Gov 339L: Research Methods in Government

(Fall 2011)

Professor Kenneth Greene TA: Austin Hart Class meets M W 3:30-5 Office: Batts 4.112 Office: Batts 1.118 Class location: WAG 214 232-7206; kgreene@austin.utexas.edu Unique code: 38710 austinhart.ut@gmail.com Office hours: M 12-3 Office hours: T TH 12:30-2:00 and by appt.

This course provides an introduction to the methods used in political science research. After learning about the structure of causal analysis, we will examine four research strategies: experiments, "large N" or quantitative studies (AKA statistics), "small N" studies that use qualitative reasoning, and formal modeling. The goal of the course is to provide students with the analytic tools to critically evaluate social science research and causal arguments found in everyday life and to improve students' ability to pose and answer research questions on their own.

The course grade will be based on one in-class midterm, a comprehensive final examination given during the exam period, several homework assignments (see below), and in-class participation. We will use plus/minus grading for the final grade. The final grade will be determined as follows:

Midterm	30%
Final Exam	35%
Homework	30%
Participation	5%

http://kgreene.webhost.utexas.edu/

Homework assignments: There will be five graded homework assignments, handed out in lecture without prior notice and will be due one week later.

Exam and Homework Policies: Early final exams will not be given. Medical or family emergency and religious holidays that are not on UT's calendar are the only reasons that a homework assignment or the midterm can be postponed. It is my strong preference that you notify me ahead of time (a must for religious holidays), unless you are unconscious. All assignments must be completed before graded assignments are returned to the class (typically within one week). After that, a make-up will not be possible. There is no provision for a make-up final exam. During exams, the following are not allowed: calculators that can calculate statistics (even if you do not know how to use these functions), cell phones, computers, and other communication devices. Cheating earns an F in the course and referral to the Dean of Students with my recommendation for expulsion from the university. For more information on scholastic dishonesty, see http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sis.

Participation: The class is lecture-style but I ask for as much student participation as I can – within the limits imposed by class size. As a result, I take note of participation and include it in the final grade. Participating is key, voicing the correct answer is not (but no need to yell out random things either).

General: For this particular class, it is essential that you attend all lectures and keep up with the readings. Given the way that the material builds, it is difficult to catch up once you fall even one lecture behind. Students who miss more than a few lectures rarely successfully complete the course.

Special Needs: Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/. Those who have official university accommodations or are absent due to religious observance will be accommodated to the very best of our abilities. Please let me know at the beginning of the semester so that we can plan accordingly and schedule alternative rooms, if necessary.

Absence due to Religious Holidays. Please let me know ahead of time so that you do not miss a homework assignment. Make sure to get notes from a friend.

Equipment: You will need a basic calculator (with square and square root functions) for the statistics segment. During exams, graphing calculators or any device that can compute statistics are not allowed, even if you do not know how to use these functions. Computers and special software are not needed for this course.

Readings: All readings are in a two-volume course packet that is available for purchase at Speedway Copy in the Dobie Mall and on reserve at the PCL. The amount of reading is light but dense. I encourage you to budget enough time to read each selection twice. Read as you would read a math book, not as you would a novel. Note that end matter includes a glossary of useful terms compiled by David Collier and χ^2 and Z tables (for stats unit).

Introduction and Overview (August 24, August 29)

- ❖ W. Phillips Shively, *The Craft of Political Research*, 5th edition, Prentice-Hall, Chapter 1, pp.1-12.
- ❖ Janet Buttolph Johnson, Richard Joslyn, and H.T. Reynolds, *Political Science Research Methods*, 4th edition, CQ Press, 2001, pp. 1-36.
- ❖ Henry Brady, Michael Herron, Walter Mebane, Jasjeet Sing Sekon, Kenneth Shotts, and Jonathan Wand, "Law and Data: The Butterfly Ballot Episode," PS: Political Science and Politics 34 (March 2001): 59-69.

THEME 1: FUNDAMENTALS OF CAUSAL ANALYSIS

Criteria for Causality (August 31)

- ❖ Shively, pp. 72-76.
- Louise White, *Political Analysis: Technique and Practice*, 4th ed, Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, pp. 126-130.
- ❖ Early Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, pp. 72-77.
- ❖ Sheryl Gay Stolberg, "Science, Studies, and Motherhood," in *The New York Times*, April 22, 2001, 4/3.
- ❖ Mets Article, "You Gotta Believe," San Francisco Chronicle.
- Associated Press, "Math adds up to College, Report Says".
- ❖ Associated Press, "How Grade Delay Affects Children," October 7, 1997.
- ❖ Maugh, Thomas, "Study Puts a Cork in Belief that a Little Wine Helps the Heart" Los Angeles Times, March 30, 2006, 1 page.

