

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 585
TECHNIQUES OF POLITICAL ANALYSIS
SPRING QUARTER 2006**

Instructor: Eric Russell
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Note: No food or drinks allowed

Office Hours:
Tues. 10:30 am - 12:30 am
and by appointment
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Lecture is on Tuesday and Thursday, 12:30 am - 2:18 pm in DB (Derby Hall) Room 125.

COURSE INTRODUCTION

I would like to welcome everyone to Political Science 585! This course provides an introduction to the tools and methods of research design and data analysis in political science. Therefore, this course will present statistical concepts, their applications to social science problems, and an illustration of how to interpret the results. Topics covered include probability, sampling, measurement, description of data, and statistical inference. Computer usage in aiding research will be emphasized throughout the course.

Prerequisites:

There are no mathematical, statistical, or computer prerequisites for this course.

Goals/Rationale:

Courses in quantitative and logical skills develop logical reasoning, including the ability to identify valid arguments, use mathematical models, and draw conclusions based on quantitative data.

Learning Objectives:

Data Analysis. Students understand statistics and probability, comprehend mathematical methods needed to analyze statistical arguments, and recognize the importance of statistical ideas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

GRADING

The items described below will contribute to your final grade.

Midterm Exam: 120 points
Final Exam: 120 points
Attendance: 40 points
Homework: 120 points total

Exams

Two exams will be given throughout the quarter. The midterm exam will cover all of the material that has been reached to that point. The final is **comprehensive** and will cover all of the material taught in this course.

Attendance

It is expected that students will attend class on a regular basis therefore attendance will be taken during every class session. The main reason for this expectation is that data analysis and statistical techniques are highly cumulative, so it is very hard to follow later material without understanding earlier material and it is hard to catch up when behind. Therefore, points will be docked off for each class you miss. However, since I understand that students may have to miss a class here or there, you will receive one “free” absence for which you will not be penalized. Lastly, I will require written documentation for excused absences.

Homework

There will be three homework assignments worth a total of 120 points. Assignments are due in class on the day stated on the syllabus. If you are not able to make it to class you must find a way to get it to me before class begins that day. Late homework assignments will be penalized by 10% per day late. That is if an assignment is due on Tuesday and you hand it in to me on Thursday the highest grade that you can receive on that assignment is 80%.

Computer Use

As part of the course, we will be using SPSS for Windows.

If a student is unable to perform the assignments on a personal computer then they can use the computers within this classroom (Derby 125) during the labs open hours. Since these computers have the required software installed all students are expected to meet the software and computing resources requirement. **EXCUSES FOR INCOMPLETE OR LATE WORK THAT INVOLVE A LACK OF COMPUTING RESOURCES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

COURSE MATERIAL

Required Text

Jack Levin and James Alan Fox. 2004. *Elementary Statistics in Social Research: the Essentials* (Allyn and Bacon Publishing)

The required text is available at Long's, and may also be available from other campus bookstores as well.

COURSE POLICIES

Missed Exams

All students are expected to take the exams at the scheduled times. If you must miss an exam for a justifiable reason, you must inform me **as soon as possible PRIOR** to the scheduled test and present documentation of the exceptional circumstance. When prior approval for missing an exam has been given, the make-up exam will be given without penalty; however, make-up exams are generally harder than the regular exams so it is definitely in one's best interest to take the exams at the regularly scheduled times. Others who miss exams without prior approval will most often not be allowed to retake the exam, resulting in a grade of zero for that particular exam; however, in extraordinary circumstances, you will be allowed to retake the exam with a penalty of one letter grade for each day after the exam, including the day of the exam.

Students with Disabilities

If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs, and explore potential accommodations. I rely on the Office for Disability Services for assistance in verifying the need for accommodations and developing accommodation strategies. If you have not previously contacted the Office for Disability Services, I encourage you to do so.

Academic Honesty: I expect all of the work you do in this course to be your own. I will tolerate absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without proper citation). I will report any cases of cheating or plagiarism to the university committee on academic misconduct, and they will be handled according to university policy.

Miscellaneous

If students want their exams and their homework assignments after the quarter has ended, they must notify the Instructor within three weeks of the beginning of the following quarter. Otherwise, their exams, homework assignments, etc... will be disposed of after the 3rd week of the following quarter.

Assistance

I want to help you do well in this course, and I hope that you will feel free to talk to me if you have any questions about the readings, concerns about the course, or need suggestions about studying and understanding the material. My scheduled office hours are listed at the beginning of the syllabus, but I would be happy to arrange an alternative time to meet if the office hours are inconvenient. Also, class time affords a perfect opportunity to ask questions, and you are encouraged to take advantage of it. I am also available for assistance after class and at any other mutually agreeable time. This syllabus is also intended to be helpful to you. Please read it carefully because it includes material that you will need to have about the class and about your responsibilities.

COURSE SCHEDULE, TOPICS AND READINGS:

All dates are tentative; the schedule may be modified as needed.

Week 1 Tues 6/20: Course Introduction
 Thurs 6/22: Chapter 1 and Appendix B

Part 1 – Description of Data

Week 2 Tues 6/27: Chapter 2
 Thurs 6/29: Chapter 3

Week 3 Tues 7/4: No Class
 Thurs 7/6: Chapter 4 – **Homework 1 due**

Part 2 – From Description to Decision Making

Week 4 Tues 7/11: Chapter 5
 Thurs 7/13: Chapter 5

Week 5 Tues 7/18: Chapter 6
 Thurs 7/20: Chapter 6 – **Homework 2 due**

Part 3 – Decision Making

Week 6 Tues 7/25: **Midterm Exam**
 Thurs 7/27: Chapter 7

Week 7 Tues 8/1: Chapter 7
 Thurs 8/3: Chapter 7

Part 4 – From Decision Making to Association

Week 8 Tues 8/8: Chapter 10
 Thurs 8/10: Chapter 10

Week 9 Tues 8/15: Chapter 11
 Thurs 8/17: Chapter 11 – **Homework 3 due**

Final Examination: As scheduled by the University