

Welcome to Math Camp (2019)

Dept. of Political Science
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Instructors:
Marcy Shieh and Anton Shirikov

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Math and Political Science

(Political Science and Math)

Why math?

In general...

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Discover hidden insights

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Formalizing: lay out premises and assumptions, derive implications

Discover hidden insights

Even if you don't do highly mathematical work, you will encounter it

For empirical research
(data analysis...)

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Principled measurement methods

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Make judgments about *statistically meaningful* findings (vs. random noise)

Make causal inferences

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Define sets of actors, preferences, incentives

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Derive actors' strategies for optimal payoffs

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Dealing with limited information, probabilistic beliefs, learning from new information

Objectives

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- Preparation for methods courses
- Practicing essential arithmetic routines

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You won't memorize everything we cover this week,

but you need to be able to "roll with it" in class

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How do we know you will be fine?

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- You get out what you put in

Questions so far?

Agenda

Mornings (9–12ish): math lessons

Lecture slides, definitions, examples

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Afternoons (1–3ish): practice

Take-home exercises will be distributed

Instructors will be present to work through problems

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Contact your instructors at any time

(But you should feel free to ask questions throughout)

Monday: Essential algebra and pre-calculus (Anton)

- Fundamentals, notation, functions

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Tuesday: Linear algebra (Micah)

- Vectors and matrices
- Useful for manipulating real data

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- How variables affect other variables

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Thursday: Finish calculus, Probability (Micah/Anton)

- Mathematical intuitions of independent and conditional probability
- Probabilistic processes (random variables), patterns in "real data"

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Friday: Finish probability (Anton)

Deliverables?

Daily exercises (not collected)

No final exam (or grades of any kind)

You are in charge of yourselves

Questions?

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- Ask lots of questions! They help the entire class!
- Slow us down
- Ask *why* we are learning something

Resources

The [Github repository](#):

- Slides, exercises
- Source code to build it all

Other resources:

- View [last year's materials](#)
- Gill, *[Essential Mathematics for Political and Social Research](#)*
- Moore & Siegal: *[A Mathematics Course for Political & Social Research](#)*

About your instructors

Micah Dillard



A proud Ohio son (Columbus)

Studies international relations & political methodology (since 2014)

Domestic politics, economic sanctions, and foreign policy

Methodological focus: Formal theory (algebra and calculus)

Email: micah.dillard@wisc.edu

Anton Shirikov



Originally from Russia. Switched back and forth between journalism and academia, but finally settled on the latter

Studies comparative politics & political methodology (since 2015)

Authoritarian politics, media, propaganda, legacies of communism

Methodological focus: experiments

Email: shirikov@wisc.edu

Acknowledgements

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Let's get started