

**POS 5736 Research Design  
Fall 2009**

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Office Hours: Wed. 1:30 – 3:00  
and by appt.

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Over the next few years, your job is to become a contributing scholar whose work is ready for review by other professionals at conferences and at academic journals. This course will introduce you to some of the tools needed to accomplish this goal. It is the first in a larger sequence of research methods courses that you are required to take to complete the Ph.D. There is no assumption of prior knowledge of research design material, but I do assume that you are enrolled in Methods II or have the equivalent background in introductory probability and statistics.

This course is designed to provide you with an 1) overview of the field of political science, 2) a working knowledge of key concepts and issues in research design, and 3) the ability to critique your own work and the work of others. This course also provides you with the basic knowledge you will need to begin your first-year paper and to pass your first-year research design exam (given at the end of spring semester).

Part of the learning process is theoretical and drawn from readings we will discuss each week. However, much of the class involves active learning. During the semester, you will participate in creating, implementing and critiquing research projects in the context of classroom exercises and short homework assignments. In addition, this class will guide you through the first part of your first year paper, an independent research project guided by a faculty member in the department. *You should plan to devote substantial time outside of class to the conduct of research.*

This class begins from the perspective that the goal of political science is to build general knowledge about causal processes that underlie political phenomenon. There are many approaches to doing this and we will cover only a subset of the various ways. The bias in this class is towards preparing you to conduct “large-n” quantitative research, but we will also discuss techniques for making inferences from case studies and how to conduct compelling qualitative research. One’s ability to make a convincing argument to other scholars about the value of one’s work depends, fundamentally, on both the quality of the theory and the quality of the research design used to test your theory. Your research design must be defensible for your findings to be defensible. This class explores the many choices scholars make when designing empirical research to test their theoretical arguments.

**Grade Components**

Class Participation / Research Exercises	40%
First Year Paper Project	40%
In-Class Final Exam	20%

**Class Participation**

This is a graduate level course; your attendance each week is expected and required. The course is part seminar and part lecture. Nuts and bolts concepts or techniques will be taught via short

lectures based on material from the assigned texts. However, substantive examples of research will be discussed “seminar style.”

You will be expected to use the concepts and techniques learned in class to analyze and cogently discuss research examples. It is essential that you read the assigned material thoroughly prior to each class. Come prepared to discuss the material and *to put it into practice in classroom activities*. I will call on students during class to summarize readings or to offer their reactions to various aspects of the readings. I will also call on students to make connections between the material in this class and the material in other classes, particularly the core seminars.

I will assess your participation and engagement in each class, but you will be given a summary participation grade every three weeks based on the quality of participation across all three classes. You will receive a total of 5 summary participation grades across the semester and all five will be included in the calculation of your final grade. The summary participation grades may also include short in-class or out of class research tasks.

I use the following scale to characterize participation:

A to A+ (Excellent) Student demonstrates exceptional mastery of the material, offers novel and insightful comments about the material, and demonstrates the ability to integrate ideas from multiple readings and apply them to new situations.

B+ to A- (Good) Student demonstrates normal mastery of the material by offering cogently argued points that accurately reflect the content of the reading, but did not necessarily demonstrate novel insights or integrate the readings with other material. Student demonstrates factual knowledge of concepts and techniques of design or is able to apply them appropriately in practical applications

B- to B (Fair) Student was able to clearly articulate the main arguments and/or evidence of the assigned research, but did not participate beyond basic reiteration of main points. Student lacks factual knowledge of concepts and techniques of design or shows some difficulty applying them to practical applications

C+ or lower (Poor) Student did not participate or the student’s participation reflected a general lack of knowledge about the readings. Student lacks factual knowledge of concepts and techniques of design or is unable to apply them appropriately to practical applications

A 0 will be given for the participation grade for the day if the student is absent from class.

### **First Year Paper Project (40%)**

The largest single component of your grade in this class is your first year paper project, an independent research project conducted with the guidance of a faculty advisor. You will begin your first year paper in this class, but you will complete it in the spring in Methods III. Your goal in this class is to develop a theoretical argument that is well grounded in the literature of political science, a set of testable hypotheses, and a research design to test those hypotheses with empirical data.

Your final grade for this paper will be based on my grade and a grade assigned to you by your faculty advisor. You will be given a lengthy handout on the first year paper process in the first few weeks of class. In the meantime, there are several important dates to log in your calendars. These form the general outline of the expectations regarding the project.

