

**Political Analysis**  
Georgia Southern University, Fall 2016  
POLS 2130 (O) CRN: 89554  
Tuesdays & Thursdays: 11:00 am – 12:15 pm  
2247 Carroll Building

Instructor: Dr. Courtney Burns

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Office hours: Mondays 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm, Wednesdays 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm, and by appointment

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### **Course Description**

This course is part of a two-course foundation for majors and minors in Political Science. In Introduction to Political Science, students were introduced to the *who, what, when, where, and why* of Political Science. In this course we will learn the *how*; in other words, we will learn how Political Scientists use the concepts, tools, and approaches available to them to understand the political world. Students will learn the tools of research design and both qualitative and quantitative techniques that are actively used in the discipline. In learning the tools that Political Scientists use to do research, you will become a better consumer of contemporary Political Science research. Additionally, we will learn how the writing process unfolds from puzzle to final manuscript and presentation. The final goal of this course is to create an original, independent research manuscript that could be refined and completed in an upper-level Political Science course for presentation at a professional conference and/or publication in a professional journal.

Prerequisite: A minimum grade of “C” in POLS 2101 Introduction to Political Science.

### **Course Objectives**

At the end of this course, assuming you fulfill the expectations below, you will be able to:

1. Identify, evaluate, and critique the major approaches to research in Political Science.
2. Think critically by utilizing appropriate theoretical constructs in both qualitative and quantitative research.
3. Incorporate appropriate methodologies into narratives that analyze and explain political events and public policies.
4. Apply your knowledge by producing an original research design manuscript.

## Course Requirements

There is one required text for this course. You are also responsible for attendance and participation, homework/lab assignments, and three papers.

The required text for this course is:

Johnson, Janet Buttolph, H. T. Reynolds, and Jason D. Mycoff. 2016. *Political Science Research Methods, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Canada: Sage CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1-5063-0782-4

Any additional readings will be provided on Folio and will be designated with an \* on the syllabus.

**Attendance and Participation:** You can receive up to 10 points per week for attendance and participation. In order to receive full points, you must come to class having read the material and participate in discussion and lecture. This does not mean that you have to talk all the time, but you must contribute at least once a week. This is meant to make class more interesting and engaging for all of us. If you attend both class sessions and participate at least once, you will receive the full 10 points. If you only attend class and do not participate, you can only receive 7 points. If you miss one class, you will receive 5 points.

**Homework/Lab Assignments:** At the discretion of the instructor, you will be assigned homework assignments, have quizzes (announced and unannounced), and/or lab assignments that will serve to check student understanding of the material and reading. There will be 9 total assessments worth 10 points each.

**Papers:** The purpose of this class is to learn the research process. To this end, you will write three papers that break up the research process into three parts: literature review & hypothesis, operationalization & method, and results. At the end of the class, you could, theoretically, put the three papers together into one final manuscript or use the paper for a class in the future (pending permission from your professor). Each of these papers will be worth 90 points. You will turn in rough drafts that will serve as 20% of the grade for each paper (18 points).

## Course Grading

There will be no extra credit offered in this class. If you want to do well, you will need to perform adequately on the given assignments and exams. The breakdown for the points is as follows:

Attendance and Participation (14 x 10 points per week)	140 points
Homework/Quiz/Lab (9 x 10 points each)	90 points
Papers (3 x 90 points each)	270 points
Total	500 points

Grades will not be rounded. You must receive the following amount of points to earn a(n):

A (excellent)	450 points – 500 points
B (superior)	400 points – 449 points
C (average)	350 points – 399 points
D (below average)	300 points – 349 points
F (failing)	299 points and below

## **Course Etiquette**

There is one core tenet of classroom etiquette that we must all agree upon for this course to be a success—respect. I will respect each and every one of you as an adult responsible for your own learning and I look forward to the opportunity to work with you as a class and individual students. I ask for the same degree of respect in return, both for me and the other students in the classroom. This requires that we all agree to abide by the following considerations:

