

# **THE POLITICS OF DEVELOPING DEMOCRACIES CHALLENGES AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS**

**Spring 2022**

**Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30-4:45**

**ROOM: Dinwiddie Hall 102**

Professor: Gustavo Diaz (he/him)

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Office Hours (on zoom): <https://calendly.com/gustavodiaz/student-hours>

Professor: Virginia Oliveros (she/her)

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Office: Political Science Department, 311 Norman Mayer Building

Appointments for office hours: <https://virginiaoliveros.youcanbook.me>

Office Hours (on zoom): Wednesdays 10:30-noon.

Zoom for office hours: <https://tulane.zoom.us/my/virginiaoliveros>

This class is co-taught. The first part of the semester will be taught by Professor Oliveros, the second part by Professor Diaz. Both professors, though, will be available for office hours during the entire semester.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

According to Freedom House, 2020 was the 15th consecutive year of decline in global freedom. Countries experiencing deterioration in their democracy outnumbered those with democratic improvements by the largest margin since 2006 (when the negative trend began). About 75 percent of the world's population lived in a country that suffered deterioration in their democratic score last year. In 2020, seventy-three countries suffered declines in political rights and civil liberties, while only 28 countries registering gains. Moreover, after decades of gains, the number of countries rated as "Free" declined from 89 (in 2005) to 82 (in 2020) while the number of countries rated as "Not free" increased from 45 to 54 in the same period (*Freedom in the World* 2021).

Why some countries manage to consolidate their democracies while others failed? What explains the variation in the quality of democracy across countries and over time? This course goes over some of the most severe and pressing challenges faced by young democracies today, drawing from examples around the world. We will be covering topics such as the difficulties of administering free and fair elections, building strong and independent institutions, holding governments accountable, and curbing corruption and clientelism, among others. Each Tuesday, we will focus on understanding a different problem faced by young democracies. On Thursdays, we will focus on the different solutions that have been proposed, tried, and evaluated by social scientists. Particularly in this part of the class we will be reading cutting-edge research from political science and, sometimes, economics. This course will introduce students to the empirical frontiers in the field, with a especial focus on methods that deal with the problem of causal inference in a careful way (experiments, regression discontinuity designs, etc.). Finally, by

paying particular attention to issues of research design throughout the course of the semester, this course will prepare students to conduct their own research and be more critical readers of other's research.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Have a good understanding of some of the most pressing challenges faced by young democracies today.
- Discuss, evaluate, and compare different solutions that have been proposed to address those challenges.

## REQUIREMENTS

Assignment	Date	Percent
Participation & Attendance		5%
Midterm exam	March 8	20%
Response papers (4) (Thursdays)		15%
Presentation (Tuesdays)		15%
Short Paper (6-8 pages)	10 days after presenting	10%
Final Paper (16-18 pages)	May 7 (1pm)	35%

### 1. PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE (5%)

This is an upper level class. You are expected to have done the required readings by the day listed on the syllabus to be able to actively participate in the discussion. An “A” in participation will be achieved with weekly participation that demonstrates familiarity with the readings. This, of course, includes asking questions. But your questions and comments during class should reflect the time spent with the readings.

### 2. MIDTERM EXAM (20%)

The midterm exam will take place on **March 8 (Week 7)** and will cover the material discussed up to then. The format of the exam will be discussed the week before the exam. There will be no make-up exams unless you have a documented medical excuse. Make travel plans accordingly. The plan is to have this exam in class, but COVID may make us change that.

### 3. RESPONSE PAPERS (15%)

Starting on Week 2, we will be posting questions on Canvas about the topic of the week each week. You can pick any 4 weeks (excluding the one you are presenting) to write your response papers. These papers need to be submitted on Canvas by noon on the Thursday of the week you chose to submit. Papers should be about 500-700 words (papers exceeding the limit will be returned). For your grade on this assignment, we will be dropping the paper with the lowest grade. Your response paper should address one of the questions for the week and discuss how the assigned readings relate to this question.

### 4. PRESENTATIONS (15%) (GROUPS OF 2 STUDENTS)

At the beginning of the semester, groups of 2 students will be formed. Each group will be assigned a week/topic to make their presentation. We will try to accommodate preferences but that might not be always possible. Presentations will happen on Tuesdays. Groups will start by describing the issue/problem of the week on a presentation (on powerpoint) for approximately 25/30 minutes. What's the problem/challenge? How widespread it is? Why is this a problem? What are the main consequences? The rest of the class will be a discussion lead by the group (with our help, of course). For this discussion, it would be useful for the groups to finish their presentations with questions. We will talk about this in more detail in class. Student presentations will start on Week 3. The plan is to have all these presentations in person but if the person presenting is on quarantine (but otherwise feeling OK), we will have to move class to zoom for that day.

### **5. SHORT PAPER (10%) AND FINAL PAPER (35%)**

The final paper (16-18 pages) will be on the same topic of your presentation. While presentations are in groups, short papers and final papers are individual (but, of course, you can discuss it with each other). You should begin working on your topic early in the semester, and you are expected to meet with us at least once during the semester to talk about it. If you really want to write on a topic we are not covering in class, please talk to us asap, and we can decide together whether it's a good fit for this class. After your presentation, you will (1) set an appointment during office hours to get feedback on the presentation and discuss the progress on the paper, (2) write a short version (6-8 pages) of the paper, papers are due the second Sunday (at midnight on Canvas) after your presentation; (3) write the final version (May 7). We will be providing detailed comments on the short version and you are expected to address these comments on the final paper. We will be discussing these assignments in class.

## **READINGS**

Students are expected to read each of the required readings carefully before coming to class and be prepared to discuss them. The amount of weekly reading for this class is significant and the expectation is that you will take the time to reflect carefully on each reading. When you read an article or book chapter, think about the following questions: What's the main argument? Do you believe it? Why? Why not? Is the evidence presented convincing? Readings will be available on Canvas.

## **CLASS POLICIES**

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory and extremely important to succeed in this class. If you missed a class, ask another student for the notes. If you miss a class or two, you do not need to tell us. If absences, tardiness, or under-preparation becomes a problem, your grade will suffer. You are expected to do the readings prior to class and come to class prepared to discuss the material. That said, there is a pandemic and your well-being is more important than any class, so please let us know if you are having trouble keeping up.

**Make-up Exams:** There will be no make-up exam unless you have a documented medical excuse. Make travel plans accordingly.

**Late Policy:** Late assignments will be downgraded by one-third of a letter grade (e.g. A to A-) per day. I strongly encourage you to discuss any problems with us before the assignment is due.

**Grading:** This course will be grade according to the following scale:

A	>=93	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66	59 &
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62	below

**Disputing grades:** We are happy to go over any exam or paper with you to help you improve. Indeed, we encourage you to come to office hours to do so, especially if you think that you did study/work hard but did not get the expected results. Request for re-grading, though, must be done in writing. Students requesting re-grading should describe (based on the class' materials) what they feel constitute the correct answer and how their work meets the standard described.

**COVID:** It's hard to predict how the semester will go. The current Tulane policy is that classes are fully in person. If you are missing class for any COVID related issue, please email us at least 2 hours before class and we will let you zoom in. If you are missing class for any other reason, just get the notes from someone. Do not come to class if you are not feeling well or think you were in contact with a confirmed positive case. Everyone's health is more important than in person classes. Please, make sure you are receiving emails sent through Canvas and check it regularly. That's the way we will communicate if we need to move the class to zoom. All this may change based on how the pandemic evolves. We know. We are also tired of it...

## **COURSE SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE IF/AS NEEDED)**

### **Week 1 [January 25-27]**

#### **Tuesday: Introduction to the Class and Housekeeping**

- Kapstein, Ethan B. and Nathan Converse. 2008. "What makes young democracies different?" In *The Fate of Young Democracies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1-36.

#### **Thursday: Evidence-informed policies**

- To watch before class: "Social experiments to fight poverty" (Duflo 2010)  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/esther\\_duflo\\_social\\_experiments\\_to\\_fight\\_poverty?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/esther_duflo_social_experiments_to_fight_poverty?language=en)
- Banerjee, Abhijit, and Esther Duflo. 2011. "Think Again, Again" in *Poor economics: A radical rethinking of the way to fight global poverty*. New York: Public Affairs: 1-16.

#### **Recommended**

- Bowers, Jake, and Paul Testa. 2019. "Better Government, Better Science: The Promises and Challenges Facing the Evidence-Informed Policy Movement." *Annual Review of Political Science* 22:521-542.
- Keele, Luke. 2015. "The Statistics of Causal Inference: A View from Political Methodology." *Political Analysis* 23(3): 313-335.

### **Week 2 [February 1-3]: Holding Politicians Accountable**

#### **Tuesday**

- Fearon, James. 1999. "Electoral Accountability and the Control of Politicians" in *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation* edited by Przeworski, Adam, Susan Stokes, and Bernard Manin. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999: 55-97.

#### **Thursday**

- Dunning, Thad, Guy Grossman, Macartan Humphreys, Susan Hyde, Craig McIntosh, and Gareth Nellis. 2019. "Voter Information Campaigns and Political Accountability: Cumulative Findings from a Pre-Registered Meta-Analysis of Coordinated Trials" *Science Advances* 5(7): eaaw2612
- Grossman, G., K. Michelitch. 2018. "Information Dissemination, Competitive Pressure, and Politician Performance between Elections: A Field Experiment in Uganda." *American Political Science Review* 112(2): 280-301.

#### **Recommended**

- Grossman, Guy, Macartan Humphreys, and Gabriella Sacramone-Lutz. 2014. "I wld like u WMP to extend electricity 2 our village": On Information Technology and Interest Articulation." *American Political Science Review* 108(3): 688-705.

### **Week 3 [February 8-10]: Organizing Free and Fair Elections**

#### **Tuesday**

- Simpser, Alberto. 2013. "Introduction," in *Why governments and parties manipulate elections. Theory Practice, and Implications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

#### **Thursday**

- Hafner-Burton, Emilie M., Susan D. Hyde, and Ryan S. Jablonski. 2014. "When do governments resort to election violence?" *British Journal of Political Science* 44(1): 149-179.
- Hyde, Susan D. and Angela O'Mahony. 2010. "International Scrutiny and Pre-Electoral Fiscal Manipulation in Developing Countries." *The Journal of Politics* 72(3): 690–704.

