POLS 209-902: Introduction to Political Science Research
Writing-Intensive Course
Texas A&M University
Spring 2011
MWF 12:05 - 12:55 p.m., Allen 1005
Instructor Christopher Olds
Office Location: Allen 2067
Office Hours: MWF 1:15 - 2:00 p.m. and MW 3:25 - 4:00 p.m., or by appointment
Office Phone: (979) 862-4588
Course email: pols209@yahoo.com

Course Description from Texas A&M University Undergraduate Catalog: Introduction to the philosophy and practice of social science and to modes of research in major subfields of political science. **Prerequisite**: Political science majors must have completed POLS 209 before they enroll in their last 18 hours of 300- and 400- level courses. This means a student may take no more than 6 hours of upper division (300- and 400- level courses) before completing POLS 209. Enrollment is restricted to political science majors.

Specific Goals of the Course: This course is designed to introduce students to the process of conducting academic social science research. While some of you may be entering this course with some apprehension, asking questions like, 'why would I need to learn how to do social science research' or 'what is the point of learning statistics when I'm not a math major,' your experience in this course will assist you in developing valuable skills you can apply for the rest of your lives. These skills include the following:

-the ability to explain why something in the world that interests you should matter or is relevant to others
-the ability to evaluate how others have discussed your topic of interest in the past in order to build upon this past knowledge
-the ability to establish an easily understandable proposal that you believe best explains the concept that interests you
-the ability to design an unbiased procedure by which you and others can determine whether your explanation is legitimate
-the ability to determine whether others adequately explain and provide evidence for their own claims regarding concepts

These skills are important because there are potential dangers in discussing ideas with colleagues in many lines of work (and not just in academic political research) where unfounded claims are made, limited and tangential supporting evidence of these claims is provided, and conclusions are rooted more in personal opinion than an actual observation of reality. Your experience in this course should make clear the hazards in depriving ourselves of important knowledge about the concepts we are interested in if we avoid applying these important skills.

The way in which you will attempt to cultivate the skills listed above is by becoming exposed to and conducting political science research. Political science research attempts to predict, describe, and explain political phenomena from an unbiased perspective. This course will illustrate the value of approaching politics from this perspective. You will also learn the basic tools in which you can engage in a structured and thorough approach to inquiry.

Course Objectives: As the instructor of this course, I expect that my students at the end of the course will:

1. Be able to discern the difficulties in trying to measure and evaluate social phenomena.
2. Be able to construct a hypothesis that attempts to describe and explain reality and can be evaluated through research.
3. Be able to distinguish the similarities and differences in multiple approaches to research design.
4. Be able to review, analyze, and connect preexisting research in a useful and coherent way.
5. Be able to design their own research plan that builds upon past knowledge and seeks out new/original information.
6. Be able to translate abstract concepts into measurable variables that can be evaluated empirically.
7. Be able to determine appropriate statistical tests for determining relationships between variables.
8. Be able to conduct statistical tests to evaluate hypothesized relationships between variables.
9. Be able to implement high-end technological tools to assist in research inquiry.
10. Be able to develop papers that are clear and focused for readers.

Course Format: The first nine weeks of the course will incorporate a mixture of in-class lecture and student participation to learn the major concepts related to conducting political inquiry. Student participation will come from the use of the interactive Classroom Performance System (CPS) Electronic Clickers. The CPS clickers will be used to gauge student understanding of course materials. The usage of these clickers is discussed in more detail in the description of item one in the graded

assignments section below.

In the last six weeks of the course, class sessions will occur mainly in the computer lab. The location of the computer lab will be discussed in class. There will be a reduction in lecture for these lab sessions, as students will be expected to interact hands-on with data and directly apply some of the concepts learned in the first half of the course. As the instructor, I will take on a more supervisory role and encourage students to collaboratively work through exercises using data from existing political science research. The CPS clickers will again be used in this portion of the course to monitor whether students are following how to appropriately use statistical programs to perform empirical research.

