

FOUNDATIONS OF RESEARCH IN POLITICAL SCIENCE
POL 2156A
DR. STEPHANIE MULLEN
FALL 2013

Course schedule: Tues.4-5:30pm & Thurs. 2:30-4pm

Office: Social Science Building, Room

Office hours: By appt. any weekday or by email any weekday or weekend.

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Assistant: TBA

OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to the fundamental dimensions of research. Presentation of several epistemological approaches and the questions they raise. Study of diverse logics of enquiry and their modes of inference. Introduction to some techniques and methods. Elaboration of a research project covering all of the required steps.

GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction and overview of the research process and helps develop critical perspectives (e.g., methodological, ethical, practical) on the ways that research methods are implicated in the production of knowledge in political science. It is intended to provide students with a sound foundation in the general principles of research methods (i.e., both qualitative and quantitative techniques used to gather and analyze data) and their application in political science (e.g., surveys, interviews and field research). Students will learn the steps necessary to undertake a research project: what questions to ask, how to design and proceed through the research project, how to operationalize theoretical concepts, and how to gather and analyze data.

EVALUATION

Course Material:

The Research Process, Canadian Edition. Bouma, Ling & Wilkinson.

Grade Distribution

25 % Research Workshops Attendance (5 Workshops X 5 Mark Each)

35 % Midterm (Oct. 10th)

40% Final Exam (During University Exam Period)

For useful tips on how to write a University paper, please refer to the following Website:

<http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/undergraduate/writing-style-guide>

COURSE OUTLINE

Sept. 5th - Theme 1: Introduction to the Course

Required Reading: Chapter 1

Sept. 10th & 12th - Theme 1: Ethics in Research

Required Reading: Chapter 9

Supplemental Reading:

http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf

Barrie Thorne “You Still Takin’ Notes?” Fieldwork and Problems of Informed Consent” Chapter 7 in Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber & Patricia Leavy’s *Approaches to Qualitative Research* pg 159-176.

Sept. 17th & 19th – Theme 1: Theories and Paradigms & Qualitative/Quantitative Designs

Required Reading: Chapters 2 & 4

Supplemental Reading:

Mark Rank “The Blending of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Understanding Childbearing among Welfare Recipients” Chapter 4 in Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber & Patricia Leavy’s *Approaches to Qualitative Research* pg 81-96.

Sept. 24th & 26th – Theme 1: Steps in Research Design & Causal Models

Required Reading: Chapter 3

Supplemental Reading:

M. Neil Browne, *Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking*. Any Chapter

Oct. 1st & 3rd – Theme 1: Concepts to Variables to Indicators & Exam Review

Required Reading: Chapter 5

Supplemental Reading:

Charles Gallagher “White Like Me? Methods, Meaning, and Manipulation...” Chapter 10 in Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber & Patricia Leavy’s *Approaches to Qualitative Research*.

Oct. 8th & 10th – Theme 2: Sampling & Quiz 1 (On material from Theme 1 including all required readings, class lecture material, guest lectures, and lab work. Takes approx. 2 weeks to mark and post grades)

Required Reading: Chapter 8

Oct. 15th & 17th - Study Break

Oct. 22nd & 24th - Theme 2: Research Process – Observation & Lab

Required Reading: Chapters 6 & 7

Workshop: Lab 1: Field Observation

Supplemental Reading:

Kath Weston “Fieldwork in Lesbian and Gay Communities” Chapter 8 in Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber & Patricia Leavy’s *Approaches to Qualitative Research* pg 177-184.

Oct. 29th & 31st - Theme 2: Research Process – Interview & Lab

Required Reading: Chapter 7 con’t

Workshop: Lab 2: Mock Interview

Supplemental Reading:

William Miller & Benjamin Crabtree “Depth Interviewing” Chapter 24 in Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber & Patricia Leavy’s *Approaches to Qualitative Research* pg 185-202.

Nov. 5th & 7th - Theme 2: Research Process – Survey

Required Reading: Chapter 7 con’t

Supplemental Reading:

Smith, Tom W., "That Which We Call Welfare By Any Other Name, An Analysis of the Impact of Question Wording on Response Patterns," Public Opinion Quarterly, vol. 51, number 1, 1987.

Nov. 12th & 14th – Theme 3: Research Task – Literature Review & Bibliographies & Lab

Required Reading: Chapter 10

Workshop: Lab 3: Literature Review

Supplemental Reading:

Carlson & Hyde, *Doing Empirical Political Research* Chapter 4 and 5

Nov. 19th & 21st - Theme 3: Research Task – Data Coding & Archiving & Lab

Required Reading: Chapters 10 con’t

Workshop: Lab 4: Data Collection & Archiving (Interview)

Supplemental Reading:

http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/chap_3.htm

Nov. 26th & 28th –Theme 3: Research Task – Data Collecting, Presentation, Lab, Exam Review

Required Reading: Chapters 11 & 12

Workshop: Lab 5: Introduction to SPSS

Supplemental Reading:

http://onlineqda.hud.ac.uk/Intro_QDA/how_what_to_code.php

Dec. 3rd – Concluding Thoughts.

