1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide students with the research skills necessary to do undergraduate research in political science. Students who wish a more comprehensive understanding of research techniques are encouraged to take advanced courses.

In political science, as well as in the other social sciences, a large percentage of research is done with the use of quantitative techniques. Although statistics can be a useful tool, the mathematical manipulations will be down-played. However, and alas, it is necessary to have an understanding of these techniques in order to read the journals in political science as well as to survey some of these techniques.

We will be spending time on human inquiry and science, the structure of inquiry, modes of observation, and analysis of data. We will also touch upon use of the library. Thus, the major objectives of the course are:

1. To offer a comprehensive overview of the scientific approach to political science.
2. To emphasize the relationship between theory, research, and practice.
3. To integrate the various research activities in a systematic framework.
4. To improve student’s research skills.

II. TEXTBOOK(S) REQUIRED

III. STUDENT REQUIREMENTS
   A. Attendance

   1. Students are required to attend class sessions regularly and punctually.
   2. Students are required to sign the roll at each session, and a record of attendance will be maintained.
   3. Students will be expected to complete assigned readings before coming to class and participate in class discussions. During class, cell phones must be turned off or vibrate mode. If you need to respond to a call, please step outside the room.
   4. This instructor allows only four unexcused and undocumented class absences. The sanction for a breach of this rule is a grade of AF (excessive absence).

IV. EVALUATION
   A. Methods

   Examinations and a research proposal will be used in evaluating the performance of students. Handouts will be given in class explaining the nature of the research proposal.

   1. Students will be given one (1) unit examination.
   2. Students will be required to take a mid-semester and the final examinations.
   3. Students are required to take all examinations as scheduled. Exams are primarily short essays. Exams are cumulative.

   **Research Project: Due Dec 2.** Each student will submit a research proposal not exceeding 10 pages (text only). Topic will be agreed upon between student and professor. The guidelines for the research proposal will be given in class. Failure to adhere to the guidelines will incur a grade of Zero. Two points will be deducted each day the proposal is late.

   B. Grading Scale and Distribution of Percentages

   1. First Unit Exam 10%
   2. Mid-Semester 30%
   3. Final Exam 30%
   4. Research Project 20%
   5. Class Participation 10%

   The numerical equivalents of letter grades are:
   
   93-100 = A  90-92 = A-  87-89 = B+  83-86 = B  80-82 = B-
   77-79 = C+  73-76 = C  70-72 = C-  60-69 = D  Below 60 = F

   NOTE: Final grades will not be changed unless there is an error in computation.
OFFICE VISITS

Students are encouraged to visit the instructor during office hours in connection with their work in this class, or to discuss any career-related problems. If unable to visit during posted hours, an appointment will be made convenient to both the student and the instructor.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU GET TO KNOW YOUR TEACHERS AND TO MAKE YOURSELF KNOWN TO THEM. IT IS THE ONLY WAY TEACHERS CAN BE OF HELP TO YOU OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM.

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES
POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic Integrity and Honesty

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student’s own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty.

Any clear violation of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. Possible sanctions for violation of academic integrity may include, but are not limited to, assignment of a failing grade in a course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University. Students should review the College of Arts and Sciences policy on Academic Honesty, which can be accessed on-line at [http://www.slu.edu/colleges/AS/](http://www.slu.edu/colleges/AS/) under “Quicklinks for Students” or in hard copy form in the Arts and Sciences Policy Binder in each departmental or College office.