#### **Recommended**

- Cantú, Francisco. 2014. "Identifying Electoral Irregularities in Mexican Local Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 58(4): 936-951.
- Ichino, Nahomi and Matthias Schundeln. 2012. "Deterring or Displacing Electoral Irregularities? Spillover Effects of Observers in a Randomized Field Experiment in Ghana." *The Journal of Politics* 74(1): 292–307.

### **Week 4 [February 15-17]: Building Strong (& Independent) Institutions: The Bureaucracy**

#### **Tuesday**

- Pepinsky, Thomas B., Jan H. Pierskalla, and Audrey Sacks. 2017. "Bureaucracy and service delivery." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20: 249-268.

#### **Thursday**

- Dal Bó, Ernesto, Frederico Finan, and Martín A. Rossi. 2013. "Strengthening state capabilities: The role of financial incentives in the call to public service." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128(3): 1169-1218. Read up to page 1175 & "Conclusions", feel free skim the rest.
- Oliveros, Virginia and Christian Schuster. 2018. "Merit, Tenure, and Bureaucratic Behavior: Evidence from a Conjoint Experiment in the Dominican Republic." *Comparative Political Studies* 51(6): 759–792.
- Toral, Guillermo. 2021. "The benefits of patronage: How the political appointment of bureaucrats can enhance their accountability and effectiveness." *Unpublished Manuscript*.

#### **Recommended**

- Gulzar, Saad, and Benjamin J. Pasquale. "Politicians, bureaucrats, and development: Evidence from India." *American Political Science Review* 111.1 (2017): 162-183.
- Grossman, Guy and Laura Paler. 2015. "Using Experiments to Study Political Institutions." *Handbook of Comparative Political Institutions*. (Gandhi, Jennifer, Ruiz-Runo, Ruben, Eds.): pages 84-97. Routledge.

## **Week 5 [February 22-24]: Processing Demands: Social Mobilization and Protests**

### **Tuesday**

- Carothers, Thomas, and Richard Youngs. 2015. *The complexities of global protests*. Vol. 8. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

### **Thursday**

- Machado, Fabiana, Carlos Scartascini, and Mariano Tommasi. 2011. "Political institutions and street protests in Latin America." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55(3): 340-365.
- Hochstetler, Kathryn. 2006. "Rethinking Presidentialism: Challenges and Presidential Falls in South America," *Comparative Politics* 38(4): 401-418.
- Aytaç, S. Erdem, Luis Schiumerini, and Susan Stokes. 2017. "Protests and Repression in New Democracies." *Perspectives on Politics* 15(1): 62-82.

### **Recommended**

- Aytaç, S. Erdem, Luis Schiumerini, and Susan Stokes. 2017. "Why Do People Join Backlash Protests? Lessons from Turkey." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*: 1-24.
- Cornell, Agnes, and Marcia Grimes. 2015. "Institutions as incentives for civic action: Bureaucratic structures, civil society, and disruptive protests." *The Journal of Politics* 77(3): 664-678.
- Ayoub, Phillip M., Douglas Page, and Sam Whitt. 2021. "Pride amid Prejudice: The Influence of LGBT+ Rights Activism in a Socially Conservative Society." *American Political Science Review* 115(2): 467-485.

## **Week 6 [March 1-3]**

**[TUESDAY] MARCH 1: MARDI GRASS HOLIDAY – NO CLASS!**

**Thursday: Review for Midterm Exam**

## **Week 7 [March 8-10]**

**TUESDAY: MIDTERM EXAM!**

### **Thursday**

- Scope Conditions Podcast. Episode 2.3: "Randomizing Together (Part 1)" with Tara Slough and Graeme Blair. URL: <https://bit.ly/3IpglYD>

## **Week 8 [March 15-17]: Fighting Poverty and Inequality**

### **Tuesday**

- Houle, Christian. 2009. "Inequality and Democracy: Why Inequality Harms Consolidation but Does Not Affect Democratization" *World Politics* 61(4): 589-622.

### **Thursday**

- Imai, Kosuke, Gary King, and Carlos Velasco Rivera. 2020. "Do Nonpartisan Programmatic Policies Have Partisan Electoral Effects? Evidence from Two Large-Scale Experiments." *Journal of Politics* 82(2): 714-730.
- Banerjee, Abhijit, Esther Duflo, and Garima Sharma. 2021. "Long-Term Effects of the Targeting the Ultra Poor Program." *American Economic Review: Insights* 3(4): 471-486

### **Recommended**

- Sen, Amartya. 1999. *Development as Freedom*. New York: Anchor Books. Introduction ("Development as Freedom") and Ch. 2 ("The Ends and Means of Development"): 3-13, 35-54.
- De La O, Ana L. 2013. "Do Conditional Cash Transfers Affect Electoral Behavior? Evidence from a Randomized Experiment in Mexico." *American Journal of Political Science* 57(1): 1-14.

## **Week 9 [March 22-24]: Curbing Clientelism**

### **Tuesday**

- Stokes, Susan C. 2005. "Perverse Accountability: A Formal Model of Machine Politics with Evidence from Argentina." *American Political Science Review* 99(3): 315-325.
- Auyero, Javier. 2000. "The Logic of Clientelism in Argentina: An Ethnographic Account." *Latin American Research Review* 35(3): 55-81.

### **Thursday**

- Vicente, Pedro C. and Leonard Wantchekon. 2009. "Clientelism and vote buying. Lessons from field experiments from African elections." *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 25(2): 292-305.
- Hidalgo, F. Daniel and Simeon Nichter. 2016. "Voter Buying: Shaping the Electorate through Clientelism." *American Journal of Political Science* 60(2): 436-455.

### **Recommended**

- Wantchekon, Leonard. 2003. "Clientelism and voting behavior: Evidence from a field experiment in Benin." *World politics* 55(3): 399-422.
- Keefer, Philip. 2007. "Clientelism, Credibility and the Policy Choices of Young Democracies," *American Journal of Political Science* 51 (4): 804-21.



- Weitz-Shapiro, Rebecca. 2014. "Moving Toward Accountability? Comparative Perspectives and Policy Implications." In *Curbing Clientelism in Argentina: Politics, Poverty, and Social Policy*, Chapter 7: 150-166.

## **WEEK 10 [MARCH 29 - 31]: SPRING BREAK**

### **Week 11 [April 5-7]: Curbing Corruption**

#### **Tuesday**

- Muñoz, Jordi, Eva Anduiza, and Aina Gallego. 2016. "Why do voters forgive corrupt mayors? Implicit exchange, credibility of information and clean alternatives." *Local Government Studies* 42(4): 598-615.

#### **Thursday**

- Boas, T. C., Hidalgo, F. D. and Melo, M. A. 2018. "Norms versus Action: Why Voters Fail to Sanction Malfeasance in Brazil." *American Journal of Political Science* 63(2): 385-400
- Avis, Eric, Claudio Ferraz, and Frederico Finan. 2018. "Do Government Audits Reduce Corruption? Estimating the Impacts of Exposing Corrupt Politicians." *Journal of Political Economy* 126(5): 1912-1964
- Le Foulon, Carmen and Catherine Reyes-Housholder. 2021. "Candidate sex, corruption and vote choice." *Electoral Studies* 69(2): 102270

#### **Recommended**

- Anduiza, Eva, Aina Gallego, and Jordi Muñoz. 2013. "Turning a Blind Eye: Experimental Evidence of Partisan Bias in Attitudes Toward Corruption," *Comparative Political Studies* 46(12): 1664–92.
- Winters, Matthew S., and Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro. 2013. "Lacking information or condoning corruption: When do voters support corrupt politicians?" *Comparative Politics* 45(4): 418-436.
- Chong, Alberto, Ana L. De La O, Dean Karlan, and Leonard Wantchekon. 2014. "Does corruption information inspire the fight or quash the hope?" *The Journal of Politics* 77(1): 55-71.

### **Week 12 [April 12-14]: Dealing with Violence and its Legacies**

#### **Tuesday**

- Fisman, Raymond, and Edward Miguel. 2008. "The Road back from War", chapter 7 in *Economic gangsters: corruption, violence, and the poverty of nations*. Princeton University Press: 158-185.

## Thursday

- Blattman, Christopher. 2009. "From Violence to Voting: War and Political Participation in Uganda," *American Political Science Review* 103(2): 231-247.
- Lyall, Jason, Yang-Yang Zhou, and Kosuke Imai. 2020. "Can Economic Assistance Shape Combatant Support in Wartime? Experimental Evidence from Afghanistan." *American Political Science Review* 114(1): 126-143
- Scope Conditions Podcast. Episode 2.1: "Can Boosting State Capacity Curb Social Disorder?" with Anna Wilke. URL: <https://bit.ly/32j8v3k>

## Recommended

- Miguel, Edward, Sebastián M. Saiegh, and Shanker Satyanath. 2011. "Civil war exposure and violence." *Economics & Politics* 23(1): 59-73.
- Gilligan, Michael J., Eric N. Mvukiyehe, and Cyrus Samii. 2013. "Reintegrating rebels into civilian life: Quasi-experimental evidence from Burundi." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57(4): 598-626.
- Flores, Thomas Edward, and Irfan Nooruddin. 2012. "The effect of elections on postconflict peace and reconstruction." *The Journal of Politics* 74(2): 558-570.

## Week 13 [April 19-21]: Improving Inclusion and Political Representation

### Tuesday

- Krook, Mona Lena, and Diana Z. O'Brien. 2010. "The politics of group representation: Quotas for women and minorities worldwide." *Comparative Politics* 42(3): 253-272.

