

Fayetteville State University
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Government and History

Course Syllabus: POLI 641: Research Methods in Political Science

I. Locator Information

Semester/Year: Fall 2001_____

Semester Hours of Credit: three (3) hours _____

Time Class Meets: T 6-8:50 PM _____

Building and Room Number: JKSA 205 _____

Instructor's Name: Dr. Andrew J. Dowdle _____

Office Location: 207B Taylor Science_____

Office Telephone: 672-1247/672-1573_____

Office Hours: MW (12:30-1:30PM), TR (9-9:30 AM and 11:30 - 1 PM),
and MT (5:30-6 PM) OR by APPOINTMENT

E-mail: adowdle@uncfsu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

POLI 641 covers basic procedures for conducting research in political science. Special emphasis is placed upon research design, research strategies, approaches, and techniques. The selection and utilization of appropriate techniques for collecting, reporting, and analyzing data will be covered.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT

The objective of this course is to examine political science as an academic discipline. The basic principles and assumptions that are the foundation of scientific political research are analyzed, and the techniques of empirical inquiry into political phenomena are explored and practiced. In addition, attention will be given to critical research skills such as theory-building, operationalization, and hypothesis writing and testing. By the end of the course the student should be able to understand basic statistical concepts and develop a research design.

Course Organization and Evaluation

Although this is introductory graduate-level course, students are expected to lead at least one week of class discussion, and class participation is part of the grade. Students are expected also to have read the assigned material *before* it is discussed in class.

Grading

The grade for the semester is based on the following criteria

- Midterm Exam: 30%
- Final Project: 30%
- Class homework 20%
- Class discussion and participation 20%

The following scale will be used to evaluate students:

- A - 92-100
- B - 83-91
- C - 73-82
- F - less than 73

Final Project:

Research Design: All students will write a research design. Methodology, format, etc. will be discussed in class.

Specifications: Paper is to be at least 8 pages in length (typed, double-spaced), with reasonable margins, using the reference-in-text citation style and complete bibliographic entries. The page count includes actual text only, not title pages, reference pages, etc. Give your paper a title that makes it clear what your topic is. PAGE NUMBERING IS REQUIRED. The topic must be approved by instructor no later than October 1.

Paper development: The paper will be developed in three stages--abstract, outline, and final draft. Each stage has its own deadline and requirements. Failure to comply with the deadline or requirements for any stage will result in a grade penalty on the final paper.

Abstract: A one or two-page (typed, double-spaced) statement of your topic that is clear and coherent. List five sources you have actually consulted that will be useful to your research. Annotate each citation with a statement or paragraph that shows you have actually consulted the work. ABSTRACT DUE: October 15.

Outline: A one or two-page (typed, double-spaced) outline that gives me a clear idea of how you will develop your paper. OUTLINE DUE: October 31.

Final Paper: This is your finished product. Typos gone, grammar checked, headings in place. FINAL PAPER DUE: Tuesday, December 11 (beginning of class--no extensions).

REQUIRED TEXTS

Kranzler, Gerald and Janet Moursund. Statistics for the Terrified 2nd Ed.. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999.

Leedy, Paul D. and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod. Practical Research: Planning and Design 7th Ed.. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2001.

COURSE OUTLINE

August 28 - **Introduction**

September 4 - **Theories of Political Science**

September 11 - **The Research Process**
Practical Research: Planning and Design Chps. # 1 and 2.

September 18 - **Research Questions, Problems, and Literature Reviews**
Practical Research: Planning and Design Chp. #3 and 4.

September 25 - **Research Designs and Proposals**
Practical Research: Planning and Design Chp. #5 and 6.

October 2 - Qualitative Research
Practical Research: Planning and Design Chp. #7 and 8.

October 9 - Quantitative Research
Practical Research: Planning and Design Chp. #9 and 10.

October 16 - Midterm Examination

October 23 - Research Update

October 30- Introductory Statistics
Statistics for the Terrified 2nd Ed. Chapters #1-3.

November 6 - No class

November 13 - **Correlation**
Statistics for the Terrified 2nd Ed. Chapters #4-5.
Homework for Chapters 1,2,and 3 due.

November 20 - **Introduction to Inferential Statistics and Differences Between the Means of Two Groups**
Statistics for the Terrified 2nd Ed. Chapters #6-7.
Homework for Chapters 4-5 due.

November 27 - **Analysis of Variance and Nonparametric Tests**
Statistics for the Terrified 2nd Ed. Chapters #8-9.
Homework for Chapters 6-7 due.

December 4 - Progress Report/ Homework for Chapters 8-9 due.

December 11 - Final Project Due