

**POS4931: Archival Research Methods in Political Science – Spring 2019**

**Tuesday – Period 5-6** (11:45am – 1:40pm)

**Thursday – Period 6** (12:50 - 1:40pm)

Room: FLG 260

Dr. Kevin Baron

kbaron76@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Monday, Noon – 2pm

Thursday, 9 – 11 am

By Appointment as Needed

Office: 224 Pugh Hall (Bob Graham Center)

**SYLLABUS**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course addresses how to conduct archival research in political science, emphasizing relevant methods and best practices. The course will take both a theoretical and empirical approach allowing students to learn how and why this type of research is important in the discipline, the theoretical foundations to understand how to use archival data, the pitfalls to avoid in constructing archival research, and the practicality of using archives and archival sources. Students will develop a general toolkit of strategies and concepts for engaging in archival research, using this toolkit to develop a research paper based on actual archival research they will conduct themselves.

The best way to learn any research is through practice. This class will utilize a hands-on approach to archival research by having you dig through actual archives. From digging through the finding aids to digging through file boxes, students will choose a topic of interest and use the political archives housed in the Smathers Libraries Special Collections (Library East) to learn through experience. The class will benefit from UF Libraries having multiple collections from various Florida politicians, see below for a list of the archives available that the class will use. Students will set-up their own research project, conduct archival research, interpret their findings and use the data to construct a brief research paper.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- To critically examine and understand archival research as a conduct of inquiry for political science
- Explore the foundational theories and best practice methods for competent research
- Experience conducting archival research and learn to interpret and utilize the findings and data
- To better develop critical thinking, writing, and analytical skills for research
- Distinguish between assumptions and evidence in evaluating arguments

**READINGS AND RESOURCES:**

Scott A. Frisch, Douglas B. Harris, Sean Q. Kelly, and David C.W. Parker, *Doing Archival Research in Political Science*. Amherst, NY; Cambria Press.

Other readings as assigned. Certain readings will be available through [UF e-Learning](#) (Canvas). Articles for this course can be found through the UF Library Website or via Google Scholar. Either way, you will also want to ensure you have VPN access from your home or personal computer as readings will only be available to you through the UF system - <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/login/vpn.html>

If you are in need of tutorials on how to use the Library website, resources are available here <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/tutorials/catalogtutorials.html>

#### **ARCHIVES:**

Lawton Chiles Collection (Florida House and Senate, and Governor)  
<http://www.library.ufl.edu/spec/pkyonge/chiles.htm>

Charles E. Bennett Collection (House of Representatives)  
<http://www.library.ufl.edu/spec/pkyonge/Bennett.htm>

D. Robert "Bob" Graham Collection (Florida House and Senate, Governor, US Senate)  
<http://www.library.ufl.edu/spec/pkyonge/graham.htm>

Connie Mack III Collection (House of Representatives and US Senate)  
<http://www.library.ufl.edu/spec/pkyonge/mack.htm>

Smathers Libraries Historical Newspapers Database (scroll down to historical newspapers)  
<http://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/az.php?a=h>

**CLASS PHILOSOPHY:** Learning is an active and interactive process. Many class sessions will consist of discussion and the development of our understandings of the modern presidency. It is essential that all students keep up with the readings and come to class prepared. Ask questions, support opinions and reasoned arguments with fact, and remember – it is fine to challenge someone’s ideas, but not the person, respect for each other is essential for civil discourse.

\*\*\*No phones will be allowed in class. While you can use a laptop or tablet for note taking, I strongly urge you to go old school and use a pen and paper. Pen and paper note-taking has been proven to help you remember and understand the material far better than using electronics, as it forces you to analyze and summarize content.

