

## PSCI 2701B

### INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH METHODS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

*Mondays, 11:35 am to 1:25 pm*

*Instructor: Simon Langlois-Bertrand*

*Office hours : Mondays 2:30pm-4:30pm, Loeb B646*

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### **Course description**

This course offers an introduction to key empirical methods required for understanding, analyzing and researching problems in political science. Students will learn and reflect on the different philosophical and practical issues, the concepts, the methods and other components in conducting scientific research in political science. The emphasis will be on the main non-quantitative methods used in political science, including literature review, data source research, case studies, content analysis, interviews, and surveys.

More specifically, the course is designed to enable students to:

- Choose which methods are appropriate in a given context, as well engage with debates about the benefits and drawbacks of the different approaches;
- Be familiar with the techniques for measuring social and political phenomena;
- Build arguments that are coherent, logically sound, and empirically supported, and analyze and critique arguments and claims made by others;
- Judge and critique the methods used by other researchers and analysts;
- Know the fundamentals of comparative and descriptive research in political science, in order to be able to create and plan a research project.

### **Evaluation**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Online Quiz 1	Week of October 15th	10%
Online Quiz 2	Week of November 12th	15%
Assignment 1 : Analyzing arguments	October 1st	10%
Assignment 2 : Operationalizing Concepts	November 5th	10%
Assignment 3 : Content analysis	December 3rd	20%
Tutorial Attendance		10%
Final Exam		25%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

Students will be provided with detailed instructions and guidelines for each assignment in class and via cuLearn (login at [www.carleton.ca/culearn](http://www.carleton.ca/culearn)). Students are responsible for getting this information and contacting their respective T.A. or the instructor for any precisions they feel necessary. Regular updates will be put on cuLearn, so students are strongly encouraged to check the website on a daily basis for important messages.

**Course Requirements:** Students must fulfil all course requirements in order to achieve a passing grade. Failure to hand in any assignment will result in a grade of F.

**Policy on late assignments.** Assignments are due in class at the beginning of the lecture, on the due date. Exceptions must be justified with your T.A. ahead of the due date, in which case alternative arrangements will be made if necessary. Late assignments will be penalized by 10% a day, up to a maximum of 5 days, which corresponds to the Friday following the due date before 4:00pm. Assignments submitted after 4:00 pm on the Friday following the due date will automatically be given a 0. Assignments placed in the department's drop box on the due date will also be considered late, since the box is not emptied until 4:00 pm. If you need to use the drop box to submit your assignment on time, you must submit your assignment at least one business day before the due date in order to avoid the late penalty. Note that since our classes are on Mondays, this means submitting it the Friday prior to the due date, before 4:00pm. The following table summarizes the possibilities for late penalties.

For an assignment submitted...	Late penalty	Maximum grade
In class on the due date, or in the drop box before 4:00 pm on the Friday before	None	100%
Monday (due date), before 4:00 pm in the drop box	10%	90%
Tuesday following the due date, before 4:00 pm in the drop box	20%	80%
Wednesday following the due date, before 4:00 pm in the drop box	30%	70%
Thursday following the due date, before 4:00 pm in the drop box	40%	60%
Friday following the due date, before 4:00 pm in the drop box	50%	50%
Any time after 4:00 pm on the Friday following the due date	100%	0%

Extensions will not be granted except on medical grounds, with appropriate documentation. Note that in the case of an exception granting you permission to submit your assignment through email, the 4:00 pm rule always applies to determine the late penalty. These rules are enforced to ensure fairness across the large number of students registered in the course.

**Tutorial attendance.** Starting on week 2, there will be a total of 10 weekly tutorials held (please verify on Carleton Central for the place and time of your own group). Attendance is mandatory, and will count for half of the tutorial grade (5%). You are allowed 1 unjustified absence without being penalized, in other words a student attending 9 out of the 10 tutorials will get the full 5 points. The other half of the tutorial grade will be determined based on your participation in the discussions and the exercises led by your T.A. The tutorials are designed to help you grasp the topics seen in class more in-depth. There are no tutorials on weeks 1 and 12.

**Online quizzes.** The two online quizzes will be administered through cuLearn and will consist of multiple choice questions. You will have 48 hours to log into your account and complete the quiz, starting at the end of class on the week of the due date. More instructions will be provided prior to each quiz.

**Final exam.** The cumulative final exam will be held during the exam period. A description of the exam format and content will be provided during the last class.

## Course text

Most of the readings in this course come from the required textbook:

Keith Archer and Loleen Berdahl (2011). *Explorations: Conducting Empirical Research in Canadian Political Science*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

The text is on order at Haven Books (located near Carleton campus at 43 Seneca Street, at Sunnyside), and is also on reserve at the MacOdrum Library. A few of the required readings are only available in hard copy from the library reserves. These are marked with an asterisk in the reading list for each week. These readings will be available on short-term loan (2 hours) basis from MacOdrum. Other readings will be available on cuLearn.