### Thursday

- Giné, Xavier, and Ghazala Mansuri. 2018. "Together We Will: Experimental Evidence on Female Voting Behavior in Pakistan." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 10 (1): 207-35.
- Conroy-Krutz, Jeffrey and Devra C. Moehler. 2015, "Moderation from Bias: A Field Experiment on Partisan Media in a New Democracy." *Journal of Politics* 77(2): 575-587.
- Scope Conditions Podcast. Episode 1.1: "The Promise and Limits of Intergroup Contact" with Salma Mousa. URL: <https://bit.ly/33WfEHe>

## Recommended

- Gottlieb, J, Grossman G, Robinson AL. 2018. "Do Men and Women Have Different Policy Preferences in Africa? Determinants and Implications of Gender Gaps in Policy Prioritization." *British Journal of Political Science*, 48(3): 611-638.
- Tripp, Aili Mari, and Alice Kang. 2008. "The global impact of quotas: On the fast track to increased female legislative representation." *Comparative Political Studies* 41(3): 338-361.
- O'Brien, Diana Z., and Jennifer M. Piscopo. 2019. "The Impact of Women in

Parliament." *The Palgrave Handbook of Women's Political Rights*. Palgrave Macmillan, London. 53-72.

- Adida, Claire L., Nathan Combes, Adeline Lo, and Alex Verink. 2016. "The Spousal Bump: Do Cross-Ethnic Marriages Increase Political Support in Multiethnic Democracies?" *Comparative Political Studies* 49(5): 635-661.
- Rosenzweig, Leah R. and Yang-Yang Zhou. 2021. "Team and Nation: Sports, Nationalism, and Attitudes Toward Refugees." *Comparative Political Studies* 54(12): 2123-2154.

## **Week 14 [April 26-28]: Cumulative Learning**

### **Tuesday**

- Deaton, Angus and Nancy Cartwright. 2018. "Understanding and misunderstanding randomized controlled trials." *Social Science & Medicine* 210: 2-21.

### **Thursday**

- Banerjee, Abhijit, Esther Duflo, Nathanael Goldberg, et al. 2015. "A multifaceted program causes lasting progress for the very poor: Evidence from six countries." *Science* 348(6236): 1260799
- Slough, Tara, Daniel Rubenson, Ro'ee Levy, et al. 2021. "Adoption of community monitoring improves common pool resource management across contexts." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 118(29): e2015367118.
- Dunning, Thad, Guy Grossman, Macartan Humphreys, Susan Hyde, Craig McIntosh, and Gareth Nellis. 2019. "Voter Information Campaigns and Political Accountability: Cumulative Findings from a Pre-Registered Meta-Analysis of Coordinated Trials" *Science Advances* 5(7): eaaw2612
- Blair, Graeme, Jeremy M. Weinstein, Fotini Christia, et al. 2021. "Community policing does not build citizen trust in police or reduce crime in the Global South." *Science* 374(6571): eabd3446

## **Week 15 [May 3]: NO CLASS MEETING**

**MAKE AN APPOINTMENT FOR OFFICE HOURS TO DISCUSS YOUR PAPERS!**

**MAY 7 [SATURDAY]: 12:00PM (AS SET BY THE REGISTRAR) FINAL PAPER IS DUE ON CANVAS**

### **ADA/Accessibility Statement**

Tulane University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability, please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. I will never ask for medical documentation from you to support potential accommodation needs. Instead, to establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **Goldman Center contact information:** [goldman@tulane.edu](mailto:goldman@tulane.edu); (504) 862-8433; [accessibility.tulane.edu](http://accessibility.tulane.edu).

### **Code of Academic Conduct**

The Code of Academic Conduct applies to all undergraduate students, full-time and part-time, in Tulane University. Tulane University expects and requires behavior compatible with its high standards of scholarship. By accepting admission to the university, a student accepts its regulations (i.e., [Code of Academic Conduct](#) and [Code of Student Conduct](#)) and acknowledges the right of the university to take disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, for conduct judged unsatisfactory or disruptive.

### **Religious Accommodation Policy**

Both Tulane's policy of non-discrimination on the basis of religion and our core values of diversity and inclusion require instructors to make reasonable accommodations to help students avoid negative academic consequences when their religious obligations conflict with academic requirements. Every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. It is never acceptable for an instructor to compel a student to choose between religious observance and academic work. Absence from classes or examinations for religious reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of absence. It is the obligation of the student to provide faculty within the first two weeks of each semester their intent to observe the holiday so that alternative arrangements convenient to both students and faculty can be made at the earliest opportunity. Students who make such arrangements will not be required to attend classes or take examinations on the designated days, and faculty must provide reasonable opportunities for such students to make up missed work and examinations. Exceptions to the requirement of a make-up examination must be approved in advance by the dean of the school in which the course is offered. A [religious calendar](#) is available.

### **Title IX**

Tulane University recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. As such, Tulane is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination including sexual and gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence like sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or is experiencing these types of behaviors, know that you are not alone. Resources and support are available: you can learn more at [allin.tulane.edu](http://allin.tulane.edu). Any and all of your communications on these matters will be treated as either "Confidential" or "Private" as explained in the chart below. Please know that if you choose to confide in me I am required by the university to share your disclosure in a Care Connection to the Office of Case Management and Victim Support Services to be sure you are connected with all the support the university can offer. The Office of University Sexual Misconduct Response and Title IX Administration is also notified of these disclosures. You choose whether or not you want to meet with these offices. You can also make a disclosure yourself, including an anonymous report, through the form at [tulane.edu/concerns](http://tulane.edu/concerns).

Confidential	Private
<p><i>Except in extreme circumstances, involving imminent danger to one's self or others, nothing will be shared without your explicit permission.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Counseling &amp; Psychological Services (CAPS)   (504) 314-2277</li> <li>▪ The Line (24/7)   (504) 264-6074</li> <li>▪ Student Health Center   (504) 865-5255</li> <li>▪ Sexual Aggression Peer Hotline and Education (SAPHE)   (504) 654-9543</li> </ul>	<p><i>Conversations are kept as confidential as possible, but information is shared with key staff members so the University can offer resources and accommodations and take action if necessary for safety reasons.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Case Management &amp; Victim Support Services   (504) 314-2160 or <a href="mailto:srss@tulane.edu">srss@tulane.edu</a></li> <li>▪ Tulane University Police (TUPD)   Uptown - (504) 865-5911   Downtown – (504) 988-5531</li> <li>▪ Office of University Sexual Misconduct Response and Title IX Administration   (504) 865-5611 or <a href="mailto:msmith76@tulane.edu">msmith76@tulane.edu</a></li> <li>▪ Student Affairs Professional On-Call (24/7)   (504) 920-9900</li> </ul>

### Emergency Preparedness & Response

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS: TU ALERT	SEVERE WEATHER
<p>In the event of a campus emergency, Tulane University will notify students, faculty, and staff by email, text, and/or phone call. You were automatically enrolled in this system when you enrolled at the university.</p> <p>Check your contact information annually in Gibson Online to confirm its accuracy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Follow all TU Alerts and outdoor warning sirens</li> <li>▪ Seek shelter indoors until the severe weather threat has passed and an all-clear message is given</li> <li>▪ Do not use elevators</li> <li>▪ Do not attempt to travel outside if weather is severe</li> </ul> <p>Monitor the Tulane Emergency website (<a href="http://tulane.edu/emergency/">tulane.edu/emergency/</a>) for university-wide closures during a severe weather event</p>
ACTIVE SHOOTER / VIOLENT ATTACKER	EVERBRIDGE APP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b><u>RUN</u></b> – run away from or avoid the affected area, if possible</li> <li>▪ <b><u>HIDE</u></b> – go into the nearest room that can be locked, turn out the lights, and remain hidden until all-clear message is given through TU ALERT</li> <li>▪ <b><u>FIGHT</u></b> – do not attempt this option, except as a last resort</li> <li>▪ For more information or to schedule a training, visit <a href="http://emergencyprep.tulane.edu">emergencyprep.tulane.edu</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Download the Everbridge app from the App Store or Google Play store</li> <li>▪ The Report feature allows you to silently and discreetly communicate with TUPD dispatchers</li> <li>▪ The SOS button allows you to notify TUPD if you need help</li> <li>▪ The Safe Corridor button serves as a virtual escort and allows you to send check-in notifications to TUPD</li> </ul>

**From: Tulane Office of emergency preparedness and response**

**Comparative Politics\***  
**POLC 2300-01 (3 credits)**  
**Fall 2021 (Revised)**  
**Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30 - 10:45 AM**  
**118 Norman Mayer Building**

**Instructor:** Gustavo Diaz

**Office location:** Center for Inter-American Policy and Research, 7025 Freret St, First floor

**Office hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11AM - 12PM or by appointment (virtual preferred)

**Email address:** [gustavodiaz@tulane.edu](mailto:gustavodiaz@tulane.edu)

## **Course Description**

This course offers an introduction to comparative politics. Comparative politics is the subfield of Political Science that tries to understand variation within countries in political institutions, political behavior, public policies, and their outcomes.

The course focuses on building the analytical tools to understand comparative politics, as well as the central questions in the subfield. These central questions include:

1. How do democracies rise and fall?
2. How do regime types affect the economic and political performance of a country?
3. How do institutional arrangements vary within and across regime types?
4. How do these institutional arrangements affect economic and political outcomes?

We start with a discussion of the origins of comparative politics and its current role within Political Science. Then, we explore the origins of nation-states, governments, and regime types. From there, we address the causes and consequences of different regime types, including variation within democracies and autocracies.

**Note:** This syllabus was revised due to the impact of Hurricane Ida. Some parts have been crossed like this to highlight key changes.

The most important change is that the course will now use a flipped classroom approach. To accommodate for those impacted by Hurricane Ida, we will now convene only once a week, on Thursdays. I will upload lecture videos and slides early in the week, and I expect you to use the scheduled meeting time on Tuesdays to watch them. We will then meet on Thursdays to discuss the material. I have incorporated many avenues in case you need to engage with the course asynchronously.

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\*This syllabus is heavily inspired by similar courses by [Graeme Blair](#), [Virginia Oliveros](#), and [Yujeong Yang](#).

The main reason for this change is that I imagine some of you are experiencing unique hardships as a result of the global pandemic and Hurricane Ida. Rather than trying to anticipate unforeseen circumstances, I opted for the most flexible format I can work with.

We will meet online only until the school allows us to resume in person.

