Pol S 301
Introduction to Empirical Political Science Research
Fall 2019
TR 11am–12:20pm, Bessey 2234

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Office Hours: MW 11am–12pm and 1pm–2pm, Ross Hall 537

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Overview and Objectives

Political Science is an empirical discipline. This means that we apply the scientific method to generate and test theories about how the political world works, in order to improve our understanding of political phenomena. In this class, you will learn the tools necessary to think like a researcher.

In particular, you will learn to generate and apply abstract theories, derive and identify specific conditions under which predictions from these theories should hold, and evaluate whether these hypotheses are supported. This means that, rather than thinking of every election, war, economic crisis, or other political outcome of interest as a unique event, you will learn how to investigate which characteristics systematically make outcomes more or less likely. To do this, we will utilize statistical tools. You are expected to learn how statistics helps us understand the political world, and what are appropriate and inappropriate uses of statistics. You can expect that the tools learned in this class will help you better understand what you read and learn in other classes, assist in making you a more critical consumer of (political) information, as well as develop marketable skills for the future.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, students should be able to:
- Students will explain the fundamentals of applying the scientific model to social science research.
- Students will identify the key elements of a theory and hypothesis testing.
- Students will describe basic tenants of measuring and describing data.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of appropriately testing social science hypotheses.
- Students will apply statistical techniques to a research problem.

Required Texts

Kellstedt, Paul M. and Guy D. Whitten. 2018. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*, 3rd edition. NY: Cambridge University Press.

Monogan, James E. III. 2015. *Political Analysis Using R.* New York: Springer. Download the book for free when on campus at `http://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-319-23446-5`, or by signing into the library's webpage, doing a search for the title, and clicking on online access.

We will be using the Top Hat (www.tophat.com) classroom response system in class. You will be able to submit answers to in-class questions using smartphones, tablets, laptops, or through text messaging. You can visit the Top Hat Overview `support.tophat.com/hc/en-us/articles/200019034-Top-Hat-Overview-Getting-Started` within the Top Hat Success Center which outlines how you can register for a Top Hat account, as well as provides a brief overview to get you up and running with the system. An email invitation to join your Top Hat space will be sent to you, but if you dont receive it, you can still create your student account at `www.tophat.com`. You will be required to purchase a Top Hat license from the ISU Book Store or online in order to access any quizzes or questions your instructor creates in the Top Hat system. Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time please contact the IT Solution Center at 515-294-4000 or solution@iastate.edu.

Grading

Grades are based on 2 exams (200 pts), a series of homework assignments (120 pts), a research project (140 pts), and in-class participation (40 pts). All readings are required to be completed prior to class. Assignments are required to be uploaded to Canvas by the start of class (11am); late assignments are not accepted and earn a score of zero. Final grades are rounded to the nearest whole number.

This class will introduce you to several statistical techniques and data management tools. You will use the statistical program **R** to analyze data for some of the homeworks and the semester-length data project. The Monogan workbook explains how to download **R**.

- Exams

    Exams are each worth 100 points. Each exam focuses on the topics covered since the previous exam. If you need to miss an exam to participate in a university sponsored event, I expect at least two weeks advance notification. You must arrange with me to make up the work in a timely manner. If you are physically unable to contact me in advance (e.g., if you wake up extremely ill), you must contact me (via email or phone) as soon as possible and then bring some form of verification from a physician. Failure to complete an exam without appropriately notifying me results in zero credit for that exam.

- Homework

    Homework is assigned either on Canvas or from the Monogan workbook (MW). Each homework assignment is worth 15 points. There are 8 homework assignments which cover the material of the previous week. For the applied statistics, all data sets and code to conduct the analysis presented in the MW text are available at `https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/ARKOTI`, as well as in a link in the preface of MW and at the start of each chapter. If a student is unhappy with their grade, they may submit their complaint in writing, explain the particular discrepancy, and recommend an appropriate recourse. The instructor will read the memo, re-read the disputed answer, and assign a grade. The new grade may be higher or lower than the original grade after the re-evaluation of the answer.

