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%

**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/sjs.

**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 $\chi^2$ and $Z$ tables (for stats unit).

**Introduction and Overview** (August 24, August 29)


**THEME 1: FUNDAMENTALS OF CAUSAL ANALYSIS**

**Criteria for Causality** (August 31)

- Shively, pp. 72-76.
- Associated Press, “Math adds up to College, Report Says”.

**Assessing Causation** (September 7, September 12)

- Shively, pp. 91-93

**Conceptualization and Measurement** (September 14)

- Johnson, Joslyn, and Reynolds, pp. 81-92 (except sections on reliability).

**Describing Data** (September 19)

- Shively, pp. 61-78 (these page numbers refer to 3rd edition while others refer to 4th edition).
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)
- 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, Joslyn, and Reynolds, pp. 128-133.

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.

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
Confidence Intervals for Means and Proportions:
- Moore, pp. 296-327

Correlation and Regression (October 26)
THEME 4: SMALL N ANALYSIS

The Comparative Research Strategy (October 31, November 2)

Single Case Studies (November 7)

Case-Selection in Small N Research (November 9)

THEME 5: RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY AND GAME THEORY

The Spatial Model (November 14)

Game Theory (November 16, November 21)
Fundamentals:
Sequential Move Games:
Simultaneous Move Games:

Examples of Standard Games (November 23, November 28)
- 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.