This division in class structure relates to my philosophy about the course - it is like learning how to use a toolkit. For starters, you have to figure out why you need a toolkit in the first place. Then you learn about each tool that is available in the kit. What are the characteristics of each tool and under what circumstances are they potentially useful? This means you find out about potential problems you can encounter when using the tools, how to diagnose these issues, and how to best overcome these issues. This will reveal how each tool can be applied in real situations. After all of this, you get the opportunity to actually apply the tools in a real situation. In my view, it would be somewhat reckless to let construction workers build a skyscraper with little background knowledge of how to appropriately use the necessary tools under various conditions. It would also be inappropriate for you to perform a statistical analysis with actual data when you are not fully informed about the basic intuition and process behind constructing such analyses.

It is important to note that this is a writing intensive course, which means that it will provide you with some writing instruction for the style of writing that is common in the discipline of political science. A series of assignments provides opportunities for writing practice and feedback, with the goal of improving your writing over the course of the semester. In this course we will read original research that has been written in the field of political science and other relevant fields of scholarly study. In class, we will highlight the style of writing used in these works. This will help students learn the key qualities to strive for when writing a paper in the field of political science. For more details about "W" courses or to obtain additional help with your own writing, go to the University Writing Center (http://writingcenter.tamu.edu), located in Evans Library.

Note: Failure to earn a passing average grade on the writing requirements precludes the assignment of "W" credit, irrespective of the student's making a passing grade for the entire course on a straight point calculation basis. In other words, a student cannot receive "W" credit for this course without earning a passing grade on the writing component.

Grades: Grades will be based on several assignments. Students can earn one hundred points in this course. Please note that this is a course where extra credit assignments are not made available. Your grades will reflect your performance on the six assigned tasks only. Please note that attendance is a part of your grade given that you must be in class to participate in the interactive assessments using CPS clickers. In addition to this, missing multiple sessions will make it difficult for you to follow the material and receive a passing grade in the course.

In terms of assignments submitted late with an unexcused absence, I will deduct one letter grade for each day an assignment is late. If there is a personal conflict with any of the assignment due dates, please notify me as soon as possible.

Special Note: For those assignments that need to be submitted via e-mail, you cannot turn in the assignment late and say that the assignment did not go through to the class e-mail account. If in the very rare case that the e-mail cannot get through, submit it to my general school account, colds1@tamu.edu or my department account, colds1@politics.tamu.edu. Barring any unforeseen circumstances like a mass power outage or natural disaster, an assignment submitted just one minute late (based on the timestamp of the email) is considered a late assignment and will receive an automatic half letter grade reduction. Do not wait until the last minute to complete and submit your work.

Item #1--15 points: Interactive Assessments

For each class session starting Wednesday, January 26th, students will be presented with several questions that they will respond to using the Classroom Performance System (CPS) clickers made by eInstruction. Questions will be presented at various points in the class session, which potentially means students will be presented with some questions at the beginning of a session, in the middle of a session, and at the end of a session.

With each question, students will be presented with several answer options. Students will use the CPS clickers to enter the answer option they believe to be correct. The questions can be on assigned reading, materials from a previous lecture, or material being discussed in the session on that day. The number of points you earn will be based on your participation in the assessments and not on whether you get the correct answers. The less you attend class and/or the less you participate in these

interactive assessments, the lower your score will be for this course item. For those instances where you have a university excused absence, you can still earn points by completing a take-home problem pertaining to the materials of the day that you missed. Refer to the statement about university excused absences about the permitted timeframe in which you can collect points for days that you missed.

The purpose of these interactive assessments is twofold. First, students can track their performance on these questions and determine which concepts they may have to study again or more in-depth as the course progresses. Second, the CPS clickers can assist in efficiently and quickly determining whether course materials need to be explained in a different way to improve student understanding. The assessments are a low-stakes way for both you and I to gauge your comprehension of the materials presented in the course.

General information on the CPS clickers is available at http://www.einstruction.com/products/student-response-systems/cps-pulse for students. More specific information on the CPS clickers in regards to their usage in class and how to register them online will be discussed in class. Please note that ensuring your own CPS clicker is functional for each class session is your responsibility. That means you must provide your own batteries, and that you must contact eInstruction if the clicker is not operating properly.

