

SYLLABUS¹

Lecturer

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Room: 5.05 (College Green)
Office hours: Wed 9:30-11:30 AM

Tutor

Andrea Salvi
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Module Description and Objectives

This module explores a variety of both qualitative and quantitative social science research to develop the skills for explaining causal mechanism in political phenomena. Especially, the class focuses on the logic of scientific inference, research design and measurement. This module also explores the uses and abuses of statistical reasoning in social and political studies. Students learn the basic rules of data analysis and the logic of statistical inference. The class covers various topics such as survey methodology, content analysis, (quasi) experiments, and policy analysis by doing such work themselves.

On successful completion of this module students should be able to:

- Critically analyse existing political science and social science research on the basis of the research methods employed.
- Specify appropriate research questions in political science and construct effective research design strategies to answer these questions.
- Analyse quantitative data to uncover relationships between theoretically relevant variables.
- Effectively use statistical methods to conduct political science research.
- Effectively employ SPSS, a statistical software package, to conduct political science research.

Lectures

We will have two lectures per week:

Tuesdays: 14-15 (2 College Green, room 3)
Thursdays: 17-18 (AP2.03)

Typically, one of the lectures will be about research methods in general, while the other will focus on statistical methods. The lectures will add to the readings for each week by providing (political science) examples, highlighting

¹ Please note that the syllabus is indicative of the material covered by the course and is subject to change.

the main points, explaining difficult concepts and methods and providing extra material which is not covered in the textbooks or additional readings.

Tutorial Sessions

The tutor for this class is Andrea Salvi. Participation in tutorial sessions is **mandatory**. It will be very difficult to do well on homework assignments, papers or the final exam if you do not attend tutorials regularly. Tutorials provide a forum for going over homework, similar problem sets, and topics covered in the lecture. The tutorials will also introduce the statistical software necessary to complete the assignments. Please note that it is necessary to be well prepared during tutorials (reading assigned materials, attending lectures, doing homework). The tutor will not repeat what is in the book or what was covered in the lecture. We assume that you have done that. The only way to learn methods and statistics well is by practising, so make sure to prepare your homework exercises well.

We will have **weekly tutorial sessions** from week 3 on. You will be assigned to a tutorial group automatically. Once you are assigned, you can only attend that group's meetings unless you receive permission from the tutor to switch groups (either permanently or for a single session).

Tuesdays: 12-1pm (Goldsmith 1A) [Group 1]

OR

Tuesdays: 5-6pm (College Green Rm 4) [Group 2]

Contacting us

The first point of contact is the tutor. If there is a **practical matter** which requires the attention of the lecturer, you may contact us by e-mail, but note that we will respond only during normal office hours (and do not expect an immediate response).

When you have **substantive questions** about what we are covering in the course, please save up your questions for the Q&A during the lecture and for the tutorial group meetings. You can also visit the lecturer's office hours, but note that we expect that you will have attended the lecture and tutorial groups and done the homework first. Office hours are not intended to replace the lectures and tutorial groups. As a rule, we will not deal with substantive questions via e-mail.

Blackboard

I will provide module announcements via Blackboard. Moreover, all homework and paper assignments will be made available there.

If you are registered for this module in My TCD, you should also be automatically added to the Blackboard environment. Please make sure this is indeed the case.

Literature

We will use the following text books in the module:

Manheim, J.B., R.C. Rich, L. Wilmot, C.L. Brians and J. Babb (2012) *Empirical Political Analysis: An Introduction to Research Methods*. Harlow: Pearson Education. ISBN: 1408204622

Field, A. (2013) *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*. 4th edition (3rd edition may also be used, but relevant parts from the fourth edition should be obtained elsewhere). London: Sage.

It is essential that you acquire your own copy of Manheim et al. (2012), because we will read almost all of it. We will read only about half of Field (2013), but it is recommended that you get your own copy as it is a good reference book. Make sure that you have access to the chapters that we will be using in class.

In addition, we will use a number of journal articles and book chapters. Most journal articles will be freely available from the link included in the reading list (from campus computers). If this does not work (or if you are not on campus), search for the article via [Stella Search](#) (or [Google Scholar](#)) and log in to gain access.

SPSS

We will use the statistical software package IBM SPSS Statistics (version 21, version 22 can also be used) in this module. It is imperative that you install this on your computer as soon as possible. Please refer to IS Services how to obtain your **free copy**: http://isservices.tcd.ie/software/kb/student_software.php

Grading

The final grade consists of the following parts:

- 60% of the mark is based on an end-of-term exam, which covers both research methods and statistics. The exam will consist of short descriptions of relevant concepts, short essay questions and the interpretation of a statistical model.
- 1 paper counting 16% towards your overall mark. In this paper, you will set up a (small) research project (based on secondary data) and execute it (including a limited statistical analysis). This work will be done in groups submitting joint papers. We will assign you to a random partner for this project. Further information on the paper assignment will be made available via Blackboard. The deadline for submitting the paper on Turnitin is Friday, November 30, 2018, 23:59. Only one of the co-authors should submit the paper, but be sure to indicate the other co-authors on the title page.
- Homework exercises are worth 20% of your overall mark. In total, students will complete 4 of these exercises. ***These homework exercises must be submitted via Turnitin.***
- Tutorial participation is worth 4% of your overall mark. Students should present themselves at their tutorials and be prepared to discuss their work in class. They should also attend the presentation sessions (weeks 9 and 10 in lecture). Two unexcused absences in tutorials and 1 in the presentation will be tolerated. Beyond that, the student will receive a zero for participation.

