PSC 202: Introduction to Political Analysis
Department of Political Science
Syracuse University

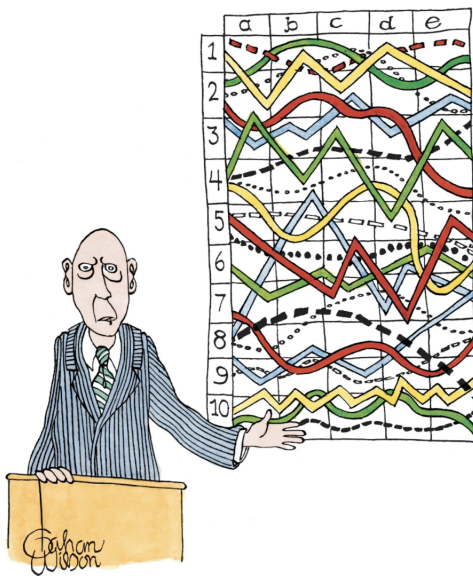|			
Summer 2021	M/W 10:00-11:45	Hall of Languages 107	Kari Waters

"I'll pause for a moment so you can let this information sink in."

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to build skills for conducting, interpreting, and presenting political science research. These skills include: basic research and data collection practices, techniques for measuring political science concepts quantitatively, hypothesis testing, interpretation of statistical evidence, and the presentation of findings in a clear and compelling manner. Tying these components together is a thematic focus on important political science concepts such as democracy, power, or representation.

How to reach me

In person: Office hours
T/Th. 10-11 AM
100 Eggers Hall

Online:
krwaters@syr.edu
Zoom by appointment

Please check your university email daily for class updates.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:
- Write & test hypotheses
- Measure political science concepts quantitatively
- Analyze data & evaluate claims
- Make effective arguments

Course Materials & Info

Readings

Pollock, Philip H., and Barry C. Edwards. 2020. The Essentials of Political Analysis. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Additional readings not in the Pollock & Edwards book will be posted to Blackboard.

You can 1 point **extra credit** by making a meme related to the class, up to 3 times. Email to me for credit.

Problem Sets

The best way to learn the material in this class is to work through a lot of exercises. The problem sets will be posted Monday on Blackboard, and are due on Friday. All assignments should be typed. They are graded on a scale from 1 to 5, and late submissions will be penalized by 1 point for every 24 hours past the due date. Any homework extension requests must be made to in writing and at the time of the homework being posted (or sooner).

Assignments & Grading

- Participation 10%
- Exam 1 25%
- Exam 2 25%
- Problem Sets 40%
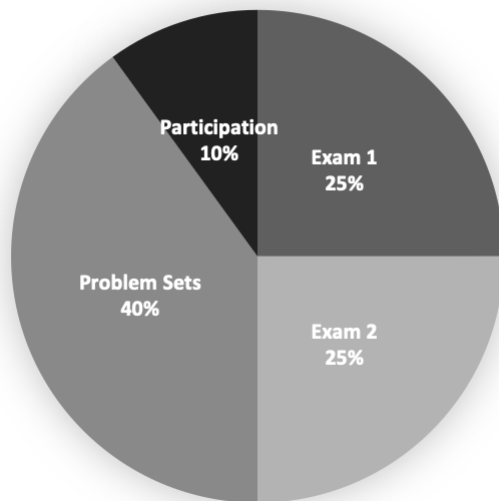
Grading Scale

A	≥ 94
A-	90-93.9
B+	88-89.9
B	83-87.9
B-	80-82.9
C+	78-79.9
C	73-77.9
C-	70-72.9
D	60-69.9
F	< 60

Participation

Please come to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading & current events.

Exams

Two over the course of the semester to evaluate your understanding of the readings and lectures. These exams will be timed and available through Blackboard. They are open-note, but are not collaborative.

Course Schedule

Part I: Introduction & Terminology

Class 1: Course Introduction

Class 2: Concepts and Measurement

Pollock & Edwards, Chapter 1, don't read "Working with datasets, codebooks, and software"

Optional: Maerz S., Lührmann A., Hellmeier S., Grahn S., Lindberg, S (2020). "State of the world 2019: autocratization surges – resistance grows," Democratization: Vol. 27: No. 6, pp 909-927. https://doi-org.libezproxy2.syr.edu/10.1080/13510347.2020.1758670

Problem set #1 posted to Blackboard

Class 3: Variables
Pollock & Edwards, Chapter 2, until pg. 58

Class 4: Hypotheses
Pollock & Edwards, Chapter 3, until bottom pg. 86

Optional: Milan W. Svolik (2020), "When Polarization Trumps Civic Virtue: Partisan Conflict and the Subversion of Democracy by Incumbents", Quarterly Journal of Political Science: Vol. 15: No. 1, pp 3-31. http://dx.doi.org/10.1561/100.00018132

Friday: Problem set #1 due on Blackboard

Part II: Methods Toolbox

Class 5: Quantitative/Qualitative Research & Research Ethics

Downes, Alexander B. "How smart and tough are democracies? Reassessing theories of democratic victory in war." International Security 33, no. 4 (2009): 9-51. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40207151

Wood, Elisabeth Jean. "The ethical challenges of field research in conflict zones." Qualitative sociology 29, no. 3 (2006): 373-386. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-006-9027-8

