PLSC 308: Introduction to Political Research

Christopher Zorn

January 12, 2016

Course Foci

1. Understand the philosophical and empirical roots of social scientific research.

2. Develop research skills and tools that will allow you to conduct your own research.
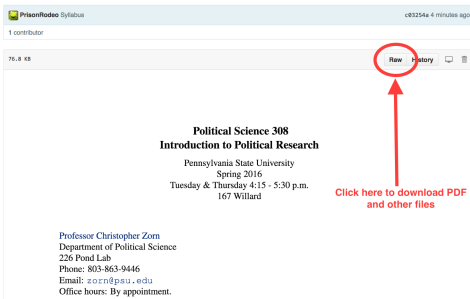
Grading

- Three short assignments (5% each; 15% total)

- A midterm examination (20%)

- A final examination (30%)

- A final paper & presentation (25%)

- Course participation and engagement (10%)

About me...

- Office: 226 Pond Lab

- Office Hours: T-Th 1:00-2:00 or by appointment

- E-mail: zorn@psu.edu

- Office Phone: 814-863-9446

- Mobile Phone / Text: 803-553-4077

- Twitter: @prisonrodeo

The Github Repository

- ...is at https://github.com/PrisonRodeo/PLSC308-git
- Feel free to:
  - Download and read the syllabus,
  - Explore the rest of the repository.

Two Ways of Seeking Truth

"Let Truth and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter?"

– John Milton, Areopagitica

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"If you make a theory, for example, and advertise it, or put it out, then you must also put down all the facts that disagree with it, as well as those that agree with it."

– Richard Feynman

Adversarial and Scientific Endeavors

Construct	Adversarial	Scientific
Goal	To "win"	To advance knowledge
Main Tool	The Claim	The Hypothesis
Main Strategy	To advocate	To disprove
Approach	Conflictual	Collaborative
Evidence is...	Exalted	Interrogated
Counterevidence is...	1. Ignored	1. Sought
	2. Discredited	2. Encouraged
	3. Minimized	3. Integrated