

**Instructor**

Simon Weschle  
Assistant Professor of Political Science

Eggers Hall 530  
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315.443.8678

**Class Information**

Days: Monday/Wednesday

Time: 11:40 - 12:35  
Falk 104

**Office Hours**

Day: Monday

Time: 1:00 - 3:00

Location: Eggers Zoom 530 or Zoom (Meeting ID 967 4250 4513, Password 884019)

**Teaching Assistants**

Jingding Wang

jwang294@syr.edu

Sections: 101 (Friday 10:35-11:30) and 103 (Friday 12:45-1:40)

Office Hours: XXX

Location/Zoom?

Katharine Russell

kbrussel@syr.edu

Sections: 102 (Friday 10:35-11:30) and 104 (Friday 12:45-1:40)

Office Hours: XXX

Location/Zoom?

**Course Description**

The purpose of this course, required for political science majors, is to build skills for conducting, interpreting, and presenting political science research. These skills include: basic research and data collection practices, techniques for measuring political science concepts quantitatively, hypothesis testing, interpretation of statistical evidence, and the presentation of findings in a clear and compelling manner. Tying these components together is a thematic focus on important political science concepts such as democracy, power, or representation.

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**MAIN THINGS TO KNOW****Course Website**

<http://www.simonweschle.com/psc202>

The website has the continuously updated class schedule, including all readings and assignments. Please check the page EVERY WEEK.

**Textbook**

Pollock, Philip H. and Barry C. Edwards 2019. *The Essentials of Political Analysis. 6th Edition*. CQ Press. Make sure you have the correct edition (6th) of the textbook. The book is also available to check out for a short period of time from the Library Course Reserves. All other readings will be posted to Blackboard.

**Assignments and Grading**

- *Class Participation (10%)*: Blackboard quizzes on lectures and readings (due before each class), other tasks.
- *Three Exams (40%)*: October 4, November 1, December 8.
- *Problem Sets (30%)*: Approximately weekly, due on Fridays.
- *Discussion Section (20%)*: See separate section syllabus.

## Covid

You are expected to adhere to all public health guidelines. If you have any symptoms, do not come to class. Just let me know and I'll excuse your absence (you can catch up by watching lecture recording from last year's class). If you experience personal stress or hardship (for any reason, Covid or not), *please* get in touch with me. I'll work with you to help you succeed in the class.

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## MORE DETAIL ON IMPORTANT THINGS

### Assignments and Grading

Your grade in this class will be based on class participation, three in-class exams, problem sets, and your grade from the discussion section.

- *Class Participation (10%)*: This part of the grade is made up of several components. First, you should make every effort to attend class. We won't be taking attendance, but there will be Blackboard quizzes (due by the start of each class) that contain questions on the content of the lectures. Second, it is important that you do the assigned readings **before** class. The reading load for this course is light to enable a close reading of each text. Before each class, I recommend that you take notes on the readings. This will also help you prepare for the problem sets and the exams. Some of the readings, especially the one's that introduce various statistical concept, are fairly difficult, so you may have to read them several times. The Blackboard quizzes that are due before each lecture will contain questions on the readings. Finally, there will be miscellaneous small tasks throughout the semester for which you can get credit. For example, one is right here: To show that you read the syllabus, go to <http://bit.ly/37vESJ2> and enter your name, SUID, and tell me about your current favorite movie/TV show, book, album, or podcast. If you do, you'll receive credit towards your participation grade.
- *Three Exams (40% total)*: Exams take place on **October 4, November 1, and December 8**. As things stand, these will be closed book, in-class exams. However, I reserve the right to move to online exams if the public health situation requires it. The exams are not cumulative in the regular sense. However, since material we discuss later in the class builds on what we cover earlier in the class, Exams 2 will contain some "old" material that was discussed before Exam 1, and Exam 3 will contain material that was discussed before Exams 1 and 2. There is no exam during finals week. Instead, there will be a final problem set covering material from the entire class (see below).

If you have a good reason why you are unable to take the exam and can provide appropriate documentation (e.g. illness, death in the family), please notify me *as soon as you can*. If I know about it in advance, we can work out something on a case-by-case basis. It tends to be harder to find a solution that works for everyone if you only come to me after you have missed an exam.

