

**INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL INQUIRY
FALL 2008 SYLLABUS**

Course: POLS 298
Class Time: 1:40-2:30 MWF
Classroom: ILC 301, PAAW 125

Instructor: Dr. Ross E. Burkhart
Office: PAAW 127A, 426-3280,
rburkha@boisestate.edu
Office Hours: 3:00-4:30 T-Th,
9:00-10:30 F, or by appt.

OBJECTIVES: This course is designed to introduce students to the use of empirical data in political science research. Students will learn to create hypotheses regarding political science relationships. Students will also learn to use several basic statistical techniques in order to test these hypotheses: measures of central tendency and dispersion, cross-tabulations, difference of means tests, analysis of variance, linear correlation and simple regression. Students will utilize SPSS for Windows.

ASSESSMENT: Students will complete:

- five quizzes based on classroom material and readings. Each quiz is worth 10 points. Students will count the four highest quiz grades. Total points from quizzes = 40 points.
- three examinations based on classroom material and readings. Each exam is worth 100 points. Total points from examinations = 300 points.
- weekly homework assignments based on the readings, due on days indicated on the syllabus. Each assignment is worth five points. Total points from homework assignments = 60 points.
- one library assignment, due November 21st, in which students will choose an article from a peer-reviewed journal and discuss the research question addressed in the article as well as the analysis performed. Library assignment = 20 points.
- SPSS-related assignments in the PAAW 125 computer lab every other Friday except where indicated, based on group assignment, beginning September 5th. Total points from labwork = 20 points.

Grading scale:

A = 94% and ↑	A- = 90-93%	B+ = 87-89%	B = 84-86%
B- = 80-83%	C+ = 77-79%	C = 74-76%	C- = 70-73%
D+ = 67-69%	D = 64-66%	D- = 60-63%	F = below 60%

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Pollock, Philip H., III. 2005. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. 2nd edition. Washington DC: CQ Press. (AKA "Pollock 1")

Pollock, Philip H., III. 2005. *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*. 2nd edition. Washington DC: CQ Press. (AKA "Pollock 2")

TOPICS (no class August 27-29, September 1)

August 25-September 3: Introduction: Political Science Research Questions.

- Reading: Pollock 1, Introduction and chap. 1, pp. 7-20.
- Homework (due September 3): Pollock 1, chap. 1, p. 26, exercise 2

September 5-September 10: Central Tendency and Variation.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 1, pp. 20-25
- Homework (due September 10): Pollock 1, chap. 1, pp. 25-26, exercise 1
- Lab Work (September 5-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 1 (no exercises—learning to use SPSS)

September 12-17: Normal Distribution. Validity/Reliability. **(First Quiz September 17th)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 1
- Homework (due September 17): Pollock 1, chap. 1, p. 26-27, exercises 4 & 6
- Lab Work (September 12-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 1 (no exercises—learning to use SPSS)

September 19-24: Z-Scores. Dependent and Independent Variables. **(Second Quiz September 24th)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 2
- Homework (due September 24): Pollock 1, chap 2, p. 48-49, exercises 3 & 5
- Lab Work (September 19-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 2, pp. 23-25, exercise 1

September 26-October 3: Z-Test. Cross-tabulation. **(FIRST EXAM OCTOBER 6th)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 3
- Homework (due October 1): Pollock 1, chap. 3, pp. 74-75, exercises 2 & 4
- Lab Work (September 26-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 2, pp. 23-25, exercise 1

October 8-13: One-sample T-Test. Populations and Samples.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 5
- Homework (due October 10): Pollock 1, chap. 5, pp. 128, exercise 1
- Lab Work (October 10-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 2, pp. 23-25, exercise 1

October 15-22: Independent samples T-Test. Sampling Distributions. **(Third Quiz October 22nd)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 5
- Homework (due October 20): Pollock 1, chap. 5, pp. 128-129, exercise 2
- Lab Work (October 17-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 2, pp. 23-25, exercise 1

October 24-October 29: Type I and Type II Errors.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 4
- Lab Work (October 24-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 3, p. 49, exercise 3

October 31-November 7: One-Way ANOVA. **(SECOND EXAM NOVEMBER 10th)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 4
- Homework (due November 5): Handout
- Lab Work (October 31-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 3, p. 49, exercise 3
- Lab Work (November 7-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 5, pp. 97-98, exercise 2

November 12-14: Bonferroni Multiple Comparisons.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 6
- Homework (due November 14): Handout
- Lab Work (November 14-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 5, pp. 97-98, exercise 2

November 17-21: Two-Way ANOVA. **(Fourth Quiz November 19th)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 4 & 6
- Homework (due November 19): Handout
- Lab Work (November 21-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 6, p. 115, exercise 2
- **Library Assignment due November 21st**

December 1-5: Chi-Square. **(Fifth Quiz December 5th)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 7
- Homework (due December 3): Pollock 1, chap. 6, p. 153, exercise 4c
- Lab Work (December 5-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 6, p. 115, exercise 2

December 8-12: Correlation.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 7
- Homework (due December 10): Pollock 1, chap. 7, p. 176, exercise 1

FINAL EXAM, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17th, 1:00-3:00pm