

PSC 202

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW TODAY

- **What is this class about?**
- **How is this class useful?**
- **What are the class policies?**

OVERVIEW TODAY

- What is this class about?
- How is this class useful?
- What are the class policies?

WHAT IS THIS CLASS ABOUT?

- **Goal of political science: We want to understand the (political) world around us**
 - What is happening?
 - Why are things happening the way they do?
- **What are some examples of questions you have about how the political world works and why it works the way it does?**

WHAT IS THIS CLASS ABOUT?

- Ok, but lots of people try to explain what is happening (and why) in politics
- What is different about the way political scientists do it?

WHAT IS THIS CLASS ABOUT?

- Ok, but lots of people try to explain what is happening (and why) in politics
- What is different about the way political scientists do it?
- Political scientists use a scientific approach to study politics
 - They follow a research process

THIS CLASS

- **A deep dive into the research process**
 - **How do we find answers to the research questions we have?**
- **Step-by-step walk through research process**

RESEARCH PROCESS

- **Developing a research question, proposing an answer**
 - Can we really study politics scientifically?
 - What kinds of research questions do political scientists ask?
 - What is a good research question?
 - What is already known about a research question?
 - How do we propose an answer to the research question?

RESEARCH PROCESS

- **Measuring what we need to answer the research question**
 - **How do we define concepts that we need to answer our research question?**
 - e.g. When is a country a democracy?
 - **How do we measure these concepts?**
 - e.g. How do we measure how democratic a country is?
- **How do we connect our research question to our data?**

RESEARCH PROCESS

- **Answering the research question**
 - **Develop a research strategy that can help us answer our question**
 - **Do we study one country? Compare two countries? Do we study all countries?**
 - **Data analysis**
 - **Qualitative approaches, statistical data analysis**

BUT...

- **I'm just not good at math!**

NOT VERY GOOD AT MATH

ZEUGNIS DER ALLGEMEINEN HOCHSCHULREIFE

Vor- und Zuname, Geburtsdatum, Geburtsort sowie Name der Schule

Simon Weschle

II. LEISTUNGEN IN DER ABITURPRÜFUNG

Prüfungsfach	Punktezahlen in einfacher Wertung		Note
	schriftl.	mündl.	
Leistungskurse (LF)			
1. Englisch	10	12	gut
2. Mathematik	06	--	ausreichend

- 0-15 points
- Less than 4: fail

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DATA ANALYSIS AND LIFE

- **Analyzing data correctly is important in life. It can even save lives!**
- **Example: Vaccine effectiveness**

USELESS VACCINES?

“Pfizer vaccine now completely worthless in Israel as >80% of all COVID-19 patients were previously vaccinated.”

Nearly 60% of hospitalized COVID-19 patients in Israel fully vaccinated, data shows

SEVERE CASES IN ISRAEL

- **Not vaccinated: 214**
- **Vaccinated: 301**
- **58% of severe cases are vaccinated!**

VACCINATION RATE IN ISRAEL

- Not vaccinated: 1,302,912
- Vaccinated: 5,634,634
- 78.7% of people are vaccinated!

SEVERE CASES IN ISRAEL

- Not vaccinated: 214 out of 1,302,912 people
 - 16.42 cases per 100,000
- Vaccinated: 301 out of 5,634,634 people
 - 5.34 cases per 100,000
- Rate of severe cases is 3.1 times higher among unvaccinated ($16.42/5.34$)

SEVERE CASES IN ISRAEL

- **But: We know that Covid has very different consequences depending on age**
 - If they get it (vaccinated or not), it is much more likely to be severe among older people than younger people
 - Perhaps as a result, older people are more likely to be vaccinated (90.4%) than younger people (73.0%)
 - So older people are more likely to be vaccinated, and at the same time also more likely to develop severe cases

SEVERE CASES, PEOPLE > 50

- Not vaccinated: 171 out of 186,078 people
 - 91.9 cases per 100,000
- Vaccinated: 290 out of 2,133,516 people
 - 13.6 cases per 100,000
- For those over 50, rate of severe cases is 6.8 times higher among unvaccinated (91.9/13.6)

SEVERE CASES, PEOPLE < 50

- Not vaccinated: 43 out of 1,116,834 people
 - 3.85 cases per 100,000
- Vaccinated: 11 out of 3,501,118 people
 - 0.3 cases per 100,000
- For those under 50, rate of severe cases is **12.8 times higher among unvaccinated** (3.85/0.3)

HOW IS THIS CLASS USEFUL?