Additional news items for Homework #1:

- * "Prison Break," The New Republic, October 21, 2002, p. 7.
- Sam Reed & Bill Bradbury, "The Voting Booth at the Kitchen Table," New York Times, Aug 21, 2001.
- ❖ Greg Winter "More Schools Rely on Tests But Study Raises Doubts" New York Times, Dec 28, 2002.
- ❖ Toni Locy, "States with High Crime See More Guns Stolen," USA Today, December 17, 2002.
- Alison McCook, "More Suicide Deaths in High Altitude U.S. States," Reuters, October 8, 2002.

Assessing Causation (September 7, September 12)

- Shively, pp. 91-93
- Wilma Rule, "Women's Underrepresentation and Electoral Systems," PS: Political Science and Politics 27 (1994), pp. 689-692.
- ❖ John Horgan, "Your Analysis is Faulty," New Republic, April 2, 1990.
- Mike Schleeter, "Restrictions Miss the Point," San Francisco Chronicle, Sept. 23, 1997.
- ❖ Donald Campbell and H. Laurence Ross, "The Connecticut Crackdown on Speeding," in *The Quantitative Analysis of Social Problems*, pp. 33-53.

Conceptualization and Measurement (September 14)

- Lewis Carroll, "Humpty Dumpty and Alice Debate the Meaning of Words," *Through the Looking Glass*, (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications), 1999, pp. 54-60.
- ❖ Jorge Luis Borges, "On Exactitude in Science," adapted from Borges, *Collected Fictions*, (New York: MacMillan), 1968.
- ❖ Jarol B. Mannheim, Richard C. Rich, and Lars Willnat, *Empirical Political Analysis*, 5th edition, (New York: Longman Press), 2002, pp. 51-56 and pp. 62-67.
- ❖ Johnson, Joslyn, and Reynolds, pp. 81-92 (except sections on reliability).
- ❖ Malcolm Gladwell, "Examined Life: What Stanley Kaplan Taught us about the S.A.T.," The New Yorker, December 17, 2001.
- Terry Karl, excerpts from "Imposing Consent," in P. Drake and E. Silva (eds.), Elections and Democratization in Latin America, 1980-1985, La Jolla, CA: Center for US-Mexican Studies, pp. 163-165 +2. AND, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America," in Rustow and Erickson (eds.), Comparative Political Dynamics, New York: Harper Collins, pp. 3-4.

Describing Data (September 19)

- Shively, pp. 61-78 (these page numbers refer to 3rd edition while others refer to 4th edition).
- Johnson, Josyln, and Reynolds, pp. 305-324 and pp. 340-250 (except section on statistical independence).
- George Weinberg, John Schumaker, and Debra Oltman, Chapter 3: "Variability and Measures of Variability" in *Intuitive Statistics*, 4th edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1981, pp. 28-40. Note: if your thoroughly understood Johnson et al. pp. 305-324, you may skip this reading.

THEME 2: EXPERIMENTS

Experiments (September 21)

- **\$** Babbie, pp. 237-251
- David Freedman, Robert Pisani, Rogers Purves, and Ani Adhikari, Statistics, 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton, pp. 3-18

Examples of Experimental Research (September 26)

- ❖ Stanley Milgram, "Some Conditions of Obedience and Disobedience to Authority" *Human Relations* 18, 1965, pp. 57-76.
- Shanto Iyengar and Donald Kinder, News That Matters. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chs 2-3.
- ❖ We will watch the film Obedience in class and fill out a worksheet

Interpreting Experiments (September 28, October 3)

- ❖ Shively, pp. 133-142.
- ❖ Johnson, Joslyn, and Reynolds, pp. 357-362.

Field Experiments: Researching in the Real World and Research Ethics (October 5)

- Johnson, Josyln, and Reynolds, pp. 128-133.
- ❖ Harold Gosnell, Getting out the Vote: An Experiment in the Stimulation of Voting. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927, pp. 1-6 and pp. 12-22.
- David Leonhardt, "The Case for \$320,000 Kindergarten Teachers" The New York Times, July 28, 2010, p 1
- Neuman, W. Lawrence "Chapter 3: Ethics in Social Research" in *Basics of Social Research*. Boston: Pearson, 2004, pp. 46-65.
- ❖ Lynnley Browning, "Professors Offer a Reality Check for Politicians," *The New York Times*, August 31, 2002, 2 pages.
- McNeil, Donald Jr. "Research on Ecstasy in Clouded by Errors" The New York Times, December 2, 2003, 5 pages.
- OPTIONAL: Phillip Zimbardo, "A Pirandellian Prison," The New York Times Magazine, April 8, 1973.