#### **Requirements:**

1. Attendance and Participation – 15%
2. Theory and Methods Essay – 100 Points: 25%
3. Research Paper Draft – 100 points: 25%
4. Research Paper Final – 200 points: 35%

Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

A = 93%+	B = 87-83	C = 77-73	D = 67-63
A- = 90-92	B- = 80-82	C- = 72-70	D- = 62-60
B+ = 89-88	C+ = 79-78	D+ = 69-68	E < 59 (failing)

## **ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Theory and Methods Essay** – This will be a take-home essay asking you to write on the foundational theories, perspectives, and practices that will be covered during the first part of the semester. The essay will be 5-7 pages in length (1500 words) excluding any citations. The essay will be given through Canvas and you will have approximately one week to complete.

**Written Assignments** – See Appendix A on the syllabus. All written assignments have fixed due dates. All assignments should be submitted through Canvas or email. Instructions will be in Canvas and as discussed in class.

## **ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION/CONDUCT**

Assignments are expected to be turned in on the due date, either by hard copy, submitted through Canvas (UF e-learning), or email. One letter grade per day (not class days) will be taken off for late papers unless you have obtained prior approval for a different date due to special circumstances or have a documented illness or family emergency. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have some type of special circumstance, but you must do so before the due date unless it is an emergency. Communication is key. Attendance, assignments, and make-up work will adhere to UF policies and standards, available here <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Your grade for class participation depends not only on physical presence (attendance is mandatory), but also your active participation in class and your "class manners." This means being on time, refraining from side discussions and other distracting behavior and respecting each other's viewpoints. We will be discussing controversial issues about which many people have strong opinions and beliefs so mutual respect is critical for the success of the class. It is fine to challenge someone's ideas/positions, but personal attacks will not be tolerated.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have special needs, you must register with the Disability Resource Center, <https://drc.dso.ufl.edu/>, so that you can be provided the necessary accommodations to ensure your success. You must inform me at the beginning of the semester and provide me with a copy of your letter. I will work with you to be successful in this course.

Please do not ask me specific questions about your assignments or grades outside of office hours. Federal privacy rules (FERPA) prohibit any discussion that can be heard by others. FERPA also prohibits me from sending grades through e-mail.

**Honor Code of Conduct:** UF students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty. Requirements, expectations, and violations can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1617/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>. It is your responsibility to know UF policies and procedures, and you should hold yourself to the highest standards.

"There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow man; true nobility is being superior to your former self." ~ Ernest Hemingway

**Class Schedule:** (subject to revision as we go through the semester)

### **Week 1 – Introduction**

- January 8: Course Syllabus and Schedule
- January 10: Frisch et al. – Introduction and Chapter 1

### **Week 2 – Why Archival Research Matters, and, getting to know your friendly neighborhood archivist**

- January 15:
  - Frisch et al. – Chapter 2: Behavioral Reality and Institutional Change
  - Frisch et al. – Chapter 3: Pulling Back the Curtain
  - Charles Tilly, “How and Why History Matters,” *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*, 2006,  
<http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199270439.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199270439-e-022?print=pdf>
- January 17:
  - The How-To’s of Archival Research at UF with Carl Van Ness
    - Class will meet in the Judaica Room of Library East (inside the Grand Reading Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)

### **Week 3 – Discovering Political Theoretical and Research Development**

- January 22:
  - Frisch et al. – Chapter 4: Why archives?
  - Frisch et al. – Chapter 5: If This is Tuesday, It Must be Albuquerque
  - David Freedman, “On Types of Scientific Inquiry: The Role of Qualitative Reasoning,” from the Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology. <https://bit.ly/2zjsCfu>
  - Bent Flyvbjerg, “Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research,” *Qualitative Inquiry*, 2006, 12(2): 219-245.  
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1077800405284363>
- January 24:
  - Frisch et al. – Chapter 6: The Search for the Elusive Executive
  - Richard S. Conley, “Congressional Position Votes in the Truman Administration, 1947-52: A View from the White House,” *Congress and the Presidency*, 2010, 37:2: 200-216.  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/07343460903394242?needAccess=true>

### **Week 4 – Uses and Continued Examples, and a time to begin...**

- January 29:
  - David Collier, “Understanding Process Tracing,” *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 2011, 44(4): 823-830.  
<http://polisci.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/people/u3827/Understanding%20Process%20Tracing.pdf>
  - Arend Lijphart, “Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method” *The American Political Science Review*, 1971, 65(3): 682-693.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1955513.pdf>
  - Finding Aids for Research – what do you want to see and write on?