- Research Project

    There is a five-part research project: the first 4 parts are worth 10 points each, and the last part is worth 100 points. Please see the *Research Project* document for additional information.

- In-class Participation

    All in-class questions are administered using Top Hat classroom response system (see section on required materials above). Top Hat questions are intended to monitor effort and understanding; 90% of the value of each question is awarded for attendance and 10% for giving the correct answer. Since each Top Hat question makes up only a small portion of the final grade (40pts total, 40-50 questions over the semester, less than 1pt per question), missing only one or two classes will not make a meaningful difference for a student's grade. Absences are considered excused only for university-approved activities (conditional on **advanced** written warning from the relevant department) or a major life-altering event, such as a serious illness or a death in the family. Missed clicker questions, due to any other reason, result in a score of 0.

Grading Scale:

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	≤ 59

Course Policies

Student Responsibilities in the Learning Process: Students are expected to complete all required readings and watch all assigned videos on a topic prior to completing that topic's assessment. Students are also expected to complete all assessments on time. This means accessing the online materials with sufficient time to complete assessments prior to deadlines. In the event that a student has questions concerning the material, they should formulate specific questions to ask the professor via office hours or email with sufficient time for a response prior to assessment deadlines (i.e. emailed questions should be sent at least 24 hours prior to a deadline, excluding weekends).

Harassment and Discrimination: Any concerns about prohibited discrimination or harassment based on race, ethnicity, sex (including sexual assault), pregnancy, color, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, or status as a veteran should be brought to the instructor, Student Assistance (515-294-1020 or dso-sas@iastate.edu), or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance (515-294-7612).

Accommodations: Please discuss any special needs with the teaching staff at the start of the semester, for example to request reasonable accommodations if an academic or work requirement conflicts with your religious practices and/or observances. Those seeking accommodations based on disabilities should provide a completed Student Academic Accommodation Request form from the Disability Resources office (Student Services Building 1076, phone 515-294-7220). The Dean of Students Office or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance may be able to provide additional assistance.

Academic Misconduct All acts of dishonesty in any work constitute academic misconduct. Online courses are no exception. The Student Disciplinary Regulations (`http://policy.iastate.edu/policy/SDR`) will be followed in the event of academic misconduct. Depending on the act, a student could receive an F grade on the test/assignment, F grade for the course, and could be suspended or expelled from the University. Academic misconduct includes all acts of dishonesty in any academically related matter and any knowing attempt to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct. Plagiarism is the act of representing directly or indirectly another person's work as your own. It can involve presenting someone's speech, wholly or partially, as your; quoting without acknowledging the true source of the quoted material; copying and handing in another person's work with your name on it; and similar infractions. Even indirect quotations, paraphrasing, etc., can be considered plagiarism unless sources are properly cited.

I reserve the right to modify the syllabus to reflect the pace of the course.

Course Outline

Aug 26: Introduction

Reading: K&W Ch 1.

No lecture on Thursday, Aug 29.

Supplemental:

- *FiveThirtyEight*. Mohawks, Faux-hawks And Macklemores: The Top-Heavy Hairdos of the World Cup. Available on Canvas.
- Clarke, Kevin A., and David M. Primo. 2007. Modernizing Political Science: A Model-based Approach. *Perspectives on Politics* 5(4): 741–753.

Sept 2: Theory Construction

Reading: K&W Ch 2.

Homework 1: Yard Sign handout (available on Canvas) (due Sept 10).

Supplemental:

- Bueno De Mesquita, Bruce, James D. Morrow, Randolph M. Siverson, and Alastair Smith. 1999. An Institutional Explanation of the Democratic Peace. *American Political Science Review* 93(4): 791–807.
- Penn, Elizabeth Maggie, 2008. Citizenship Versus Ethnicity: The Role of Institutions in Shaping Identity Choice. *Journal of Politics* 70(4): 956–973.
- Sartori, Anne E. 2002. The Might of the Pen: A Reputational Theory of Communication in International Disputes. *International Organization* 56(1): 121–149.

