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# PSC 502: Methods of Inquiry

4 credits

Spring 2023

Online

**Instructor:** Matthew Geras, Assistant Professor

**Office:** PAC 358

**Office Hours:** Mondays & Thursdays: 3:30pm-5:00pm central (in person or via Zoom)

By appointment (in person or via Zoom)

**Phone:** 217-206-7884

**Email:**  [mgera2@uis.edu](mailto:mgera2@uis.edu)

## **Course Description**

Graduate education is about training yourself to do research. As an undergraduate, you learned how to be a discriminating user of information, but in graduate school, you will learn to be a producer of new information. In this course, we begin this training by exploring various aspects of the conduct of research, with a focus on researching political and policy questions. We will explore how a researcher conceives of important questions, develops potential answers, defines relevant concepts, and how one collects and compares empirical data to evaluate these questions validly and reliably. This course lays the foundation for conducting both academic and practical research. The issues we deal with this semester will be among those that you deal with in every other class you take in your graduate program. More important, this course raises questions with which you will grapple throughout your professional career, whether in academia or outside it, both in conducting and evaluating research. We will mostly be discussing these concepts through the lens of social science research, but I encourage you to apply what you learn to your current or potential career as well.

The work assigned in this course is designed to improve your ability to think critically and analytically about how we gain the knowledge that is generated by research. Our assignments will focus on both building an understanding of the basics of research design and on the ability to apply those basics to your own research. These assignments will not be undergraduate “read and regurgitate” tasks. You will be asked to process the material, connect the material from one week to the material from other weeks, and apply the material to real research questions.

## **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of the course, students will:

* Be able to identify and describe characteristics and components of empirical research in the field of political science.
* Be able to formulate social science research questions, develop theories and hypotheses to test these questions, and plan a research project to empirically test the validity of these theories and hypotheses.
* Learn how to synthesize and connect the arguments and findings from existing research to inform the creation of original empirical research.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to distinguish and articulate key concepts in basic social science research design, consume academic research in political science, demonstrate critical analysis skills in assessing that academic research, and understand how to produce knowledge using a scientific approach. To demonstrate these outcomes, students will:

* Write and present an original research design (the first four sections of an empirical research paper: introduction, literature review, theory, research design).
* Complete several memo assignments which will serve as the building blocks for the final research design project.
* Complete short quizzes to demonstrate mastery of course content.
* Complete discussion board assignments and a peer-review.

## **Course Expectations**

This course has a modular structure. Each module will last one calendar week. Each new module will begin on Tuesday and end on Monday at 11:59pm. Other than the designated work week, each module consists of required readings and video lecture(s). Additionally, every student is required to complete a research design and there will be several short writing assignments throughout the semester which will serve as building blocks for your research design. Finally, most modules contain a short multiple-choice quiz. You should complete all the required readings before watching the video lectures and taking the quizzes.

Specific instructions, rubrics, and due dates for each assignment can be found below and on Canvas. Since you know the course expectations and due dates at the start of the semester and this is an asynchronous class, it is your responsibility to plan ahead if you have other commitments throughout the semester. By registering for this online course, students commit to self-motivated study, participation in online course activities, and the submission of all assignments on time. Furthermore, they commit to accessing Canvas and checking email at least four times a week and to devoting at least as much time to this online course as to a comparable class on campus. You will get the most out of this class if you take all assignments, readings, and lectures seriously and if you stay up to date with the course schedule.

## **UIS Academic Integrity Policy**

I support the UIS policy on Academic Integrity, which states, in part: “Academic integrity is at the heart of the university’s commitment to academic excellence. The UIS community strives to communicate and support clear standards of integrity, so that undergraduate and graduate students can internalize those standards and carry them forward in their personal and professional lives. Living a life with integrity prepares students to assume leadership roles in their communities as well as in their chosen profession. Alumni can be proud of their education and the larger society will benefit from the University’s contribution to the development of ethical leaders. Violations of academic integrity demean the violator, degrade the learning process, deflate the meaning of grades, discredit the accomplishments of past and present students, and tarnish the reputation of the university for all its members.”

Academic sanctions range from a warning to expulsion from the university, depending on the severity of your violation and your history of violations. Whatever the sanction, I will file a report of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Provost.

You are responsible for understanding and complying with the [UIS Academic Integrity Policy](http://www.uis.edu/academicintegrity).