- *Topic and Faculty profile due Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> (5%)*  
You must select a topic and a faculty advisor by the end of September. Once you've selected your topic and advisor, you must turn in an abstract of your project and a short biography about your advisor and his/her research interests.
- *Draft 1 due first week in November 4 (10%).*  
The first draft of your paper is due during the first week of November. You must turn in three copies. One will be given to me, one will be given to your advisor and one will be given to a colleague in this class. You will receive comments that you must respond to as you revise your final paper.
- *Review of colleague's paper Due November 11 (5%)*  
You must provide a written review of a colleague's first draft of the paper. Details of the appropriate way to write a review will be handed out in class.
- *Final paper with R&R memo due December 2 (20%)*  
Your final paper must be turned in with a "revise and resubmit" memo that explains how you addressed the comments on your first draft. One copy should be given to me and one copy should be given to your faculty advisor.

### **In-Class Final Exam (20%)**

There will be an "in-class" final exam given during finals week that mimics the type of exam that you will be given at the end of the first year. You will have 3 hours to complete the exam and it will be a closed book exam. You will be given a short summary of a theoretical argument. You must fully articulate theoretical hypotheses that flow from this argument and an empirical research design to test the theoretical hypothesis. You will be provided with an example of the exam format prior to taking it.

## **Classroom Policies**

### **Communication**

You must have an email account that you check regularly and you need to confirm that the University has your email address on file. I will provide updates to the reading list or to the class schedule through email. In addition, I will post information about the class, lab work, and the readings online on the blackboard website for this course.

If you need to reach me, the best way is through email. I check my email regularly and respond as quickly as I can. I hold office hours on Tuesdays from 1:30 – 3:00, but can meet with you by appointment at other times during the week. If we cannot schedule a time to meet during the day, we can arrange a phone conference.

### **Students with Disabilities (Americans with Disabilities Act)**

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

- (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
- (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center  
874 Traditions Way  
108 Student Services Building  
Florida State University  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167  
(850) 644-9566 (voice)  
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)  
(850) 644-7164  
sdr@admin.fsu.edu  
<http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

### **Academic Honor Policy**

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to ". . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://dof.fsu.edu/honorpolicy.htm>.)

Note: Perhaps the primary danger of academic dishonesty in a graduate level course is plagiarism. Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism is a serious offense. It is the job of each student in the class to carefully check his or her papers to ensure that the ideas of others are properly cited.

The following excerpt of discussion of plagiarism appears on the website:

<http://online.fsu.edu/learningresources/plagiarism/student.html>

***"Your paper would be considered as "plagiarized" in part or entirely if you do any of the following:***

- *Submit a paper that was written by someone other than you.*
- *Submit a paper in which you use the ideas, metaphors or reasoning style of another, but do not cite that source and/or place that source in your list of references.*
- *Submit a paper in which you "cut and paste" or use the exact words of a source and you do not put the words within quotation marks, use footnotes or in-text citations, and place the source in your list of references."*

## Reading List

This is a tentative reading list. Throughout the semester, I may add or drop readings as needed.

For many classes, there will be a “work in progress” reading which showcases work currently in progress in the department. These are designed to give you a glimpse of the research process at various stages of development from early and unpolished to published or publishable. You will also be asked to make connections between the material in this class and the substantive research material in your core seminars. Be prepared to discuss the material you are reading in your other classes in the context of this class.

### Required Books

- Aneshensel, Carol S. 2001 *Theory Based Data Analysis for the Social Sciences*. Pine Forge Press. (TBDA)
- David deVaus *Research Design in Social Research*. 2001. Sage Publications. (DdV)
- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry*. 1994. Princeton University Press. (KKV)

### 1. Getting Started – An Overview of Graduate Education + Some Tricks of the Trade

- Practical Tips: How to search for and find academic research
- How to make the “Backwards Clock” your friend
- Graduate Education – Norms and Expectations
  - Cohen, D.B. 2002 “Surviving the PhD: Hints for navigating the sometimes stormy seas of graduate education in political science” *PS* 35(3): 585-588
  - Wuffle, A. 1989. “Uncle-Wuffle’s Advice to the Advanced Graduate Student” *PS* 22(4):838-839.