## Academic Resources

<i><b>If you need assistance with...</b></i>	<i><b>Refer to...</b></i>	<i><b>Contact Information</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding a tutor</li> <li>• One-on-one study skills support</li> <li>• Group study skills workshops</li> <li>• Reserving group study rooms</li> </ul>	Student Academic Success Centre – Learning Support Services	302 Tory Building, 613-520-7850 <a href="http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/">http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/</a> No appointments necessary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic support and advice</li> <li>• Choosing, changing major</li> <li>• Academic planning</li> </ul>	Student Academic Success Centre – Academic Advising	302 Tory Building, 613-520-7850 <a href="http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/">http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/</a> No appointments necessary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A learning disability</li> </ul>	Paul Menton Centre	501 University Centre, 520-6608 <a href="http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/">http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing writing skills</li> </ul>	Writing Tutorial Service	4th Floor MacOdrum Library, 613-520-6632 <a href="http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/">http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Polishing English conversation skills</li> </ul>	International Student Services Office, Conversation Groups	128 University Centre, 613-520-6600 <a href="http://www1.carleton.ca/isso/">http://www1.carleton.ca/isso/</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research assistance</li> </ul>	Research Help Desk, MacOdrum Library	MacOdrum Library, 520-2735 <a href="http://www.library.carleton.ca/">http://www.library.carleton.ca/</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistics/SPSS assistance (by appointment only)</li> </ul>	Data Centre, MacOdrum Library	Statistical Consultant, 520-2600 x 2619 <a href="http://www.library.carleton.ca/contact/service-points/data-centre">http://www.library.carleton.ca/contact/service-points/data-centre</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coping with stress or crisis</li> </ul>	Office of Student Affairs  Health and Counseling Services	613-520-2600, x 2573 <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/studentaffairs">http://www.carleton.ca/studentaffairs</a>  613-520-6674 <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/health">www.carleton.ca/health</a>

## **Topics and Schedule**

The following list of topics is offered as a tentative schedule only. Flexibility being essential in order to cover the course material at a pace that works for both the students and the instructor, some changes may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

### *LECTURE #1 (10 September)*

Topic: Introduction; Scientific Approach to Politics and Social Phenomena

*No tutorial.*

Required readings:

- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 1 (The Scientific Approach to Politics);
- \*Isaak, A.C. 1969. *Scope and Methods of Political Science*. Homewood: Dorsey Press. Chapter 2: Politics and science, pp. 13-30; Chapter 4 : Is political science a science? pp. 45-57.

### *LECTURE #2 (17 September)*

Topic: Theory and research; Causality; Introduction to theory development

*Tutorial #1.*

Required readings:

- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 2 (Theory-oriented Research and the Issue of Causality).

### *LECTURE #3 (24 September)*

Topic: Causation and Argumentation

*Tutorial #2.*

Required readings:

- \*Baxter-Moore, N., Carroll, T. and Church R. 1994. *Studying Politics: An Introduction to Argument and Analysis*. Toronto: Cobb Clark Longman. Chapter 2: Understanding arguments, pp. 23-48; Chapter 3: Generalization, cause and analogy, pp. 49-76;
- Lite, Jordan. 2009. "Special delivery? Cereal not linked to baby's sex, after all, study says." *Scientific American* (January 14). Online, <http://www.scientificamerican.com/blog/60-second-science/post.cfm?id=special-delivery-cereal-not-linked-2009-01-14>

*LECTURE #4 (1 October)*

Topic: Ethics in Social Research

*Tutorial #3*

Required readings:

- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 5 (Research Ethics: People Behind the Numbers);
- Dixon-Woods, M. and C.L. Bosk. 2011. "Defending rights or defending privileges?" *Public Management Review* 13(2):257-72;
- Wood, E.J. 2006. "The ethical challenges of field research in conflict zones." *Qualitative Sociology* 29:373-86.

*8 OCTOBER: NO CLASS AND NO TUTORIAL*

Thanksgiving Day.

*LECTURE #5 (15 October)*

Topic: Designing a Research Project and Gathering Data

*Tutorial #4*

Required readings:

- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 10 (Government Data Sources);
- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 20 (Writing the Report).

*LECTURE #6 (22 October)*

Topic: Measuring Social Phenomena; Conceptualization

*Tutorial #5*

Required readings:

- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 3 (Defining the Political World: Concepts);
- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 4 (Defining the Political World: Measures);
- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 6 (Observing the Political World: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches).

Optional:

- Gerring, John. 1999. "What makes a concept good? A criterial framework for understanding concept formation in the social sciences." *Polity* 31(2): 357-93.

