

**Spring 2024**

**University of Texas at Austin**

**Gov 370N (37560): Research on the US Congress II  
(Continuation of Gov 370M, Research on the U.S. Congress)**

MEZES 1.216; TTh, 9:30-10:45pm

**Instructors:**

Derek A. Epp

[depp@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:depp@austin.utexas.edu)

Batts 3.126

OH: MW 11am – 1230pm

Sean M. Theriault

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Batt 3.130

OH: M 3-5 and T 11-12

**TA:**

Miranda Sullivan

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Zoom OH: W 1-4

<https://utexas.zoom.us/j/8616771416>

<https://calendly.com/mirandasullivan/officehours>

**Course Description**

This research course is the second half of a year-long research program, the J.J. “Jake” Pickle Undergraduate Mentorship Program, under the direction of Professors Epp (DE) and Theriault (ST). This term will be devoted to pursuing your individual research projects and continuing with your work as research assistants.

**Special Needs**

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To determine if you qualify, please contact the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY. If they certify your needs, I will work with you to make appropriate arrangements.

**Course Format**

The class will meet regularly to discuss progress on your projects and research assignments. We will also cover certain essential elements in design, analysis, and presentation of results. It is the student’s responsibility to come to class with all of the assigned work – both research and reading – completed. Rarely will the class stray from a seminar format.

**Grades**

We will grade using + and -. Grades will be determined according to the following formula:

10% Class Participation. We will take attendance every class meeting. Because of the nature of the course, unexcused student absences will not be tolerated.

20% Homework. Each of your homework assignments will be graded.

20% Research Assignments. These assignments will be the bulk of your work for us this semester. You will be graded on your timeliness and thoroughness of completion.

30% Research Poster

20% Research Paper

**Course Material**

Specific readings will be uploaded to Canvas as assigned in the course outline.

## Course Outline\*

Week 1 (January 16): Welcome Back! Reviewing the Semester Plan

Week 2 (January 23): Data Updates and Management

*Due January 22:* A list of five people you want to meet with in DC, their contact information, and what information you hope to gain from them. Submit this assignment to Canvas (by 10pm).

*Note:* The School of Undergraduate Studies is hosting URF info sessions on January 25 (11-12) and January 29 (3-4) over Zoom. We encourage attending! You must register for the review sessions using this link: <https://ugs.utexas.edu/our/scholarships/urf>

Week 3 (January 30): Presentation of a Final Figure

*Due January 29:* You've already presented a figure from your data. Now, we want you to update that figure with additional data or by improving the aesthetics of it. Submit this assignment to Canvas (by 10pm).

*Due January 29:* Draft of URF Application (due by 10pm)

*February 5:* URF DEADLINE

Week 4 (February 6): Hypothesis Testing and Statistical Analysis\*

Week 5 (February 13): Presenting Statistics

*Due February 12:* Draft of URA Application (due by 10pm)

*Due February 12:* Using your project's data (if you are collecting original data and your dataset is not complete, use the data you have collected so far), prepare an interesting statistic (compiled via Excel or Stata) to present to the class. Submit this assignment to Canvas (by 10pm).

Week 6 (February 20): One-on-One Meetings

*February 20:* URA DEADLINE

Week 7 (February 27): Check-in on Research

*Due February 26:* Submit updated introduction, literature review and theory sections of research proposal from Fall semester based on the feedback provided by the instructor. Submit this assignment to Canvas (by 10:00 pm).

Week 8 (March 5): Constructing Effective Posters\*

*Due March 4:* A draft of the methods/analysis section of your project. Minimum of one page (header *not* included), double spaced, and 12 pt. font. Describe the method that you will use to test your hypothesis. Provide some descriptive (summary) statistics (figures are helpful here!). Introduce your hypothesis test and execute it (provide results and analyze them). Submit this assignment to Canvas (by 10pm).

Spring Break (March 12)

***Note: We highly recommend that by the end of this week, you complete the data collection for your project. If you are not collecting original data, by the end of this week, have the data that you will use downloaded and in usable form.***

Week 9 (March 19): Poster Workshop Session

*Due March 18:* Turn in a rough draft of your poster to Canvas (by 10pm). Refer to the template used in last week's class session as a guide. Come to class prepared to discuss.

Week 10 (March 26): Present Draft Posters

*Due March 25:* Turn in a revised draft of your poster to Canvas (by 10 pm)

Week 11 (April 2): One-on-One Meetings

Week 12 (April 9): Presentation of Posters to Class

*Due April 8:* Submit the final poster in advance to Canvas (by 10pm). Come to class prepared to present your poster (2 minutes).

Week 13 (April 16): Poster Presentations and Research Week

*Note: alternative class time for poster presentations!*

Week 14 (April 23): General Session – Class Retrospective.

*Due April 22:* Final paper – 8 to 10 pages, 12 pt. font, double-spaced with at least two figures (complete with bibliography - not included in page count) – due to Canvas (by 10pm).

\* Note: Unless directed otherwise, we won't meet as a class on Thursdays. Instead, use this time to meet with your individual research groups.

