

<https://carleton.ca/polisci/>

Intermediate Research Methods for Applied Political Science

PSCI 4702 - PSCI 5702

Instructor: Scott Edward Bennett
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Class Times: 8:35am to 11:25pm on Mondays beginning on January 6.
Please confirm location on Carleton Central.

Office Hours: The instructor will hold nominal **online** office hours from 8:00 to 13:00 Fridays (unless altered by last minute adjustments arising from University scheduling or University meetings). These hours will probably not be held during the first week of the term. **It is important to note that appointments during those hours must be arranged at least 48 hours in advance. All regular hours are online. There are no regular in person office hours.**

Read this syllabus carefully. This syllabus stipulates class and university policies. Exemptions from these policies will almost never be granted.

NOTE: IN SO FAR AS POSSIBLE, YOU SHOULD TRY TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE INSTRUCTOR IN CLASS OR THROUGH ELECTRONIC MAIL. IN PERSON MEETINGS DURING OFFICE HOURS SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR PROBLEMS THAT CANNOT BE DEALT WITH IN ANY OTHER WAY. THERE ARE VERY FEW MATTERS THAT CANNOT BE DEALT WITH IN CLASS OR BY EMAIL

Course Description

At one point or another, most students in political science or related fields have probably been confronted with the question, "What can you do with your degree or degrees?" While there are some opportunities to use your education in purely non-quantitative areas, such opportunities are increasingly rare. Alternatively, there are a great many professions which fundamentally involve the use of empirical, particularly quantitative, analysis in politics and

policy. A list of some relevant activities in those professions would include, *inter alia*, the following:

- Public opinion polling which drives almost all parts of the policy process
- Campaign and election analysis often involving polling to track electorate response, evaluate campaign strategies or serve media interests
- Evaluation of public policy and programmes—a multi dimensional set of activities involving everything from the simplest monitoring and performance measurement activities to full scale multi-methods evaluations and experiments
- Developing public affairs communication strategies for political parties, interest group, government agencies and even corporations
- Devising ways to change public opinion for particular purposes
- Devising ways to mobilize groups
- Using some of the same skills required in the above to do private sector market or management research.

For that matter, in many parts of the discipline, even if one wishes to be an academic, knowing about the substance of the above activities and the skills used in them is increasingly important.

The purpose of this course is to provide you with an opportunity to become more acquainted with applied political analysis by producing a paper that could contribute to one of the types of projects noted above. Since our time frame and resources are very limited, it will probably not be possible to do a full scale project based on a large project data set that you create yourself. In light of that, you should consider taking one of the following approaches:

- Emphasize the analysis of an existing data set
- Emphasize the construction of a research design paper laying out the structure of a larger, potential research project. This might involve some very limited data collection just as a pre-test.

Each student should choose the type of project that best suits their own research. I think this is particularly important in that this course tends to have students from varied academic backgrounds with varied interests. However, the instructor is willing to recommend paper topics and approaches if the student does not have a project in mind. The instructor will use certain types of projects for the purposes of illustration in class, but students do not have to pursue the same types of projects if it doesn't suit their purposes.

One of the unusual features of this course is that there are really very few useful academic readings available that realistically reflect the nature of these projects. The academic work done on the nature of public affairs analysis tends to be at several removes from (and often several years behind), the practical features of this kind of work. That means a great deal of the material will have to be imparted to the students through participation and example. At the same time, students will usually need to do a great deal of work finding their own substantive sources for their research.

Main Texts

There are no main texts for the course. However, the main references that may be of use are listed below. You will probably not need to buy them, and they are on reserve or online if you need them.

Public Affairs Research Methods: A Quantitative Introduction by Scott Edward Bennett (mostly for review)

Empirical Political Analysis (8th edition) by Briens, Willnat, Manheim and Rich (Longman, 2011) (mostly for review)

Introduction to Survey Sampling by Graham Kalton (mostly for review)

Using Multivariate Statistics (ideally at least fifth edition) by Tabachnick and Fidell (for more advanced reference)

Secondary readings may also be suggested from time to time and will sometimes be available on reserve.