- *Problem Sets (30% total)*: The best way to learn the material in this class is to work through a lot of exercises. To that effect, there are (approximately) weekly problem sets. They are posted on Fridays after the discussion section and are due a week later. There will be one final problem set that covers material from the entire course that is due during the finals period. This assignment will count double. All assignments must be typed in their entirety. They are graded on a scale from 1 to 5, and late submissions will be penalized by 1 point for every 24 hours past the due date. Any homework extension requests must be made to in writing and at the time of the homework being posted (or sooner).
- *Discussion Section (20%)*: The discussion section is designed for small group discussion and activities that are integral in a course like this that requires you master a specific skill set. Your grade will depend on your attendance as well as your participation in class. You will receive a syllabus for your section with more details.

For your final grade, I use the following scale as a guide: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D (60-69), and F (0-59). However, the final determination about grades is with me and may deviate from this scale. We will post grades to Blackboard. You are expected to keep track of your own grade using the raw scores from Blackboard and the weights above.

If you feel, at any point, depressed, panicked, or anything the like, please come talk to me. There's always something that can be done to help you and to make sure you are in a position to complete the course. The same goes if you are in danger of failing the class. I'm happy to help, but I cannot read your mind or otherwise intuit what is going on in your life. So, come talk to me as early as possible. It's much more difficult to do something after the fact.

### **Office Hours**

Office hours are the designated time that I set aside each week specifically for meeting with students. If you want to come during that time, you do not need to let me know in advance or ask permission, I will always be there. These hours are your chance to talk to me about course material, college in general, or just to chat so we can get to know each other. I am also happy to meet with you outside of the designated office hours, but for that you need to schedule an appointment in advance. Office hours are held simultaneously in-person and on Zoom, and you can choose whichever modality you prefer. If you cannot meet during designated office hours, please let me know and we'll set up another time.

As mentioned in the previous section, it is easiest for everyone if you talk to me as early as possible about any issues or questions. Instead of waiting until you get a bad grade in an exam and asking how you can "make up" for it, come talk to me before the exam and ask questions about the material. That way, we can walk through the material together and I can explain a course concept in a different way. Similarly, rather than waiting until the end of the semester to tell me about issues that prevented you from focusing on school, talk to me earlier when there is still time for me to accommodate your circumstances. You get the point—if you find yourself asking whether you should come talk to me about

something, come talk to me.

**This Unpleasant Covid Thing**

We unfortunately can't ignore the fact that we're doing this class in the middle of a worldwide pandemic. What's in here right now is assuming the best-case scenario (cases remain low and we can safely do in-person instruction until the end of the semester). I have no clue whether that's going to happen, and neither does anybody else. So we'll probably have to adjust things along the way. It'll probably be bumpy, and not everything is going to work in the way you (and I) want it to. But let's all do our best.

**Tentative Course Outline**

The course outline below is tentative and subject to change. The exact week-to-week schedule, along with the required readings, will be posted on the Course Website <http://www.simonweschle.com/psc202>, which you should check at least once a week.

- Aug 30: Introduction to the Course
- Sep 1: Studying Politics Scientifically
- Sep 6: No Class (Labor Day)
- Sep 8: Research Questions in Political Science
- Sep 13: Developing Theories in Political Science
- Sep 15: Concepts and Measurement
- Sep 20: Variables
- Sep 22: Describing Variables
- Sep 27: Sampling and Surveys
- Sep 29: More Sampling and Surveys, Exam Review
- Oct 4: Exam # 1
- Oct 6: Hypotheses and Causality
- Oct 11: Observational Research Designs: Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses
- Oct 13: Qualitative Analyses
- Oct 18: More Qualitative Analyses
- Oct 20: Bivariate Hypothesis Testing
- Oct 25: More Bivariate Hypothesis Testing
- Oct 27: More Bivariate Hypothesis Testing, Exam Review

- Nov 1: Exam # 2
  - Nov 3: Hypothesis Testing When Using a Sample
  - Nov 8: More Hypothesis Testing When Using a Sample
  - Nov 10: Hypothesis Testing with One Confounder
  - Nov 15: More Hypothesis Testing with One Confounder
  - Nov 17: Linear Regression
  - Nov 22 and 24: No Class (Thanksgiving Break)
  - Nov 29: Linear Regression in Practice
  - Dec 1: Experimental Research Designs
  - Dec 6: More Experimental Research Designs, Exam Review
  - Dec 8: Exam # 3
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**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, FINE PRINT, AND THINGS I HAVE TO PUT ON THE SYLLABUS****Course Philosophy**

This course is very valuable for your future trajectory as a political science major or minor. You will learn and practice a set of skills that can be applied widely both inside and outside of political science. While politics is not science, you will learn how the scientific method can be applied to the study of politics.