- January 31: Begin Constructing Your Finding Aid List

#### **Week 5 – Figuring Out What to Find...and What to Write On**

- February 5:
  - Constructing Your Project and Finding Aids
  - Frisch et al. Chapter 7 – Rummaging Through the Attics of the CIA and Congress
  - Frisch et al. Chapter 8 – Public Opinion in the Archives
- February 7:
  - Frisch et al. Chapter 10 – In Search of Influence
  - Methodological and Theoretical Review

#### **Week 6 – Finalizing Your Research Before Jumping Into the Deep End**

- February 12:
  - Finding Aid List Due
- February 14:
  - Research Paper Draft Due
  - How to Prepare for the Archives

#### **Week 7 – The Time Has Come...**

- February 19:
  - Research in the Archives
- February 21:
  - Review time and contextualization

**FEBRUARY 22: THEORY AND METHODS ESSAY ASSIGNED**

#### **Week 8 – Research and Writing**

- February 26:
  - Research in the Archives
- February 28:
  - Review time and contextualization

**March 1: Theory and Methods Essay Due by 11:59 p.m.**

#### **Week 9: SPRING BREAK – March 4-8**

#### **Week 10 – Continued Research**

- March 12:
  - Research in the Archives
- March 14:
  - Review time and contextualization

#### **Week 11 – Continued Research**

- March 19:
  - Research in the Archives

- March 21:
  - Review time and contextualization

#### **Week 12 – Continued Research**

- March 26:
  - Research in the Archives
- March 28:
  - Review time and contextualization

#### **Week 13 – Continued Research**

- April 2:
  - Research in the Archives
- April 4:
  - Review time and contextualization

#### **Week 14 – Continuing Research**

- April 9:
  - Research in the Archives
- April 11:
  - Review time and contextualization

#### **Week 15 – Applied Methodology and Experiential Learning**

- April 16:
  - Understanding the methodology as applicable to research
- April 19:
  - Contextualized history in political science

#### **Week 16 – Bringing It All Back Home**

- April 23: Reflections on the Semester and Archival Research

**FINAL PAPER DUE April 30 BY 11:59 p.m.**

## **Appendix A: Research Paper Guidelines and Source Material**

### **Research Paper Draft – DUE February 14 by 11:59 p.m.**

This assignment has three (3) parts:

1. Topic Issue & Thesis statement
2. Finding Aid References
3. Draft Outline

In total, for this assignment, you should produce at minimum 3-5 pages for your research proposal.

#### **1. Topic Issue & Thesis Statement**

Any good research paper begins with knowing what you want to write about, and for the purposes of this course, your topic will come from the archives. The thesis statement lays out the argument of your paper, and should be followed by an organizational statement that conveys how you will organize your analysis/data based on the topic issue and what you think you will find. This will help you focus your research and develop a paper based on what you uncover.

#### **2. Finding Aid References**

This will be a list of all of the archival material you want to examine for your project. Using the collections listed above and from those finding aids, you will construct your own list. This list serves as the basis of your research, whereby you have identified what you believe to be all of the relevant material available to examine for your research topic issue.

Note, this is not a complete list by any means, but your starting point. As you will have learned, with archival research, finding documents will lead you to new ones that you had not previously identified. All good archival research begins with a finding aid list of materials that you want to examine.