Academic dishonesty in an online learning environment may include the following scenarios:

* Having a tutor or friend complete a portion of your assignments
* Having a reviewer make extensive revisions to an assignment
* Copying work submitted by another student to a public class meeting
* Using information from online information services without proper citation
* Posting any work as your own that has been written by another author(s)

## **Academic Accommodations**

If you are a student with a documented temporary or ongoing disability in need of academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 217-206-6666.

Disabilities may include, but are not limited to: Psychological, Health, Learning, Sensory, Mobility, ADHD, TBI and Autism Spectrum Disorder.  In some cases, accommodations are also available for shorter term disabling conditions such as severe medical situations. Accommodations are based upon underlying medical and cognitive conditions and may include but are not limited to extended time for tests and quizzes, distraction free environment for tests and quizzes, a note taker, interpreter and FM devices.

Students who have made a request for an academic accommodation that has been reviewed and approved by the ODS will receive an accommodation letter which should be provided by the student to the instructor as soon as possible, preferably in the first week of class.

For assistance in seeking academic accommodations please contact the UIS Office of Disability Services (ODS) in the Human Resources Building, Room 80, phone number 217-206-6666.

## **Library Resources**

You can access library resources, databases, and helpful research guides from [Brookens Library](http://library.uis.edu/). For in-depth help, please contact one of our librarians directly via email or schedule a one-on-one research consultation: [View full list of librarians by subject](https://libguides.uis.edu/librarians).

**The Learning Hub**

The Learning Hub provides students on campus with many services including online and face-to-face tutoring for writing, science, exercise science, academic skills, business, computer science, and math; supplemental instruction; workshops; and online resources. Any student who is enrolled at UIS is eligible for the free services.

If you feel like you need extra help in the class, please use this service along with instructor help.

Appointments can be made by contacting The Learning Hub at (217) 206-6503, [thehub@uis.edu](mailto:thehub@uis.edu), or in person at Brookens 460. You may also use this link to access a “Make an Appointment” form to ensure you give them all the information needed to schedule an appointment. When making an appointment, please have the following information ready:

* Course number
* Instructor
* Assignment/Paper Length
* Available Days and Times

## **Required Texts**

1. Powner, Leanne C. 2015. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. CQ Press.

All other required readings will be posted to Canvas.

## **UIS Resources**

[University of Illinois at Springfield](http://www.uis.edu/)

[[Information Technology Services (ITS)](http://www.uis.edu/)](http://www.uis.edu/its)

[University Webmail](http://webmail.uis.edu)

[Canvas](https://go.uis.edu/canvas)

[The Learning Hub](https://www.uis.edu/learning-hub)

[The Career Development Center](http://www.uis.edu/career/)

## **Course Requirements**

## Complete all assigned readings, lecture videos, and graded assignments. As a best practice, please keep a backup copy of all assignments that you submit. As a UIS student you have access to a [Box](https://www.uis.edu/its/services-uis/box) account, which can be used to back up your assignments

## **Adhere to assignment deadlines as outlined on Canvas and the course schedule. Meeting these deadlines is important since this class is built around receiving consistent and frequent feedback from me and your classmates.**

## **I accept late work, but assignments submitted after their due date will be subject to a penalty of 2% per day. I recognize that some late work occurs due to circumstances outside a student’s control. As a result, I may waive this penalty in such circumstances, especially if you are proactive in letting me know you will be submitting work late, before the assignment deadline. Most importantly, keep in mind that if you are consistently submitting assignments lates, you are limiting your ability to receive feedback on your assignments, which is crucial to not only this class, but your overall development of research skills.**

## ***While it is important that we all do our best to adhere to these requirements, I recognize we all continue to live through unprecedented times. If you find yourself in a situation where your ability to meet course deadlines is compromised, please let me know. I will, to the best of my abilities, work with you to come up with a solution that will allow you to complete the required components of this course.***

## **Technology Requirements**

Students will use the internet to access the Canvas course page and their UIS email. Other programs used will be Zoom, Microsoft Office, Zotero or some other bibliographic management software (optional), and resources from the UIS library. All these programs are available to students through their enrollment in UIS classes or are freely available online.

## **Course Communication**

The best way to contact me is through email or the messenger function on Canvas. As needed, we can also schedule Zoom meetings and telephone consultations. I typically respond to emails within 24 hours Monday through Thursday and within 48 hours Friday through Sunday. You will likely receive a response from me much faster than this timeline. If fact, if you do not receive a response from me within this timeframe, it is okay to assume I did not receive your original message and you are welcome to contact me again.