### 2. Overview of the Discipline of Political Science

- Outlets for Research, Conferences, Journals and Books
  - Gupta Devashree, Israel Waismel-Manor. “Network in Progress: A Conference Primer for Graduate Students” *PS Political Science & Politics*. 485-490
  - Giles, Michael W. and James C. Garand. “Ranking Political Science Journals: Reputational and Citational Approaches” *PS Political Science & Politics*. 40(4):741-751.
  - Goodson, Larry, Bradford Dillman, and Anil Hira. 1999. “Ranking the Presses: Political Scientists Evaluations of Publisher Quality.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 32 (June): 257–62.
  - Sigelman, Lee 2006. “The Coevolution of American Political Science and the *American Political Science Review*” *American Political Science Review*. 100(4): 463-478.
- Types of research—Approaches and Fields
  - Grant, J. Tobin. 2005. “What Divides Us? The Image and Organization of Political Science.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 38(3): 379–86.

- Kasza, Gregory. 2001. "Perestroika: For an Ecumenical Science of Politics." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 34 (September): 597–99.
- Bennett, Stephen 2002. "Perestroika" Lost: Why the Latest "Reform" Movement in Political Science Should Fail" *PS: Political Science and Politics*

### 3. Social Science Research & First Year Paper Orientation

- Clark, William, Matt Golder and Sona Golder 2006. "What is Science" (BB)
- KKV Chapter 1 & 2
- TBDA Chapter 1 & 2

## Theory Building and Empirical Implications of Theories

### 4. Creating Causal Explanations / Theories

- Shadish Cook and Campbell 2002 *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Generalized Causal Inference*. pp 9 – 12. (BB)
- Cameron, Charles. 2000. *Veto Bargaining*. Chapter 3 (69-82). Cambridge University Press. (BB)
- Souva, Mark 2007 "Fostering Theoretical Thinking in Undergraduate Classes" *PS* p. 557-561.
- Lave & March 1975. *An Introduction to Models in the Social Science* Chapters 1-3 (BB)

Connections:

- Be prepared to offer an example from your core seminar a work you think makes a clear theoretical contribution and explain why.

### 5. Empirical implications of a theory and the logic of hypothesis testing

- KKV Chapter 1-3
- DdV Chapter 3, Chapter 6
- Lave & March 1975. *An Introduction to Models in the Social Science* Chapters 1-3 (BB) *review*
- Morgan and Winship Chapter 1 (BB)

Connections

- Be prepared to offer an example of the empirical implications of a theory from your core seminar readings. It can be a good example or a bad example.

### 6. Connections between Theory, Research Design and Data Analysis

- TBDA, Chapters 3 - 9

## Designs, Design Limitations, and Statistical Fixes

### 7. Experiments vs. Quasi Experiment v.s. Observational Studies

- Druckman et. al. – APSR "Growth of experiments in Political Science"
- Morgan & Winship Chapter 2 (BB)
- DdV – Chapters 4-6

- Jerit and Barabas – Experiments (BB)

Work in progress: Jerit and Barabas: NSF Grant (BB)

Connections: Has experimental research been used the field of the core seminar you are taking this semester? If so, bring in examples and be prepared to discuss how you think these have contributed. If not, bring in an example of a study you think could be benefit from experimental study and be prepared to explain how.

## 8. Time and Space in Research Design

- DdV – Chapter 7 – 11
- Berry, Frances Stokes & Berry William D. 1990 “State Lottery Adoptions as Policy Innovations: An Event History Analysis” *APSR* (84:2): 395-415
- Beck, Nathaniel 2001 “Time-Series-Cross-Section data: What Have We Learned in the Past Few Years” *Annual Rev. of Political Science*. read p. 271- 274 (skim remainder of article)

Connections: Be ready to discuss the use of time and space in your core seminar readings for the week. Bring in an example where you thought the author either did a good job or did a poor job of exploiting temporal or spatial variation in testing his/her theory.

## 9 & 10. Research Design and Threats to Validity: Construct Validity, Internal Validity, Statistical Conclusion Validity, External Validity

- Shadish, Cook and Campbell, *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs* Chapters 2 and 3. (BB)
- KKV Chapter 4 & 5
- TBDA Chapters 4, 5 & 6 (review)

In-Class Exercise: Develop a simple theory, identify the empirical implications and develop a research design to test your central hypothesis. Be prepared to describe your design answer questions about its validity (all four types, as described in SCC 2 & 3).

