

# Conduct of Inquiry

POS 6736|Fall 2019  
R|Period 8-10 (3:00- 6:00pm)  
MAT 0114

Instructor: Dr. Angela F. McCarthy

Office: 207 Anderson Hall

Phone: 352-273-3247

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00pm-3:00pm; Thursday 11:00am- 2:00pm; (or) by appointment

Email: angelamccarthy@ufl.edu

## 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:

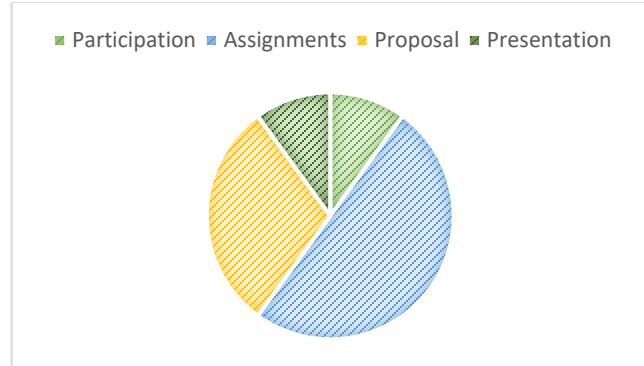
1. Analyze the logic of scientific research
2. Describe the scope of political science research
3. Understand central concepts related to the research process
4. Achieve a basic foundation on using computers for data analysis
5. Produce an original research project

## REQUIRED READINGS

1. There is one required textbook for the course. This text is available in print and as an e-book. Students should purchase the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the text.
  - **Janet B. Johnson, H. T. Reynolds, and Jason D. Mycoff, *Political Science Research Methods* (CQ Press, 8th edition, 2016).**
2. There are links to additional readings on the course website. These readings are required. They include articles published in leading academic journals.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Participation: 10%
2. Assignments: 50%
3. Research Proposal: 30%
4. Presentation: 10%



## COURSE REQUIREMENT DESCRIPTION

1. Participation: 10%. Participation grades are based on your contribution to the class. Students are expected to come to class ready and willing to participate. To ensure your participation, complete all readings and assignments. Occasionally, there will be an opportunity for students to participate via online blogs and forums on the course website.
2. Assignments: 50%. There are five assignments. The assignments are designed to guide students through writing a research proposal. Each assignment tackles a core component of conducting original research: research question, literature review, hypothesis formation, data and variable description, and methods design.
3. Research Proposal: 30%. A major component of this course is to design a research paper proposal. The paper proposal is the culmination of all five assignments in the course. Students are expected to apply instructor feedback and critique (from the assignments) to their final research proposal.
4. Presentation: 10%. During the final examination period students are to present their final research proposal to their colleagues.

## ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

Detailed assignment descriptions will be available on the course website.

1. Research Topic & Question
2. Literature Review
3. Hypothesis(es)
4. Data and Variable description
5. Methods/Research Design

## **COURSE SPECIFICS/DETAILS**

### *Grading scale:*

94-100: A; 90-93: A-; 87-89: B+; 83-86: B; 80-82: B-; 77-79: C+; 73-76: C; 70-72: C-; 67-69: D+; 63-67: D; 60-62: D-

*Office Hours:* Students are welcome to attend the scheduled office hours. My office is (almost) always open for student to inquire about their grades, discuss weekly assignments, or chat about the course. If the scheduled office hours do not fit your schedule, then let's make an appointment. I am happy to accommodate.

*Late work:* Late work is not accepted. If you find yourself unable to complete your assignments on time, email me as soon as possible. I reserve the right to make an exception, provided there is valid documentation. Of course, students are allowed make up exams and assignments due to a university obligation, illness, death of a family member, or civic duties.

*Attending class:* Class attendance is required and expected. You will need to fulfill your commitment and obligation to be in class and on time every day that class is held. Please do not come to class ill. If you think that you are ill then stay home, get some rest, go to the doctor, and recover. We will make arrangements on how to accommodate your missing class.

*Recordings:* Please see the Student Honor Code. Students are not allowed to record or video record lectures without my permission.

*Electronics:* Feel free to use laptops and tablets during class. However, if social media proves to be disruptive to the learning environment, then I will limit the use of electronic devices in the course.

*Evaluations:* Evaluations are part of our course. To ensure the highest quality of education for the entire UF student body, students are expected to provide feedback on their satisfaction with the course.

*Tentative:* Life is often unpredictable. This syllabus is subject to change. This is to protect the needs of both the instructor and the students.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

*Students with Disabilities.* The University of Florida is committed to providing accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability which may require accommodation, contact the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565). You can find more information at [www.dso.eff.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.eff.edu/drc/).

*Academic Honesty.* It is your responsibility to refrain from cheating, academic misconduct, and/or plagiarism. If you are uncertain about your responsibilities or you are questioning your academic integrity, then contact me immediately. Visit the [Dean of Students Office](#) for an explanation of plagiarism, student conduct, and conflict resolution.

*Counseling and Wellness Center.* If you feel that you need emotional support, then [here](#) is the contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center.