Keep in mind that the messenger app on Canvas sometimes struggles with file attachments, especially in cases where you are responding to a Canvas message through email. As a result, email or UIS’s protected email application ([PEAR](https://www.aits.uillinois.edu/services/application_services/PEAR/)) is the better option in these circumstances. Additionally, keep in mind that I am not allowed to discuss grades through email.

Office Hours:

My office hours are Mondays and Thursdays from 3:30pm to 5:00pm central and by appointment. To set up a meeting, send me an email with some suggested times. I encourage all students to attend office hours whenever they wish to discuss course content and assignments. Please view my office hours as time that I have set aside to answer your questions, clarify class discussions, and help you succeed in class. All office hours will be available either in person or via Zoom.

### Netiquette

In any social interaction, certain rules of etiquette are expected and contribute to more enjoyable and productive communication. I recommend you review the following [tips for interacting online](https://www.livinginternet.com/i/ia_nq.htm) in e-mail and/or discussion board messages compiled by Chuq Von Rospach and Gene Spafford.

Everyone must plan an active role in helping to facilitate and maintain a safe and comfortable learning environment where everyone should feel free to participate, ask questions, engage the course and support one another. To do this successfully, we must remain mindful and respectful of each other’s freedom of thought and speech and provide mutual respect. Everyone should feel comfortable expressing themselves and their views. There must be a clear respect for diversity of participants including respect for gender, race/ethnicity, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, as well as culture, beliefs, and personal values.

Here are some tips for discussing serious and potential sensitive topics with your peers:

* Be empathetic and remember that this environment is a safe place for making mistakes.
* Use nonjudgmental language and phrases that do not attack an individual. One way of doing this is to ask the individual to discuss their process for making their final decision.
* Use specific questions, examples, and research as a way of making your point.

## **Methods of Evaluation and Explanation of Each Assignment**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | **Percent of Final Grade** | **Due Date**  (By 11:59pm) |
| Quizzes | 10% | Due most Mondays |
| Discussion Board Assignments | 10% | Various (see below) |
| Memo 1: Research Question and Annotated Bibliography | 15% | 2/13 |
| Memo 2: Theory and Hypothesis | 10% | 3/6 |
| Memo 3: Research Design | 10% | 4/3 |
| Rough Draft of Research Design | 5% | 4/24 |
| Peer Review | 5% | 5/1 |
| Final Research Design | 25% | 5/8 |
| Presentation of Research Design | 10% | 5/8 |

| Percent Range | Letter Grade |
| --- | --- |
| 100-93 | A |
| 92-90 | A- |
| 89-87 | B+ |
| 86-83 | B |
| 82-80 | B- |
| 79-77 | C+ |
| 76-73 | C |
| 72-70 | C- |
| 69-67 | D+ |
| 66-63 | D |
| 62-60 | D- |
| 59 and below | F |

*A scoring breakdown for each assignment can be found on each assignment page on Canvas.*

Quizzes

Throughout the semester, there will be 10 short quizzes based upon the assigned readings and lectures. Quizzes will be comprised of multiple choice and true/false questions and will be completed on Canvas. These quizzes are not meant to be a lengthy time commitment. While there is no time limit on the quizzes, if you have watched the video lectures and have completed the required readings, you should be able to complete each quiz in about 15 to 20 minutes. The purpose of these quizzes is for students to demonstrate their understanding of the material. Additionally, the quizzes will give me an indication as to whether certain content needs to be covered further. Overall, these quizzes are collectively worth 10% of your final grade.

Discussion Board Assignments

Throughout the semester, there will be 4 discussion board assignments. The first will take place in Module 1 and will be your opportunity to introduce yourself to your classmates. The 3 remaining discussion board assignments, which will be spread out through the remainder of semester, will provide you with the opportunity to share your research progress with the class and will also give you the opportunity to learn about your classmates’ research. To receive full credit for each discussion board, you must first fully answer the prompt I provide and then you must comment on at least 2 of your classmates’ responses. Collectively, your participation in these discussion boards assignments will constitute 10% of your final grade.

In addition to the discussion board assignments, twice during the semester, I will be holding optional Zoom meetings. The purpose of these meetings is for me to answer any questions you may have about the course’s assignments and for participants to share their progress on their research. These meetings will take place on **Thursday, February 9th at 6pm central** and **Wednesday, March 22nd at 6pm central**.

