

Conduct of Inquiry

POS 6736 | Fall 2020

T | Period 5-7 (11:45-2:45)

Instructor: Dr. Angela F. McCarthy

Zoom Personal Meeting ID: 227 595 9385

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12:30-2:30, (or) by appointment

Email: angelamccarthy@ufl.edu

BASIC COURSE COMMUNICATION INFORMATION

Communication: The best way for us to communicate is through Canvas messages or by email. For questions regarding graded work or course assignments, the safest way for us to communicate is through Canvas messages.

Office Hours: I am (almost) always available for students to inquire about their grades, discuss weekly assignments, or chat about research. I am available Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 12:30 - 2:30, or by appointment. If the scheduled office hours do not fit your schedule, then let us make an appointment. I am happy to accommodate your scheduling needs.

Email Response: If I do not respond to your email inquiry within 24 hours, then you should email me again. You are not "bugging" me with a follow up email. I should respond to ALL emails within 24 hours. If you email me during schedule office hours, then I will email you within the hour. This is my commitment to you.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to research design and the methods used for investigating contemporary (political) issues. Throughout the semester, students will learn how to conduct original research and present their research designs to their colleagues. The goal of this course is to provide students with tools to critically analyze the strengths and weaknesses of methodological approaches used in research. Overall, this course is designed to train students on the appropriate way to conduct social science research. To meet the objectives of this course, we will explore (1) the logic of social science research, (2) the elements of the empirical research process, and (3) research design. Throughout the semester, students will develop an original research project.

COURSE FOCUS

Students will:

1. Analyze the logic of scientific research
2. Describe the scope of political science research
3. Understand central concepts related to the research process
4. Achieve a basic foundation on using computers for data analysis
5. Produce an original research project

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Johnson, Reynolds, and Mycoff (2019) Political Science Research Methods (9th Edition)
2. Mycoff (2020) Working with Political Science Research Methods: Problems and Exercises (5th Edition)
3. Additional materials (scholarly articles, data, media sources, etc.) are posted in Canvas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Research Proposal: 50%.
2. Exercise Sets: 30%.
3. Participation: 20%.

GRADED WORK DESCRIPTION

See Canvas > "Grading Rubric" for a complete description of grade work (with links to assignment examples and expectations)

1. Research Proposal: 50%. There are six research proposal assignments. The assignments are designed to guide you through writing a research paper proposal. Each assignment tackles a core component of conducting original research: research question, literature review, theory development and hypothesis formation, data and variable description, and methods design. You will turn in each component (separately), and I will provide feedback. You are expected to apply my critique (from the individual assignments) to your final research proposal assignment (i.e. Final Projects).
 - Research Topic & Question
 - Literature Review
 - Hypothesis(es)
 - Data and Variable description
 - Methods/Research Design
 - Findings and Conclusions
2. Exercise Sets: 30%. There are weekly chapter problem sets. Taken together, these problem sets are labeled "Exercise Sets". There are two Exercise Sets due this semester. Exercise Sets include completed questions from the weekly problem sets. Each Exercise Set is worth 15% of your final grade in the course. You should complete the problem sets each week; however, you will only turn in your answers twice during the semester (October 16 and December 4). Questions will come from the Mycoff (2020) workbook. Do NOT answer all questions. I will provide a list of questions that you are required to answer the week *before* the questions are assigned/outlined on the syllabus.
3. Participation: 20%. You are expected to attend and participate in class discussions.

GRADING POLICIES AND GRADING SCALE

Grading in this class is consistent with UF policies available at: [Grades and Grading Policies](#)

Policy on Late and Make-up Work: Late work is not accepted. If you find yourself unable to complete your assignments on time, email me *before* the assignment is due. I reserve the right to make an exception, provided there is valid documentation. Of course, students are able to make up assignments due to a university obligation, illness, death of a family member, or civic duty. Students who miss an assignment and have a valid excuse are given two days after the missed assignment to arrange a makeup. Otherwise, you are not allowed to make up the assignment. Late assignments are automatically deducted 1 letter grade. Without a valid excuse, you are not allowed to make up assignments.

Grade Return Timing: Grading is done on Saturdays. All assignments in this class are due on Fridays. Thus, you will have your graded work back to you within 48 hours (barring natural disaster, illness, or internet communication issues).

Point Range for this Class:

Letter Grade	Range:	
A	100 %	to 94.0%
A-	< 94.0 %	to 90.0%
B+	< 90.0 %	to 87.0%
B	< 87.0 %	to 84.0%
B-	< 84.0 %	to 80.0%
C+	< 80.0 %	to 77.0%
C	< 77.0 %	to 74.0%
C-	< 74.0 %	to 70.0%
D+	< 70.0 %	to 67.0%
D	< 67.0 %	to 64.0%
D-	< 64.0 %	to 61.0%
F	< 61.0 %	to 0.0%

UF POLICIES SHAPING THIS COURSE

Contact Hours: "Contact Hours" refers to the hours per week in which students are in contact with the instructor, excluding office hours or other voluntary contact. The number of contact hours in this course equals the number of credits the course offers.