- Refrain from using cell phones during class.
- Use of computers is not allowed on days when we are not using them. You are not allowed to use any other electronics in this class. On days when we do use computers, you need to stick to task and not browse other websites. This is to help your learning and to prevent distraction of others around you.
- Attend all class sessions, arrive on time, and stay until the class is over. If you must miss class or arrive late/leave early, please notify me before class. Please do not pack-up your materials until class has been dismissed. This is distracting to everyone and makes it impossible for us to finish.
- Refrain from reading newspapers, sleeping, or working on material for other courses during class.
- Notify me at the beginning of the semester if you have learning disabilities or other documented issues that we need to make exceptions for. I am happy to work with you to make appropriate arrangements to help you meet the course requirements.
- Use email in a respectful manner. Emails to professors or classmates should be just as respectful as if you were writing them a letter or speaking with them in class. In other words, you should begin your email with a proper salutation, for example “Professor/Dr. Burns,” and it should end with your name. Do not use email as a forum to discuss important course-related issues that should be addressed in person.
- Turn work in on time. *I will not accept late work.*

## **Academic Integrity**

All members of the community recognize the necessity of being honest with themselves and with others. The integrity of the educational experience is diminished by cheating in class, plagiarizing, lying, and employing other methods of deceit. None of these should be used as a strategy to obtain a false sense of success. The need for honest relations among all members of the community is essential.

## **ADA**

This class complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations must register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC), and provide a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating what your need may be for academic accommodation. This should be done within the first week of class. Cone Hall, Room 2010. Telephone 912-478-1566

Students may also find information online at <http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/disability>.

## **Course schedule (subject to change)**

### Week 1 – August 16, 18

Topic 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 - JRM

Topic 2: Philosophy of Science

\*Kuhn “Structure of Scientific Revolutions” parts II, III, and IV

*Add/Drop deadline Friday August 19*

### Week 2 – August 23, 25

Topic 1: The Scientific Method

Chapter 2 – JRM

Topic 2: Critical Approaches

Chapter 2 – JRM

Week 3 – August 30, September 1

Topic 1: Research Topics/Puzzles  
Chapter 3 – JRM

Topic 2: Literature Review  
Chapter 3 – JRM

Week 4 – September 6, 8

Topic 1: Theory  
\*KKV “Constructing Casual Theories”  
\*Shively – Chapter 2

Topic 2: Theory & Hypothesis  
Chapter 4 – JRM

Week 5 – September 13, 15

Topic 1: Measurement & Operationalization  
Chapter 5 – JRM

Topic 2: Sampling  
Chapter 7 – JRM  
*Paper #1 Rough Draft Due September 15*

Week 6 - September 20, 22

Topics 1 & 2: Causal Inferences  
Chapter 6 – JRM pages 166-171  
\*KKV – Chapter 3  
\*Shively – Chapter 6

Week 7 – September 27, 29

Topic 1: Methodological Approaches to Political Science  
Reading TBA

Topic 2: Qualitative: Field Research  
Chapter 8 – JRM  
*Paper #1 Final Draft Due September 29*

Week 8 – October 4, 6

Topic 1: Qualitative: Document Analysis  
Chapter 9 - JRM

Topic 2: Qualitative: Survey  
Chapter 10 JRM  
*Paper #2 Rough Draft due October 6*

Week 9 – October 11, 13

Topic 1: Experiments  
Chapter 6 – JRM pages 171 - end

Topic 2: Game Theory  
\*BdM – Chapter 3

Week 10 – October 18, 20

Topic 1: Game Theory  
\*BdM – Chapter 3  
\*Osborn – Chapter 2

Topic 2: Game Theory  
\*Osborn – Chapter 2

Week 11 – October 25, 27

Topic 1: Quantitative Data  
Chapter 11 – JRM

Topic 2: Basic Statistics  
Chapter 12 – JRM  
*Paper #2 Final Draft due October 27*

Week 12 – November 1, 3

Topic 1: Basic Statistics  
Chapter 12 – JRM  
Chapter 13 – JRM

Topic 2: Regression  
Chapter 13 – JRM

Week 13 – November 8, 10

Topic 1: Multivariate Regression  
Chapter 14 – JRM

Topic 2: Categorical Variables and Logistic Regression  
Chapter 14 – JRM

Week 14 – November 15, 17

Topic 1: Logistic Regression

Chapter 14 - JRM

*Paper #3 Rough Draft due November 15*

Topic 2: No Class

Week 15 – November 22 & 24

Thanksgiving Recess – No Class

Week 16 – November 29, December 1

Topic 1: Presenting research

Chapter 15 – JRM

Topic 2: Writing results

**Paper #3 Final Draft due: Thursday 12/8 10:00 am to my office (2205 Carroll Building)**