Memo 1: Research Question and Annotated Bibliography Memo (due: 2/13)

**Section 1: Research Question**

First, clearly state your research question. Second, write 1-3 paragraphs that justify your question by arguing for its theoretical and/or practical importance. If you are having difficulties with this part, I recommend you read the first few pages of several political science journal articles for examples of how scholars make these arguments. Consider articles that do and do not convince you of their questions’ importance and consider why this is the case in each instance. This will help you to develop your own arguments.

### Section 2: An Annotated Bibliography

A core component of your research design will be a literature review that explains how past research has informed your proposed study. This annotated bibliography will serve as your initial investigation into the existing literature on your topic. If you are thorough with this assignment, the process of organizing and writing a literature review for your final paper will be much easier.

Find at least 20 different academic sources related to your topic. This means peer-reviewed journal articles and/or books. First, provide the bibliographic citation for each source. Second, after reading each source, write a summary that describes the source’s key findings and the source’s importance to the body of literature on your topic.

When writing your summaries, it might be helpful to consider the following questions:

1. What is the article’s research question(s)?
2. What are the key concepts, the phenomena implicitly or explicitly referenced in the research question, and how are they measured as independent or dependent variables?
3. What is the article’s theory, the logical explanation of how and why the concepts are related?
4. What are the article’s hypotheses, the statements predicting a relationship between two or more variables?
5. What data is collected by the authors and how is it collected?
6. What research method(s) do the researchers use to test the hypotheses?
7. What is the article’s key empirical finding(s)? Do the authors present convincing evidence that supports their hypotheses? If not, why not? What are the implications of these findings?

You do not need to explicitly answer all these questions for each source, but thorough summaries will be most helpful when it comes time to write your literature review. Overall, as you read, consider how each source might contribute to your proposed study. Does the source offer advice on how to measure an important concept, will it contribute to your theory, does it suggest a potential data source, etc.?

Memo 2: Theory and Hypothesis (due: 3/6)

First, explicitly state at least one hypothesis that your project is designed to test. Second, write 1-3 pages justifying the plausibility of your hypothesis. This memo will serve as the initial draft of the theory section of your final project.

Remember your hypotheses should:

* Answer your research question directly and explicitly
* Be the result of a theoretical argument about an underlying causal process in the world and your logical application of this theory to your research question
* Be appropriately supported by citations to published research or other supporting evidence with a list of these references attached to your memo

For your final project, you may have more than one hypothesis and more than one theory/causal story. However, you only need to discuss one theory and hypothesis in this memo. I urge you to notice how this sort of hypothesis development and justification is done in the journal articles you read for this class, your other classes, and for your research design. Often students will think one or two short paragraphs is sufficient to explain your theory, but as you will see in published research, this is rarely the case. At the top of this memo, write your research question in its most up-to-date form.

Memo 3: Research Design (due: 4/3)

### Section 1: Sampling Procedures

First, describe the population your project is designed to study. Your population might be elections, voters, wars, speeches, etc. Second, describe the sample or specific cases you will be analyzing in your study. Third, explain and justify how and why you selected this specific sample or set of cases. In this explanation, you should consider what your sample can and cannot tell us about your unobserved population and why this sample is better suited to test your hypotheses than other potential samples.

Depending on your research question, the differences between your target population and your study sample will vary. For example, if your unit of analysis is wars, you may only be analyzing one to three wars. However, if your unit of analysis is congressional elections, you will probably be analyzing a subpopulation of congressional elections defined by a specific timeframe. Overall, this section of the memo should explain how and why your study sample is different from your target population and why you believe your study sample is best suited to test your hypotheses and answer your research question. In doing this, you should acknowledge any limitations or other threats to validity your sample may pose.

### Section 2: Measurement

Describe the measurement strategy for both the dependent variable and the independent variable in your hypothesis. To do this, you will need to follow four steps for each of your variables. First, provide a clear explanation of the overarching concept each of your variables is measuring. Second, provide a detailed description and discussion of how you will operationalize and measure this concept in one or more variables. Third, evaluate the extent to which each of your variables is both a reliable and valid indicator of the concepts you want to measure. Finally, discuss how you will collect your data. Is there an existing dataset you can use, will you be conducting a survey or experiment, will you be collecting observational data, etc?