- Helps you pick apart bad arguments that are not backed up by empirical evidence
- And make good arguments backed up by evidence

HOW IS THIS CLASS USEFUL?

CNN Poll: Biden and Trump matchup tightens as enthusiasm hits new high

Overall, 50% of registered voters back the Biden-Harris ticket, while 46% say they support Trump and Pence, right at the poll's margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points. Among the 72% of

The CNN Poll was conducted by SSRS August 12 through 15 among a random national sample of 1,108 adults reached on landlines or cellphones by a live interviewer, including 987 registered voters. The survey also includes an oversample of residents of 15 battleground states for a total subsample of 636 adults and 569 registered voters from those states. That subset was weighted to its proper share of the overall adult population of the United States. Results for the full sample have a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3.7 percentage points. It is 4.0 points among registered voters and 5.4 points for results for registered voters in the battleground states.

- **Helps you understand everyday debates better**

HOW IS THIS CLASS USEFUL?

Table 1
Dependent variable: average corruption in 1994–1998

	(1) OLS	(2) OLS (LDCs only)	(3) TSLS	(4) OLS	(5) OLS (LDCs only)	(6) OLS	(7) TSLS
Constant	2.560 (10.508)	2.614 (10.516)	3.392 (5.003)	1.945 (1.721)	1.506 (1.260)	2.946 (2.180)	4.139 (1.867)
PRESS	−0.017 (−6.350)	−0.015 (−4.789)	−0.028 (−3.266)	−0.017 (−4.023)	−0.015 (−3.501)	−0.020 (−4.439)	−0.037 (−1.926)
BUREAU	0.220 (2.893)	0.254 (2.708)	0.221 (2.310)	0.200 (2.058)	0.128 (1.220)	0.089 (0.942)	0.073 (0.663)
RULE	0.265 (3.482)	0.146 (1.624)	0.143 (1.527)	0.259 (2.583)	0.068 (0.607)	0.154 (1.530)	0.044 (0.251)
log(GDP)				0.104 (0.681)	0.226 (1.358)	0.107 (0.538)	0.127 (0.523)
HUMCAP				−0.043 (−1.007)	−0.085 (−1.562)	−0.052 (−1.058)	−0.064 (−1.088)
TRADE				0.002 (1.103)	0.004 (2.091)	0.003 (1.358)	0.003 (1.367)
BLACK				0.001 (1.882)	0.001 (1.288)	0.001 (1.350)	0.001 (0.730)
ETHNIC				−0.246 (−0.690)	−0.053 (−0.154)	−0.457 (−1.170)	−0.410 (−1.021)
AFRICA						−0.142 (−0.521)	−0.102 (−0.252)
LATIN						−0.563 (−2.298)	−0.857 (−2.530)
OECD						0.419 (0.983)	0.075 (0.150)
Observations	125	93	104	68	47	68	68
Adjusted R^2	0.67	0.38	0.67	0.74	0.38	0.77	0.72

t Statistics in parentheses; White-corrected standard errors; political rights as instrument in Columns (3) and (7).

- Helps you in other PSC/Maxwell classes

HOW IS THIS CLASS USEFUL?



- **Helps you get a job...**

HOW IS THIS CLASS USEFUL?

ROTC Alumnus Will Join the U.S. Space Force

After commissioning into the U.S. Air Force through Syracuse University's Reserve Officer Training Program, 2nd Lt. Daniel Egert is putting satellites and people into orbit.