Workload: As a Carnegie I, research-intensive university, UF is required by federal law to assign at least 2 hours of work outside of class for every contact hour. Work done in these hours may include reading/viewing assigned material and doing explicitly assigned individual or group work, as well as reviewing notes from class, synthesizing information in advance of exams or papers, and other self-determined study tasks.

Accommodation for Student with Disabilities: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). This class supports the needs of different learners; it is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

Statement regarding Evaluations: Evaluations are part of our course. To ensure the highest quality of education, students are expected to provide professional feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at [GatorEvals Public Data](#).

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES AND INFORMATION

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” [The Honor Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

UNIVERSITY POLICE

[UF Police](#) (392-111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies)

CAREER CONNECTIONS CENTER

[Career Connections Center](#) (352-392-1601 | CareerCenterMarketing@ufsa.ufl.edu) connects job seekers with employers and offers guidance to enrich your collegiate experience and prepare you for life after graduation.

COUNSELING AND WELLNESS CENTER

[Counseling and Wellness Center](#) (352-392-1575) provides counseling and support as well as crisis and wellness services including a [variety of workshops](#) throughout the semester (e.g., Yappy Hour, Relaxation and Resilience).

DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE

[Dean of Students Office](#) (352-392-1261) provides a variety of services to students and families, including [Field and Fork](#) (UF’s food pantry) and [New Student and Family programs](#)

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

[Disability Resource Center \(DRCAccessUF@ufsa.ufl.edu](mailto:DRCAccessUF@ufsa.ufl.edu) | 352-392-8565) helps to provide an accessible learning environment for all by providing support services and facilitating accommodations, which may vary from course to course. Once registered with DRC, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodations. Students should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

MULTICULTURAL AND DIVERSITY AFFAIRS

[Multicultural and Diversity Affairs](tel:352-294-7850) (352-294-7850) celebrates and empowers diverse communities and advocates for an inclusive campus.

OFFICE OF STUDENT VETERAN SERVICES

[Office of Student Veteran Services](tel:352-294-2948) (352-294-2948 | vacounselor@ufl.edu) assists student military veterans with access to benefits.

ONE.UF

[ONE.UF](#) is the home of all the student self-service applications, including access to:

- [Advising](#)
- [Bursar](#) (352-392-0181)
- [Financial Aid](#) (352-392-1275)
- [Registrar](#) (352-392-1374)

OFFICIAL SOURCES OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

The official source of rules and regulations for UF students is the [Undergraduate Catalog](#) and [Graduate Catalog](#). Quick links to other information have also been provided below.

- [Student Handbook](#)
- [Student Responsibilities](#), including academic honesty and student conduct code
- [e-Learning Supported Services Policies](#) includes links to relevant policies including Acceptable Use, Privacy, and many more
- [Accessibility](#), including the Electronic Information Technology Accessibility Policy and ADA Compliance
- [Student Computing Requirements](#), including minimum and recommended technology requirements and competencies

Date	Topic	Readings	Exercise Set	Proposal
9/1	Introduction	Syllabus	---	---
9/8	Introduction to Social Science Research/ The Research Article	PSRM Ch1 PSRM Ch15 Mansbridge (2014) Shively (2011)	Chapter 1	---
9/15	Empirical Approach to Political Science	PSRM Ch 2	Chapter 2	---
9/22	Beginning the Research Process	PSRM Ch 3 Knopf (2006)	Chapter 3	Research Topic/Research Question
9/29	Building Blocks of Research	PSRM Ch 4	Chapter 4	---
10/6	Sampling	PSRM Ch 5	Chapter 5	Literature Review
10/13	Mental Break	---	Exercise Set 1	---
10/20	Research Design	PSRM Ch 6	Chapter 6	Theory/Hypotheses
10/27	Qualitative Research	PSRM Ch 7	Chapter 7	---
11/3	Empirical Observations	PSRM Ch 8	Chapter 8	---
11/10	Quantitative Designs	PSRM Ch 9	Chapter 9	Data and Variable Description
11/17	Quantitative Methods	PSRM Ch 10	Chapter 10	Methods and Design
11/24	Data	PSRM Ch 11	Chapter 11	Drafts
12/1	Semester Recap	---	Exercise Set 2	---
12/8	Presentations	N/A	---	Final Projects