Once again, depending on your question, the differences between your concepts and your actual operationalization and measurement of these concept will vary. For example, the concepts of electoral success or political participation have more direct measures than do the concepts of political knowledge or democracy. This section of the memo should explain how you will be measuring both your independent and dependent variable and why you believe these measurement strategies are best suited to measure each of your concepts. In doing this, you should acknowledge any limitations or threats to validity your measurement strategies may pose.

Overall, this memo should be 2-5 pages. At the top of this memo, write your research question and hypothesis(es) in their most revised form. As always, cite your sources of information as appropriate and add a list of references at the end of your memo.

Final Research Design (due: 5/8)

Your final research design will not simply be each of your preliminary memos put into one Word document. You will use the feedback you get from me on each memo assignment and your rough draft, the feedback you will receive from your peer reviewer on your rough draft, and what you have learned throughout the semester, to revise, develop, and expand upon these memos for the final paper. Opposed to an annotated bibliography, your final research design must contain a review of the existing literature on your topic that analyzes how past research has informed your proposed study. In addition, you may have more than one hypothesis to develop in your final paper, and you will have several variables for which to develop measurement plans. The end product should contain the material covered in the journal articles we will read this semester right up to the results section. That means an introduction, literature review, theory/hypothesis section, and a methodology section. You will take your memos and the feedback you received to build out these sections in a coherent manner. **In order to end up with a high-quality research design by the end of the semester, you should be working on your project consistently every week, regardless of whether an assignment is due that week.**

*Rough Draft (due: 4/24)*

The rough draft of your research design does not need to be a completed draft, but you must submit something showing you have gone beyond your initial drafts of each memo. However, since one of your classmates will be reviewing your rough draft, the more complete your rough draft is, the more thorough the feedback you will receive.

Peer Review (due: 5/1)

You are responsible for reviewing a classmate’s rough draft. You should offer advice on how the author might improve their research design. Your peer review should do more than point out typos or misspellings; although, I am sure your classmate would appreciate this as well. Instead, you should identify areas of the rough draft that you believe need further explanation, or you might have an idea of how a particular concept might be measured more effectively. It is perfectly okay, and expected, that you will not have the same content knowledge as the author of the rough draft you are reviewing. This does not preclude you from providing important feedback. If anything, you will be in a better position to point out jargon and other information that the author incorrectly assumed was common knowledge. You should use the advice you received in the course readings and lectures to complete your peer review. In addition to sharing your feedback with your partner, you should submit a copy of your peer review to Canvas. You are welcome to download and leave comments/feedback in the margins of your classmate’s draft or you can write a peer-review memo like we discussed in class. The format of your peer review is not important to me as long as your assignment reflects that you have put serious time and effort into reviewing your classmate’s draft.

Presentation of Research Design (due: 5/8)

When you submit your research design, you will also submit a prerecorded presentation about your research design. In your presentation, you should present your research question and explain why you think this research question is important and/or what motivated you to pursue this research question. Next, you should briefly review the relevant literature. This is normally the shortest part of a research presentation because you will have limited time and you should spend this time discussing your new contribution(s) to the topic at hand. Next, present your theory and hypotheses. Finally, present your research design section which includes a discussion of the data that needs to be collected, the measurement of concepts, your sampling strategy, and the methodology you will use to collect and analyze your data. Your presentation should be **no more than 8-10 minutes**. You are welcome to use other programs if you prefer, but everyone has access to PowerPoint and Zoom, which can be used to record your presentation.

## **Course Calendar**

Below is an outline of the course calendar with the due dates of major assignments and each module’s required readings. Please note this schedule is subject to change.

**Module 1: Class Introductions & Introduction to Empirical Research (1/17 - 1/23)**

Readings:

* Johnson, Janet Buttolph, and H.T. Reynolds. 2005. *Political Science Research Methods*. 5th ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press. (Chapter 2: Studying Politics Scientifically)
* Schwartz, M. A. 2008. “The Importance of Stupidity in Scientific Research.” *Journal of Cell Science* 121(11): 1771–1771.
* Hougen, Erica. 2021. “The Effects of Super PAC Spending: An Analysis of U.S. House Elections 2016-2020.” MA Thesis. University of Illinois Springfield.
  + This thesis was written by a recent UIS political science MA graduate Erica Hougen. Erica’s thesis originated from her final research design in this class, so this should give you an idea of the type of project you should be working towards this semester.

