

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL INQUIRY FALL 2007 SYLLABUS

Course: POLS 298
Class Time: 1:40-2:30 MWF
Classroom: ILC 202, 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 5th, 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 7th. Total points from labwork = 20 points.

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 31st, September 3rd, October 5th, October 19th, November 14th-23rd)

August 27-29: Introduction: Political Science Research Questions.

- Reading: Pollock 1, Introduction and chap. 1, pp. 7-20.
- Homework (due August 29): Pollock 1, chap. 1, p. 26, exercise 2

September 5-7: Central Tendency and Variation.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 1, pp. 20-25
- Homework (due September 7): Pollock 1, chap. 1, pp. 25-26, exercise 1
- Lab Work (September 7-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 1 (no exercises—learning to use SPSS)

September 10-14: Normal Distribution. Validity/Reliability. **(First Quiz September 12th)**

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 1
- Homework (due September 14): Pollock 1, chap. 1, p. 26-27, exercises 4 & 6
- Lab Work (September 14-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 1 (no exercises—learning to use SPSS)

September 17-21: Z-Scores. Dependent and Independent Variables.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 2
- Homework (due September 21): Pollock 1, chap 2, p. 48-49, exercises 3 & 5
- Lab Work (September 21-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 2, pp. 23-25, exercise 1

September 24-28: Z-Test. Cross-tabulation. (**FIRST EXAM SEPTEMBER 28th**)

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 3
- Homework (due September 26): 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 1-8: One-sample T-Test. Populations and Samples. (**Second Quiz October 8th**)

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 5
- Homework (due October 8): Pollock 1, chap. 5, pp. 128, exercise 1
- Lab Work (October 3-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 3, p. 49, exercise 3

October 10-15: Independent samples T-Test, Sampling Distributions.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 5
- Homework (due October 15): Pollock 1, chap. 5, pp. 128-129, exercise 2
- Lab Work (October 12-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 3, p. 49, exercise 3

October 17-26: One-Way ANOVA. (**Third Quiz October 24th**)

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 4
- Homework (due October 26): Handout
- Lab Work (October 26-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 5, pp. 97-98, exercise 2

October 29-November 2: Type I and Type II Errors. (**SECOND EXAM NOVEMBER 2nd**)

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 4
- Homework (due October 31): Pollock 1, chap. 4, pp. 101, exercise 3

November 5-12: Two-Way ANOVA. (**Fourth Quiz November 12th**)

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 6
- Homework (due November 9): Handout
- Lab Work (November 9-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 5, pp. 97-98, exercise 2
- **Library Assignment due November 5th**

November 26-December 3: Chi-Square Test. (**Fifth Quiz December 5th**)

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 4 & 6
- Homework (due November 30): Pollock 1, chap. 6, p. 153, exercise 4c
- Lab Work (November 30-Group 1): Pollock 2, chap. 6, p. 115, exercise 2

December 5-14: Correlation.

- Reading: Pollock 1, chap. 7
- Homework (due December 10th): Pollock 1, chap. 7, p. 176, exercise 1
- Lab Work: (December 7-Group 2): Pollock 2, chap. 6, p. 115, exercise 2

FINAL EXAM, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19th, 1:00-3:00pm