin, Social science and research ethics in developing countries: The perspective from Nigeria, *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development*, 6(4), 2014: 231-241.

### **Lecture 8: Textual Analysis**

*Required Reading:*

Berdahl and Roy, Chapter, 6.

### **Lecture 9: Interview and Focus Group**

*Required Reading:*

Berdahl and Roy, Chapter 7 (read only interview and focus group sections).

### **Lecture 10: Observation & Field research**

*Required Reading:*

Berdahl and Roy, Chapter 7 (read only observation section)

N. Cohen, & T. Arieli, 'Field research in conflict environments: Methodological challenges and snowball sampling,' *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(4), 2011: 423-435.

R. F. Fenno, 'Observation, context, and sequence in the study of politics,' *American Political Science Review*, 80(1), 1986: 3-15.

### **Lecture 11: Survey**

*Required Reading:*

Berdahl and Roy, Chapter 8.

*Optional:*

Harvard University Program on Survey Research (2007). *Tip Sheet on Question Wording*, Access online at: <http://psr.iq.harvard.edu/book/questionnaire-design-tip-sheet>

### **Lecture 12: Experimental research**

*Required Reading*

Berdahl and Roy, Chapter 9.

### **Lecture 13: Course Overview and final Exam Discussion**

No required reading

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## **Appendix**

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### **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/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

## **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:

***Academic consideration for medical or other extenuating circumstances:*** Please contact your instructor if you are experiencing circumstances that (a) are beyond your control, (b) have a significant impact your capacity to meet your academic obligations, and (c) could not have reasonably been prevented. Decisions on academic consideration are in your instructor’s discretion; they will be guided by the course learning outcomes and the principle of good faith. Please see [here](#) for more details. For considerations relating to course work, your instructor may request that you complete the [Self-Declaration form](#). To apply for a deferral of your final exam, you must submit the Self-Declaration form to the Registrar’s Office no later than three days after the scheduled examination or take-home due date.

***Pregnancy accommodation:*** Please 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, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form ([click here](#)).

***Religious accommodation:*** Please 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 [click here](#).

***Accommodations for students with disabilities:*** If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation, or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, reach out to your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, [click here](#).

***Accommodation for student activities:*** Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and to the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who engage in student activities at the national or international level. Please 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 information, please [click here](#).

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: [students.carleton.ca/course-outline](https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline).

### **Sexual Violence Policy**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated. 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: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](https://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support).

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is an essential element of a productive and successful career as a student. Carleton's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) addresses academic integrity violations, including plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, misrepresentation, impersonation, withholding of records, obstruction/interference, disruption of instruction or examinations, improper access to and/or dissemination of information, or violation of test and examination rules. Students are required to familiarize themselves with the university's academic integrity rules.

### ***Plagiarism***

The Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include, but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, websites, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- Using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- Using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;

- Submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

### ***Use of Artificial Intelligence***

Unless explicitly permitted by the instructor in a particular course, any use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools to produce assessed content (e.g., text, code, equations, image, summary, video, etc.) is considered a violation of academic integrity standards.

### ***Procedures in Cases of Suspected Violations***

Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy are serious offences which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. When an instructor suspects a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, the Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the assignment/exam in question or a final grade of "F" for the course. More information on the University's Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>.

### **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).

### **Submission and Return of Term Work**

Papers must be submitted directly to the instructor according to the instructions in the course outline. The departmental office will not accept assignments submitted in hard copy.

### **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:

<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Letter grade</b>	<b>12-point scale</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Letter grade</b>	<b>12-point scale</b>
90-100	A+	12	67-69	C+	6
85-89	A	11	63-66	C	5
80-84	A-	10	60-62	C-	4
77-79	B+	9	57-59	D+	3
73-76	B	8	53-56	D	2
70-72	B-	7	50-52	D-	1



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 Brightspace. As important course and university information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton University email accounts and Brightspace.

### **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. By hosting social events, including Model Parliament, debates, professional development sessions and more, 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 our networking opportunities, academic engagement initiatives and numerous events which aim to complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CarletonPoliticalScienceSociety/>.

### **Official Course Outline**

The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.