Problem set #2 posted to Blackboard

Class 6: Experiments and Quasi-Experiments
Pollock & Edwards, Chapter 4, pg. 105-113

Optional: Posner, Daniel. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi," American Political Science Review, Vol. 98, No. 4: 529-545. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055404041334

Class 7: The Comparative Method
He, Kai. 2013. "Case Study and the Comparative Method." In Political Science Research in Practice, chap. 3. New York: Routledge. (Blackboard)

Gerring, John. 2001. "Methods." In Social Science Methodology, chap. 9. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Blackboard)

Class 8: Case Studies and Process Tracing
Van Evera, Stephen. 1997. "What are case studies? How should they be performed?" In Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science, chap. 2. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. (Blackboard)

George, Alexander L. and Andrew Bennett. 2005. "The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison." In Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences, chap. 3. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Blackboard)

Optional: Hale, Henry. 2011. "Formal constitutions in informal politics: Institutions and Democratization in Post-Soviet Eurasia." *World Politics* 63 No. 4: 581-617. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0043887111000189

Friday: Problem set #2 due on Blackboard

Class 9: Review

Class 10: Exam 1 on Blackboard during scheduled class time

Part III: Quantitative Methods

Class 11: Using Data for Comparisons and Cross-Tabulations Part I
Pollock & Edwards, Chapter 3 pg. 85-91

Class 12: Using Data for Comparisons and Cross-Tabulations Part II
Pollock & Edwards, Chapter 5

Class 13: Statistical Inference Part I
Pollock & Edwards, Chapter 6

Problem set #3 posted to Blackboard

Class 14: Statistical Inference Part II
Wheelan, Charles. "Naked Statistics," Ch. 8. Blackboard.

Part IV: Statistical Significance and Correlation

Class 15: Significance Testing Part 1
Pollock & Edwards, Chapter 7

Class 16: Significance Testing Part II
Pollock & Edwards, Chapter 7

Friday: Problem set #3 due on Blackboard

Class 17: Correlation
Pollock & Edwards, Chapter 8

Problem set #4 posted to Blackboard

Class 18: Linear Regression
Wheelan, Charles. "Naked Statistics," Ch. 11. Blackboard.

Class 19: Linear Regression
Pollock & Edwards, Chapter 8

Friday: Problem set #4 due on Blackboard

Part V: Writing and Presenting in Political Science

Class 20: Making Effective Arguments in Political Science Part II: Writing
Wilhoit, Stephen. 2009. "The Elements of Persuasive Academic Arguments." In A Brief Guide to Writing Academic Arguments, chap. 2. New York: Longman. (Blackboard)

Class 21: Making Effective Arguments in Political Science Part I: Data Visualization
Healy, Kieran. 2018. "Data Visualization," Ch. 1.
https://socviz.co/lookatdata.html

Class 22: Review

Class 23: Final Exam on Blackboard during scheduled class time

Course Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

Syracuse University's Academic Integrity Policy reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy defines our expectations for academic honesty and holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit. Students should understand that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific expectations, as well as about university-wide academic integrity expectations. The policy governs appropriate citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. The policy also prohibits students from submitting the same work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. Under the policy, students found in violation are subject to grade sanctions determined by the course instructor and non-grade sanctions determined by the School or College where the course is offered as described in the Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric. SU students are required to read an online summary of the University's academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check-in on MySlice. For more information about the policy, see academicintegrity.syr.edu.
The Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric establishes recommended guidelines for the determination of grade penalties by faculty and instructors, while also giving them discretion to select

the grade penalty they believe most suitable, including course failure, regardless of violation level. Any established violation in this course may result in course failure regardless of violation level.

Statement Regarding Disability-Related Accommodations

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), http://disabilityservices.syr.edu, located at 804 University Avenue, room 309, or call (315) 443–4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented disabilities "Accommodation Authorization Letters," as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

Religious Observances Policy

SU's religious observances policy, found at supolicies.syr.edu/emp ben/religious observance.htm, recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes. For fall and spring semesters, an online notification process is available through MySlice/Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances from the first day of class until the end of the second week of class.

Classroom Participation Rubric

	Strong work	Needs development	Unsatisfactory work/ unacceptable behavior
Listening	Listens actively and respectfully. Responds thoughtfully to others.	Sometimes demonstrates lack of attention to others.	Projects lack of interest in, or disrespect of others.
Preparation	Arrives fully prepared with all readings completed.	Sometimes arrives unprepared or with only superficial preparation.	Exhibits little evidence of having read or thought about material.
Quality of Contributions	Questions and comments are: -relevant - reflect thoughtful engagement with assigned readings - reflect thoughtful engagement with the remarks of the instructors and other students – draw connections to other readings, evaluate the argument, provide alternate interpretations, and so on.	Questions and comments: - are sometimes vague or irrelevant. - are mostly about facts (as opposed to ideas/arguments).	Questions and comments: - betray lack of preparation - betray lack of thoughtful engagement with texts and with other students' remarks - are often vague and irrelevant.
Frequency of participation	Actively participates at appropriate times.	Sometimes tunes out, or sometimes dominates the conversation.	Seldom participates and is unengaged. Speaks out of turn or interrupts others.

Adapted from https://www.academia.edu/9681328/Humanitarian_Affects