

# POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH METHODS

## LECTURE 2: FOUNDATIONS OF POLITICAL ANALYSIS

Research Methods

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## USING POLLING IN THE CLASSROOM

Go to:

[www.mcgill.ca/polling](http://www.mcgill.ca/polling)

You must register with your McGill name and ID

In each class I will provide a new session number for you to use

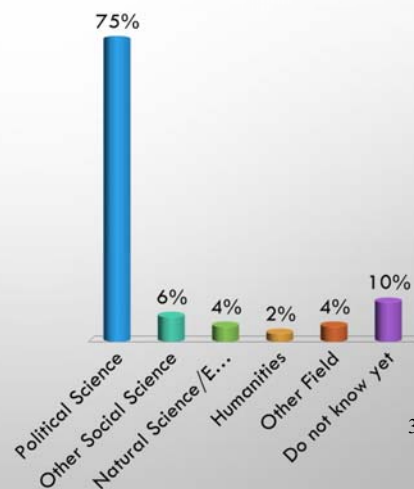
Research Methods

2

**This is a Polling test.  
I am majoring in...**



1. Political Science
2. Other Social Science
3. Natural Science/Engineering
4. Humanities
5. Other Field
6. Do not know yet

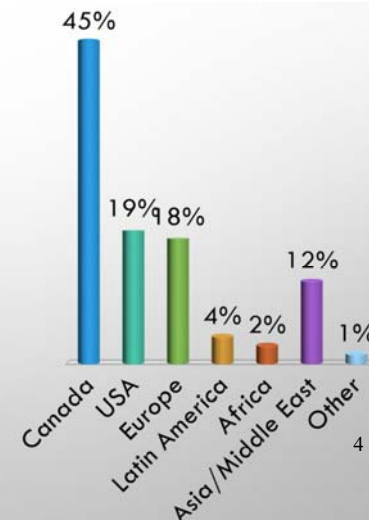


3

**This is another Polling Test.  
Where are you from originally?**





1. Canada
2. USA
3. Europe
4. Latin America
5. Africa
6. Asia/Middle East
7. Other





4


# ISSUES TO ADDRESS

 Access to Readings


 Textbook choice

 Reading Quiz

 Lecture Notes

 Conferences/Labs Sign-Up is open

They will start in the third week only

 Other questions so far?

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**Types of Inquiries in Political Science**

**Goals in Empirical Analysis in Political Science**

**The scientific method**

**Vocabulary of the Scientific Inquiry**

**Watching a piece of a movie**

**Using what we have learned**

## PLAN FOR TODAY

Research Methods

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## WHAT IS POLITICAL SCIENCE?

- Political Science = Scientific Study of Politics
- Politics— "who gets what, when, and how" (Harold Lasswell)
- Scientific Study
  - "Accumulation and establishment of knowledge which has been systematized and formulated with reference to the discovery of general truths or the operation of general laws"

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## NORMATIVE VERSUS EMPIRICAL QUESTIONS

### Normative:

- Focus on: Philosophies, norms or 'shoulds'
- Questions: How something 'ought' to be?
- Character: Value-based
- How: Use general principles, persuasion, logic

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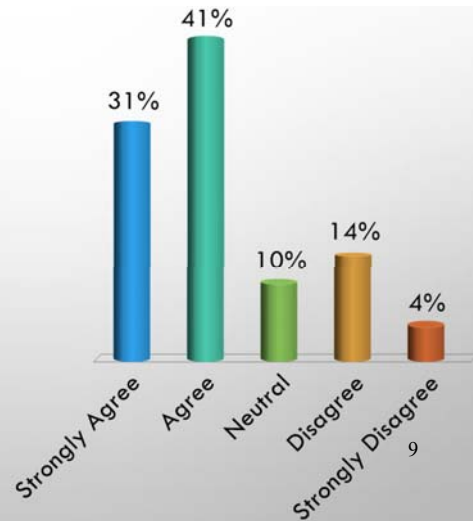
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**In a democracy, all people should participate in politics.**



1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



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## NORMATIVE VERSUS EMPIRICAL QUESTIONS

### Normative:

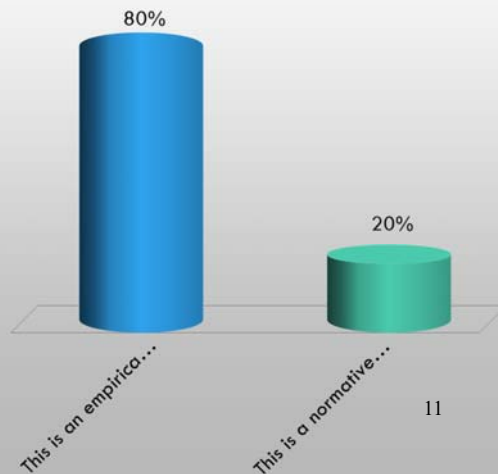
- Focus on: Philosophies, norms or 'shoulds'
- Questions: How something 'ought' to be?
- Character: Value-based
- How: Use general principles, persuasion, logic

### Empirical:

- Focus on: Measurement and observation
- Questions: How something is?
- Character: Observational and descriptive
- How: Collect evidence from real world (facts), use scientific method