## Course Goals

This course has three goals:

1. Familiarize students with the study of comparative politics
2. Build core analytical skills central to the study of politics around the world
3. Strengthen communication skills by learning and practicing concepts from comparative politics

## Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, we will be able to:

1. Understand the fundamentals of comparative politics
2. Engage in productive conversations on politics and policy around the world
3. Apply the analytical skills from the course to our current and future careers

## Required Student Resources

### Prerequisites

There are no formal prerequisites to take this course.

### Technology

You will need reliable access to a computer with internet connection to access the course material and to work on and submit assignments. We will use Canvas as a hub for all course related purposes. Please let me know if you need help accessing technology resources.

### Reading

We will use the following textbook:

- Clark, William Roberts, Matt Golder, and Sona N. Golder. 2017. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. Washington DC: CQ Press. Third Edition. [\[TU Bookstore\]](#) [\[Amazon\]](#)

The rest of the syllabus refers to the textbook as CGG. We will use the third edition. The second edition may also work, with the exception of the chapters listed [here](#). Don't bother with the international edition.

I will also list recommended readings in the course schedule. I may mention some during class, but I do not expect you to read them. They are mostly for your future reference.



Also for your reference, you can see the list of comparative politics courses that you may take after this introductory course [here](#).

## Evaluation Procedures and Grading Criteria

Your grade will depend on the following assignments:

Assignment	Percentage
Quizzes (5)	40%
News Reports (5)	40%
Participation	20%
Final Exam	30% of final grade

### Quizzes (40%)

We will have six five online quizzes every other week. These are a combination of selection and short answer questions including material from the textbook and lectures. Every quiz will cover the material discussed after the last quiz.

Quizzes become available on Canvas on Thursdays at noon CT and are due on Fridays of the same week by 5pm CT. Each quiz is worth 10 points and ~~only your best five quizzes count towards your final grade.~~

### News reports (40%)

On the weeks without Quizzes (except for weeks 1 and 11), you will submit a news report covering recent political events in a region of the world of your choosing. I encourage you to be creative about the meaning of “political” and “region.” The purpose of news reports is to apply the course material to current world events and to practice short-form communication. You will submit ~~six~~ five reports in total.

Except for the first report, you can use any creative medium to deliver your news report. If you write a short essay, your report should be no longer than two pages (12pt font, double spaced). Some examples of alternative creative mediums include: audio, video, drawing, painting, infographics, concept maps, and flowcharts.

My ultimate goal is for you to use the course as an opportunity for advancing your personal interests and career goals, so the only restriction is that you choose a medium that can be uploaded or linked in canvas and that I can reasonably grade within a week. Don’t overdo it! Find something that will be fun and sustainable throughout the semester.

If your report does not include an equivalent amount of written or spoken words, you should attach a document no longer than one page explaining your intention. If your creative medium cannot accommodate a reference to the sources you use, you should also attach those in a separate document.

Your first news report will propose a region of the world to follow, explain why you think it would be interesting to follow the news from that region, include a list of five potential news sources, and explain the creative medium that you plan to use. I will discuss news reports in more detail on



week 3. Your choice of region or creative medium is not binding, but you should consult with me if you plan to change your original focus.

Every subsequent news report should contain a brief summary of events or opinions surrounding them, a justification of why these are important events, and your own thoughts or opinions regarding the events in question. If any of those aspects is not immediately obvious, you should clarify it in an attachment. An excellent news report uses the course material to shed new light on recent events.

News reports are due on the Friday of the week they appear as due in the course schedule by 5pm CT. You will upload or share a link to your report using the corresponding space on Canvas. Each report is worth 10 points and ~~only your best five reports count towards your final grade.~~

### **Participation (20%)**

I expect you to engage actively in this class. At a minimum, I expect you to come to lecture ready to discuss the material. To obtain a good participation grade, you must also make interventions conducive to a productive and respectful learning environment for yourself and others during class, office hours, in Canvas, or through other means that best suit your learning style.

We all have different learning styles, so I will keep an open mind about what constitutes good participation, and I encourage you to be proactive about pursuing the participation avenues that are most productive for you.

You will receive a temporary participation grade during Fall Thanksgiving break along with feedback on how to improve. As a rule of thumb, if I remember your name, you are likely in the right track. Participation scores range from 0 to 100.

### **Final Exam (30% of final grade)**

We will have a **take home** final exam ~~on the scheduled final examination date for the course~~ due on December 21 (the last day of instruction in the revised school calendar). The final exam is required only for those without a passing grade. For everyone else, the final exam is optional. If you wish to opt-in for the final exam, you must let me know by Friday, December 17, at 5:00 PM, at which time the exam prompt goes live.

The final covers the entirety of the course material and uses a format similar to the quizzes. Your exam will be graded from 0 to 100. ~~If public health conditions allow, we will hold the final exam in person.~~ Since the final exam is due too close to Winter break, I will upload it to Canvas and you will upload your answers in PDF or word format.

### **Late work policy**

~~For each day an assignment is late without excuse, I will deduct 10% of your grade for that assignment.~~ If your assignment is late for more than 3 days, your assignment will be graded with zero. I will no longer penalize your grade for late submissions, but in return I expect you to submit assignments within 48 hours of the due date.

That said, this course is taking place during extraordinary times. If exceptional circumstances require you to ask for an extension or other accommodations, reach out to me as soon as possible. If you anticipate prolonged issues, ask your academic advisor (or equivalent) to send me an e-mail

detailing the extent of required accommodations. For accessibility or religious accommodations, please read the appropriate sections below.

Please note that you never owe me personal information about your mental or physical health, nor about any other aspect of your personal life. For example, I will not ask for documentation if you need to quarantine because of a close contact tested positive. However, I do expect you to be accountable for coursework and reach out if you expect complications that prevent you from keeping up.

I aim to establish a learning community based on empathy about our varied circumstances during this time. You are always welcome to talk to me about what you are going through. I will not judge nor think less of you, and I hope you will extend me the same courtesy. If I can't help you, I will help you find the resources on campus that you need.

## Grading

Final grades range from 0 to 100 and will use the following conversion to letter grades:

F	D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A
60	63	67	70	73	77	80	83	87	90	93	
Grade											

Final grades with decimal numbers will be truncated to the highest integer (e.g. 92.1 becomes 93). After this, if your grade is exactly in the limit between two letter grades, you will get the highest letter grade (e.g. 93 is an A).

## Attendance Statement

I do not take attendance, but attendance is a basic component of your participation grade and some topics may be covered during lecture but not on the textbook. I trust that you will balance attendance and participation according to your priorities.

I encourage those unable to attend in person to participate via Canvas using the Discussion or Chat sections, as well as the Google form linked in the Syllabus section of the course website.

## Remote Course Policies

As long as we are meeting in person, I will not allow remote attendance unless a formal accessibility request requires so. This is mostly because I find it hard to give equal attention to two audiences. If you cannot attend in person to one or more lectures, I encourage you to engage with the course asynchronously instead. If we are required to move the class online, we will convene via Zoom.

The public health situation is still evolving, and the recovery from Hurricane Ida complicates things even further. I ask for your patience and flexibility as conditions are likely to change under short notice.

## Recording of class sessions

I will record in-person lecture audio and slides and upload them to Canvas by the end of the day. I will also upload slides separately no later than the night before lecture.

I will record one or more lecture videos in advance for each week and upload them to Canvas no later than Monday by 5:00 PM. I expect you to use the scheduled meeting time on Tuesdays to watch those and come ready to discuss on Thursday. I will also upload slides separately.

## ADA/Accessibility Statement

Tulane University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability, please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. I will never ask for medical documentation from you to support potential accommodation needs. Instead, to establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **Goldman Center contact information:** [goldman@tulane.edu](mailto:goldman@tulane.edu); (504) 862-8433; [accessibility.tulane.edu](http://accessibility.tulane.edu).

## Code of Academic Conduct

The Code of Academic Conduct applies to all undergraduate students, full-time and part-time, in Tulane University. Tulane University expects and requires behavior compatible with its high standards of scholarship. By accepting admission to the university, a student accepts its regulations (i.e., [Code of Academic Conduct](#) and [Code of Student Conduct](#)) and acknowledges the right of the university to take disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, for conduct judged unsatisfactory or disruptive.

Unless I indicate differently on instructions, all quizzes and exams are to be completed individually and without any study aid, including textbooks, class notes, or online sites. If you have any question about whether a resource is acceptable, you must ask the instructor rather than assume.

## Religious Accommodation Policy

As per Tulane policy, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester if you will be missing class due to religious observance so that we can agree on a makeup schedule. Tulane's Religious Observance Policy can be found at the bottom of the page linked here: [https://registrar.tulane.edu/Academic\\_Calendar](https://registrar.tulane.edu/Academic_Calendar)

## Course Schedule

### Important dates

**Week 1 (August 24/26): Introduction + What is Science?**

**Reading:** CGG Chapters 1-2

Assignment	Date
Fall Break (NO CLASS)	September 20-24
News Report 1	October 1
Quiz 1	October 8
News Report 2	October 15
Quiz 2	October 22
News Report 3	October 29
Quiz 3	November 5
News Report 4	November 12
Thanksgiving Break (NO CLASS)	November 22-26
Quiz 4	December 3
News Report 5	December 10
Quiz 5	December 17
Final Exam Due	December 21

**Recommended:**

- Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review* 65(3): 682-693
- Fearon, James. 1991. "Counterfactuals and Hypothesis Testing in Political Science." *World Politics* 43: 169-195

**Week 2 (September 13-17): What is Politics?**

**Reading:** CGG Chapter 3

**Recommended:**

- Foucault, Michel. 1977. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Pantheon Books

**Week 3 (September 20-24): FALL BREAK (NO CLASS)**

**Week 4 (September 27- October 1): What are States?**

**Reading:** CGG Chapter 4

**Due:** News report 1

**Recommended:**

- Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol. *Bringing the State Back In*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 117-139
- Herbst, Jeffrey. 1990. "War and the State in Africa." *International Security* 14(4): 117-139
- Grzymala-Busse, Anna. 2020. "Beyond War and Contracts: The Medieval and Religious Roots of the European State." *Annual Review of Political Science* 23: 19-36