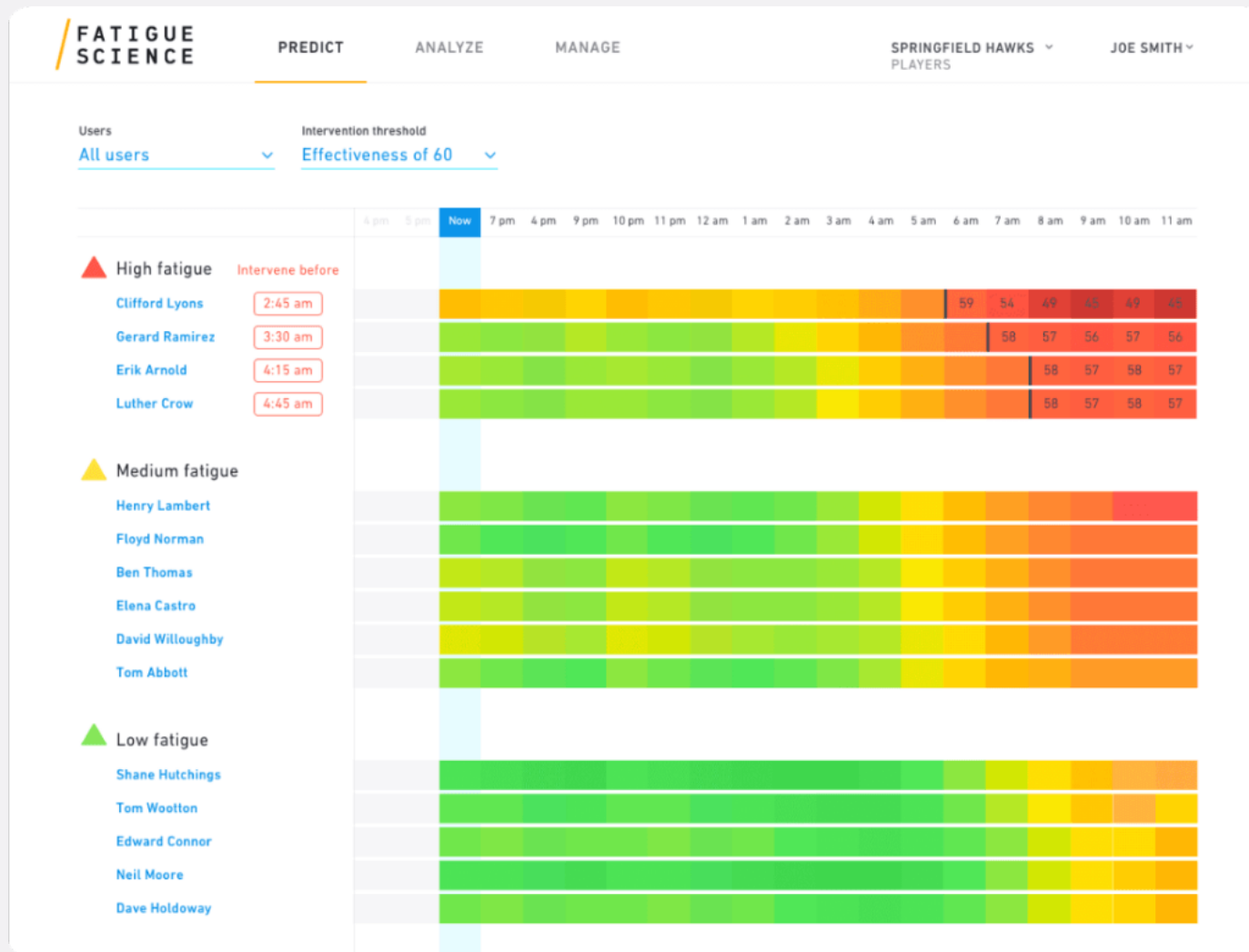
- Research design and data analysis are increasingly important in all kinds of sectors

HOW IS THIS CLASS USEFUL?

Egert is applying analytical and statistical skills he learned as an undergraduate student in political science at Syracuse University. “Pulling in information, looking at what’s happening so I can report what people need to know, it has been huge,” he says. Before graduating, Egert wasn’t sure how he would use what he learned in a course on quantitative methods for the social sciences. “I remember thinking, ‘Oh, is this a vocational program? It’s kind of silly.’ But no, it’s been indispensable.”

- <https://www.syracuse.edu/stories/rotc-alumnus-space-force/>

BASKETBALL



- Research design and data analysis are not only important in political science...

NOT IN THIS CLASS...

- **Should not be your first political science class**
- **Not an introduction to political science**
 - **Instead: How to do political science research**

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COVID, WHAT ELSE?

- Your health, and all our health, is the most important thing
 - We'll do in-person sections as long as it's safe to do
 - If you are sick (even just a runny nose), do not attend in-person. Send me an email to let me know.
 - I have recordings of last year's lectures if you don't want to miss anything

COVID, WHAT ELSE?