Item #2--10 points: Take-home examination

On 03/28 in class, four essay-based questions will be distributed to students. Students will be expected to respond to all four of these prompts. Students will have until 04/04 at 4 p.m. to construct their responses. The test is open-note, meaning students can refer to the required reading materials assigned in the course, as well as notes they have personally taken during lectures and while reading the assigned materials. Each of the four responses will be worth two and a half points. Prompts will be a mix of accuracy and evaluative questions.

Accuracy questions will gauge whether students can correctly interpret whether a research analysis was conducted appropriately, and whether the student can correctly interpret the findings of a research analysis. Evaluative questions will ask students to assess the research approach of some of the course readings. Students will be expected to take a position on these evaluative prompts and provide support for their position. The student should cite course materials (when appropriate) using guidelines presented in the American Political Science Association Style Manual. Throughout the time of the examination, students cannot discuss any of the test items with other students in the course. You are allowed to e-mail me with a question or concern you might have about the exam during the examination period, but please note that I might not be able to provide certain details if it reveals potential answers to questions within a specific prompt. Be sure to contact me as soon as possible to ensure I have a chance to respond to your question in a timely way.

All essay responses must be typed in a word-processing computer program and follow specific formatting rules (12-pt Times New Roman font, double spaced, and one inch margins). Microsoft Word .doc files are preferred. Students will be expected to avoid frequent spelling and grammatical errors when writing their responses. **Finished exams have to be submitted in paper form to a staff person working in the department main office in Allen 2010 by 4 p.m on 04/04.**

Item #3--55 points: Original Research Project

This item is comprised of three assignments that students will write over the course of the semester on a research topic of interest to them. As a result, the fifty-five total points available are divided up between the separate assignments. For some of these assignments, a typed draft is due to the instructor beforehand. This way you can receive feedback on the content and structure of your writing before it is graded. *If you do not submit a draft for those papers where a draft is required, you will receive a two-point deduction on the grade for that particular paper.*

All assignments for the original research project must be typed in a word-processing computer program and follow specific formatting rules (12-pt Times New Roman font, double spaced, and one inch margins). Microsoft Word .doc files are preferred. Students will be expected to avoid frequent spelling and grammatical errors when writing their papers. The student should cite all resources used when constructing these papers using guidelines presented in the American Political Science Association Style Manual. **All assignments will be due at 5 p.m. via e-mail on the specific date listed**. The email address to submit all papers is immediately below:

pols209@yahoo.com

Assignment #1 (15 points) Annotated Bibliography – no draft required (but will review if requested), finished paper due 02/11

Students will offer a detailed bibliography of sources in the existing academic/scholarly literature relevant to the research question of interest to them. To do this, students will list the APSA citation information and a brief (five to ten sentence)

summary of that source. In this summary, the student should offer a clear and concise general summary of the research question, research design, and research findings of that particular source. This annotated bibliography will serve as a tool of reference to construct the literature review and research design papers. Selection of sources should be geared towards a combination of highly cited projects and recently written projects relevant to the particular research question. A minimum of 10 scholarly sources must be discussed.

Before the listing and discussion of the selected sources, the student must provide an introductory statement that will clearly inform readers of the research question they are researching and why it interests them.

The scoring of this assignment is based on the following (out of 15 points possible)
- 4 Points: The student offers an introductory statement describing the research question they are interested in
- 4 Points: The student offers accurate citation information for sources relevant to their research question
- 4 Points: The student offers a brief and informative summary of the selected sources
- 3 Points: The student follows requested formatting rules and avoids frequent spelling and grammatical errors

Assignment #2 (20 points) Literature Review – draft required 2/25, finished paper due 3/11

In this paper, students will present a thorough review and analysis of previous research that is related to their respective research question. The important/major works in the research area should be detailed in the literature review. This means the research that is highly cited by other scholars in the research area needs to be covered. It is the responsibility of the student to summarize these major works and evaluate how their findings have shaped how the area related to the research question is currently understood. A basic way to think about the literature review is that it links together the separate sources discussed in the annotated bibliography by explicitly comparing and contrasting the approach and findings of those projects. The student must also integrate sources not included in the annotated bibliography that have been recommended by the instructor upon review of their annotated bibliography.