## UNIVERSITY CALENDAR

August 20	Classes begin
August 20-23 & 26	Last day to add or drop a course
September 2	Labor Day, no class
October 4 & 5	Homecoming, no class
November 11	Veterans Day, no class
November 25	Last day to drop with a "W"
November 26	Course evaluations open
November 27-28	Thanksgiving, no class
December 4	Last day of classes
December 5 & 6	Reading days
December 6	Course evaluations close
December 18	Final grades due

## Course Schedule

The course schedule is a tentative outline for the semester. Readings may be omitted or added depending on the nature of class discussion and weekly progress. Please note that readings should be completed *prior* to the beginning of the assigned class period. Rule of thumb: complete all readings for class on Thursday.

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment
8/22	Introduction	---	Research Topic of Interest
8/29	Introduction to Social Science Research	PSRM: Ch1: Introduction  Mansbridge (2014) "What Is Political Science Research For?"  Shively (2011): The Craft of Political Science Research, Chapter 1: Doing Research	---
<del>9/5</del> 9/12	The Research Article	PSRM: Ch15: The Research Report: An Annotated Example  JOP: Margolis (2019) "How Politics Affects Religion: Partisanship, Socialization, and Religiosity in America"  AJPS: Mason (2015) "I Disrespectfully Agree: The Differential Effects of Partisan Sorting on Social and Issue Polarization"  APSR: Goren and Chapp (2017) "Moral Power: How Public Opinion on Culture Wars Issues Shapes Partisan Predispositions and Religious Orientations"	---
9/19	The Research Process	PSRM (Ch2): The Empirical Approach to Political Science  PSRM(Ch3) Beginning the Research Process: Identifying a Research Topic, Developing Research Questions, and Reviewing the Literature	Research Topic due

		Knopf, Jeffrey W. 2006. "Doing a Literature Review." <i>PS-Political Science &amp; Politics</i> 39 (1, January): 127-132.  Prior (2013) "Media and Political Polarization"	
<b>9/26</b>	Literature Review Practice	Literature Review Lab: Working Through Writing a Literature Review	Literature Review due <b>9/30@ 9am</b>
<b>10/3</b>	Building Blocks of Research	PSRM(Ch4): The Building Blocks of Social Scientific Research: Hypotheses, Concepts, and Variables  <i>Enrichment: Political Mobilization</i> Calhoun-Brown (2000) "Upon This Rock: The Black Church, Nonviolence, and the Civil Rights Movement  Delton et al. (2018) "Partisan Goals, Emotions, and Political Mobilization: The Role of Motivated Reasoning in Pressuring Others to Vote	---
<b>10/10</b>	Building Blocks of Research	PSRM (Ch5): The Building Blocks of Social Scientific Research: Measurement  <i>Enrichment: The Media</i> Gerber and Green (2001) "Do Phone Calls Increase Voter Turnout"  Iyengar and Hahn (2009) "Red Media, Blue Media: Evidence of Ideological Selectivity in Media Use"  Broockman and Green (2014) "Do online Advertisements Increase Political Candidates' Name Recognition of Favorability?"  Allcott and Gentzkow (2017) "Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election"	Hypotheses due <b>10/14@ 9am</b>
<b>10/17</b>	Research Design	PSRM (Ch6): Research Design: Making Causal Inferences	---

		<p><i>Enrichment: Voting:</i> Barreto et al. (2006) "Do Absentee Voters Differ from Polling Place Voters?"</p> <p>Alvarex et al. (2012) "Making Voting Easier"</p> <p>Herron and Smith (2014) "Race, Party, and the Consequences of Restricting Early Voting in Florida in the 2012 General Election"</p>	
<b>10/24</b>	Sampling	<p>PSRM (Ch7): Sampling</p> <p><i>Enrichment: Topic</i></p>	<b>Data and Variable Description due 10/28@ 5pm</b>
<b>10/31</b>	Observation	<p>PSRM (Ch8): Making Empirical Observations: Firsthand Observation</p> <p><i>Enrichment: Public Opinion:</i></p> <p>Shao et al. (2014) "Weather, Climate, and the Economy: Explaining Risk Perceptions of Global Warming, 2001-2010"</p> <p>Song (2014) "Understanding Public Perceptions of Benefits and Risks of Childhood Vaccinations in the United States"</p>	---
<b>11/7</b>	Document Analysis	<p>PSRM (Ch9): Document Analysis: Using the Written Record</p> <p><i>Enrichment: Foreign Policy</i> Rathbun et al. (2016) "Taking Foreign Policy Personally: Personal Values and Foreign Policy Attitudes"</p> <p>Kertzer et al. (2014) "Moral Support: How Moral Values Shape Foreign Policy Attitudes"</p>	---
<b>11/14</b>	Survey Research	<p>PSRM (Ch10): Survey Research and Interviewing</p> <p><i>Enrichment: Topic</i></p>	<b>Methods/Research design section due 11/15 @5pm</b>

<b>11/21</b>	Data	PSRM (Ch11): Making Sense of Data: First Steps  Data Lab: Exploration with Data	---
<b>11/28</b>	Thanksgiving	No Class	---
<b>12/5</b>	Study Week	No Class	---
<b>12/10</b>	Exam	Research Presentations	<b>Presentation/ Final Research Project Due</b>