Assignments:

* Class Introductions Discussion Board (due: 1/23)

**Module 2: Research Questions (1/24 - 1/30)**

Readings:

* Minkoff, Scott L. 2016. “A Guide to Developing and Writing Research Papers in Political Science.” <http://scottminkoff.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/minkoff_researchpaper_guide_aug2016.pdf>.
* Powner, Leanne C. 2015. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. CQ Press. (Chapter 1: From Research Topic to Research Question)
* Day, Christopher, and Kendra L. Koivu. 2019. “Finding the Question: A Puzzle-Based Approach to the Logic of Discovery.” *Journal of Political Science Education* 15(3): 377–86.
* Zigerell, L.J. 2011. “Of Publishable Quality: Ideas for Political Science Seminar Papers.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44(3): 629–33.

Assignments:

* Brainstorming Research Questions Discussion Board (due: 1/30)
* Module 2 Quiz (due: 1/30)

**Module 3: Literature Reviews (1/31 - 2/6)**

Readings:

* Powner, Leanne C. 2015. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. CQ Press. (Chapter 3: Doing Pre-Research)
* Knopf, Jeffrey W. 2006. “Doing a Literature Review.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 39(1): 127–32.
* [UIS Center for Academic Success's Advice on Writing a Literature Review](https://www.uis.edu/learning-hub/writing-resources/handouts/learning-hub/literature-review#:~:text=The%20purpose%20of%20a%20literature,conducting%20your%20own%20original%20research.)
* Read an article from the [Annual Review of Political Science](https://www.annualreviews.org/toc/polisci/current) on your topic. This will provide you with an example of an article-length lit. review and help with your research.

Assignments:

* Module 3 Quiz (due: 2/6)

**Module 4: Work Week (2/7 – 2/13)**

Assignments:

* Memo 1 (due: 2/13)

**Module 5: Theory and Hypothesis Testing (2/14 – 2/20)**

Readings:

* Powner, Leanne C. 2015. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. CQ Press. (Chapter 2: From Research Question to Theory to Hypothesis)
* Fearon, James D. 1991. “Counterfactuals and Hypothesis Testing in Political Science.” *World Politics* 43: 169–95.
* Canes-Wrone, Brandice, Michael C. Herron, and Kenneth W. Shotts. 2001. “Leadership and Pandering: A Theory of Executive Policymaking.” *American Journal of Political Science* 45(3): 532-550.

Assignments:

* Module 5 Quiz (due: 2/20)

**Module 6: Research Design & Measurement (2/21 – 2/27)**

Readings:

* Powner, Leanne C. 2015. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. CQ Press. (Chapter 4: Choosing a Design That Fits Your Question)
* Gschwend, Thomas, and Frank Schimmelfennig. 2007. “Introduction: Designing Research in Political Science — A Dialogue between Theory and Data.” In *Research Design in Political Science: How to Practice What They Preach*, eds. Thomas Gschwend and Frank Schimmelfennig. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1–18.
* USC Libraries. “Organizing Your Social Science Research Paper: 6. The Methodology.” *USC Libraries*. <https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/methodology> (December 29, 2020).
* Adcock, Robert, and David Collier. 2001. “Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research.” *American Political Science Review* 92(3): 529–46.
* Kneuer, Marianne. 2016. “E-Democracy: A New Challenge for Measuring Democracy.” *International Political Science Review* 37(5): 666–78.

Assignments:

* Module 6 Quiz (due: 2/27)

**Module 7: Qualitative Research (2/28 – 3/6)**

Readings:

* Powner, Leanne C. 2015. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. CQ Press. (Chapter 5: Case Selection and Study Design for Qualitative Research)
* Powner, Leanne C. 2015. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. CQ Press. (Chapter 6: Qualitative Data Collection and Management)
* Baxter, Pamela, and Susan Jack. 2008. “Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers.” *The Qualitative Report* 13(4): 544–59.
* Collier, David. 2011. “Understanding Process Tracing.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44(04): 823–30.
* Oktay, Sibel. 2022. *Governing Abroad: Coalition Politics and Foreign Policy in Europe*. University of Michigan Press. <https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/57567> (Chapter 4: Reaching Across the Aisle).