An assessment of the makeup of the literature is essential. This means if there is a high level of disagreement in the past scholarship in terms of theories and findings, the student must offer some thoughts as to why they believe this is the case. For those students where a relatively limited literature exists pertaining to the student's research question, they must offer some thoughts as to why they believe this is the case.

Lastly, the potential implications of past research on how the student would approach their own research project needs to be discussed. Is there an important concept in the literature that is not being addressed in the literature or is conceptualized incorrectly that the student can attempt to explore? Do the projects use an underdeveloped theory? Does a research design previously unused in the scholarship need to be applied to better examine the political phenomena of interest? These are the sorts of questions that should be addressed here. The length of the paper will depend on how many major works related to your research question need to be discussed, but papers less than eight pages will raise concerns that the student is not attempting to provide readers a thorough representation and analysis of the literature in the research area of interest.

The scoring of this assignment is based on the following (out of 20 points possible)
- 8 Points: The student presents a review and analysis of past important/major works related to their research question
- 8 Points: The student describes how the proposals and findings of past research influence their own research plan
- 4 Points: The student's writing has an easy to follow structure (introduction-body-conclusion). The student also follows requested formatting rules and avoids frequent spelling and grammatical errors

Assignment #3 (20 points) Description of Research Hypotheses and Design - draft required by 03/25, finished paper due 04/15

In this paper, students will discuss the research hypothesis or hypotheses emerging from their research question. They will also detail how they would go about evaluating the research hypothesis or hypotheses by presenting a legitimate research design. The research question must be clearly specified and needs to be understandable to a reader that has no previous background or interest in the area of political science relevant to the research question. The hypothesis/hypotheses offered must show direct relevance to the research question presented. The concepts (variables) that are relevant to examining the research hypothesis/hypotheses need to be described in an accessible way.

An explanation as to how the hypothesis/hypotheses compare to past hypotheses examined in the scholarship is necessary. The student has to mention whether they think their hypothesis/hypothesis needs to be compared with alternative hypotheses that exist. In addition, the student should explain why the examination of their hypothesis or hypotheses should be relevant to others. Students should attempt to answer the ever important 'so what' question - how would examining the hypothesis or hypotheses make a contribution to knowledge that others would appreciate?

Students will also describe the research design they believe is most appropriate to evaluate their hypothesis/hypotheses. An explanation as to why the student believes their research design is a better option than potential alternatives is required. For example, if the student wants to construct an experimental design studying how alternative styles of news coverage on illegal immigration shapes attitudes towards Latinos, the student should justify why an experimental approach is more preferable than studying data with natural variation, such as cross-sectional survey data.

A description of how the student would collect information to research their hypothesis is mandatory for this paper. The procedure through which you will evaluate this information is also required. For instance, if the student will perform statistical regression(s), what will the statistical model look like? If the student is studying how individual political trust impacts political participation, the student must describe where and how the student will collect data on these and any other relevant variables. Is the data used in the regression readily available, or would the student have to build their own dataset? If the data exists, what are the important characteristics of the sample?

The scoring of this assignment is based on the following (out of 20 points possible)
- 3 Points: The student describes their research question and hypothesis/hypotheses in a clear, understandable fashion
- 3 Points: The student describes the concepts (variables) that are relevant in examining their hypothesis/hypotheses
- 3 Points: The student contrasts their hypothesis/hypothesis to past hypotheses evaluated by scholars
- 3 Points: The student evaluates whether their research project needs to compare alternative hypotheses from their own
- 3 Points: The student describes the research design they will use and why it is appropriate relative to other options
- 3 Points: The student describes how they will collect the information to research their hypothesis/hypotheses
- 2 Points: The student's writing has an easy to follow structure (introduction-body-conclusion). The student also follows requested formatting rules and avoids frequent spelling and grammatical errors

Item #4--20 points: Data Analysis Project (link to completed webpage due 05/03, comments on peer pages due 05/11)

The website based research report will present students the opportunity to evaluate an existing dataset and present the results of this data on a personally created website. Students will be given a research question and hypothesis that can be evaluated with the dataset, and students will use this information to construct and evaluate an appropriate statistical model. The expectation is that students will provide an explanation as to why they selected the model that they did and describe the results of their hypothesis tests. It will be expected that students will provide both a written and visual (tables, graphs, etc.) summary of their regression results. A discussion about the general characteristics of the data, such as sample size and descriptive statistics, is also required. Any potential issues the student has with the data based on diagnostic tests or their interpretation of the regression results needs to be included in their research report. The student should discuss the implications of the findings as they relate to the research question and hypothesis stated in the assignment prompt. Students will have a comments section on their webpage, giving classmates the opportunity to ask questions, as well as evaluate the model used and the corresponding findings.