The course is designed first to help you learn how to analyze information. The frenetic advancement of technology has produced an expansion of information and data about the political world. This course will help you consume logical arguments, data, and statistics.

How do you evaluate a theory? A hypothesis? A claim about an observable relationship between X and Y? How do you know when someone is lying with statistics? You will be a better critic of other people's work, especially work that uses basic statistics. You should also leave this course thinking more systematically and critically about the truth claims made by the media, policymakers, and professors.

Next, this course will help you learn critical empirical methods for conducting your own research. You will examine the logic behind conceptualizing and analyzing ideas. Ideas about politics are often abstract such as democracy, power, and values. This course will help you evaluate these concepts with more precision.

This course will also help you develop and test your own ideas. This includes recognizing the steps to creating sound theories and testable hypotheses. You will also learn the comparative method and become familiar with case studies. Finally, you will learn basic statistical analysis. Statistics provide strategies and tools for using data to gain insight into real problems. This class will help you become a

better political science student and a democratic citizen.

**Course Objectives**

1. The primary purpose of this course is to prepare students, especially political science majors and minors, to read and understand original research in political science, especially quantitative research.
2. The course will also increase students' understanding of the following topics: concepts, variables, and hypotheses; literature reviews and research design strategies; quantitative analysis of data; and making effective arguments.
3. This course should prove useful in other ways as well. In nearly every area of life you are presented with claims and evidence in support of these claims. This course will help you develop skills that will enable you to evaluate these claims more rigorously, and to make better-grounded claims of your own.

**Campus Resources**

As an SU student you have access to a variety of resources that can help you in this class and beyond. Please make use of them.

- Mental health and overall well-being are significant predictors of academic success. As such it is essential that during your college experience you develop the skills and resources effectively to navigate stress, anxiety, depression and other mental health concerns. Please familiarize yourself with the range of resources the Barnes Center provides ([ese.syr.edu/bewell](https://ese.syr.edu/bewell)) and seek out support for mental health concerns as needed. Counseling services are available 24/7, 365 days a year, at 315.443.8000, and I encourage you to explore the resources available through the Wellness Leadership Institute, <https://ese.syr.edu/bewell/wellness-leadership-institute/>
- Counseling Center: <http://counselingcenter.syr.edu/faculty-staff/helping-students-in-distress.html> and [http://counselingcenter.syr.edu/\\_documents/Bill\\_of\\_Rights.pdf](http://counselingcenter.syr.edu/_documents/Bill_of_Rights.pdf).
- Writing Center: [http://wc.syr.edu/?\\_ga=2.101027140.454082058.1534346263-1387513330.1433439063](http://wc.syr.edu/?_ga=2.101027140.454082058.1534346263-1387513330.1433439063)
- Tutoring Services: CenterforLearningandStudentSuccess:<http://class.syr.edu/tutoring>
- Financial Counseling: <http://financialaid.syr.edu/financialliteracy>
- Career Services: [http://thecollege.syr.edu/advising/index.html?\\_ga=2.101048900.454082058.1534346263-1387513330.1433439063](http://thecollege.syr.edu/advising/index.html?_ga=2.101048900.454082058.1534346263-1387513330.1433439063)
- Sexual Harassment/Title IX Concerns: Sheila Johnson-Willis, Compliance Officer. [titleix@syr.edu](mailto:titleix@syr.edu). 315.443.0211

- Sexual & Relationship Violence Response Team: 315.443.4715

**Harassment, Confidentiality, and Mandatory Reporting**

Federal and state law, and University policy prohibit discrimination and harassment based on sex or gender (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and retaliation). If a student has been harassed or assaulted, they can obtain confidential counseling support, 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, from the Sexual and Relationship Violence Response Team at the Counseling Center (315-443-8000, Barnes Center at The Arch, 150 Sims Drive, Syracuse, New York 13244).

Incidents of sexual violence or harassment can be reported non-confidentially to the University's Title IX Officer (Sheila Johnson Willis, 315-443-0211, [titleix@syr.edu](mailto:titleix@syr.edu), 005 Steele Hall). Reports to law enforcement can be made to the University's Department of Public Safety (315-443-2224, 005 Sims Hall), the Syracuse Police Department (511 South State Street, Syracuse, New York, 911 in case of emergency or 315-435-3016 to speak with the Abused Persons Unit), or the State Police (844-845-7269).