Students with Special Needs - Disability Services

Any student who feels that he/she may need academic accommodations in order to meet the requirements of this course - as outlined in the syllabus - due to presence of a disability, should contact the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action. Please telephone the office at 314-977-8885, or visit DuBourg Hall Room 36. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

COURSE EVALUATION

During the last week of the semester, students will be reminded to complete an on-line course evaluation. Students will be notified when screens will be accessible for students to submit the evaluation.
V. COURSE OUTLINE

Aug 26  COURSE OVERVIEW

Aug 28  AN INTRODUCTION TO INQUIRY
1. Kinds of Statements
2. Types of Knowledge
3. Characteristics of Scientific Knowledge
   Reading: Class Handout
   Patten, pp. 3-4

Aug 30, Sept 4  AN INTRODUCTION TO INQUIRY (Cont’d)
   Reading: Same as Aug. 28
   Brians et al, Chap. 1, pp. 1-7

Sept 6, 9  STUDYING POLITICS SCIENTIFICALLY
   APPROACHES TO POLITICAL SCIENCE
   Reading:
   Gamble & Co. “Approaches to Political Science.” (e-reserve)
   Argyle, Nolan J., “Methods, “Science,” and Politics: Modes of
   Analysis in Political Science (e-Reserve)

Sept 11  Discussion Questions, problems on previous lectures and readings.
   What are the differences between the social sciences and the
   physical sciences?

   THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Sept 13, 16  Specifying the Research question
   Theories/Social Science Paradigms
   Reading: Patten: Topics 2-6
   Brians et al, Chap. 2

Sept 18  THEORIES/SOCIAL PARADIGM (Cont’d)
   Reading: Same as Sept 13, 16

Sept 20  Reference and Information Sources and Handouts
   Class meets in Pius Library, Lower Level.

   Research Proposal Topic Due

Sept 23  HYPOTHESES, CONCEPTS, AND VARIABLES
   Reading: Same as Sept 13, 16, especially, pp 23-35
   Patten: Topics 3-11

Sept 25  HYPOTHESES, CONCEPTS, AND VARIABLES (Cont’d)
Reading: Same as Sept 23. Causal Versus Spurious Relationships; Brains et al. Chap. 2, pp. 25-26;

Sept 30 FORMULATING HYPOTHESES AND SPECIFYING UNITS OF ANALYSIS.  
Reading: Brians et al. Chap. 3

Oct 2 UNIT EXAMINATION

Oct 4 CONDUCTING LITERATURE REVIEW  
Reading: Brians et al, Chap. 3  
Patten, Parts D and E

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH OPERATIONALIZATION AND INDICATIONS--MEASUREMENT

Oct 7, 9 NOMINAL AND OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS  
Reading: Brians et al, Chap. 5, pp. 88-94

Oct 11 THE ACCURACY OF MEASUREMENTS — LEVELS OF MEASUREMENT  
Reading: Brians et al Chap. 5 pp. 94-108

Oct 14, 16 GUIDE TO WRITING A RESEARCH PROPOSAL  
Sample Research Proposals will be distributed and discussed in class  
Reading: Brian et al, Chap. 10

Oct 18 MID-TERM EXAMINATION

Oct 21 Fall Break

MODES OF OBSERVATION

Oct 23 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS  
Reading: Brians et al, Chap. 10  
Moen, M.C., “Ronald Reagan and the Social Issues: Rhetorical Support for the Christian Right” (e- Reserve)

Oct 25, 28, 30 SURVEY RESEARCH  
Reading: Brians et al, Chap. 8  
Patten: Topic 13

Nov 1 Survey Research Continued  
Readings: Same as for Oct. 25, 28, 30
LaPlant, James, “Survey Research: The Role of the Family in Political Socialization” (e-Reserve)

Nov 4, 6    SAMPLING
            Reading: Brians et al, Chap. 7
            Patten, Part F, Topics 27-31

Nov 8       SAMPLING (Cont’d)
            Reading: Same as Nov 4, 6

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Nov 11, 13, 15 UNIVARIATE DATA ANALYSIS & DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS
            Reading: Brian et al, Chap. 16

Nov 18      DISCUSSION on Research Proposal

Nov 20, 22, 25 BIVARIATE DATA ANALYSIS--Measures of Association
            Reading: Brian et al, Chap. 17

Dec 2, 4, 6  Tests of Significance
            Reading: Same as Nov 20, 22, 25

Dec 9       REVIEW

Dec 16      FINAL EXAM     8:00 – 9:50 a.m.