Students will use the WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) website editing interface of Google Sites to create their webpage. Google Sites offers multiple appropriate templates that students can select from, or students can elect to develop their own presentation style with the HTML coding features made available.

The webpage will in part be evaluated on the readability and accessibility of the content posted. The student should cite all resources used when constructing their webpage report using guidelines presented in the American Political Science Association Style Manual.

A link to the webpage is due by 5 p.m. on 05/03 to the email address immediately below:

pols209@yahoo.com

Once the link to the revised report has been sent, I will post on eLearning links to all the webpage reports that have been created. Students participating in this project will be required to visit the webpage reports of three of their classmates and make an effort to comment on these reports in the comments section of each respective webpage. Students should write out the comments on each webpage, and also forward me these comments in an email due by 12:30 p.m. on 05/11.

The scoring of this assignment is based on the following (out of 20 points possible)
- 4 Points: The student constructs and describes a statistical model they evaluated using the provided dataset
- 4 Points: The student provides both a written and visual (tables, graphs, etc.) summary of their regression results.
- 4 Points: The student details the implications of the regression results for the selected research question and hypothesis

- 4 Points: The student made a legitimate attempt to review and comment on the webpages created by their colleagues.
- 4 Points: The student's webpage is presented in a clear, easy to follow format. All content that is created is readable and accessible. The student also avoids frequent spelling and grammatical errors.

Upon completion of the all the items, final class grades will be assigned with the following grading scale, out of one hundred total points possible.

A = 89.50 - 100
B = 79.50 - 89.49
C = 69.50 - 79.49
D = 59.50 - 69.49
F = 0 - 59.49

Course Readings

There are two texts that are required. These books can be acquired separately or as a bundle, and are frequently discounted on online sites like Amazon.com. All other assigned readings, such as academic journal articles and book chapters, will be posted on course reserves through eLearning online. Details will be given in class on how to acquire these readings.

Pollock, Philip H. 2009. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. 3rd Edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
ISBN: 978-0-87289-606-2

Pollock, Philip H. 2011. *A Stata Companion to Political Analysis*. 2nd Edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
ISBN: 0-87289-305-7

The two assigned texts should also be available on reserve at the Policy Sciences & Economics Library (PSEL) in the Annenberg Presidential Center adjacent to the Allen Building.

Statement about Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities in Room B118 of Cain Hall, or call 845-1637.

Statement about Course Materials/Copyright and Plagiarism

The materials used in this course are copyrighted. By "materials," I mean anything generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, presentations, web pages, quizzes, exams, lab problems, in-class materials review sheets, and additional problem sets. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless I expressly grant permission. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with the definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of the person. Plagiarism is a serious offense and students can face severe consequences if they have been found to plagiarize the work of others. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please consult the Texas A&M University web site (http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu).

Classroom Protocol

This course requires students to work through at times complicated concepts that they sometimes will struggle with. Students should maintain a positive attitude in interacting with other students and the instructor. It is important that when appropriate, students exhibit a willingness to help and/or encourage peers that need assistance as opposed to mocking them. The best learning environment is a positive one. If any student does not follow these guidelines, I reserve the right to excuse them from the classroom.

Statement about University Excused Absences

The following reasons are deemed by Texas A&M University as acceptable reasons for being absent to a class (from Section 7.1 from student rules http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07)

1. Participation in an activity appearing on the university authorized activity list. Notify me prior to your participation in this activity.
2. Death or major illness in a student's immediate family.
3. Illness of a dependent family member.
4. Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.
5. Religious holy day.
6. Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class (to be determined by Health Center or off-campus physician).
7. Required participation in military duties.
8. Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school that cannot be rescheduled.