## **Week 5 (September 4 - October 8): Democracy and Dictatorship**

**Reading:** CGG Chapter 5

**Due:** Quiz 1

### **Recommended:**

- Dahl, Robert. 1971. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press
- Diamond, Larry. 2002. "Elections Without Democracy: Thinking About Hybrid Regimes." *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 21-35
- Cheibub, José Antonio, Jennifer Gandhi, and James R. Vreeland. 2010. "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited." *Public Choice* 143: 67-191

## **Week 6 (October 11-15): Economic Determinants of Democracy and Dictatorship**

**Reading:** CGG Chapter 6

**Due:** News report 2

### **Recommended:**

- Valenzuela, J. Samuel and Arturo Valenzuela. 1978. "Modernization and Dependency: Alternative Perspectives in the Study of Latin American Underdevelopment." *Comparative Politics* 10(4): 535-557
- Knack, Stephen. 2004. "Does Foreign Aid Promote Democracy?" *International Studies Quarterly* 48(1): 251-266
- Inglehart, Ronald, and Christian Welzel. 2009. "How Development Leads to Democracy: What We Know About Modernization." *Foreign Affairs* 88(2): 33-48
- Ross, Michael L. 2015. "What Have We Learned About the Resource Curse?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 18: 239-259

## **Week 7 (October 18-22): Cultural Determinants of Democracy and Dictatorship**

**Reading:** CGG Chapter 7

**Due:** Quiz 2

### **Recommended:**

- Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. 2001. "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation." *American Economic Review* 91(5): 1369-1401
- Fish, Steven M. 2002. "Islam and Authoritarianism." *World Politics* 55(1): 4-37
- Habyarimana, James, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel N. Posner, and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2007. "Why Does Ethnic Diversity Undermine Public Goods Provision." *American Political Science Review* 101(4): 709-725

## **Week 8 (October 25-29): Democratic Transitions**

**Reading:** CGG Chapter 8

**Due:** News report 3

**Recommended:**

- Boix, Carles and Susan C. Stokes. 2003. "Endogenous Democratization." *World Politics* 55(4): 517-539
- Bellin, Eva. 2012. "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring." *Comparative Politics* 44(2): 127-149

**Week 9 (November 1-5): Democracy vs. Dictatorship**

**Reading:** CGG Chapter 9

**Due:** Quiz 3

**Recommended:**

- Olson, Mancur. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development." *American Political Science Review* 87(3): 567-576
- Gallagher, Mary E. and Jonathan K. Hanson. 2015. "Power Tool or Dull Blade? Selectorate Theory for Autocracies." *Annual Review of Political Science* 18: 367-385
- Geddes, Barbara. 1999. "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: 115-144
- Levitsky, Steven and Lucan Way. 2002. "Elections Without Democracy: The Rise and Fall of Competitive Authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 51-65

**Week 10 (November 8-12): Problems with Group-Decision Making**

**Reading:** CGG Chapter 11

**Due:** News report 4

**Recommended:**

- McElwain, Kenneth M. 2008. "Manipulating Electoral Rules to Manufacture Single Party Dominance." *American Journal of Political Science* 52(1): 32-47
- Ostrom, Elinor. 2009. "Collective Action Theory." In Carles Boix and Susan Stokes (eds). *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, pp. 186-208
- Andrews, Talbot M. and John Barry Ryan. 2021. "Preferences for Prevention: People Assume Expensive Problems Have Expensive Solutions." *Risk Analysis*

**Week 11 (November 15-19): Parliamentary, Presidential, and Semi-Presidential Democracies**

**Reading:** CGG Chapter 12

**Recommended:**

- Mainwaring, Scott. 1993. "Presidentialism, Multipartyism, and Democracy: The Difficult Combination." *Comparative Political Studies* 26(2): 198-228
- Cheibub, José Antonio, Adam Przeworski, and Sebastián M. Saiegh. 2004. "Government Coalitions and Legislative Success Under Presidentialism and Parliamentarism." *British Journal of Political Science* 34(4): 565-587
- Cheibub, José Antonio, Zachary Elkins, and Tom Ginsburg. 2014. "Beyond Presidentialism and Parliamentarism." *British Journal of Political Science* 44(3): 515-544

## **Week 12 (November 22-26): Thanksgiving Break - NO CLASS**

## **Week 13 (November 29-December 3): Elections and Electoral Systems**

**Reading:** CGG Chapter 13

**Due:** Quiz 4

### **Recommended:**

- Boix, Carles. 1999. "Setting the Rules of the Game: The Choice of Electoral Systems in Advanced Democracies." *American Political Science Review* 93(3): 609-624
- Carey, John M., and Simon Hix. 2011. "The Electoral Sweet Spot: Low-Magnitude Proportional Electoral Systems." *American Journal of Political Science* 55(2): 383-397

## **Week 14 (December 6-10): Social Cleavages and Party Systems**

**Reading:** CGG Chapter 14

**Due:** News Report 5

### **Recommended:**

- Kitschelt, Herbert. 2000. "Linkages between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Polities." *Comparative Political Studies* 33(6-7): 845-879
- Luna, Juan Pablo and David Altman. 2011. "Uprooted but Stable: Chilean Parties and the Concept of Party System Institutionalization." *Latin American Politics and Society* 53(2): 1-28

## **Week 15 (December 13-17): Institutional Veto Players**

**Reading:** CGG Chapter 15

**Due:** Quiz 5

### **Recommended:**

- Gibson, Edward L. and Julieta Suarez-Cao. "Federalized Party Systems and Subnational Party Competition: Theory and an Empirical Application to Argentina." *Comparative Politics* 43(1): 21-39
- Palanza, Valeria and Gisela Sin. 2013. "Item Vetoes and Attempts to Override Them in Multiparty Legislatures." *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 5(1): 37-66
- Magar, Eric, Valeria Palanza, and Gisela Sin. 2021. "Presidents on the Fast Track: Fighting Floor Amendments with Restrictive Rules." *The Journal of Politics* 83(2): 633-646

## **Week 16 (December 21): FINAL EXAM DUE 11:59 PM**

## Title IX

Tulane University recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. As such, Tulane is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination including sexual and gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence like sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or is experiencing these types of behaviors, know that you are not alone. Resources and support are available: you can learn more at [allin.tulane.edu](http://allin.tulane.edu). Any and all of your communications on these matters will be treated as either “Confidential” or “Private” as explained in the chart below. Please know that if you choose to confide in me I am required by the university to share your disclosure in a Care Connection to the Office of Case Management and Victim Support Services to be sure you are connected with all the support the university can offer. The Office of University Sexual Misconduct Response and Title IX Administration is also notified of these disclosures. You choose whether or not you want to meet with these offices. You can also make a disclosure yourself, including an anonymous report, through the form at [tulane.edu/concerns](http://tulane.edu/concerns).

Confidential	Private
<i>Except in extreme circumstances, involving imminent danger to one’s self or others, nothing will be shared without your explicit permission.</i>	<i>Conversations are kept as confidential as possible, but information is shared with key staff members so the University can offer resources and accommodations and take action if necessary for safety reasons.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Counseling &amp; Psychological Services (CAPS)   (504) 314-2277</li><li>▪ The Line (24/7)   (504) 264-6074</li><li>▪ Student Health Center   (504) 865-5255</li><li>▪ Sexual Aggression Peer Hotline and Education (SAPHE)   (504) 654-9543</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Case Management &amp; Victim Support Services   (504) 314-2160 or <a href="mailto:srss@tulane.edu">srss@tulane.edu</a></li><li>▪ Tulane University Police (TUPD)   Uptown - (504) 865-5911   Downtown – (504) 988-5531</li><li>▪ Office of University Sexual Misconduct Response and Title IX Administration   (504) 865-5611 or <a href="mailto:msmith76@tulane.edu">msmith76@tulane.edu</a></li><li>▪ Student Affairs Professional On-Call (24/7)   (504) 920-9900</li></ul>



## Emergency Preparedness & Response

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS: TU ALERT	SEVERE WEATHER
<p>In the event of a campus emergency, Tulane University will notify students, faculty, and staff by email, text, and/or phone call. You were automatically enrolled in this system when you enrolled at the university.</p> <p>Check your contact information annually in Gibson Online to confirm its accuracy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Follow all TU Alerts and outdoor warning sirens</li> <li>▪ Seek shelter indoors until the severe weather threat has passed and an all-clear message is given</li> <li>▪ Do not use elevators</li> <li>▪ Do not attempt to travel outside if weather is severe</li> </ul> <p>Monitor the Tulane Emergency website (<a href="http://tulane.edu/emergency/">tulane.edu/emergency/</a>) for university-wide closures during a severe weather event</p>
ACTIVE SHOOTER / VIOLENT ATTACKER	EVERBRIDGE APP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b><u>RUN</u></b> – run away from or avoid the affected area, if possible</li> <li>▪ <b><u>HIDE</u></b> – go into the nearest room that can be locked, turn out the lights, and remain hidden until all-clear message is given through TU ALERT</li> <li>▪ <b><u>FIGHT</u></b> – do not attempt this option, except as a last resort</li> <li>▪ For more information or to schedule a training, visit <a href="http://emergencyprep.tulane.edu">emergencyprep.tulane.edu</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Download the Everbridge app from the App Store or Google Play store</li> <li>▪ The Report feature allows you to silently and discreetly communicate with TUPD dispatchers</li> <li>▪ The SOS button allows you to notify TUPD if you need help</li> <li>▪ The Safe Corridor button serves as a virtual escort and allows you to send check-in notifications to TUPD</li> </ul>

From: Tulane Office of emergency preparedness and response

# Advances in the Design and Analysis of Experiments

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Sample syllabus

## Instructor

Gustavo Diaz  
diazdia2@illinois.edu  
420 David Kinley Hall MC-713  
1407 W Gregory Drive  
Urbana, IL 61801

## Course Description

This course covers recent advances in the design and analysis of experiments in Political Science (and beyond). We focus on two areas. First, we discuss the merit of doing experiments: What can we learn from experiments? Does our research question require an experiment? If so, what kind of experiment? How can we build cumulative knowledge from experiments?