Sept 9: Understanding Causality

Reading: K&W Ch 3.

Research Project: Part 1 (due Sept 17).

Supplemental:

- Campbell, Donald T. and H. Laurence Ross. 1968. The Connecticut Crackdown on Speeding: Time-Series Data in Quasi-Experimental Analysis. *Law & Society Review* 3(1):333–54.
- McNulty, John E., Conor M. Dowling, and Margaret H. Ariotti. 2009. Driving Saints to Sin: How Increasing the Difficulty of Voting Dissuades Even the Most Motivated Voters. *Political Analysis* 17(4): 418–434.
- Signorino, Curtis S. 2003. Structure and Uncertainty in Discrete Choice Models. *Political Analysis* 11(4): 316–344.

Sept 16: Research Design

Reading: K&W Ch 4.

Supplemental:
- Braumoeller, Bear F., and Gary Goertz. 2000. The Methodology of Necessary Conditions. *American Journal of Political Science* 44(4): 844-858.
- Chyzh, Olga. 2014. Can You Trust a Dictator: A Strategic Model of Authoritarian Regimes' Signing and Compliance with International Treaties. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 31(1): 3–27.
- Gibler, Douglas M., and Scott Wolford. 2006. Alliances, then Democracy: An Examination of the Relationship between Regime Type and Alliance Formation. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50(1): 129–153.

Sept 23: Exam 1 and Measurement

Take Exam 1 at Testing Center between 9am Sept 23 to 7:00pm Sept 25.

Homework 2: Political Participation handout (available on Canvas) (due Oct 1).

No lecture on Tuesday, Sept 24.

Reading: K&W Ch 5; MW Ch 1-2.

Supplemental:
- Palmer, Glenn, Vito D'Orazio, Michael Kenwick, and Matthew Lane. 2015. The MID4 Dataset, 2002-2010: Procedures, Coding Rules, and Description. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 32(2): 222–242.
- Nieman, Mark and Jon Ring. 2015. The Construction of Human Rights: Accounting for Systematic Bias in Common Human Rights Measures. *European Political Science* 14(4):473–495.
- Jurkovich, Michelle. 2019. What Isn't a Norm? Redefining the Conceptual Boundaries of "Norms" in the Human Rights Literature. *International Studies Review* `https:doi.org/10.1093/isr/viz040.`

Sept 30: Descriptive Statistics

Reading: K&W Ch 6; MW Ch 3-4.

Homework 3: MW Ch 4–Practice Problems 1-5 (due Oct 10).

Supplemental:
- Gleditsch, Nils Petter, Peter Wallensteen, Mikael Eriksson, Margarata Sollenberg, and Håvard Strand. 2002. Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset. *Journal of Peace Research* 39(5): 615–637.
- Lo, James, Sven-Oliver Proksch, and Thomas Gschwend. 2014. A Common Left-Right Scale for Voters and Parties in Europe. *Political Analysis* 22(2): 205–223.
- Westbrooke, Ian. 1998. Simpson's Paradox: An Example in a New Zealand Survey of Jury Composition. *Chance* 11(2): 40–42.

Oct 7: Making Inferences

Reading: K&W Ch 7; MW Ch 3.

R lab in Gilman 2272 on Tuesday, Oct 8.

Homework 4: MW Ch 3–Practice Problems 1-3(a-c) (due Oct 15).

Research Project: Part 2 (due Oct 15).

Supplemental:

- Sears, David O. 1986. College Sophomores in the Laboratory: Influences of a Narrow Data Base on Social Psychology's View of Human Nature. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 51(3): 515–530.
- Hassid, Jonathan. 2011. Four Models of the Fourth Estate: A Typology of Contemporary Chinese Journalists. *China Quarterly* 208: 813–832.
- Ditonto, Tessa M., Richard R. Lau, and David O. Sears. 2013. AMPing Racial Attitudes: Comparing the Power of Explicit and Implicit Racism Measures in 2008. *Political Psychology* 34(4): 487–510.

