



Graduate Course Syllabus

POL 510: The Study and Practice of Political Science

Center: Online

Course Prerequisites

None

Course Description

This course introduces students to graduate-level study of political science including foundational concepts and approaches to the discipline. Students will explore the contemporary role of political science in the United States, common theoretical lenses and methodologies used to study political science, and use of empirical data and research to address problems across the various domains relevant to political science and public policy.

Course Outcomes

- Analyze data-collection techniques for their appropriateness and applicability in diverse research scenarios in political science
- Apply ethical standards to the development of original research designs for scientific inquiry involving human subjects
- Design empirical research projects that address contemporary political issues
- Evaluate statistical data sets from published primary academic sources for relevant information in supporting proposed political change
- Test hypothesized bivariate and multivariate relationships in political science using appropriate statistical techniques
- Make inferences about contemporary political issues through the interpretation of statistical analysis results
- Communicate results in a format consistent with political science research guidelines

Required Materials

Using your learning resources is critical to your success in this course. Please purchase directly through the [SNHU Online Bookstore](#) rather than any other vendor. Purchasing directly from the bookstore ensures that you will obtain the correct materials and that the Help Desk, your advisor, and the instructor can provide you with support if you have problems.

Political Science Research Methods

Janet Buttolph Johnson and H. T. Reynolds

Congressional Quarterly

Eighth Edition

Instructor Availability and Response Time

Your class interaction with the instructor and your classmates will take place on a regular, ongoing basis. Your instructor will be actively engaged within the course throughout the week. You will normally communicate with your instructor in the weekly discussions or the General Questions discussion topic so that your questions and the instructor's answers benefit the entire class. You should feel free, however, to communicate with your instructor via SNHU email at any time, particularly when you want to discuss something of a personal or sensitive nature. Your instructor will generally provide a response within 24 hours.

Grade Distribution

Assignment Category	Number of Graded Items	Point Value per Item	Total Points
Discussions	7	30	210
Journals	3	30	90
Activities	3	40	120
Final Project			
Milestone One	1	90	90
Milestone Two	1	90	90
Milestone Three	1	100	100
Research Study	1	300	300
			Total Course Points: 1,000

This course may also contain practice activities. The purpose of these non-graded activities is to assist you in mastering the learning outcomes in the graded activity items listed above.

University Grading System: Graduate

Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Points
A	93–100	4.00
A-	90–92	3.67
B+	87–89	3.33
B	83–86	3.00
B-	80–82	2.67
C+	77–79	2.33
C	73–76	2.00
F	0–72	0.00
I	Incomplete	
IF	Incomplete/Failure *	
W	Withdrawn	

* Please refer to the [policy page](#) for information on the incomplete grade process.

Grading Guides

Specific activity directions, grading guides, posting requirements, and additional deadlines can be found in the Assignment Guidelines and Rubrics section of the course.

Weekly Assignment Schedule

All reading and assignment information can be found within each module of the course. Assignments and discussion posts during the first week of each term are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Assignments and discussion posts for the remainder of the term are due by 11:59 p.m. of the student's local time zone.

In addition to the textbook readings that are listed, there may be additional required resources within each module.

Module	Topics and Assignments
1	Science and Political Science Political Science Research Methods, Chapter 2 1-1 Review Final Project 1-2 Discussion: Applying the Scientific Method to Political Science 1-3 Journal: Your Experience With Political Science Writing
2	Research Questions and Literature Review Political Science Research Methods, Chapters 3 and 9 2-1 Discussion: Developing an Empirical Research Question 2-2 Journal: Examining Published Data Sets
3	Ethics and Political Science Political Science Research Methods, Chapter 8 3-1 Discussion: Balancing Results and Ethics 3-2 Final Project Milestone One: The Research Question
4	Formulating Hypotheses, Defining Concepts, and Measuring Variables Political Science Research Methods, Chapters 4 and 5 4-1 Discussion: Evaluating Freedom House's Methodology 4-2 Journal: Proposing a Preliminary Hypothesis
5	Research Designs in Political Science Political Science Research Methods, Chapter 6 5-1 Discussion: Evaluating an Experimental Research Design 5-2 Final Project Milestone Two: Selecting an Appropriate Data Set
6	Introduction to Data Analysis Political Science Research Methods, Chapter 11 6-1 Activity: Statistical Exercise
7	Sampling and Statistical Inference Political Science Research Methods, Chapter 7 and Chapter 12 7-1 Activity: Statistical Exercise 7-2 Final Project Milestone Three: Hypothesis and Conceptual Definitions