Students who are unable to complete graded work by the due date as a result of an excused absence have a very limited amount of time to notify the instructor that the absence is an acceptable excused absence given university policy and need to provide documentation.

From Section 7.3 on the timeframe for excused absences (http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07): Students may be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Section 7.1, or other reason deemed appropriate by the student's instructor. Except in the case of the observance of a religious holiday, to be excused the student must notify his or her instructor in writing (acknowledged e-mail message is acceptable) prior to the date of absence if such notification is feasible. In cases where advance notification is not feasible (e.g. accident, or emergency) the student must provide notification by the end of the second working day after the absence. This notification should include an explanation of why notice could not be sent prior to the class. Accommodations sought for absences due to the observance of a religious holiday can be sought either prior or after the absence, but not later than two working days after the absence. If needed, the student must provide additional documentation substantiating the reason for the absence, that is satisfactory to the instructor, within one week of the last date of the absence. If the absence is excused, the instructor must either provide the student an opportunity to make up any quiz, exam or other graded activities or provide a satisfactory alternative to be completed within 30 calendar days from the last day of the absence.

Course Outline   *Note: If any changes are necessary during the term, I will announce them in class*

Week 1 (January 19th to January 21st)
How do we distinguish social/political science research from other forms of inquiry?
Required Reading:

Hoover, Kenneth and Todd Donovan. 2008. "Chapter 1 - Thinking Scientifically" and "Chapter 2 - The Elements of Science." In *The Elements of Social Scientific Thinking*. Boston, MA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Ethridge, Marcus E. 1999. "Scientific Principles in Political Study: Some Enduring Situations." In *Methods for Political Inquiry: The Discipline, Philosophy, and Analysis of Politics*, eds. Stella Z. Theodoulou and Rory O'Brien. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 130-141.

Theodoulou, Stella Z. 1999. "Starting from Scratch: The Research Process." In *Methods for Political Inquiry: The Discipline, Philosophy, and Analysis of Politics*, eds. Stella Z. Theodoulou and Rory O'Brien. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 142-151.

Week 2 (January 24th to January 28th)
How do we appropriately define and measure the concepts we are studying?
Required Reading:

Pollock, Philip H. 2009. "Chapter 1 - The Definition and Measurement of Concepts." In *The Essentials of Political Analysis*.

Adcock, Robert and David Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *American Political Science Review*. 95(3): 529-546.

Mondak, Jeffrey. 2001. "Developing Valid Knowledge Scales." *American Journal of Political Science*. 45(1): 224-238.

Week 3 (January 31st to February 4th)
         What are the various ways in which we can describe specific characteristics/qualities of our variables?
Required Reading:
      Pollock, Philip H. 2009. "Chapter 2 – Measuring and Describing Variables." In *The Essentials of Political Analysis*.

      Coppedge, Michael and Wolfgang H. Reinicke. 1990. "Measuring Polyarchy." *Studies in Comparative International Development*." 25(1): 51-72.

      Niemi, Richard G., Stephen C. Craig, and Franco Mattei. 1991. "Measuring Internal Political Efficacy in the 1988 National Election Study." *American Political Science Review*. 85(4): 1407-1413.

Week 4 (February 7th to February 11th)
         What is a research hypothesis and what is meant by independent and dependent variables of a hypothesis?
Required Reading:
      Pollock, Philip H. 2009. "Chapter 3 - Proposing Explanations, Framing Hypotheses, and Making Comparisons." In *The Essentials of Political Analysis*.

      Stack, Steven and Jim Gundlach. 1992. "The Effect of Country Music on Suicide." *Social Forces*. 71(1): 211-218.

      Maguire, Edward R. and Jeffrey B. Snipes. 1994. "Reassessing the Link Between Country Music and Suicide." *Social Forces*. 72(4): 1239-1243.

      Stack, Steven and Jim Gundlach. 1994. "Country Music and Suicide: A Reply to Maguire and Snipes." *Social Forces*. 72(4): 1245-1248.

Week 5 (February 14th to February 18th)
         Why should we account for alternative explanations when evaluating relationships between variables?
      Pollock, Philip H. 2009. Second Half of "Chapter 4 - Research Design and the Logic of Control." In *The Essentials of Political Analysis* (pg. 79-90).