Grading and Preliminary Comments on Course Work

Major Seminar Paper 70 % of course grade

Presentations 30 % of course grade

More details on the major paper will be provided in class. If time permits, an oral presentation on the paper will be made to the class during its last meeting on April 6, 2020. The final version of the paper is due by the end of April 6, 2020. It is to be submitted as a WORD attachment to an email.

Ideally, there will be at least two major presentations, apart from any minor presentations of exercises. One of these should be during the final class when the results of the major paper are presented. The other major presentation will occur at about the sixth class (depending on class progress) when each student will be asked to briefly present preliminary aspects of their project plans. There will be some small weight given to general attendance as well.

Those registered in PSCI 5702 will be evaluated in essentially the same way as those registered in PSCI 4702. However, it is expected that students registered in a graduate

course will pay a bit more attention to placing their work in existing literature than those registered in an undergraduate course.

Main Topics

Note that the instructor considers it to be bad pedagogy to assign in advance specific dates to the coverage of specific topics. We will cover as many of the topics as is appropriate and possible in the order listed below. Our progress will primarily depend on student background and interests.

It is assumed that students will have taken at least an introductory quantitative methods course prior to taking this course. There will likely be some opportunity to review that material during the course, but the review will be inserted at a couple of different points within the following topics.

We can alter the emphasis placed on certain topics if it suits the background and interests of the students.

1. Introduction to the Course and Some Review Elements

We will also consider some of the types of projects that can be pursued and what students are interested in pursuing. There may some review of basic concepts.

2. Using Experiments, Surveys and Focus Groups to Develop Later Research Strategy that Will Influence Policy and Related Behaviour and Opinion: The Importance of Research Design and Sample Selection in Applied Work

3. The Importance of Questionnaires and Measurement Instruments: Developing Them and Linking Them to Analysis in Practically Useful Ways

4. Gathering and Processing Basic Data: The Implications of Various Modes of Data Collection

5. Preliminary Presentations

Presentations will probably take place at about this time, but it will depend on other aspects of class progress.

6. Analysing Data

This will almost certainly take up much more time than other topics. It will cover such sub-topics as univariate analysis, bivariate analysis and aspects of multivariate analysis. In addition, some aspects of data transformation will be dealt with. This overall topic may well take up much of the course. A probable list of topics is:

- a. Possibly a quick review of univariate techniques and basic association and correlation
 - b. Linear regression and some basic extensions: explaining ordered variables
 - c. Logistic Regression: Specialised Prediction of Categorical Variables
 - d. Discriminant analysis: predicting categorical group memberships using a different analytic tradition
 - e. Factor and principal components analysis: finding patterns in sets of variables (*If it seems to suit student projects, we may cover this technique earlier.*)
 - f. Cluster analysis and related techniques: finding patterns in sets of cases
 - g. The Causal Modelling Approach: Exploring Systems of Relationships
7. Using Results to Create a Recommendation for a Change Strategy and Further Research

This will not be a big section, but I want students to be able to discuss what they think the major issues would be in writing effective recommendations.

8. Problem Solving Sessions if Time Permits

In fact, parts of certain earlier classes will be devoted to this. So, this may not be critical to include here.

9. Final Presentations if Time Permits

Other Considerations

Without going into great detail, various other course, departmental and university rules apply to the conduct of any course. You are expected to know them, and I imagine they are already understood by senior students and graduate students. From, my point of view, the important rules are:

1. Do your work on time as described in this outline and in class.
2. Do not engage in plagiarism.
3. Do not disrupt the class.
4. Keep an open mind with respect to value systems and approaches to inquiry.

On a more administrative note, An IP (in progress) can be granted to graduate students, but graduate students should try to adhere to the same schedule as undergraduates.

It is possible that there will be a minor extension of the official date for turning in the final paper. However, this will apply to the whole class and not to particular individuals. Of course, as noted, a graduate student does have some added leeway here because of the possibility of an IP.

Other rules of general interest from a departmental or university perspective are contained in an attachment that follows.

Academic Accommodations

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:

Pregnancy obligation

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, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

Religious obligation

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, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

Academic 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 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, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. carleton.ca/pmc

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 is 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

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 must be provided to students who compete or perform 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.

<https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

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

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.

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 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:

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

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.

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/> and our website <https://carletonpss.com/>, or stop by our office in Loeb D688!"

Official Course Outline

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