Second, we discuss the nuts and bolts of experiments: How can we know how an experiment should look like before knowing the results? How should we measure our outcome variables? How to assign units to treatment and control groups? How to test hypothesis or calculate treatment effects given our research design? How to distinguish meaningful effects from random chance? What of all this should we include in a pre-analysis plan?

As usual, the answer to these questions is a big “it depends.” A good experiment looks different depending on the discipline, field, and sub-field. But in this course we will collectively develop our own standards to navigate these questions in a productive way.

**Note:** The current version of this syllabus aims for a 16-week graduate seminar that follows after (at least) introductory courses to research design and quantitative data analysis. I could make it more general and fill the space of an introduction to research design, or turn it into more specific modules on field experiments, survey experiments, or an experiment design workshop. This may fit better in schools with a trimester system.

## Course Goals

As we transition from consumers to creators of knowledge, we learn about cutting-edge innovations in experiments in isolation. As a result, what we learn is path-dependent on the subject areas we follow. The main purpose of this course is to cast a wider net and create a space to collectively

reflect on our own work through the lenses of experiments, in the hopes of increasing the quality of our contributions.

By the end of this course, you will be able to engage with future developments on experiments in the social sciences, incorporate them to your own work, and to make unique and meaningful contributions both empirically and methodologically.

## **Expectations**

I assume you have taken introductory graduate courses on research design and data analysis in Political Science or an equivalent in statistics, social sciences, or medical sciences. You know the basics of experiments and can analyze data from experiments using statistical software. Maybe you have already collaborated on or conducted your own experiment. I also assume you want to learn more about experiments to make unique contributions in your career path of choice.

I expect familiarity, yet not expertise, with experiments. A few examples may help you calibrate this expectation.

- You know that experiments involve random assignment to conditions
- You use, or plan to use, experiments in your work and you want to have all your bases covered
- You would like to bring students to the laboratory, but you worry about students not being “real people”
- You like to read about experiments and are excited to participate in a conversation about them with like-minded people
- You have strong feelings about experiments that you want to articulate into productive critiques

I expect you to participate actively, productively, and respectfully in our meetings. Some of the material addresses complicated concepts or uses math extensively. I do not expect you to understand every single equation for this course, but I do expect you to read carefully enough to make a judgment about how the material relates to your work. That means you will get every detail if you choose to revisit the material after taking this course.

## **Requirements**

### **Attendance**

This course meets regularly per school policy. I will not take attendance, but repeated absences without justification (defined by school policy) will be considered a reason to fail the course. I will revisit this policy based on roster size and school regulations.

### **Participation**

X% of your grade will be based on participation. Participation involves actively engaging in discussion during our meetings according to the course expectations, as well as attending to office hours, and other forms of participation that suit your learning style. We will discuss ways to adjust the participation policy to suit everyone’s goals and interests in our first meeting.

## Leading discussion

X% of your grade will be based on your role as discussion leader. The discussion leader's job is to briefly summarize the material and identify critical discussion topics in the form of questions, reflections, or critiques. In general, your goal as a discussion leader is to ensure a productive discussion. Based on enrollment I will determine a minimum of readings or weeks in which you will serve as discussion leader. If feasible, I will ask you to work in pairs in preparation to lead discussion. That may alleviate the stress of being put in the spot. You can choose to split the reading, or to collectively come up with talking points.

## Pre-analysis plan

Your final assignment will be to write an extended pre-analysis plan. Ideally, the topic will be an empirical contribution using experiments, or a methodological contribution to the literature on experiments. I am open to accommodate for what makes the most sense for your career path as long as you keep me updated.

The extended pre-analysis is similar to the pre-analysis plans that most political scientists write. Common templates include the EGAP (<http://egap.org/content/how-to-register>) and the OSF (<https://osf.io/registries>) registries. However, for the purposes of this course, I also expect you to include a section discussing the theoretical motivation for your pre-analysis plan. This is mostly so you can get better feedback. More details to come soon.

X% of your final grade will be based on a brief project proposal (around 5 pages) due on Week 7. We will meet on Week 6 to discuss project proposal ideas.

You will also be assigned to provide written feedback on a project proposal, due on week 11. Your feedback should read like a reviewer or discussant report, summarizing the project, emphasizing its importance and contributions, as well as providing realistic and productive to improve. X% of your grade will be based on your written feedback report.

X% of your final grade will be based on the final pre-analysis plan draft at the end of the term.

## Schedule

### Week 1: Introduction/Organization

Druckman, James N. and Arthur Lupia. 2012. "Experimenting with Politics." *Science* 335(6073): 1177-1179

Fujii, Lee Ann. 2012. "Research Ethics 101: Dilemmas and Responsibilities." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 45(4): 717-723

### Week 2: Why Experiments? Back to Basics

Fisher, R.A. 1935. *The Design of Experiments*. London: Oliver and Boyd

Campbell, Donald T. 1957. "Factors relevant to the validity of experiments in social settings." *Psychological Bulletin* 54(4): 297-312

Mook, Douglas G. 1983. "In Defense of External Invalidity". *American Psychologist* 38(4): 379-387

Smith, Herbert L. 1990. "Specification Problems in Experimental and Nonexperimental Social Research." *Sociological Methodology* 20: 59-91

### Week 3: Why Experiments? Modern Debates

Gerber, Alan, Kevin Arceneaux, Cheryl Boudreau, Conor Dowling, Sunshine Hillygus, Thomas Palfrey, Daniel R. Biggers, and David J. Hendry. 2014. "Reporting Guidelines for Experimental Research: A Report from the Experimental Research Section Standards Committee." *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 1(1): 81-98

Mutz, Diana and Robin Pemantle. 2015. "Standards for Experimental Research: Encouraging a Better Understanding of Experimental Methods." *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 2(2): 192-215

Giacomini, Mita. 2009. "Theory-Based Medicine and the Role of Evidence: Why the Emperor Needs New Clothes, Again" *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 52(2): 234-251

Deaton, Angus and Nancy Cartwright. 2018. "Understanding and misunderstanding randomized controlled trials." *Social Science & Medicine* 210: 2-21

Green, Donald P. and Alan S. Gerber. 2002. "The Downstream Benefits of Experimentation." *Political Analysis* 10(4): 394-402

Druckman, James N., and Cindy D. Kam. 2011. "Students as Experimental Participants." In *Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science*, edited by James N. Druckman, Donald P. Green, James H. Kuklinski, and Arthur Lupia, 41–57. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Mullinix, Kevin J., Thomas J. Leeper, James N. Druckman, and Jeremy Freese. 2015. "The Generalizability of Survey Experiments." *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 2(2): 109-138

### Week 4: Learning from Experiments

Open Science Collaboration. 2015. "Estimating the reproducibility of psychological science." *Science* 349(6251): aac4716

Benjamin, Daniel J., James O. Berger, Magnus Johannesson, et al. 2018. "Redefine statistical significance." *Nature Human Behavior* 2: 6-10

McShane, Blakeley B., David Gal, Andrew Gelman, Christian Robert, and Jennifer L. Tackett. 2019. "Abandon Statistical Significance." *The American Statistician* 73(sup1): 235-245

Stroebe, Wolfgang. 2019. "What Can We Learn from Many Labs Replications?" *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 41(2): 91-103

Dunning, Thad. 2016. "Transparency, Replication, and Cumulative Learning: What Experiments Alone Cannot Achieve." *Annual Review of Political Science* 19: S1-S23

Duch, Raymond, Denise Laroze, Thomas Robinson, and Pablo Beramendi. 2020. "Multi-Modes for Detecting Experimental Measurement Error." *Political Analysis* 28(2): 263–283

Bowers, Jake and Paul Testa. 2019. "Better Government, Better Science: The Promises and Challenges Facing the Evidence-Informed Policy Movement." *Annual Review of Political Science* 22: 521-542

## Week 5: Planning Experiments

Humphreys, Macartan, Raul Sanchez de la Sierra, and Peter Van der Windt. 2013. [“Fishing, Commitment, and Communication: A Proposal for Comprehensive Nonbinding Research Registration.”](#) *Political Analysis* 21(1): 1-20

Laitin, David D. 2013. [“Fisheries Management.”](#) *Political Analysis* 21(1): 42-47

Banerjee, Abhijit, Esther Duflo, Amy Finkelstein, Lawrence F. Katz, Benjamining A. Olken, and Anja Sautmann. 2020. [“In Praise of Moderation: Suggestions for the Scope and Use of Pre-Analysis Plans for RCTs in Economics.”](#) NBER Working paper No. 26993

Blair, Graeme, Jasper Cooper, Alexander Coppock, and Macartan Humphreys. 2019. [“Declaring and Diagnosing Research Designs.”](#) *American Political Science Review* 113(3): 838-859

Montgomery, Jacob M., Brendan Nyhan, and Michelle Torres. 2018. [“How Conditioning on Posttreatment Variables Can Ruin Your Experiment and What to Do About It.”](#) *American Journal of Political Science* 62(3): 760-775

Slough, Tara. 2019. [“On Theory and Identification: When and Why We Need Theory for Causal Identification.”](#) Working paper

## Week 6: Discuss Ideas for Pre-Analysis Plan

Chen, Noule and Christopher Grady. [“10 Things to Know About Pre-Analysis Plans.”](#) EGAP Methods Guides

## Week 7: Randomization (Proposal draft due)

Kasy, Maximilian. 2016. [“Why Experimenters May Not Always Want to Randomize, and What They Could Do Instead.”](#) *Political Analysis* 24(3): 324-338

Wu, Jason and Peng Ding. 2020. [“Randomization Tests for Weak Null Hypotheses in Randomized Experiments.”](#) *Journal of the American Statistical Association*

Li, Xinran, Peng Ding, and Donald B. Rubin. 2020. [“Rerandomization in  \$2^K\$  factorial experiments.”](#) *Annals of Statistics* 48(1): 43-63

Miratrix, Luke, Jasjeet S. Sekhon, and Bin Yu. 2013. [“Adjusting treatment effect estimates by post-stratification in randomized experiments.”](#) *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society. Series B* 75(2): 369-396

Moore, Ryan T. 2012. [“Multivariate Continuous Blocking to Improve Political Science Experiments.”](#) *Political Analysis* 20(4): 460-479