I will seek to keep information you share with me private to the greatest extent possible, but as a professor I have mandatory reporting responsibilities to share information regarding sexual misconduct, harassment, and crimes I learn about with the University's Title IX Officer to help make our campus a safer place for all.

**Communication**

If you have questions about the material, chances are that you are not the only one. Therefore the best way to ask questions is in class. If your question is not related to class material or relevant to other students, please come to my office hours to talk about questions, difficulties with the class material or with homework, and so on. If you cannot make office hours, feel free to send me an email to set up an appointment.

I will usually respond to email within 24 hours during the week. I will not respond to emails during weekends, except for urgent matters. As with all business-related correspondence, please include an appropriate salutation, identify yourself, and write in complete sentences. Students are expected to check their email accounts regularly, as I will be using email to provide announcements and updates about the course. See Syracuse's email policy at <http://supolicies.syr.edu/it/email.htm>.

**Religious Observances**

SU's religious observances policy ([http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp\\_ben/religious\\_observance.htm](http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm)) recognizes the diversity of faiths represented in the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their traditions. Under the policy, students are given an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance, provided they notify their instructors no later than the academic drop deadline. For observances occurring before the drop deadline, notification is required at least two academic days in advance. Students may enter their observances in MySlice under Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances/Add a Notification.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Syracuse University values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and

full participation. There may be aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion and full participation in this course. I invite any student to contact me to discuss strategies and/or accommodations (academic adjustments) that may be essential to your success and to collaborate with the Center for Disability Resources (CDR) in this process.

If you would like to discuss disability-accommodations or register with CDR, please visit Center for Disability Resources. Please call (315) 443-4498 or email [disabilityresources@syr.edu](mailto:disabilityresources@syr.edu) for more detailed information.

The CDR is responsible for coordinating disability-related academic accommodations and will work with the student to develop an access plan. Since academic accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact CDR as soon as possible to begin this process.

### **Academic Integrity**

Syracuse University's Academic Integrity Policy reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit and for upholding course-specific, as well as university-wide, academic integrity expectations. The policy governs citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and truthfulness in all academic matters, including course attendance and participation. The policy also prohibits students from: 1) submitting the same work in more than one class without receiving advance written authorization from both instructors and, 2) using websites that charge fees or require uploading of course materials to obtain exam solutions or assignments completed by others and present the work as their own. Under the policy, instructors who seek to penalize a student for a suspected violation must first report the violation to the Center for Learning and Student Success (CLASS). Students may not drop or withdraw from courses in which they face a suspected violation. Instructors must wait to assign a final course grade until a suspected violation is reviewed and upheld or overturned. Upholding Academic Integrity includes abiding by instructors' individual course expectations, which may include the protection of their intellectual property. Students should not upload, distribute, or otherwise share instructors' course materials without permission. Students found in violation of the policy are subject to grade sanctions determined by the course instructor and non-grade sanctions determined by the School or College where the course is offered, as described in the Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric. Students are required to read an online summary of the University's academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check-in on MySlice. The Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed at <https://class.syr.edu/academic-integrity/policy/>.

The Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric establishes recommended guidelines for the determination of grade penalties by faculty and instructors, while also giving them discretion to select the grade penalty they believe most suitable, including course failure, regardless of violation level. Any established violation in this course may result in course failure regardless of violation level.

All academic integrity expectations that apply to in-person quizzes and exams also apply to online quizzes and exams. In this course, all work submitted for quizzes and exams must be yours alone. Discussing quiz or exam questions with anyone during the quiz or exam period violates academic integrity expectations for this course. Using websites that charge fees or require uploading of course material (e.g. Chegg, Course Hero) to obtain exam solutions or assignments completed by others and present the work as your own violates academic integrity expectations in this course.



This class will use the plagiarism detection and prevention system Turnitin. You will have the option to submit your papers to Turnitin to check that all sources you use have been properly acknowledged and cited before you submit the paper to me. I will also submit all papers you write for this class to Turnitin, which compares submitted documents against documents on the Internet and against student papers submitted to Turnitin at SU and at other colleges and universities. I will take your knowledge of the subject matter of this course and your writing level and style into account in interpreting the originality report. Keep in mind that all papers you submit for this class will become part of the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers.

**Privacy and Student Records**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) sets forth requirements regarding the privacy of student records. FERPA governs both the access to and release of those records, known as education records, and the information they contain. Under FERPA, faculty have a legal responsibility to protect the confidentiality of student records. For additional information about FERPA and SU's FERPA policy, see: <http://www.syr.edu/registrar/staff/ferpa>.