      Snipes, Jeffrey B. and Edward. R Maguire. 1995. "Country Music, Suicide, and Spuriousness." *Social Forces*. 74(1): 327-329.

      Stack, Steven and Jim Gundlach. 1995. "Country Music and Suicide: Individual, Indirect, and Interaction Effects: A Reply to Snipes and Maguire." *Social Forces*. 74(1): 331-335.

Week 6 (February 21st to February 25th)
      What are some viable empirical alternatives to traditional regression analysis for research designs in political science?
Required Reading:
      Pollock, Philip H. 2009. First Half of "Chapter 4 - Research Design and the Logic of Control." In *The Essentials of Political Analysis* (pg. 72-79).

      Swanborn, Peter. 2010. "Chapter 1 – What is a Case Study?" In *Case Study Research: What, Why, and How?* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1-22.

      Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review*. 65(3): 682-693.

      Geddes, Barbara. 1990. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics." *Political Analysis*. 2(1): 131-150.

Week 7 (February 28th to March 4th)
Required Reading:
      Morton, Rebecca B. and Kenneth C. Williams. 2010. "Chapter 2 - Experiments and Causal Relations." In *Experimental Political Science and the Study of Causality*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 31-74.

      Nelson, Thomas E, Rosalee E. Clawson, and Zoe M. Oxley. 1997. "Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflict and its

Effect on Tolerance." *American Political Science Review*. 91(3): 567-583.

Gerber, Alan S. and Donald P. Green. 2000. "The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review*. 94(3): 653-663.

Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawai." *American Political Science Review*. 98(4): 529-545.

Week 8 (March 7th to March 11th)
Required Reading:
   How can we initially determine if relationships between variables that appear probable are potentially legitimate?
Required Reading:
   Pollock, Philip H. 2009. "Chapter 5 - Making Controlled Comparisons" and "Chapter 6 - Foundations of Statistical Inference." In *The Essentials of Political Analysis*.

   Dreyer, Edward C. 1973. "Change and Stability in Party Identifications." *Journal of Politics*. 35(3): 712-722.

Week 9 (March 21th to March 25th)
   How do we conduct tests of significance and perform a linear regression analysis?
Required Reading:
   Pollock, Philip H. 2009. "Chapter 7 - Tests of Statistical Inference and Measures of Association" and "Chapter 8 - Correlation and Linear Regression." In *The Essentials of Political Analysis*.

   Jackman, Robert W. 1973. "On the Relation of Economic Development to Democratic Performance." *American Journal of Political Science*. 17(3): 611-621.

   Neto, Octavio Amorim and Gary W. Cox. 1997. "Electoral Institutions, Cleavage Structures, and Number of Parties." *American Journal of Political Science*. 41(1): 149-174.

Week 10 (March 28th to April 1st)
No Required Reading
Meet on Monday to distribute and discuss take-home exam
No class on Wednesday and Friday to work on exams

Week 11 (April 4th to April 8th)
Working with political research data
Materials Covered:
   Pollock, Philip H. 2011. "Chapter 1 - Introduction to Stata," "Chapter 2 - Descriptive Statistics," and "Chapter 3 - Transforming Variables." In *A Stata Companion to Data Analysis*.

Week 12 (April 11th to April 15th)
Working with political research data
Materials Covered:
   Pollock, Philip H. 2011. "Chapter 4 - Making Comparisons," "Chapter 5 - Making Controlled Comparisons," and "Chapter 6 - Making Inferences about Sample Means." In *A Stata Companion to Political Analysis*.

Week 13 (April 18th to April 22nd)
Working with political research data
Materials Covered:
   Pollock, Philip H. 2011. "Chapter 7 - Chi-Square and Measures of Association," "Chapter 8 – Correlation and Linear Regression," and "Chapter 9 - Dummy Variables and Interaction Effects." In *A Stata Companion to Political Analysis*.
Reading day April 22nd - No class

Week 14 (April 25th to April 29th)
Working with political research data
Time to work on data analysis project

__Week 15 (May 2nd to May 6th)__
Working with political research data
Time to work on data analysis project
__Data Analysis Project Link Due May 3rd__