## 11. Case Selection & Selection Bias

- KKV Chapter 4 (review)
- DdV 185-191
- Maestas & Rugeley 2008 “Reassessing the Experience Bonus: Candidate Quality and Campaign Receipts in U.S. House Elections” *AJPS*. 52(July).
- Von Stein, Jana 2005 "Do Treaties Constrain or Screen? Selection Bias and treaty Compliance" *APSR*

Connections: Identify readings from your core seminar that could have problems with selection bias and describe why you think it’s a problem. Second, come prepared to talk about your case selection for your FYP. What types of biases do you face in your case selection?

Work in progress: We will discuss the journal review process at length by reading one manuscript from a faculty member in the department that evolved from conference papers to a published work. You must read several versions of the same paper, the reviews, the author’s

response to reviewer and the final version of the paper. Paper TBA and will be posted on Blackboard.

## 11. Sample Frames, Rare Events, and Matching

- DdV Chapter 3 "Target Populations, sampling frames, and coverage error"
- DdV Chapter 4 "Sampling Design and Sampling Error"
- Ho, Daniel E., Imai Kosuke, and Gary King 2007 "Matching as Nonparametric Preprocessing for Reducing Model Dependents in Parametric Causal Inference" *Political Analysis*. 15:199-236.
- King, Gary and Langche Zeng "Explaining Rare Events in International Relations" *International Organization*.

Connections: Come to class prepared to discuss how these topics apply to your FYP.

### Measuring Theoretical Concepts

## 12. Measuring concepts I: Content Validity, Criterion Validity, & Construct Validity

- KKV Chapter 5, Section 5.1
- TBDA Chapter 2,
- Adcock, Robert, and David Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *APSR* 529, Vol. 95, September
- Berry, William D., Evan J. Ringquist, Richard C. Fording and Russell L. Hanson. "Measuring Citizen and Government Ideology in the American States, 1960-93" *American Journal of Political Science*. 42(Jan): 327-348.
- Clark, Golder & Golder 2008. "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy" Chapter 5. (BB)

See Also:

- Marks, Gary et. al. 2007. "Crossvalidating data on party positioning on European integration" *Electoral Studies*. 26:23-38.

Connections: Be prepared to discuss your FYP theoretical concepts and how they will be measured in your design.

## 13. Measuring concepts II. Reliability & Measurement Error

- KKV Chapter 5
- Jones, Bradford S. and Barbara Norrander. 1996. "The Reliability of Aggregated Public Opinion Measures." *American Journal of Political Science*. 40(Feb.):295-309.
- Maltzman, Forrest and Paul J. Wahlbeck. 1996. "Inside the U.S. Supreme Court: The Reliability of the Justices' Conference Records" *Journal of Politics*. 58(May): 528-539.
- Dorussen, Han, Lenz Hartmut and Spyros Blavoukos. 2005. "Assessing the Reliability and Validity of Expert Interviews" *European Union Politics*. 6(3): 315-337.

Work in Progress: See Stone et. al. reviews from JOP + Response to Reviewer Memo and methodological appendix.

#### 14. Data Quality & Missing Data

- Herrera, Yoshiko and Devesh Kapur. 2007. "Improving Data Quality: Actors, Incentives and Capabilities" *Political Analysis*. 15:365-386.
- King, Gary, James Honaker, Anne Joseph, Kenneth Scheve "Analyzing Incomplete Political Science Data: An Alternative Algorithm for Multiple Imputation." (BB)
- Honaker, James and Gary King. 2008. "What to do about Missing Values in Time Series Cross Section Data" (BB)
- Gleditsch, Kristian Skrede. 2002. "Expanded Trade and GDP Data" *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 46(Oct): 712-724.

Connections: Be prepared to discuss issues of missing data and data quality as it relates to your FYP project.

#### Puzzles, theories, and research programs

#### 16. Wrap Up and Thinking about the Future

- Brady, "Introduction to Symposium on Two Paths to a Science of Politics," *Perspectives on Politics* (June 2004: 295-300).
- Smith, "Identities, Interests, and the Future of Political Science," *Perspectives on Politics* (June 2004:301-12).
- Granato and Scioli, "Puzzles, Proverbs, and Omega Matrices: The Scientific and Social Significance of Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM)," *Perspectives on Politics* (June 2004: 313-23).
- Zinnes, Dina A. 1980. "Three Puzzles in Search of a Researcher: Presidential Address," *International Studies Quarterly*, 24(3):315-319, 337-339.