*LECTURE #7 (29 October)*

Topic: Conducting Surveys and Interpreting Results

*Tutorial #6*

Required readings:

- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 8 (Sampling and the Political World);
- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 9 (Observing the Political World: Survey Research).

*LECTURE #8 (5 November)*

Topic: Interviews and Focus Groups

*Tutorial #7*

Required readings:

- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 13 (Elite Interviews);
- Speckhard, A. 2009. "Research challenges involved in field research and interviews regarding the militant jihad, extremism, and suicide terrorism." *Democracy and Security* 5: 199–222;
- Parham-Payne, W. 2009. "Through the lens of Black Women: The significance of Obama's campaign." *Journal of African American Studies* 13: 131–38.

*LECTURE #9 (12 November)*

Topic: Experiments

*Tutorial #8*

Required readings:

- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 11 (Experiments);
- Berinsky, A.J. and D.R. Kinder. 2006. "Making sense of issues through media frames: Understanding the Kosovo crisis." *Journal of Politics* 68(3): 640-56;
- Loewen, P.J., D. Rubenson and L. Wantchekon. 2010. "Help me help you: Conducting field experiments with political elites." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* March 628(1): 165-75.

Optional:

- Gerring, John and Rose McDermott. 2007. "An Experimental Template for Case Study Research." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(3): 688-701.

*LECTURE #10 (19 November)*

Topic: Content Analysis

*Tutorial #9*

Required readings:

- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 12 (Content Analysis);
- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 19 (Analyzing Qualitative Data);

- Tumasjan, A., T.O. Sprenger, P.G. Sandner and I.M. Welpe. 2011. "Predicting elections with Twitter: What 140 characters reveal about political sentiment." *Proceedings of the Fourth International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media*, Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence Press, 178-85  
<http://www.aaai.org/ocs/index.php/ICWSM/ICWSM10/paper/view/1441>
- Meeks, L. 2012. "Is she 'Man Enough'? Women candidates, executive political offices, and news coverage." *Journal of Communication* 62(1): 175–93.

#### LECTURE #11 (26 November)

Topic: Comparative and Case Study Research; Selection Bias

Tutorial #10

Required readings:

- Gerring, John. 2004. "What is a case study and what is it good for?" *American Political Science Review* 98(2): 341-54;
- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 7 (Comparative Research);
- Geddes B. 1990. "How the cases you choose affect the answers you get: Selection bias in comparative politics." *Political Analysis* 2(1): 131-50.

Optional:

- Sawer, M. and D. Laycock. 2009. "Down with elites and up with inequality: Market populism in Australia and Canada." *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 47(2):133-50;
- George, Alexander L. and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press. Chapter 1, all of Part II, and Chapter 12 ;
- Mitchell, Ronald and Thomas Bernauer. 2004. "Beyond story-telling: Designing case study research in international environmental policy." In *Models, numbers & cases: Methods for studying international relations*, ed. Detlef F. Sprinz and Yael Wolinsky-Nahmias, 81–106. Ann Arbor MI: University of Michigan Press;
- Bailey, Carol A. 2007. *A Guide to Qualitative Field Research*, Second Edition. Pine Forge Press. Chapter 10, 11 and 12.

#### LECTURE #12 (3 December)

Topic: Observation and Field Research; Final thoughts

No tutorial.

Required readings:

- Archer and Berdahl, Chapter 14 (Observation);
- Fenno, R. F. 1986. "Observation, context, and sequence in the study of politics." *American Political Science Review*, 80(1): 3-15.

Optional:

- Virchow, F. 2007. "Performance, emotion and ideology: On the creation of 'collectives of emotion' and worldview in the contemporary German Far Right." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 36(2): 147-64.

## **Student Conduct, Academic Regulations and Academic Accommodations**

**For students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre (613-520-6608) every term to ensure that the instructor receives your request for accommodation. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet with the instructor in order to discuss your needs at least two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012 for December examinations.

**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](http://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.

**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 include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

**Oral Examination:** At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

**Submission and Return of Term Work:** Papers must be handed directly to the instructor 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. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

**Grading:** Assignments and exams will be grade with a percentage grade. To convert this to a letter grade or the university 12-point system, please refer to the following table.

Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale	Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale
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

**Grades:** Final grades are derived from the completion of course assignments. Failure to write the final exam will result in the grade ABS. Deferred final exams are available **ONLY** if the student is in good standing in the course.

**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.

**Connect Email Accounts:** All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via Connect. Important course and University information is also distributed via the Connect email system. It is the student's responsibility to monitor their Connect account.

**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 in the after-hours academic life 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, please email [carletonpss@gmail.com](mailto:carletonpss@gmail.com), visit our website at [poliscisociety.com](http://poliscisociety.com), or come to our office in Loeb D688.

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