Assignments:

* Memo 2 (due: 3/6)
* Module 7 Quiz (due: 3/6)

**Module 8: Quantitative Research (3/7 – 3/20) [Spring Break: 3/13 – 3/17]**

Readings:

* Powner, Leanne C. 2015. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. CQ Press. (Chapter 7: Quantitative Data Collection and Management)
* Powner, Leanne C. 2015. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. CQ Press. (Chapter 8: Preparing Quantitative Data for Analysis)
* Long, Abby. “10 Things to Know About Reading a Regression Table – EGAP.” <https://egap.org/resource/10-things-to-know-about-reading-a-regression-table/> (January 5, 2022).
* Edwards III, George C, Andrew Barrett, and Jeffrey Peake. 1997. “The Legislative Impact of Divided Government.” *American Journal of Political Science* 41(2): 545–63.
* Binder, Sarah A. 1999. “The Dynamics of Legislative Gridlock, 1947-96.” *The American Political Science Review* 93(3): 519–33.

Assignments:

* Module 8 Quiz (due: 3/20)

**Module 9: Mixed-Methods Research (3/21 - 3/27)**

Readings:

* Cyr, Jennifer. 2017. “The Unique Utility of Focus Groups for Mixed-Methods Research.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 50(04): 1038–42.
* Seawright, Jason, and John Gerring. 2008. “Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options.” *Political Research Quarterly* 61(2): 294–308.
* Fridkin, Kim, Amanda Wintersieck, Jillian Courey, and Joshua Thompson. 2017. “Race and Police Brutality: The Importance of Media Framing.” *International Journal of Communication* 11.
* Hassell, Hans J. G. 2016. “Party Control of Party Primaries: Party Influence in Nominations for the US Senate.” *Journal of Politics* 78(1): 75–87.

Assignments:

* Qualitative and Quantitative Methods Discussion Board (due: 3/27)

**Module 10: Causal Inference (3/28 - 4/3)**

Readings:

* Manzi, Pilar, and Maximilian Weylandt. 2021. “Causal Inference and the Scientific Method.” In *Empirical Methods in Politica Science: An Introduction*, ed. Jean Clipperton. Northwestern University Libraries. <https://nulib-oer.github.io/empirical-methods-polisci/causal-inference-and-the-scientific-method.html>.
* King, Gary, Robert O Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. (Chapter 3: Causality and Causal Inference)
* Geddes, Barbara. 1990. “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get.” *Political Analysis* 2: 131–50.
* Carroll, Aaron E. 2018. “Workplace Wellness Programs Don’t Work Well. Why Some Studies Show Otherwise.” *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/06/upshot/employer-wellness-programs-randomized-trials.html> (December 28, 2020).

Assignments:

* Memo 3 (due: 4/3)
* Module 10 Quiz (due: 4/3)

**Module 11: Experiments (4/4 – 4/10)**

Readings:

* Druckman, James N. 2022. *Experimental Thinking: A Primer on Social Science Experiments*. Columbia University Press.
* Saint-Germain, Michelle. “Experimental Designs for Research.” *PPA 696 Research Methods*. <https://web.csulb.edu/~msaintg/ppa696/696exper.htm#Pre-test/Post-test%20control%20group%20design> (March 26, 2021).
* Preece, Jessica Robinson, and Olga Bogach Stoddard. 2015. “Does the Message Matter? A Field Experiment on Political Party Recruitment.” *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 2: 26–35.
* Campbell, Rosie, and Philip Cowley. 2014. “What Voters Want: Reactions to Candidate Characteristics in a Survey Experiment.” *Political Studies* 62(4): 745–65.
* Broockman, David E. 2013. “Black Politicians Are More Intrinsically Motivated to Advance Blacks’ Interests: A Field Experiment Manipulating Political Incentives.” *American Journal of Political Science* 57(3): 521–36.
* Wintersieck, Amanda L. 2017. “Real-Time Fact-Checking Can Change People’s Opinion about a Candidate, but Only If the Ratings Are Decisive.” *USAPP- American Politics and Policy*. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2017/03/23/real-time-fact-checking-can-change-peoples-opinion-about-a-candidate-but-only-if-the-ratings-are-decisive/> (December 28, 2020).
* Saha, Sparsha, and Ana Catalano Weeks. 2022. “Ambitious Women: Gender and Voter Perceptions of Candidate Ambition.” *Political Behavior* 44(2): 779–805.