- Your health, and all our health, is the most important thing
 - If you experience any hardship (Covid-related or not) that interferes with your academics, *please* get in touch with me
 - I'll work with you. There's always something that can be done. But I need to know about it
 - You do not have to reveal personal details to me
 - Talk to me as early as possible, harder to do something after the fact
 - If you ask yourself whether you should talk to me, talk to me

CLASS WEBSITE

- <http://www.simonweschle.com/psc202>
- The website has the continuously updated class schedule
- Lists all readings and assignments
- Please check the page **EVERY WEEK**

CLASS WEBSITE

PSC 202: Introduction to Political Analysis

CLASS INFORMATION

Monday and Wednesday, 11:40 - 12:35, Falk 104

INSTRUCTOR

Prof. Simon Weschle

Email: sweschl@syr.edu, Phone: 315-443-8678

Office Hours: Monday, 1:00 - 3:00, Eggers Zoom 530 or Zoom (see Syllabus for details)

CLASS SCHEDULE

Below is a continuously updated class schedule. It contains information on what topics we are covering as well as on the readings and assignments. Please check this site EVERY WEEK.

Week 1

- Monday (8/30): Introduction to the Course
- Wednesday (9/1): Studying Politics Scientifically
 - Shepsle, Kenneth A. (2010): "It Isn't Rocket Science, but..." p. 3-6. (Blackboard)
 - Monroe, Alan D. (2000): "The Scientific Study of Research Questions." p. 1-12. (Blackboard)

TEXTBOOK

- **Pollock, Philip H. and Barry C. Edwards. 2020. The Essentials of Political Analysis. 6th Edition. CQ Press.**
 - **Orange Inclusive Access through Blackboard/RedShelf. Automatically enrolled, costs \$41.30 to have e-book for 180 days**
 - **Can opt out until Sep 20, 11.59PM and purchase it elsewhere**
- **Other readings on Blackboard**

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Things I Noticed EARTH 222/ENVIRON 232 Students Doing During Class Meg Veitch, April 2017

An (x) means I've seen it a lot, as in multiple students every day.

- Chipotle menu
- ESPN
- Hamilton tickets
- Wolverine access(x)
- Amazon(x)
- Facebook(x)
- Job applications (x)
- IM: breaking up with boyfriend
- HuffingtonPost/NYTimes/othernews(x)
- Buying makeup
- Pornography
- Reddit (x)
- <Writing obscene things...can't put here...>
- Tumblr (x)
- Looking at pictures of themselves in suits
- A relay page?
- Cooking show
- Chinese rap videos

An (x) means I've seen it a lot, as in multiple students every day.

- Buying \$240 worth of turtle necks
- Looking at pictures of sliced bread
- Photoshopping President Trump onto muppets
- Watching baseball/basketball/golf
- Programing homework
- Translating German
- Taking selfies
- Playing Mortal Kombat
- Playing agar.io
- Fantasy baseball/basketball
- Breeding dragons (draconic neopets???)
- Playing racing game
- Cat videos
- General shopping (x)
- Sex tapes
- Drawing a tree? A squid?
- Watching Planet Earth 2

GRADES

- **10%: Class Participation**
 - Quizzes (covers lecture and readings). Posted after lecture and due before next lecture
 - Other varied things
- **40%: 3 Exams**
 - Oct 4, Nov 1, Dec 8
- **30%: (Roughly) weekly problem sets**
 - Posted Friday (after section), due Friday week after (before section)
 - + final problem set due during finals period
- **20%: Section**
 - Attendance and participation

SECTIONS

- Hands-on experience with research process
- TAs
 - Jingding Wang
 - Katharine Russell

STUDENT HOURS

- **Monday 1:00-3:00**
 - Can chose in person (530 Eggers) or Zoom (info on syllabus)
 - Or by appointment (email me)
 - Your chance to talk to me about course material, college in general, or just to chat
 - *Please* talk to me as early as possible about any issues or questions
 - If I know what's going on, I can almost always help in some way (or I know someone who can help)
 - It's much more difficult to do something after the fact

SYLLABUS

- **For all kinds of details, read the syllabus**
 - **Read the parts “Main Things to Know” and “More Details on Important Things”**
 - **No really, read them carefully...**