COURSE DESCRIPTION: 
This is a foundational course in which graduate students will be introduced to concepts surrounding the design and evaluation of political science research. As we will learn, political science is a broad field with multiple subfields, in which researchers address an array of questions and in which they employ a range of methodological approaches. That said, the need to be systematic and rigorous in one’s approach is always important, and there are fundamental issues to consider when conducting research regardless of the methodological approach one employs.

REQUIRED BOOKS:


CLASS REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES:

General Class Format, Conduct & Participation Requirements
This online seminar will be conducted via Collaborate Ultra, accessible to students via our Canvas course site. It is essential in a graduate seminar that students actively participate in all online sessions and are ready discuss the assigned reading each week. Much of the conversation in this course will be student driven. Your active participation and high level of professionalism is expected in all online meetings. In addition, some seminar discussion will take place via written discussion forums available on our Canvas site, so you will be expected to participate in those, as needed. Please note that a sizeable proportion of your grade in this course is course participation. This includes regularly contributing to all online sessions, being prepared to discuss the readings, preparing a preliminary research proposal, presenting your research design, and (when applicable) contributing to online written discussion forums.
Recording Notice and Consent
Any online class sessions (held via Collaborate Ultra) will be audio and visually recorded and stored on Collaborate Ultra (accessible through our Canvas course site). Students who participate with their camera engaged or who utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their audio/video or image recorded in any online class session or class activity. Likewise, students who un-mute during an online session and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded.

E-mail & Canvas Course Page
Communications regarding this class may be sent to your UWM student e-mail accounts, so you should regularly check this account. In addition, any e-mail inquiries sent to me should be sent via your UWM e-mail account, which is the only account that I will use when sending responses. I always aim at sending timely responses, but I do ask that you afford me up to 72 hours to respond to e-mail messages. You should also expect such responses during regular business hours, Monday-Friday.

As an online course, we will extensively use our course Web site on Canvas. Please consult our Canvas course site on a regular basis. Readings beyond those in the required book/s or those available through the UWM library (see, especially, JSTOR) will be made available on this page.

Critical Essays
To facilitate class discussion, each student will write two critical essays in which they engage the assigned reading for a given week of class. All students will be required to submit one of their two critical essays during Week 5 of the course. Students will then be given a limited option for eligible weeks in which they may submit a second essay. Specific guidelines for the essays will be posted on our Canvas Web site. Papers should be approximately 4-5 pages (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, and one-inch margins) in length and should, for the most part, be in the nature of critique and analysis (i.e., please do not simply summarize each article).

All critical essays will be due to Canvas at the start of class (4 pm) on the day the relevant readings are discussed!

Draft Research Proposal & Research Design
As part of your grade, each student will be required to submit a research design on a topic in the field of political science. The design should include an introductory section, in which the student provides sufficient background for the research question as well as a concise statement of the question to be addressed. Following this section, the student should provide a literature review, which will then lead to a theory section, in which the student provides highly developed, clearly stated, and testable hypotheses. The final section of the design should provide a description of the data, operationalizations of concepts, and possible methods to be employed in the study. Students will not be expected to conduct their study and report their findings as part of this assignment. However, students are expected to design projects that could be carried out at some point in their careers.

Some students might initially struggle to identify a topic for this assignment. Others might have a few topics in mind but not know where to start in terms of developing a viable design. To this end, we will spend time brainstorming in class, and students will be required to submit a few interim assignments that will lead up to submission of their final research design. This will include a “preliminary research proposal” and a “draft research proposal.” The preliminary research proposal will be an informal document in which the student proposes two or three possible research questions and lists articles
and/or books that might be helpful sources in projects associated with these questions. Completion of a preliminary research proposal will be factored into the student’s participation grade. It will not be separately graded and accorded a letter grade.

The “draft research proposal,” however, will be assigned a separate letter grade (see below for the grade allocation). As part of this process, students will need to submit their document via Canvas and post it in a discussion forum designated for this purpose. The draft research proposal should include an introductory/background section in which the research question is clearly posed, a literature review, and a theory and hypotheses section. I will not expect you to have a developed data and methods section for the purposes of the draft research proposal.

