I. Introduction: This course is designed to be an introduction to methods of political research. For the next term, we will focus on several issues of particular importance facing individuals interested in pursuing scientific research in political science. As a result of this course you should be able to (1) comprehend statistical results that are commonly found in political science journal articles; (2) conduct basic quantitative research on your own; (3) understand how to use statistical programs like SPSS to conduct such research.

This course will be divided into three sections. Since it is important for you to begin your research project as quickly as possible, in the first we will cover the general contours of the research process, especially how to write an introduction or problem statement, how to construct a literature review and how to generate hypotheses. In this section we will also deal with the history of the discipline of political science and the philosophical foundations of political science methodology. In the second section we will deal with the research process focusing on the role and construction of theory in political inquiry, the structure of logical argumentation, the operationalization of theoretical concepts, the measurement of variables and the generation of working hypotheses. Finally, we will deal with the statistical techniques commonly employed in political research to describe data, measures of association and the statistical significance in the relationship between variables, and to test hypotheses.

Perhaps the best way to learn methodology is to use it in practice. As such, the goal of this course is oriented towards the production of an individual quantitative research project, and assignments are geared towards the construction of such a project. Please note, the most important thing is that you go through the process, NOT that you produce the perfect project.

For the final three weeks of the term, you will present your research findings in a public forum in class, as an “electronic poster” These will take place during our regular class meeting times.

II. Texts: The following text are required for purchase by the student:


In addition other readings indicated on the schedule of lecture topics that will either be posted on Canvas or you will be asked to look up on JSTOR

You are also expected to know APSA citation style. If you do not know it, learn it immediately. There are citation guidelines located at http://www.psci.unt.edu/~pmcollins/APSA%20Citation%20and%20Reference%20Guidelines.pdf

III. Grades: The final grade a student receives will be based on his/her performance on three class project assignments, three examinations (including an optional comprehensive final), a final quantitative
research paper and the oral presentation of this paper. NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED!

The point breakdown of the final grade in terms of these assignments and the Final Examination is as follows:

**Assignments:**
- Project Assignment 1 (September 5) = 10 pts
- Project Assignment 2 (September 19) = 25 pts
- Project Assignment 3 (October 24) = 25 pts

**Paper:**
- Research Paper = 100 points due on Friday December 7, by 5:00 pm (via Canvas)
- Presentation of research design (at assigned time) = 25 points

**Exams:**
- First Exam - October 3 = 100 pts
- Second Exam - November 5 = 100 pts
- Final Examination December 10 = 100 pts

**total=460 points The final examination is optional. If you choose not to take it, the total number of points in the denominator will be 360 points**

**III. Dropping Courses:** Please link [http://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-registration-guide](http://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-registration-guide) for information concerning drops, withdraws, and other administrative information.

**IV. Course Evaluations:** You will have an opportunity to evaluate this class at the end of the semester using SPOT. If over 80 percent of the class completes the SPOT, each student will receive one percentage point of extra credit.

**V. Americans with Disabilities Act Statement:** The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at [http://www.unt.edu/oda](http://www.unt.edu/oda).

**VI. Academic Misconduct:** Academic Integrity is defined in the UNT Policy on Student Standards for Academic Integrity. Any suspected case of Academic Dishonesty will be handled in accordance with the University Policy and procedures. Possible academic penalties range from a verbal or written admonition to a grade of “F” in the course. Further sanctions may apply to incidents involving major violations. For policy and procedures: [http://faculty.success.unt.edu/academic-integrity](http://faculty.success.unt.edu/academic-integrity).
For more information on what constitutes plagiarism, please visit: http://abacus.bates.edu/cbb/

VII. Emergency Notification & Procedures: UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in an event of emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) ensuring you know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas, determining how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and identifying where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, your instructor will communicate with you through Blackboard regarding assignments, exams, field trips, and other items that may be impacted by the closure.

VIII. Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr. In short, please be considerate of others.

IX. Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault: UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT’s Dean of Students’ website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their needs: http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/sexual-misconduct/reporting-sexual-misconduct#4. Contact via e-mail (SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu) or by phone 940-565-2648.

X. Schedule of Lecture Topics and Assigned readings:
1) August 27 syllabus distributed and Introduction
   A Science of Politics?
   readings- Powner chapter 1(Read to prepare research proposal/question)

   NO CLASS AUGUST 29 I will be at a conference

   Project Assignment 1: Write Short Research Proposal/Question-Hand in September 5, via Canvas

3) September 3-10 Overview of the Research Process and How to Look up Stuff
   readings- Powner, chapters 2 and 3

   42(1980):1085-1107 (look up on library website)
Brad Epperly “Institutions and Legacies: Electoral Volatility in the Postcommunist World” Comparative Political Studies 44(7) 829 –853 (look up on library website)

4) September 12-17: The Research Process: Hypotheses, Research Design and Analysis readings- Powner chapters 3 and 4


Project Assignment 2- (due September 24 )
Write your draft of the Literature Review and State your principal hypotheses

5) September 19- 24-History of the Discipline: Traditionalism, Behavioralism and the post-behavioral critique


6) September 26-October 1 Summarizing the Research Process. re-read Powner chapter 4 and read chapter 7, 9

October 3: First examination

7) October 8-10 Case studies and Qualitative techniques

Powner, Chapter 5 and chapter 6


James Mahoney 2007. “Qualitative Methodology and Comparative Politics” Comparative Political Studies 40:122-144. (look up on library website)

8) October 15 -17 data gathering and SPSS and sources of aggregate data Powner - chapter 8

9) October 22- Playing with the data- indexing scaling techniques Readings TBA will be placed on Canvas
10) October 24  Basic analysis – the logic of hypothesis testing
Readings TBA will be placed on Canvas

Project Assignment 3:(October 24)
List Variables and how you intend to measure them; prepare your data matrix and codebook.

11) October 29-October 31  Statistical Analysis 1 using SPSS
Readings TBA will be placed on Canvas

November 5: Second Examination

12) November 5-12: Statistical Analysis 2 & Ordinary Least Squares Regression.& Running OLS, Logistic Regression on SPSS
Readings TBA will be placed on Canvas

November 14, overview

NO CLASS November 21 (at conference)

Thanksgiving Break 27-28-29

13) November 19, Nov 26, December 3, December 5: Short Oral Summaries of Projects

Final Comprehensive Examination: Tuesday December 10, 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. (OPTIONAL)