Assignments:

* Experiments Discussion Board (due: 4/10)
* Module 11 Quiz (due: 4/10)

**Module 12: Survey Research (4/11 - 4/17)**

Readings:

* Butt, Sarah, Sally Widdop, and Lizzy Winstone. 2016. “The Role of High Quality Surveys in Political Science Research.” In *Handbook of Research Methods and Applications in Political Science*, ed. H Keman. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 262–80.
* PEW Research. “Collecting Survey Data.” *Pew Research Center Methods*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/methods/u-s-survey-research/collecting-survey-data/> (December 26, 2020).
* PEW Research. “Questionnaire Design.” *Pew Research Center Methods*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/methods/u-s-survey-research/questionnaire-design/> (December 26, 2020).
* Berinsky, Adam J. 2018. “Telling the Truth about Believing the Lies? Evidence for the Limited Prevalence of Expressive Survey Responding.” *The Journal of Politics* 80(1): 211–24.
* Berinsky, Adam J., Gregory A. Huber, and Gabriel S. Lenz. 2012. “Evaluating Online Labor Markets for Experimental Research: Amazon.Com’s Mechanical Turk.” *Political Analysis* 20(3): 351–68.

Assignments:

* Module 12 Quiz (due: 4/17)

**Module 13: Interviews and Participant Observation (4/18 - 4/24)**

Readings:

* Curry, James M. 2017. “In-Depth Qualitative Research and the Study of American Political Institutions.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 50(01): 114–20.
* Knott, Eleanor, Aliya Hamid Rao, Kate Summers, and Chana Teeger. 2022. “Interviews in the Social Sciences.” *Nature Reviews Methods Primers* 2(1): 1–15.
* Goldstein, Kenneth. 2002. “Getting in the Door: Sampling and Completing Elite Interviews.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 35(04): 669–72.
* Leech, Beth L. 2002. “Asking Questions: Techniques for Semistructured Interviews.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 35(04): 665–68.
* Aberbach, Joel D., and Bert A. Rockman. 2002. “Conducting and Coding Elite Interviews.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 35(04): 673–76.
* Berry, Jeffrey M. 2002. “Validity and Reliability Issues In Elite Interviewing.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 35(04): 679–82.
* Woliver, Laura R. 2002. “Ethical Dilemmas in Personal Interviewing.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 35(04): 677–78.
* Gillespie, Andra, and Melissa R. Michelson. 2011. “Participant Observation and the Political Scientist: Possibilities, Priorities, and Practicalities.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44(02): 261–65.

Assignments:

* Research Design (Rough Draft) (due: 4/24)
* Module 13 Quiz (due: 4/24)

**Module 14: Research Ethics & Peer Review (4/25 - 5/1)**

Readings:

* [UIS Institutional Review Board](https://www.uis.edu/research/irb-and-integrity-programs/uis-institutional-review-board) (check out the links too)
* Fujii, Lee Ann. 2012. “Research Ethics 101: Dilemmas and Responsibilities.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 45(04): 717–23.
* Cronin-Furman, Kate, and Milli Lake. 2018. “Ethics Abroad: Fieldwork in Fragile and Violent Contexts.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 51(03): 607–14.
* Michelson, Melissa R. 2016. “The Risk of Over-Reliance on the Institutional Review Board: An Approved Project Is Not Always an Ethical Project.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 49(02): 299–303.
* Whitfield, Gregory. 2019. “TRENDS: Toward a Separate Ethics of Political Field Experiments.” *Political Research Quarterly* 72(3): 527–38.
* Powner, Leanne C. 2015. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. CQ Press. (Chapter 10: Practicing Peer Review)

Assignments:

* Peer Review (due: 5/1)

**Module 15: Writing and Presenting Research (5/2 – 5/6)**

Readings:

* Powner, Leanne C. 2015. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. CQ Press. (Chapter 9: Writing Up Your Research)
* Zigerell, L. J. 2013. “Rookie Mistakes: Preemptive Comments on Graduate Student Empirical Research Manuscripts.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 46(01): 142–46.
* Powner, Leanne C. 2015. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. CQ Press. (Chapter 11: Posters, Presentations, and Publishing)

Assignments:

* Research Design (Final Draft) (due: 5/8)
* Research Design (Presentation) (due: 5/8)

**Acknowledgements:** This syllabus benefited directly or indirectly from several people, including (in no particular order) A.J. Simmons, John Transue, Christopher Mooney, Sarah Shair-Rosenfield, Amanda Wintersieck, Milli Lake, Will H. Moore, Reed Wood, Thorin Wright, Cameron Thies, Holly Williamson, Mark Ramirez, Stephen Walker, Chuck Finocchiaro, Kathleen Tipler, and Aimee Franklin.