

## **POLITICAL SCIENCE 585: TECHNIQUES IN POLITICAL ANALYSIS**

Winter Quarter 2004

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:30 – 8:18

Derby Hall, Room 0125

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Office: Derby Hall 2022; Phone: 292-4291  
Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 4:00-5:15, or by appointment  
Course webpage: <http://psweb.sbs.ohio-state.edu/grads/bartels/ps585.htm>

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Welcome to *Political Analysis*! This class will introduce you to the quantitative study of politics. More generally, you will be exposed to the broader research methods enterprise concerned with the measurement of concepts, descriptive analysis of variables, research design, and research methods employed to make empirical knowledge claims about political phenomena of interest. The class mixes conceptual discussions of these topics with actual hands-on experience in the form of data analysis. We will cover four general topics this quarter: (1) the measurement of political concepts, (2) theory, hypotheses, and research design, (3) descriptive summaries of variables and measures of association between variables, and (4) statistical inference, probability, significance testing, and regression. Note that this class is not solely about *statistics*, per se, but instead on the quantitative research process writ large.

### **TEXTBOOK**

The following book is required for the course and is available for purchase at SBX Bookstore.

- Pollock, Philip H. 2003. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. CQ Press.

### **SOFTWARE – SPSS**

We will be using SPSS, a popular statistical package, in this course. You will be required to use SPSS to complete three of the assignments. All of the computers in our classroom have SPSS installed on them. The classroom has computer lab hours, and you are free to do your assignments in the lab when the room is available. I *highly recommend* that you acquire a *free* one-year site license of SPSS through OIT so that you can install the package on your own computer. You can either download the software online via <http://osusls.osu.edu/upgrades/stg2wnx.html>, or you can bring a blank CD-R to OIT Customer Service (512 Baker Systems) and they will burn you a copy of the installation CD. For both methods, you need to fill out a short license agreement form that allows you to get license codes necessary for installation. The website above has a link to the form, or you can retrieve the form from OIT. Let me know if you have any problems getting a copy of SPSS.

### **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

Course grades will be based on the following:

- *Attendance* (10%; 40 points). I will take attendance every class period. Attending class is *very important* for this class given the cumulative nature of the material. That is, each class session builds on past class sessions. Points will be docked off for each class you

miss. However, as I understand that students may have to miss one class here or there, you will receive one “free” absence for which you will not be penalized. There are 18 class sessions (not counting the first day and the midterm exam). Thus, receipt of all 40 attendance points entails coming to 17 class sessions (not counting the first day and the midterm exam). I will require written documentation for excused absences.

- *4 Homework Assignments* (10% each; 40 points each). The assignments (especially 2, 3, and 4) will require the use of SPSS. I will give you clear instructions about how to use SPSS in order to complete the assignments. Due dates for assignments are given below. Assignments must be given to me in class by the day they are due – no exceptions! Let me be clear: *I WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS*. If you anticipate not being in class the day the assignment is due, you should make arrangements to give it to me early.
  - *Note on assignments*: Feel free to work with your classmates on the assignments. Working together on assignments can be very beneficial for learning and understanding the material. However, *you must do your own work*. That is, while you can work together, the final product that you hand in must be your own work.
- *Midterm exam* (25%; 100 points). Tuesday, February 1.
- *Final exam* (25%; 100 points). Tuesday, March 15, 6:30 pm.
  - *Note*: Make-up examinations will generally not be given, except in rare circumstances such as a death in the immediate family or personal illness. In these cases, I will ask for written documentation that justifies why you missed the exam.
- *Grading scheme*:

93-100%:	A
90-92.9:	A-
87-89.9:	B+
83-86.9:	B
80-82.9:	B-
77-79.9:	C+
73-76.9:	C
70-72.9:	C-
67-69.9:	D+
60-66.9:	D
<60:	E

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

All of the work you do in this class is expected to be your own. Cheating and plagiarism are the grandest offenses a student can commit. Therefore, I will handle cases of cheating and plagiarism according to university policy as outlined in the *Code of Student Conduct*. The bottom line: *Don't cheat!* It's simply not worth risking your academic career for!

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Any student who feels that they may need assistance should inform the instructor at the beginning of the quarter so that adequate arrangements can be made.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS** (subject to change)

### **Week 1**

Tuesday, January 4. *Course Introduction: The Nature of Social Science Research.*

Thursday, January 6. *Concepts, Measurement, and Variables.* Introduction and Ch. 1.

### **Week 2**

Tuesday, January 11. *Concepts, Measurement, and Variables.* Ch. 1.

Thursday, January 13. *Theory, Hypotheses, and Research Design.* Ch. 2.

### **Week 3**

Tuesday, January 18. *Theory, Hypotheses, and Research Design.* Ch. 2.

Thursday, January 20. *Describing and Comparing Variables.* Ch. 3. I'll also introduce you to SPSS. **Assignment 1 due.**

### **Week 4**

Tuesday, January 25. *Describing and Comparing Variables.* Ch. 3.

Thursday, January 27. *Describing and Comparing Variables.* Ch. 3 and Ch. 4. **Assignment 2 due.**

### **Week 5**

Tuesday, February 1. *MIDTERM EXAM.*

Thursday, February 3. *Foundations of Inferential Statistics: Sampling, Inference, and Probability Theory.* Ch. 5.

### **Week 6**

Tuesday, February 8. *Statistical Inference, the Sampling Distribution, and the Standard Error.* Ch. 5.

Thursday, February 10. *Hypothesis Testing and Statistical Significance.* Ch. 6.

### **Week 7**

Tuesday, February 15. *Hypothesis Testing and Statistical Significance.* Ch. 6.

Thursday, February 17. *Hypothesis Testing and Statistical Significance.* Ch. 6.

**Week 8**

Tuesday, February 22. *Correlation*. Ch. 7. **Assignment 3 due.**

Thursday, February 24. *Regression*. Ch. 7.

**Week 9**

Tuesday, March 1. *Regression*. Ch. 7.

Thursday, March 3. *Regression*. Ch. 7.

**Week 10**

Tuesday, March 8. *Regression*. Ch. 7.

Thursday, March 10. *Regression*. Ch. 7. **Assignment 4 due.**

**FINAL EXAM – Tuesday, March 15, 6:30 pm.**