

## INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL INQUIRY SPRING 2009 SYLLABUS

Course: POLS 298  
Class Time: 1:40-2:30 MWF  
Classroom: E 106, PAAW 125

Instructor: Dr. Ross E. Burkhart  
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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 April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 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 February 13<sup>th</sup>. Total points from labwork = 20 points.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Pollock, Philip H., III. 2009. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Washington DC: CQ Press. (AKA "Pollock 1")  
Pollock, Philip H., III. 2009. *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Washington DC: CQ Press. (AKA "Pollock 2")

**TOPICS (no class January 30<sup>th</sup>, February 16<sup>th</sup>, March 23<sup>rd</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>, April 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>)**

January 21-23: Introduction: Political Science Research Questions.

- Reading: Pollock 1, Introduction and chap. 1, pp. 7-16.
- Homework (due January 23): Pollock 1, chap. 1, p. 24, exercises 1 & 2

January 26-January 28: Validity/Reliability.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 1, pp. 17-23
- Homework (due January 28): Pollock 1, chap. 1, pp. 24-25, exercise 3 & 4

February 2-6: Central Tendency and Variation. Normal Distribution. **(First Quiz February 6<sup>th</sup>)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 1
- Homework (due February 4): Pollock 1, chap. 1, p. 25, exercise 5

February 9-13: Z-Scores. Dependent and Independent Variables.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 2
- Homework (due February 13): Pollock 1, chap 2, pp. 42-43, exercises 1 & 3
- Lab Work (February 13-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 1 (no exercises—learning to use SPSS)

February 18-20: Z-Test. Variable relationships. **(FIRST EXAM FEBRUARY 23<sup>rd</sup>)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 3
- Homework (due February 20): Pollock 1, chap. 3, pp. 68-71, exercises 5 & 8
- Lab Work (February 20-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 1 (no exercises—learning to use SPSS)

February 25-March 4: One-sample T-Test. Populations and Samples.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 5
- Homework (due February 27): Pollock 1, chap. 5, pp. 110-111, exercise 1
- Lab Work (February 27-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 2, pp. 33-34, exercise 7

March 6-11: Independent samples T-Test. Sampling Distributions. **(Second Quiz March 11<sup>th</sup>)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 5
- Homework (due March 6): Pollock 1, chap. 5, pp. 111, exercise 2
- Lab Work (March 6-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 2, pp. 33-34, exercise 7

March 13-20: Type I and Type II Errors. **(Third Quiz March 18<sup>th</sup>)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 4
- Lab Work (March 13-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 3, p. 54, exercise 2
- Lab Work (March 20-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 3, p. 54, exercise 2

March 30-April 6: One-Way ANOVA. **(SECOND EXAM APRIL 8<sup>th</sup>)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 4
- Homework (due April 3): Handout
- Lab Work (April 3-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 4, p. 70, exercise 1

April 10-20 Bonferroni Multiple Comparisons. **(Fourth Quiz April 20<sup>th</sup>)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 6
- Homework (due April 13): Handout
- Lab Work (April 10-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 4, p. 70, exercise 1

April 22-27: Two-Way ANOVA.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 4 & 6
- Homework (due April 24): Pollock 1, chap. 6, pp. 142-143, exercise 4
- Lab Work (April 24-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 5, p. 106-108, exercise 1
- **Library Assignment due April 22<sup>nd</sup>**

April 29-May 4: Chi-Square. **(Fifth Quiz May 6<sup>th</sup>)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 7
- Homework (due May 4): Pollock 1, chap. 7, pp. 168-169, exercise 4
- Lab Work (May 1-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 6, pp. 106-108, exercise 1

May 6-8: Correlation.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 7
- Homework (due May 6): Pollock 1, chap. 8, pp. 194-195, exercise 1

**FINAL EXAM, WEDNESDAY, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 1:00-3:00pm**