**Peer Critique**
Each student will review a peer’s draft research proposal (assigned by the instructor) and will offer a written critique (2-3 pages - typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, and one-inch margins) of their peer’s project that includes suggestions for measurement, etc. and possible ways of setting up the study. The instructor will provide a template of questions that should be addressed in this assessment.

**Article Review**
Students will locate and read an unpublished paper for the purposes of drafting an article review, whereby the student critiques the paper and offers suggestions for revision. This assignment should be approximately 3-5 pages (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, and one-inch margins) in length. A detailed set of instructions and guidelines for this assignment will be posted on our Canvas course site.

**Grade Allocations**

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Essays (2 x 5% per essay)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft Research Proposal</td>
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<td>Final Research Design</td>
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<td>Peer Critique</td>
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<td>Article Review</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>Class Participation</td>
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**Point Scale**

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<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
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<td>87-89</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<td>D-</td>
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**Time Allocation**

This is a three-credit hour class. Students, on average, should expect to spend nine hours a week on activities related to POL SCI 700.

**Grading/Class Concerns**
If you have any concerns with respect to the grades you have received in class, please consult with me in a TEAMS appointment. This review should take place within one week of receiving the grade on the assignment. Please reach out to me as soon as possible if you are encountering obstacles to learning the material or successfully competing course requirements!
**Academic Misconduct**
I do not tolerate acts of plagiarism or any forms of cheating on assignments. If I suspect a case of academic misconduct, I will follow the academic misconduct and reporting policies of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Please see the following for details: http://www4.uwm.edu/acad_aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm.

**Course Drops & Incompletes**
Please keep track of deadlines associated with dropping the course (see UWM Calendar for details). Incompletes will only be given to students who qualify for them pursuant to the Graduate School’s incomplete policy.

**Submitting Course Assignments & Late Policy**
Students are expected to submit electronic assignments via Canvas (Word documents or PDFs only) at the times/dates noted on the syllabus. If a student is unable to submit an assignment on time, the student has the responsibility of notifying me **before** the due date and providing a legitimate reason for seeking an extension without late penalty. The student should also present a plan for submitting the assignment in a timely manner (within 2-5 days, if possible). If a student does not follow these guidelines and/or does not have a legitimate reason (as determined by the instructor) for a late submission, I will apply a deduction of ten-percentage points for each day the assignment is overdue, including Saturdays or Sundays. If an assignment deadline is due at the start of class (i.e., critical essays and peer review assignments), I will treat the assignment as one day late if it is submitted after 4:00 pm on a seminar day.

**Student PC/Internet Responsibility & Assignment/Response Submission Responsibility**
It is the student’s responsibility to ensure they have access to a functional PC and secure Internet connection for the duration of this online course. In order to minimize problems, students should give themselves plenty of time to submit assignments (i.e., do not wait until the final hours or minutes to upload an assignment). Make every effort to get your work in well before the deadline, so that you can get technical support from appropriate sources, if needed! **Always electronically back up important class materials and assignments (e.g., course papers) so that you can access and submit them from a secondary device (e.g., a phone), if needed!**

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure they have successfully submitted and uploaded correct and intended assignments to the course Canvas site, and it is the student’s responsibility to ensure their intended responses are successfully posted/saved to a discussion forum. If a student fails to submit an intended document or fails to properly upload/post/save text in this online course, that is the student’s error, and the student assumes all grade consequences that arise from it regardless of when that error is recognized.

**Technical Support**
I am not able to provide students with technical support. Please contact the UWM Help Desk at (414) 229-4040 or helpdesk@uwm.edu, if you run into any difficulties accessing/utilizing Canvas. Canvas support can also be requested at: https://uwm.edu/canvas/support-request/. Please do, however, also **immediately** notify me of any technical issues you encounter while taking this online course. Should you run into technical difficulties, you are advised to fully document your issues!
**Student Accommodations**
Please notify me as soon as possible if there are any accommodations that you need for the purposes of this course. Students should also contact an Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) counselor on campus (archelp@uwm.edu).