Midterm Review in-class (October 10)

Midterm Exam in-class (October 12)

THEME 3: LARGE N ANALYSIS

Sampling (or how you pick your cases) and Survey Research (October 17)

- ❖ Johnson, Joslyn, and Reynolds, pp. 182-197.
- ❖ David Moore, Statistics: Concepts and Controversies, 2nd edition. New York: WH Freeman, pp. 3-18.
- Michael Kagay, "A Sample of a Sample," New York Times, November 4, 1999.
- ❖ Richard Morin, "Telling Polls Apart," Washington Post, August 16, 2000.
- ❖ Donald Green and Ann Gerken "Self-Interest and Public Opinion Toward Smoking Restrictions and Cigarette Taxes," in *Public Opinion Quarterly* 53, 1989.

Confidence Intervals and Significance Tests (October 19, October 24)

Confidence Statements and Margin of Error:

- ❖ Moore, pp. 18-21
- Johnson, Joslyn, and Reynolds, pp. 197-210

Normal Calculations:

- Moore, pp. 189-195
- Weinberg, pp. 49-52 AND pp. 122-135.

Confidence Intervals for Means and Proportions:

Moore, pp. 296-327

Correlation and Regression (October 26)

- ❖ William Mendenhall, Beginning Statistics A to Z, (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth), 1993, pp. 280-297.
- ❖ Tufte, Edward, "Economic and Political Determinants of Electoral Outcomes," in *Political Control of the Economy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1978, pp. 105-123, 136.

THEME 4: SMALL N ANALYSIS

The Comparative Research Strategy (October 31, November 2)

- ❖ David Collier, "The Comparative Method," in Ada Finifter (ed.), *Political Science: The State of the Discipline II*, American Political Science Association, 1993, pp. 105-119.
- ❖ Irving Copi, "Causal Connections: Mill's Methods of Experimental Inquiry," in *Introduction to Logic*, Second edition. New York: MacMillan, 1961, pp. 355-366, AND pp. 368-371, AND pp. 385-388.
- Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen, "China and India" Hunger and Public Action (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 1989, pp. 204-225.
- ❖ James Mahoney, "Nominal, Ordinal, and Narrative Appraisal in Macrocausal Analysis" *American Journal of Sociology* 4 (January, 1999), pp. 1154-1164.

Single Case Studies (November 7)

- Seymour Martin Lipset, "Introduction" in Robert Michels, *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy* (New York: The Free Press), 1962, pp. 15-21.
- Steven Levitsky, "Institutionalization and Personism: The Concept, the Case, and the Case for Unpacking the Concept" Party Politics 4 (1), 1998, pp. 77-92.
- Henry Brady, "Data Set Observations versus Causal Process Observations: The 2000 U.S. Presidential Election" in H. Brady and D. Collier (eds.) Rethinking Social Inquiry, Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005, pp. 267-271.
- ❖ Jerome Kirk and Marc Miller, *Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research* (Beverly Hills: Sage), 1986, pp. 23-26 AND pp. 28-32.

Case-Selection in Small N Research (November 9)

- ❖ Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003, pp. 89-106.
- Christopher Achen and Duncan Snidal, "Rational Deterrence Theory and Comparative Case Studies," in World Politics 41: 2 (January, 1989), pp. 143-153 AND pp. 160-169.

THEME 5: RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY AND GAME THEORY

The Spatial Model (November 14)

- Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957, pp. 21-35, 114-132.
- ❖ Donald Green and Ian Shapiro, *Pathologies of Rational Choice*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994, pp 151-153.

Game Theory (November 16, November 21)

Fundamentals:

- Avinash Dixit and Susan Skeath, Games of Strategy. New York: Norton, 1999, pp. 16-22 AND pp. 24-32. Sequential Move Games:
- Dixit and Skeath, pp. 43-53 AND pp. 56-62.

Simultaneous Move Games:

Dixit and Skeath, pp. 79-93, AND pp. 97-99, AND pp. 107-115.

Examples of Standard Games (November 23, November 28)

- Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*. New York: Basic Books, 1984, pp. 3-12 AND pp. 73-87.
- ❖ Barbara Geddes, "What We Know about Democratization After Twenty Years" *Annual Review of Political Science 1999*, pp. 121-138.
- ❖ Surowiecki, James "The Coup de Grasso" *The New Yorker* October 6, 2003, 1 page.

Final Exam Review in-class (November 30)

FINAL EXAM – CHECK PUBLISHED EXAM SCHEDULE. The Registrar's final exam prediction page implies that ours will be held Wednesday, May 13, 7:00–10:00 pm, location TBD.