Late Submissions

5 points per day will be taken off your mark on assignments submitted late without a valid excuse (capped at 30 points).

Plagiarism

Unless explicitly stated otherwise, all coursework is **individual** and should be **original** (you should not re-use parts of a paper you wrote for another module, for example).

You need to **reference** any literature you use in the correct manner. This is true for use of quotations as well as summarizing someone else's ideas in your own words. Useful information regarding essay writing may be found in the [political science undergraduate student handbook](#), as well as <http://www.plagiarism.org>. When in doubt, consult with the lecturer before you hand in an assignment. [Plagiarism is regarded as a major offence](#) that **will** have serious implications.

Paper Submission

All coursework must be submitted via turnitin.com.

Class ID: 19060845

Password: po3110

All coursework deadlines are strictly adhered to. Extensions on deadlines will only be granted in exceptional circumstances; relevant documentation (for example a medical certificate, or a letter/e-mail from your college tutor explaining the circumstances) should be provided when an extension is requested. All late work, unless excused **beforehand**, will have 5 marks deducted for each day beyond the deadline, as stated in the [political science undergraduate student handbook](#).

The weekly homework exercises must be submitted through turnitin on **the Monday evening (11:59pm) preceding the tutorial session**. This applies regardless of the tutorial you are assigned to. Attendance records are based on: 1) your presence at tutorial and 2) proof that the homework was attempted by the deadline. Please make sure that your answers are typed into a Word document and that you have made a good faith attempt at the analyses. Screenshots of the SPSS output *is not sufficient*—you will need to *interpret* the results and procedures.

Overview of lectures & tutorial sessions

Week	Lecture Date(s)	Tuesday	Thursday	Tutorial Topic	Homework exercises	Readings for Tuesday ²	Readings for Thursday ³
1	11-09 13-09	Why do I need to learn about research methods?	Why statistics? The problem of sampling	-	-	Manheim et al., Chapter 1	Field, Chapter 1 (1.1 to 1.5 including)
2	18-09 20-09	Theories & concepts	Univariate statistics: Measurement levels and measures of central tendency	-	-	Manheim et al., Chapter 2 & 3 Gerring, J. (1999). What Makes a Concept Good? A Criterial Framework for Understanding Concept Formation in the Social Sciences. <i>Polity</i> , 31(3), 357–393. doi:10.2307/3235246	Field, Chapter 1 (section 1.6 1.7) Manheim et al., Chapter 16
3	25-09 27-09	Variables, hypotheses & measurement	Univariate statistics: Measures of dispersion and standard errors	Theories & concepts; Measurement levels & measures of central tendency	-	Manheim et al., Chapter 4	Field, Chapter 2 (up to section 2.5.1 including) Field, Chapter 3
4	02-10 04-10	Measurement error and the research plan	Univariate statistics: confidence intervals & significance testing	Hypotheses & measurement; Standard deviation & error	Hw1 due (submit on Turnitin)	Manheim et al., Chapter 5	Field, Chapter 2 (section 2.5.2 to 2.13)
5	09-10 11-10	Qualitative versus	Presenting data: tables and charts	Confidence Intervals,	-	King, Gary, R.O. Keohane and S. Verba (1994), <i>Designing Social Inquiry</i> , Princeton: Princeton University Press, Chapter 1 and 2	Field, Chapter 4 Manheim et al., Chapter 15

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		quantitative research?		measurement error		Mahoney, J., & Goertz, G. (2006). A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research. <i>Political Analysis</i> , 14(3), 227–249. doi:10.1093/pan/mpi017	
	16-10 18-10	Bivariate statistics: cross tables and chi-square	Bivariate statistics: correlation	Qualitative & quantitative, Measurement problems	Hw2 due (submit on Turnitin)	Manheim et al., Chapter 17	Field, Chapter 7
7		STUDY WEEK	STUDY WEEK	STUDY WEEK	-		
8	30-10 1-11	<i>Monday – bank holiday. No lecture.</i>	Bivariate statistics: t-tests	Presenting data, Graphing in SPSS	-		Field, Chapter 9
9	06-11 08-11	Presentations	Presentations	Chi-square and correlation	Hw3 due (submit on Turnitin)		
10	13-11 15-11	Presentations	Presentations	Review			
11	20-11 22-11	Experimental research	From experimental to quasi-experimental research	Experimental research	Hw4 due (submit on Turnitin)	Manheim et al., Chapter 6 (p. 103-108) Mintz, A., Redd, S. B., & Vedlitz, A. (2006). Can We Generalize from Student Experiments to the Real World in Political Science, Military Affairs, and International Relations? <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> , 50(5), 757–776. doi:10.1177/0022002706291052	Lyall, Jason. "Does indiscriminate violence incite insurgent attacks? Evidence from Chechnya." <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> 53.3 (2009): 331-362.
12	27-11 29-11	Formal analysis / rational choice	Q&A, recap	Quasi-experiments	FRIDAY 23:59: Final Paper due	Osborne, M. J. (2003). <i>An Introduction to Game Theory</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapter 1 & 2 available from http://www.economics.utoronto.ca/osborne/igt/intro.pdf and http://www.economics.utoronto.ca/osborne/igt/nash.pdf	Posner, Daniel N. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." <i>The American Political Science Review</i> , vol. 98, no. 4, 2004, pp. 529–545. www.jstor.org/stable/4145323 .