**Religious Accommodations**
UWM has a policy regarding religious accommodations. This policy, which will be followed in this class, can be found at: https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm

**Military Service**
Please see the following link regarding accommodations for students who are called for military service: http://www4.uwm.edu/academics/military.cfm

**Changes to the Course Syllabus**
In the event the instructor needs to modify the terms of this syllabus and/or adjust the course topic/reading schedule, either a syllabus addendum will be posted, or an announcement will be made on the Canvas course site.

**OUTLINE OF TOPICS & READING SCHEDULE**
*TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THE INSTRUCTOR'S DISCRETION! (PLEASE EXPECT ADDITIONS AND/OR DELETIONS TO THIS LIST OF READINGS)*

**WEEK 1 (SEPTEMBER 2): INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE**

**WEEK 2 (SEPTEMBER 9): POLITICAL SCIENCE AND THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD**

**WEEK 3 (SEPTEMBER 16): DEVELOPING THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS**


**WEEK 4 (SEPTEMBER 23): CONCEPTS, VARIABLES, OPERATIONS, MEASURES I**

“Preliminary Research Proposal” due to Canvas by 4 pm, September 23.


**WEEK 5 (SEPTEMBER 30): CONCEPTS, VARIABLES, OPERATIONS, MEASURES II**

**Critical Essay #1 ALL STUDENTS (See Canvas handout for details (Due by 4 pm, Sep. 30))**

**READ FIVE OF THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES:**


• Kraft, Patrick. N.d. “Let’s Talk Politics: A Naive Approach for Measuring Political Sophistication.”


**WEEK 6 (OCTOBER 7): INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH DESIGN**

*Tentative Guest Speaker: Prof. Kathy Dolan*

• VISIT and look over the Web site of the American National Election Studies. Available at: https://electionstudies.org/


• TBA

**WEEK 7 (OCTOBER 14): EXPERIMENTS**

*Tentative Guest Speaker: Prof. Steven Redd*

*Critical Essay #2 Eligible Week (See Canvas handout for details (Due by 4 pm, October 14))*


WEEK 8 (OCTOBER 21): QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH
*Tentative Guest Speaker: Prof. Sara Benesh
*Critical Essay #2 Eligible Week (See Canvas handout for details (Due by 4 pm, October 21))

• VISIT and look over the Supreme Court Database Web site. Available at: http://scdb.wustl.edu/


Suggested Reading:


WEEK 9 (OCTOBER 28): SURVEY RESEARCH AND SAMPLING ISSUES
*Tentative Guest Speaker: Prof. Tom Holbrook
*Critical Essay #2 Eligible Week (See Canvas handout for details (Due by 4 pm, October 28))


WEEK 10 (NOVEMBER 4): CASE STUDIES, CASE SELECTION, PROCESS TRACING
*Critical Essay #2 Eligible Week (See Canvas handout for details (due by 4 pm, November 4))


WEEK 11 (NOVEMBER 11): ON CAUSATION
*Tentative Guest Speaker: Prof. Kennan Ferguson
*Critical Essay #2 Eligible Week (See Canvas handout for details (due by 4 pm, November 11))
** Draft Research Proposals Due to Canvas by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, November 11 (please also post your draft in the designated “Research Proposal” discussion forum!)


• Dunning, Thad. 2010. “Designed-Based Inference: Beyond the Pitfalls of Regression Analysis?” In Henry E. Brady and David Collier, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared*


WEEK 12 (NOVEMBER 18): NO ASSIGNED READING.

- Online discussion of each student’s draft research proposal will occur in our meeting on November 18 (please prepare a brief overview (10 minutes) of your draft proposal to share in our online session).
- Submit your assigned proposal peer review directly to Canvas by the start of class (4 pm) on November 18!

WEEK 13 (NOVEMBER 25-29): THANKSGIVING BREAK. NO CLASS!

WEEK 14 (DECEMBER 2): INTERVIEWING & ETHICAL ISSUES IN POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH


WEEK 15 (DECEMBER 9): REPLICATION AND DOCUMENTATION
*Tentative Guest Speaker: Prof. Hong Min Park
*Critical Essay #2 Eligible Week (See Canvas handout for details (Due by 4 pm, December 9))


Suggested Reading:


WEEK 16: NO MEETING!

Please submit final draft of your full research design to Canvas no later than 11:59 pm on Monday, Dec. 14!