Module	Topics and Assignments
8	Analyzing Relationships Between Variables Political Science Research Methods, Chapter 13, pages 412–478, and Chapter 14, pages 516–553 8-1 Activity: Statistical Exercise 8-2 Discussion: The Role of Race in Voting Behavior
9	Regression Analysis Political Science Research Methods, Chapter 13, pages 478–515, and Chapter 14, pages 528–558 9-1 Discussion: Interpreting the Results of Regression Analysis
10	Survey Methodology Political Science Research Methods, Chapter 10, pages 294–338 10-1 Final Project Submission: Research Study

Attendance Policy

Online students are required to submit a graded assignment/discussion during the first week of class. If a student does not submit a graded assignment/discussion during the first week of class, the student is automatically dropped from the course for non-participation. Review the [full attendance policy](#).

Late Assignments Policy

Meeting assigned due dates is critical for demonstrating progress and ensuring appropriate time for instructor feedback on assignments. Students are expected to submit their assignments on or before the due date. Review the [full late assignment policy](#).

SNHU Student Handbook

Review the [student handbook](#).

ADA/504 Compliance Statement

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008, Southern New Hampshire University does not discriminate on the basis of disability, including intellectual disability, in admission, treatment, or access to its programs or activities, nor does it discriminate in employment in its programs or activities.

The university prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability and takes action to prevent such discrimination by providing reasonable accommodations to eligible individuals with disabilities. A disability is a condition or impairment that impacts a “major life activity” or “major bodily function.”

- **Major life activities** include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.
- **Major bodily functions** include, but are not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, and digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and

reproductive functions. Disabilities include physical, medical (including pregnancy), mental health, and learning needs.

At the beginning of each term, or as soon as you become aware of a disability or accessibility concern, we encourage you to contact the Online Accessibility Center (OAC) to discuss accommodations for which you may be qualified. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student and the OAC.

Note that accommodations are not retroactive and that disability accommodations are not provided until acceptable documentation of a disability and its impact is received and an accommodation letter has been processed. If you are unsure whether your condition qualifies as a disability or accessibility concern, please contact the OAC for determination.

Contact Information:

Online Accessibility Center

Phone: 866-305-9430

Email: oac@snhu.edu

For questions concerning support services, documentation guidelines, or general disability issues, please visit the [Online Accessibility Center](#) website.

If you feel you have been denied appropriate disability-related accommodations, including appropriate auxiliary aids and services, you may file a grievance as described in the ADA/504 Grievance Policy found on the [Disability and Accessibility Services](#) website.

Academic Honesty Policy

Southern New Hampshire University requires all students to adhere to high standards of integrity in their academic work. Activities such as plagiarism and cheating are not condoned by the university. Review the [full academic honesty policy](#).

Copyright Policy

Southern New Hampshire University abides by the provisions of United States Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code). Any person who infringes the copyright law is liable. Review the [full copyright policy](#).

SNHU Withdrawal Policy

Review the [full withdrawal policy](#).

Southern New Hampshire University Policies

More information about SNHU policies can be found on the [policy page](#).

Student Work Samples

For the purpose of continuous improvement of our educational training, Southern New Hampshire University may, on occasion, utilize anonymous student work samples for internal professional development and staff training. If you would like to withdraw permission for use of your work, please complete the [Student Work Sample Survey](#).