Moore, Ryan T and Sally A. Moore. 2013. [“Blocking for Sequential Political Experiments.”](#) *Political Analysis* 21(4): 507-523

Green, Donald P. and Lynn Vavreck. 2008. [“Analysis of Cluster-Randomized Experiments: A Comparison of Alternative Estimation Approaches.”](#) *Political Analysis* 16(2): 138-152 [Perhaps replace with something addressing when and why to use cluster randomization]

## Week 8: Field Experiments I (Methods)

Esterling, Kevin M., Michael A. Neblo, and David M.J. Lazer. 2011. "Estimating Treatment Effects in the Presence of Noncompliance and Nonresponse: The Generalized Endogenous Treatment Model." *Political Analysis* 19(2): 205-226

Coppock, Alexander, Alan S. Gerber, Donald P. Green, and Holger L. Kern. 2017. "Combining Double Sampling and Bounds to Address Nonignorable Missing Outcomes in Randomized Experiments." *Political Analysis* 25(2): 188-206

Marbach, Moritz and Dominik Hangartner. 2020. "Profiling Compliers and Noncompliers for Instrumental-Variable Analysis." *Political Analysis* 28(3): 435-444

Egami, Naoki and Erin Hartman. 2019. "Covariate Selection for Generalizing Experimental Results: Application to a Large-Scale Development Program in Uganda." Working paper. <https://arxiv.org/abs/1909.02669>

Aronow, Peter M., Dean Eckles, Cyrus Samii, and Stephanie Zonszein. 2020. "Spillover Effects in Experimental Data." Working paper. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2001.05444>

## Week 9: Field Experiments II (Applications)

Broockman, David E., Joshua L. Kalla, and Jasjeet S. Sekhon. 2017. "The Design of Field Experiments With Survey Outcomes: A Framework for Selecting More Efficient, Robust, and Ethical Designs." *Political Analysis* 25(4): 435-464

Slough, Tara. 2019. "The Ethics of Electoral Experimentation: Design-Based Recommendations." Working paper. <http://taraslough.com/assets/pdf/eee.pdf>

Butler, Daniel, and Jonathan Homola. 2017. "An Empirical Justification for the Use of Racially Distinctive Names to Signal Race in Experiments" *Political Analysis* 25(1): 122-130

Coppock, Alexander. 2019. "Avoiding Post-Treatment Bias in Audit Experiments" *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 6(1): 1-4

Grossman, Guy, and Kristin Michelitch. 2018. "Information Dissemination, Competitive Pressure, and Politician Performance Between Elections: A Field Experiment in Uganda." *American Political Science Review* 112(2): 280-301

Banerjee, Abhijit, Esther Duflo, Nathanael Goldberg, et al. 2015. "A multifaceted program causes lasting progress for the very poor: Evidence from six countries" *Science* 348(6236): 1260799

Rossiter, Erin. 2020. "The Consequences of Interparty Conversation on Outparty Affect and Stereotypes." Working paper

## Week 10: Placeholder for mid-semester break

## Week 11: Survey Experiments for Causal Inference

Gaines, Bryan, James H. Kuklinski, and Paul J. Quirk. 2007. "The Logic of the Survey Experiment Reexamined." *Political Analysis* 15(1): 1-20

Brutger, Ryan, Joshua D. Kertzer, Jonathan Renson, Dustin Tingley, and Chagai M. Weiss. 2020. "Abstraction and Detail in Experimental Design." Working paper [Very early draft, check back later]

for a stable version]

Mummolo, Jonathan and Erik Peterson. 2019. [“Demand Effects in Survey Experiments: An Empirical Assessment.”](#) *American Political Science Review* 113(2): 517-529

Miratrix, Luke, Jasjeet S. Sekhon, Alexander G. Theodoridis, and Luis F. Campos. 2018. [“Worth Weighting? How to Think About and Use Weights in Survey Experiments.”](#) *Political Analysis* 26(3): 275-291

Hainmueller, Jens, Dominik Hangartner, and Teppei Yamamoto. 2015. [“Validating vignette and conjoint experiments against real-world behavior.”](#) *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112(8): 2395-2400

De la Cuesta, Brandon, Naoki Egami, and Kosuke Imai. 2020. [“Improving the External Validity of Conjoint Analysis: The Essential Role of Profile Distribution.”](#) *Political Analysis*

Abramson, Scott, Korhan Koçak, and Asya Magazinik. 2019. [“What Do We Learn About Voter Preferences from Conjoint Experiments?”](#) Working paper

## **Week 12: Survey Experiments to Measure Sensitive Attitudes**

Schwarz, Norbert. 1999. [“Self-Reports: How the Questions Shape the Answers.”](#) *American Psychologist* 54(2): 93-105

Schuldt, Jonathon P., Sara H. Konrath, and Norbert Schwarz. 2011. [“‘Global warming’ or ‘climate change’? Whether the planet is warming depends on question wording.”](#) *Public Opinion Quarterly* 75(1): 115-124

Blair, Graeme, Alexander Coppock, and Margaret Moor. 2020. [“When to Worry About Sensitivity Bias: A Social Reference Theory and Evidence from 30 Years of List Experiments.”](#) *American Political Science Review*

Rosenfeld, Bryn, Kosuke Imai, and Jacob N. Shapiro. 2016. [“An Empirical Validation Study of Popular Survey Methodologies for Sensitive Questions.”](#) *American Journal of Political Science* 60(3): 783-802

Chou, Winston, Kosuke Imai, and Bryn Rosenfeld. 2017. [“Sensitive Questions with Auxiliary Information.”](#) *Sociological Methods & Research* 49(2): 418-454

Blair, Graeme, Kosuke Imai, and Jason Lyall. 2014. [“Comparing and Combining List and Endorsement Experiments: Evidence from Afghanistan.”](#) *American Journal of Political Science* 58(4): 1043-1063

Alvarez, R. Michael, Lonna Rae Atkeson, Ines Levin, Yimeng Li. [“Paying Attention to Inattentive Survey Respondents.”](#) *Political Analysis* 27(2): 145-162

## **Week 13: Laboratory Experiments in Behavioral Economics**

Del Ponte, Alessandro, Reuben Kline, and John Ryan. 2020. [“Behavioral Analysis in the Study of Politics: The Conflict Laboratory.”](#) In *Oxford Encyclopedia of Political Decision Making*

Belot, Michele, Raymond Duch, and Luis Miller. 2015. [“A comprehensive comparison of students and non-students in classic experimental games.”](#) *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 113(1): 26-33



Krupnikov, Yanna and John Barry Ryan. 2017. [“Choice vs. Action: Candidate Ambiguity and Voter Decision Making.”](#) *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 12(4): 479-505

Andrews, Talbot M., Andrew W. Delton, and Reuben Kline. 2018. [“High-risk high-reward investments to mitigate climate change.”](#) *Nature Climate Change* 8: 890-894

Habyarimana, James, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel N. Posner, and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2007. [“Why Does Ethnic Diversity Undermine Public Goods Provision.”](#) *American Political Science Review* 101(4): 709-725

## **Week 14: Laboratory Experiments in Psychology**

Bortolotti, Lisa, and Matteo Mameli. 2006. [“Deception in psychology: moral costs and benefits of unsought self-knowledge.”](#) *Accountability in Research* 13(3): 259-275

Westfall, Jacob, David A. Kenny, and Charles M. 2014. [“Statistical Power and Optimal Design in Experiments in Which Samples of Participants Respond to Samples of Stimuli.”](#) *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General* 143(5): 2020-2045

Brysbaert, Marc. 2019. [“How Many Participants Do We Have to Include in Properly Powered Experiments? A Tutorial of Power Analysis with Reference Tables.”](#) *Journal of Cognition* 2(1): 1-38

Lamprianou, Iasonas, and Antonis A. Ellinas. 2019. [“Emotion, Sophistication and Political Behavior: Evidence from a Laboratory Experiment.”](#) *Political Psychology* 40(4): 859-876

Bakker, Bert N., Gijs Schumacher, Claire Gothreau, and Kevin Arceneaux. 2020. [“Conservatives and liberals have similar physiological responses to threats.”](#) *Nature Human Behavior* 4: 613-621

## **Week 15: Heterogeneous Treatment Effects and Causal Mechanisms**

Ding, Peng, Avi Feller, and Luke Miratrix. 2019. [“Decomposing Treatment Effect Variation.”](#) *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 114(525): 304-317

Imai, Kosuke and Aaron Strauss. 2011. [“Estimation of Heterogeneous Treatment Effects from Randomized Experiments, with Application to the Optimal Planning of the Get-Out-the-Vote Campaign.”](#) *Political Analysis* 19(1): 1-19

Gaines, Brian J. and James H. Kuklinski. 2011. [“Experimental Estimation of Heterogeneous Treatment Effects Related to Self-Selection.”](#) *American Journal of Political Science* 55(3): 724-736

Imai, Kosuke, Dustin Tingley, and Teppei Yamamoto. 2013. [“Experimental designs for identifying causal mechanisms.”](#) *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society. Series A* 176(1): 5-51

Acharya, Avidit, Matthew Blackwell, and Maya Sen. 2018. [“Analyzing Causal Mechanisms in Survey Experiments.”](#) *Political Analysis* 26(4): 357-378

## **Week 16: Experiments and Computational Social Science**

Efron, Bradley. 2007. [“Size, power and false discovery rates.”](#) *Annals of Statistics* 1351-1377

Imai, Kosuke and Marc Ratkovic. 2013. [“Estimating Treatment Effect Heterogeneity in Randomized Program Evaluation.”](#) *Annals of Applied Statistics* 7(1): 443-470

Shiraito, Yuki. 2016. [“Uncovering Heterogeneous Treatment Effects.”](#) Working paper.