**In comparison to authoritarian systems, democratic countries have better human rights records, on average.**

1. This is an empirical statement.
2. This is a normative statement.

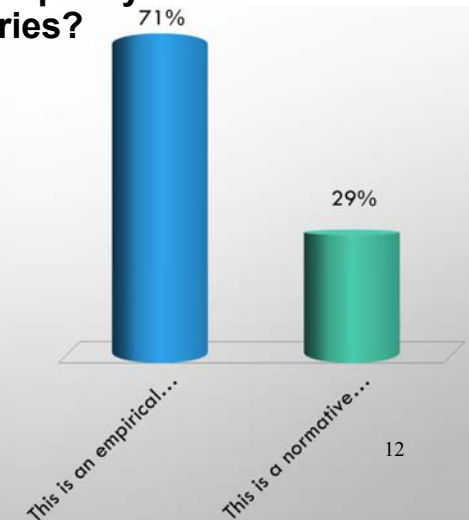


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**Do Countries with a higher Social Safety net have less political inequality than other countries?**

1. This is an empirical question
2. This is a normative question



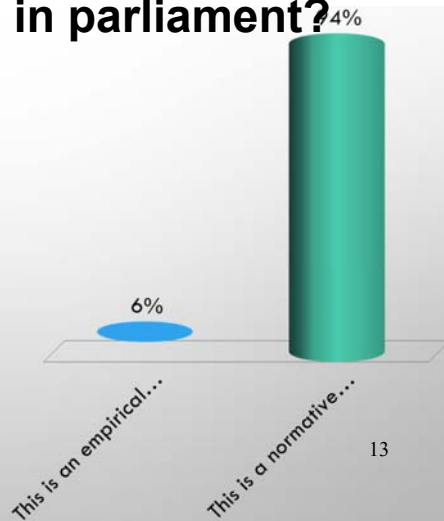
Research Methods

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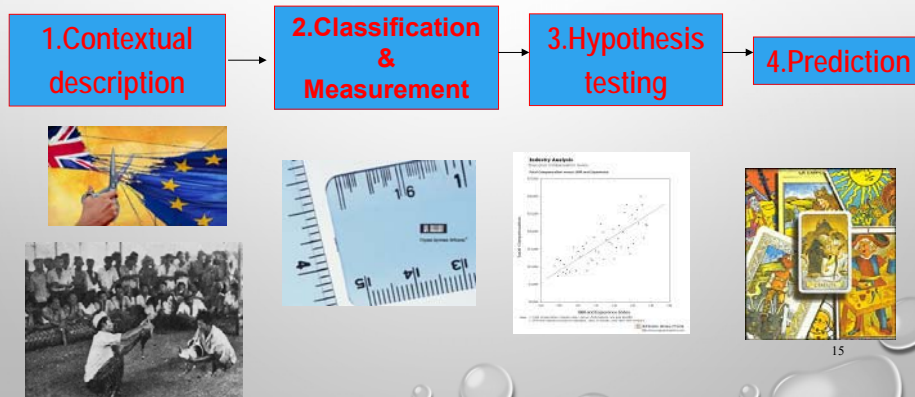
## Do women and men need equal representation in parliament?

1. This is an empirical question
2. This is a normative question



Example of turning it into an empirical question: Does gender equality in parliament lead to more family friendly policies?

## AIMS OF EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE



## PROBABILISTIC SCIENCE?





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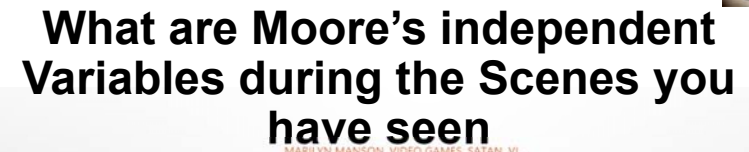
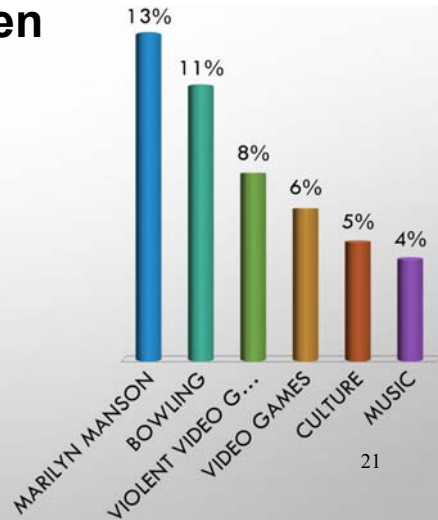
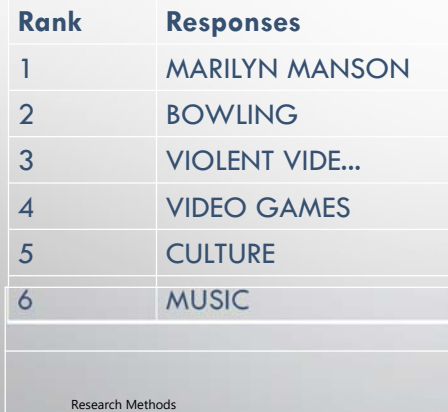


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## 19

## 0



Points	Team	Points	Team
3.2	Latin America		
3.13	Other Field		
2.73	USA		
2.69	Europe		
2.67	Political Science		



01

Read  
chapter 3

02

Take short  
Reading  
quiz

03

Think about a research question that interests you

04

Check out  
assignment  
#1 (weekend  
or Monday on  
MyCourses)