Syllabus

After Spring Break, FSU switched to online classes. In response, we change the structure of the last five weeks of the class. See this announcement on Canvas.

There are two versions of this file: an html and a pdf.

Introduction to Political Science Research

This course provides an introduction to political science research methods. We examine concepts, computation, and applications alongside one another.

Staff

Instructor

Carlisle Rainey
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Teaching Assistant

Rob Lytle
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Course Website

I post all the materials for this course to pos3713.github.io. I recommend bookmarking this page.

Office Hours

Office hours are first-come, first-serve, but both the instructor and teaching assistant allow you to sign up in advance to reduce wasted time. You can sign up for one (or more) 15 minute slots (see below). Also, feel free to come in groups of two or three if you all have similar questions.

Instructor Monday and Wednesday, 1:00-2:30pm

Drop-ins are welcome, but you can reserve a slot by signing up here.

Teaching Assistant Friday, 11:30am-1:00pm.

Drop-ins are welcome, but you can reserve a slot by signing up here.

Date	Day	Assignment	Notes

Important Dates

Date	Day	Assignment	Notes
February 5	Wednesday	Exam 1	Complete in usual class space and time.
February 21	Friday	Computing Assignment 1	Due by 5pm.
March 11	Wednesday	Exam 2	Complete in usual class space and time.
April 10	Friday	Computing Assignment 2	Due by 5pm.
April 29	Wednesday	Final Exam	Complete from **12:30-2:30pm** in usual class space.

Outcomes

In taking this course seriously, you will:

- Acquire and/or further develop knowledge of...
  - basic statistical tools, such as the histograms, average, standard deviation, normal approximation, scatterplot, correlation, simple and multiple regression, sample survey, and hypothesis tests.
  - basic concepts in probability theory, such as conditional probability, the law of averages, the expected value, and the standard error.
- Acquire and/or further develop the ability to...
  - evaluate empirical arguments.
  - use R to implement basic statistical tools.
  - clearly explain data and analysis in an honest and compelling manner.

Textbook

You need to obtain the following items for this class:

- Freedman, David, Robert Pisani, and Roger Purves. 2007. *Statistics.* 4th Edition. W. W. Norton and Company. New York. ISBN: 0393929728.
  - It is important to get the 4th Edition, and I recommend a hard copy rather than an eTexbook.
  - This book is expensive, but in past semesters, students have found good copies online for around $20.
  - You should have the textbook by January 21.
- A pocket calculator. I bought mine at Walmart for about $3. Here's one on Amazon. I do not allow graphing calculators on the exams, so if you have any questions, please ask. You should have your calculator by January 21.

Grading

Item	Weight
Exam 1	25%
Exam 2	25%
Final Exam	30%
Computing Assignment 1	5%

Item	Weight
Computing Assignment 2	5%
Misc. Exercises (1% each)	10%

Above is a summary of the graded assignments in the course, their due dates, and their weights.

- **Exams.** There are three exams throughout the semester. The exams are cumulative and focus on all of the material covered up to the exam, including the readings, lectures, and computing exercises. The exam is multiple choice and the questions come from the review exercises I've assigned up to that point in the semester. Exams include questions about statistical computing in R.
- **Computing Assignments.** As part of the class, we'll learn about statistical computing in R. To demonstrate your ability with R, you'll submit two short reports. I'll provide detailed instructions at the appropriate time.
- **Misc. Exercises.** Periodically throughout the semester, I'll assign exercises (e.g., submit a photo of yourself with your textbook and calculator) worth 1% each.

Your points in the course will translate into a letter grade using the table below:

Letter Grade	Points
A	at least 93
A-	at least 90
B+	at least 87
B	at least 83
B-	at least 80
C+	at least 77
C	at least 73
C-	at least 70
D+	at least 67
D	at least 63
D-	at least 60
F	if less than 60

Workload

Federal guidelines define a single semester credit hour as "one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks." I have made an effort to design this class following this definition. All students are different, but as a rough starting point: **you should plan to spend about 6 hours per week outside of class on course material.**

To help you with planning, here are my rough estimates for how much time to set aside for various assignments:

- **Reading and doing the exercises:** The reading and exercises after each class should take about two hours. Some will be much shorter. A few might take slightly longer. **All of the following time estimates assume you are keeping up with the review exercises.** If you don't keep up with the review exercises, then the computing assignments, for example, will be basically impossible.
- **Reviewing for exams.** You should plan to spend about six hours reviewing for each exam.
- **Doing the misc. exercises.** Plan to spend about 15 minutes on each misc. exercise.
- **Doing the computing assignments.** The computing assignments should take about two hours to complete and submit.

Missed Classes and Late Assignments

University Attendance Policy

> Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

My Implementation I realize there are more important things in life than my class. I will gladly make reasonable accommodations for important events (sibling's wedding, illness) as long as you make arrangements **beforehand** *if possible.*

You missed or will miss a class (but not an exam). You do not need to notify me. However, use good judgment when you choose to miss.

You missed or will miss an exam. If you are going to miss an exam, notify me *before the exam* via e-mail. Your e-mail should explain and document why you are going to miss the class. In the case of an unexpected absence, notify me in a reasonable amount of time. (I don't want you to worry about contacting me during a medical emergency, for example.) Your e-mail should explain and document why you missed the exam, and why you could not notify me beforehand. I might follow up with a request for more documentation. I usually expect you to make up the assignment during my next office hours. To avoid advantaging some students over others, I might use an alternative make-up assignment.

I penalize any *unexcused* late exam by 15 percentage points per class. For example, we have an exam on Wednesday, but you forget and skip class, I simply subtract 15 percentage points from your score if you make it up before the next class, 30 percentage points if you make it up before the class after that, and so on.

You can't submit an assignment on time. If you have a commitment on the day the assignment is due (e.g., you're traveling for a wedding), usually expect you to submit the assignment early unless you have made prior arrangements with me. I do not accept assignments submitted via email except in unusual circumstances.

In case of an unexpected circumstance (e.g., medical emergency), simply submit the assignment and notify me by e-mail as soon as reasonable. (I don't want you to worry about submitting the assignment during a medical emergency, for example.) Your e-mail should explain and document why you submitted the assignment late, and why you could not have simply submitted it early. I might follow up with a request for more documentation.

I penalized any computing assignment turned in late without an excuse 20 percentage points per class. For example, if the computing assignment is due on Friday, I will simply subtract 20 points from your score if you turn it in by the beginning of the next class (usually Monday), 40 points if you turn it in by the beginning of the class after that (usually Wednesday) and so on.

I do not give any credit for misc. exercise submitted late is given a zero, unless the student has excuse.

Academic Honor Policy

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "... be honest and truthful and... [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic

Honor Policy, found at http://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy.)

American's with Disabilities Act

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

1. Register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
2. Bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu
http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/

Syllabus Change Policy

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

Changes

Wed., Feb. 5. Added information about instructor and TA office hours and e-mail.

Wed., Feb. 12. Clarified penalty for making up an exam without an acceptable excuse.

Sun., Mar. 22. We dramatically changed the remainder of the course. See this announcement on Canvas.