Class attendance is necessary to successfully complete this course.

You will also be judged on your writing abilities. It is recommended to take the appropriate measures to avoid mistakes such as spelling, syntax, punctuation, inappropriate use of terms, etc. You may be penalized up to 15%, to the professor's discretion.

Late submissions are not tolerated. Exceptions are made only for illness or other serious situations deemed as such by the professor. *There will be a penalty for late submissions.* University regulations require all absences from exams and all late submissions due to illness to be supported by a medical certificate.

Absence for any other serious reason must be justified in writing, to the academic assistants of the Faculty, within five business days following the date of the exam or submission of an assignment. The Faculty reserves the right to accept or refuse the reason. Reasons such as travel, jobs, or any misreading of the examination timetable are not acceptable.

In the case of illnesses, medical certificates are accepted. However, the Faculty who needs additional information concerning a medical certificate or who wants to verify its authenticity must send it to the University of Ottawa Health Services (located at 100 Marie-Curie).

A penalty of 5% will be given for each subsequent day following the due date (weekends not included). This goes for assignments submitted through e-mail as well, and, in this case, the time that the e-mail was received will be counted as the time of submission of the document.

We suggest that you advise your professor as early as possible if a religious holiday or a religious event will force you to be absent during an evaluation.

Resources for you

FACULTY MENTORING CENTRE - <http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/mentor/eng/index.asp>

The goal of the Mentoring Centre is to help students with their academic and social well-being during their time at the University of Ottawa. Regardless of where students stand academically, or how far along they are in completing their degree, the Mentoring Centre is there to help them continue on the path to success.

A student may choose to visit the Mentoring Centre for very different reasons: talking to older peers to gain insight into programs and services offered by the University, or to simply brush up on study skills (time management, note-taking, exam preparation, etc.)

In sum, at the Mentoring Centre, you can discuss all things academic and everything about life on campus with mentors who are social science students themselves and trained to answer all your questions.

ACADEMIC WRITING HELP CENTRE <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/writing/>

The Academic Writing Help Centre provides free, individualized help and advice for writing academic assignments. With the help of our advisors, you learn to correct your errors, to write well independently, to improve your critical analysis and to sharpen your argumentation skills—everything you need to master the official language of your choice.

CAREER SERVICES <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/careers/>

This unit provides an array of career-development services and resources designed to help students identify and put forward the critical skills they need to enter the work force.

COUNSELLING-SERVICE <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/personal/>

There are many reasons to call on the Counseling Service, including:

- personal counselling
- career counseling
- study skills counseling.

ACCESS SERVICE <https://sassit.uottawa.ca/apps/ventus/student/index.php>

The University has always strived to meet the needs of individuals with learning disabilities or with other temporary or permanent functional disabilities (hearing/visual impairments, sustained health issues, mental health problems), and the campus community works collaboratively so that you can develop and maintain your autonomy, as well as reach your full potential throughout your studies. You can call on a wide range of services and resources, all provided with expertise, professionalism and confidentiality.

If barriers are preventing you from integrating into university life and you need adaptive measures to progress (physical setting, arrangements for exams, learning strategies, etc.), contact the Access Service right away:

- in person at the University Centre, Room 339
- online at <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/access/registration/>
- by phone at 613-562-5976

Deadlines for submitting requests for adaptive measures during exams

- midterms, tests, deferred exams: seven business days before the exam, test or other written evaluation (excluding the day of the exam itself)
- final exams:
 - November 15 for the fall session
 - March 15 for the winter session
 - Seven business days before the date of the exam for the spring/summer session (excluding the day of the exam itself).

Student Resources Centre - <http://www.communitylife.uottawa.ca/en/resources.php>

These centres strive to meet all sorts of student needs.

Beware of Academic Fraud!

Academic fraud is an act committed by a student to distort the marking of assignments, tests, examinations, and other forms of academic evaluation. Academic fraud is neither accepted nor tolerated by the University. Anyone found guilty of academic fraud is liable to severe academic sanctions.

Here are a few examples of academic fraud:

- engaging in any form of plagiarism or cheating;
- presenting falsified research data;
- handing in an assignment that was not authored, in whole or in part, by the student;
- submitting the same assignment in more than one course, without the written consent of the professors concerned.

In recent years, the development of the Internet has made it much easier to identify academic plagiarism. The tools available to your professors allow them to trace the exact origin of a text on the Web, using just a few words.

In cases where students are unsure whether they are at fault, it is their responsibility to consult the University's Web site on *student life and academic resources* at the following address: <http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/undergraduate/student-life-academic-resources>

Persons who have committed or attempted to commit (or have been accomplices to) academic fraud will be penalized. Here are some examples of the academic sanctions, which can be imposed:

- a grade of « F » for the assignment or course in question;
- an additional program requirement of between 3 and 30 credits;
- suspension or expulsion from the Faculty.

For more information, refer to: <http://web5.uottawa.ca/mcs-smc/academicintegrity/home.php>