Oct 14: Making Inferences

Reading: K&W Ch 7.

Supplemental:

- Alford, John R., Carolyn L. Funk, and John R. Hibbing. 2005. Are Political Orientations Genetically Transmitted?. *American Political Science Review* 99(2): 153–167.
- Keele, Luke J., and Rocio Titiunik. 2015. Geographic Boundaries as Regression Discontinuities. *Political Analysis* 23(1): 127–155.
- Lyall, Jason. 2009. Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks? Evidence from Chechnya. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53(3): 331–362.

Oct 21: Exam 2 and Bivariate Hypothesis Testing

Take Exam 2 at Testing Center between 9am Oct 21 to 7:00pm Oct 23.

Research Project: Part 3 (due Oct 29).

No lecture on Tuesday, Oct 22.

Reading: K&W Ch 8.

Supplemental:

- Dion, Douglas. 1998. Evidence and Inference in the Comparative Case Study. *Comparative Politics* 30(2): 127–145.
- Biddle, Stephen. 2001. Rebuilding the Foundations of Offense-Defense Theory. *Journal of Politics* 63(3):741-774.

Oct 28: Bivariate Hypothesis Testing

Reading: K&W Ch 8; MW Ch 5.

R lab in Snedecor 1105 on Thursday, Oct 31.

Homework 5: MW Ch 5–Practice Problems 1-4(a) (due Nov 5).

Supplemental:

- Levy, Jack S., and William R. Thompson. 2010. Balancing on Land and at Sea: Do States Ally Against the Leading Global Power? *International Security* 35(1): 7–43.
- Madsen, Douglas. 1985. A Biochemical Property Relating to Power Seeking in Humans. *American Political Science Review* 79(2): 448–457.

Nov 4: Simple Regression

Reading: K&W Ch 9; MW Ch 2.

Homework 6: MW Ch 2–Practice Problems 2-4 (due Nov 12).

Research Project: Part 4 (due Nov 12).

Supplemental:

- Lewis-Beck, Michael S., and Tom W. Rice. 1982. Presidential Popularity and Presidential Vote. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 46(4): 534–537

Nov 11: Simple Regression

Reading: K&W Ch 9.

Homework 7: Simple Regression handout (available on Canvas) (due Nov 19).

Supplemental:

- Achen, Christopher H. 1978. Measuring Representation. *American Journal of Political Science* 22(3): 475–510.

Nov 18: Multiple Regression

Reading: K&W Ch 10; MW Ch 6 pp. 79-88.

Homework 8: MW Ch 6–Practice Problems 1-2 (due Dec 3).

Supplemental:

- Finkel, Steven E., and Amy Erica Smith. 2011. Civic Education, Political Discussion, and the Social Transmission of Democratic Knowledge and Values in a New Democracy: Kenya 2002. *American Journal of Political Science* 55(2): 417-435.
- Peterson, David AM, and Paul A. Djupe. 2005. When Primary Campaigns Go Negative: The Determinants of Campaign Negativity. *Political Research Quarterly* 58(1): 45–54.
- Vercellotti, Timothy, and David Andersen. 2009. Voter-identification Requirements and the Learning Curve. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 42(1): 117–120.

Nov 25: Thanksgiving Break—No Class

Dec 2: Multiple Regression

Reading: K&W Ch 11.

Research Project: Part 5 (electronic copy due Dec 10 by 11am).

Supplemental:

- Achen Christopher H. 2005. Let's Put Garbage-Can Regressions and Garbage-Can Probits Where They Belong. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 22(4):327–339.
- Brambor, Thomas, William Clark, and Matt Golder. 2006. Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses. *Political Analysis* 14: 63–82.
- Urbatsch, R. 2012. The Paradox of Voting Intelligently. *Public Choice* 150(3-4): 511–524.

Dec 9: Posters

Poster Presentation Week. Bring poster and present on assigned day.

Dec 16: Finals Week