#### **3. Draft Outline**

In the draft outline you will develop a more detailed layout of your paper. The major headings should be based on your organizational statement that follows your thesis statement from Step 1. Then there should be subheadings that provide more detail and specifics. There is no single, correct way to develop a draft outline. However, a bulleted, numbered, or multi-level list works well. There should be a high attention to detail, which underscores that you have thought through the most important elements of your paper – and this will pay off once you begin to actually write your paper.

Of course with a project based on archival research, you will not yet know for sure certain portions of your paper, as you have not yet done the research. This is okay, you can still put together a basic plan that will be helpful for you going forward.

**Outline = Roadmap for your paper.** Like any good traveler, you can stray from the map and check out some of those unusual places, but know your goal and keep moving toward it.

### **Final Research Paper – DUE April 30 by 11:59 p.m.**

This paper, based on the earlier Draft Paper assignment and the archival research you have conducted will be a non-traditional research paper. This means that you will write a paper demonstrating sound methodology based on what you have learned, using the research you have conducted to provide sound analysis on your topic issue. The expectations are that the paper be approximately 12 to 20 pages in length, depending on what you found in your research. The emphasis is placed on your ability to demonstrate proper methodology and rigorous analysis of your research to make an argument of your topic issue. It must be submitted by the due date, turned in through Canvas. Your Final Paper should adhere to the following guidelines:

**FORMAT:** 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, page numbers, and Chicago or APSA style citations.

**Paper:** follow your draft outline, but should include the following sections in rough order -

- **Introduction (1-2 pages):** this includes your topic issue, thesis and organizational statement. This section should lay out your argument and reasoning for this research.
- **Theory and Methods (2-3 pages):** Based on your research conducted during the semester, you should be able to establish a theory that explains the political phenomena you have researched. This is your opportunity to use some of the theoretical discussions in class to help develop an explanation of what explains your data. Your methods portion will discuss where your data has come from and how you are going to use it in your paper. As this paper is focused on archival research, you do not have to bring in other outside research unless you want to.
- **Data (7-10 pages):** this is the presentation of your research data – what you uncovered in the archives. You will provide a discussion on what you uncovered and use it to explain and support your theory. This section is the narrative and analysis of your research.
- **Conclusion and Further Discussion (2-3 pages):** wrap it up. Restate your thesis/theory and findings and why they are important. Always leave us wanting more, so discuss future research on what was related but not covered in your paper.
- **Bibliography:** you should know what this is. There is no set number of sources, you should use enough to get what you need. Make sure you have properly cited your archival material and where it came from so that other researchers can find your data. \*Wikipedia is not a credible academic source.



## **APPENDIX B:**

### **General Grading Criteria**

Students who get top grades (A, B+) generally:

- Turn in high-quality written work which reflects careful research, good planning, well-conceived arguments, originality, clarity of thought, and integration of course material, where appropriate. They stay within stated page limits. Their bibliographies are solid and their footnotes carefully used. Their final product is typed, structured, and readable, with nearly flawless English grammar and spelling.
- Complete all assigned readings on time, and reflect this in their exams, written work, and class participation. They review carefully and productively.
- Attend class regularly.
- Participate actively and enthusiastically in class discussions. They ask questions on a regular basis, and their ideas are original and stimulating. They challenge the conventional wisdom. They summarize each author's principal argument and their reaction to it when discussing the course material.

Students who get middle grades (B, C+) generally:

- Turn in acceptable written work with no serious deficiencies in writing. They meet deadlines generally. Their work is readable and typed.
- Attend class, complete the assigned readings and participate in class discussions, asking occasional questions.

Students who get low and failing grades (C, D, E) generally:

- Do not turn in their assigned work, or turn it in late with penalty. Their work is of poor quality and shows inadequate research, documentation, thought, and originality. It is poorly presented (untidy and/or handwritten rather than typed, poor grammar and structure).
- Complete only part of the required readings. Demonstrate little knowledge or thought of the material.
- Do not attend class and avoid participation. When called upon, they are obviously not familiar with the material. They ask no questions and show little concern to learn or hear new perspectives.