Imai, Kosuke and Michael Lingzhi Li. 2020. [“Experimental Evaluation of Individualized Treatment Rules.”](#) Working paper

Offer-Westort, Molly, Alexander Coppock, and Donald P. Green. 2020. [“Adaptive Experimental Design: Prospects and Applications to Political Science.”](#) Working paper

**Placeholder for Pre-analysis Plan Deadline**

# Political Data Analysis

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

## Sample syllabus

### Instructor

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### Course Description

This course introduces quantitative research methods from the lenses of political and social science. We start with a discussion of two different goals of data analysis: Inference and prediction. We will learn the theory and application of core statistical techniques for data analysis in social science research and industry. For example, we will try to answer questions such as: What explains whether and for whom people vote? Do government handouts help alleviate poverty? Can we predict who will win the next election? Later, we will introduce standards to determine the quality of the statistical evidence we produce.

This course involves a combination of lecture and hands-on work. We will learn the communication and programming skills to produce and share data analysis. Throughout the course, you will read two textbooks, answer problem sets, and work towards a research project that you will present as a poster.

**Note:** This course currently assumes a 15-week semester. The main ambition is to complement the usually academia-oriented social science research training with an introduction to machine learning. In a quarter system, I would teach these as two separate courses.

### Audience

Who should take this course? The short answer is: Everyone! Data analysis nowadays is a must for any kind of job, even if you are not the person doing data analysis, you will engage with and interpret the work of someone who is doing it.

The long answer is: This course is intended primarily for majors in political science, social science, and related fields. Students from other concentrations who are interested in politics will also benefit greatly from this course. While everyone should benefit from taking a course like this, note that

there are many other courses in other departments that cover similar material in a way that may better suit your interests and career goals (List alternative courses here).

## Structure

In a normal week in this course, you will read the required material in anticipation of the lecture (depending on whether TAs are available, lecture will be one or two days a week). The goal of lecture is to practice the language of quantitative social science research, some come prepared to participate and ask questions.

Our weekly schedule will also include a workshop session in which we will learn and practice statistical programming (we will call these “labs”). Early on, lectures and workshops will be unrelated. As we progress in the semester, the two will converge as we cover data analysis techniques and discuss research project ideas. **If possible, please bring your laptop to the labs.** If you don’t have regular access to a laptop, please let us know so we can make the necessary arrangements.

Every week will also include a considerable portion of work outside of the classroom. In some weeks, you will complete problem sets that emphasize applying that week’s material to statistical programming. In other weeks, you will write a short report detailing the progress of your research project, we will refer to these as “project milestones.”

## Course Goals

By the end of this course, students will acquire three essential job market skills:

1. Knowledge of statistics
2. Statistical programming
3. Written and verbal communication in the language of the social sciences

Usually, a course of this type emphasizes data analysis from the perspective of academic social science research, which emphasizes understand complex social and political phenomena. I recognize that, even in an audience of primarily political science majors, not everyone will pursue this path. Therefore, a secondary goal of this course is also to expose students to quantitative social and political science applied to government, civil society organizations, and industry. We will learn that the concepts and tools are often the same, but the language and purposes vary. In broad terms, I aim to help you build skills that will prove useful regardless of your career goals.

## Requirements and Expectations

There is no formal requirement to take this course. While most of the material assumes high school math, we will fill the gaps as we go. All of the techniques in this course involve calculating a one number summary for a collection of observations in a data set. Sometimes they have different names or involve more complex calculation, but in the end we are mostly dealing with averages and standard deviations.

This course is about building and practicing skills. To maximize space for this goal, we have weekly assignments rather than exams. I expect you are willing to put the time and effort to stay on top of the material and assignments. The only tried and true method to learn statistics is through practice

and repetition. We won't have the luxury of time, so I also expect you to be proactive in asking for help when you are stuck and to help others who are struggling. More than anything, I am concerned with building a foundation that will open doors for future learning opportunities. You are welcome to collaborate on problem sets, but your answers should reflect your own learning process.

## Materials

### Software

We will use R (<https://www.r-project.org/>) and RStudio (<https://rstudio.com/>) to learn statistical programming and perform data analysis. The advantage of R is that it is free and open source, meaning that you will be able to apply everything you learn in this course anywhere else. The disadvantage is a somewhat steep learning curve. I believe the investment is worthwhile.

If you can't install software on a personal computer, a viable option is RStudio Cloud (<https://rstudio.cloud/>), which works on your browser and will let you access your work from any device. A free account will suffice for the purposes of this course. If resources permit, we will create a dedicated course space in RStudio Cloud so you can access the course materials everywhere.

### Required Readings

This course has two required textbooks:

- Kaplan, Daniel T. 2012. *Statistical Modeling: A Fresh Approach*. Project Mosaic (SM2, read for free at: <https://dtkaplan.github.io/SM2-bookdown/>)
- James, Gareth, Daniela Witten, Trevor Hastie, and Robert Tibshirani. 2013. *An Introduction to Statistical Learning*. New York: Springer (ISL, available for free at: <http://faculty.marshall.usc.edu/gareth-james/ISL/>)

Both are starting to show their age, but they are still excellent for the purposes of this class (and they are free!). SM2 is mostly about inference, which the book refers to as statistical modeling. ISL is somewhat more advanced and covers prediction, which they call supervised learning.

### Further Reading

The following books are not required, but you may be interested in reading them after taking this course to broaden your horizons.

- Angrist, Joshua D. and Jörn-Steffen Pischke. 2015. *Mastering 'Metrics: The Path from Cause to Effect*. Princeton University Press
- Grolemund, Garrett, and Hadley Wickham. 2016. *R for Data Science*. O'Reilly Media, Inc (Read for free at: <https://r4ds.had.co.nz/>)
- Efron, Bradley and Trevor Hastie. 2016. *Computer Age Statistical Inference: Algorithms, Evidence, and Data Science*. Cambridge University Press (Available for free at: <https://web.stanford.edu/~hastie/CASI/>)
- Imai, Kosuke. 2018. *Quantitative Social Science: An Introduction*. Princeton University Press

## **Assignments**

Your final course grade will depend on the following assignments. All assignments will be graded with a score from 0 to 100, with 100 being the highest possible grade. Assignments may change depending on roster size.

### **Problem Sets (40%)**

We will complete 11 problem sets. Problem sets will usually involve a set of coding exercises, followed by some short answer questions. Problem sets are released on Monday and are due by Friday of the same week (TBD specific times). Only your best 8 problem sets will count towards your final grade. Any problem set not submitted gets 0 points.

### **Project Milestones (20%)**

In weeks 3, 9, and 15 you will deliver a report indicating the progress on your research projects. We call these project milestones. These are intended to spread the workload of producing a research poster throughout the semester. We will release a template for each project milestone a week before it is due. We won't have problem sets on project milestone weeks. Along with a grade, you will receive feedback on how to progress with the project.

### **Poster Presentation (30%)**

By the end of the semester, we will hold a poster session in which you will present the results of your research project. Your work will be graded by three external judges and the instructional team following the same rubric. Your poster presentation grade will be the average of all these grades, excluding the judge that assigned you the lowest score.

Students that anticipate not being able to participate in the poster session should contact me as soon as possible to make appropriate arrangements.

### **Participation (10%)**

Finally, you will also be graded on your participation in this course. Half of the participation grade will depend on the quality of your participation during lecture, labs, office hours, and other formal communications. We all have different learning styles, so I will keep an open mind about what constitutes good participation. At a minimum, I expect you to attend lecture and labs. From there, any intervention conducive to a positive learning environment for yourself and your peers will be considered good participation.

The second half of your participation grade will depend on the quality of the feedback to your peers. At every project milestone, you will be randomly assigned to provide written feedback on the report of two of your peers following a template. Only the instructional team will know who you got assigned to, your peers will receive anonymous feedback. Your peers will then grade the quality of your feedback following a rubric. If you do not grade the feedback you receive for your peers, your participation grade for that project milestone will be 0.

TBD project milestone feedback and feedback grade deadlines.

## **Grading**

TBD. This section will detail the conversion from points to letter grades.

## **Learning Tips and Resources**

TBD. This section will include campus and online resources to assist writing, coding, and statistical analyses.

## **Policies**

TBD. This section will outline course policies on late assignments, academic honesty, classroom behavior, study habits, special needs, extra credit etc.

## **Schedule**

### **Week 1: Introduction and Overview**

**Read:** SM2 chapters 1 and 2

**Lab:** Introduction to R and RStudio

**Due:** Practice problem set

### **Week 2: Understanding Variation**

**Read:** SM2 chapters 3 and 4

**Lab:** Data processing

**Due:** Problem set 1

### **Week 3: The Language of Models**

**Read:** SM2 chapter 6

**Lab:** Data visualization

**Due:** Project milestone 1

### **Week 4: Linear Models for Inference**

**Read:** SM2 chapter 7

**Lab:** Bivariate linear models

**Due:** Problem set 2

## **Week 5: Multivariate Models I**

**Read:** SM2 chapter 8

**Lab:** Multivariate linear models

**Due:** Problem set 3

## **Week 6: Multivariate Models II**

**Read:** SM2 chapter 10

**Lab:** Interactive linear models

**Due:** Problem set 4

## **Week 7: Uncertainty in Inference**

**Read:** SM2 chapters 5 and 12

**Lab:** Sampling distributions and mathematical approximations

**Due:** Problem set 5

## **Week 8: Hypothesis Testing**

**Read:** SM2 chapter 13

**Lab:** Experiments and hypothesis testing

**Due:** Problem set 6

## **Week 9: Evaluating Models for Inference**

**Read:** SM2 chapters 9 and 14

**Lab:** Discussing project ideas

**Due:** Project milestone 2

## **Week 10: Placeholder for mid-semester break**

## **Week 11: Linear Models for Prediction I**

**Read:** ISL chapters 2 and 3

**Lab:** Regression for prediction

**Due:** Problem set 7

## **Week 12: Linear Models for Prediction II**

**Read:** ISL chapter 4

**Lab:** Logistic regression

**Due:** Problem set 8



### **Week 13: Evaluating Models for Prediction**

**Read:** ISL chapter 5

**Lab:** Prediction contest

**Due:** Problem set 9

### **Week 14: Model Selection**

**Read:** ISL chapter 6

**Lab:** Making a poster

**Due:** Problem set 10

### **Week 15: Non-linear Models**

**Read:** ISL chapters 8 and 9

**Lab:** Having fun with non-linear models

**Due:** Project milestone 3

**Placeholder for poster session dates**