

Bowie State University
Department of History and Government
Govt 391 Research Methods
Spring 2010
Weds. 4:55-7:25

Dr. D. Osei Robertson
Office 0209 MLK Bldg
Office Hours: T: 10:50-11:50, 2:30-4:30, W: 1:30-4:30, Th: 10:50-11:50, 1:30-3:00
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[NOTE: Govt145: Scope and Methods, and Soci, Psy, or Eco: Introductory Statistics are prerequisites for this course.]

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of the basic concepts, principles, and research methods employed in political science.

Course Overview

Research Methods is has three primary purposes. One, the course is designed to expand on the student's understanding of primary research in political science. This includes (though not limited to): the ability to conduct extensive literature reviews, formulate hypotheses, and perform data analyses. Secondly, the course seeks to expose students to some of the advanced statistical (for example, OLS and Logistic regressions) techniques used in the social sciences. Finally, the class seeks to a aid students in developing a basic proficiency with SPSS (one of the programs [others common programs are STATA and SAS] social scientists use to perform statistical analysis).

*******Special Needs:** Students who have a disability and who would like accommodations should report immediately to Disability Support Services (DSS), located in Room 1328 in the Business and Graduate Studies Building or call Dr. Michael S. Hughes, DSS Coordinator at 301-860-4067.

Requirements

A:General Education Competencies

- 1) Written and Oral Communication
 - Write a research proposal
 - Present a research proposal to class
 - Write a research paper
- 2) Critical Thinking and Reasoning
 - Carefully interpret, analyze, and evaluate evidence statements, graphics, and questions
 - Construct well-supported (evidence based), clearly articulated, and sustained arguments
- 3) Scientific Analysis Using Quantitative and Qualitative Sources
 - Apply descriptive and inferential statistics (such as US census data and public opinion data) to evaluate claims and current literature

- Use decision-maker and policy documents to assess the accuracy of claims made by politicians
- 4) Technology Competence
 - Use word processor to create a text document
 - Use SPSS program (such as Excel) to create tables and graphs for data analysis
- 5) Information Literacy
 - Use a Library Database (such as EBSCO Academic), the internet, or “MyPoliSciKit” to conduct research for class
 - Use traditional (hard copy books or journals) to conduct research for class

B: Student Learning Objectives

- 1) Learn the main components of a research paper, including: research questions, hypotheses, literature reviews, theoretical and methodological frameworks.
- 2) Understand basic quantitative concepts, such as: measures of central tendency, T-test, ANOVA, correlations, bivariate and multivariate regression.
- 3) Understand the differences between qualitative and quantitative methods, and different research sources.
- 4) Use the requisite skills for research in political science;
- 5) Demonstrate this knowledge in the use of technology and library resources.

C: Expected Outcomes: Students will be required to complete the following:

- 1) Two Tests to evaluate their mastery of key methodological concepts (learning objectives 1-4). Tests will be composed of multiple choice, short answers, and essays.
- 2) Write a research proposal (learning objectives 1&4)
- 3) Write a research paper (approx 20 pages) using qualitative or quantitative sources to examine a preselected topic (learning objective 1-5).

Course Requirements

1:Class Attendance/Participation: Attendance is a mandatory component of this course. Moreover, the participation element of the course will be partially derived from class discussions of the readings. While quizzes are not formally part of the course requirements, if students fail to keep up with the weekly reading assignments the instructor reserves the right to conduct pop quizzes. If any student misses more than four classes, the instructor reserves the right to automatically fail the student. *University professors are not obligated to honor any excuse or explanation for an absence, regardless if the absence is due to illness, family issues, or athletic events. If any student misses an assignment, she or he must submit the appropriate documentation (outlining specific details) for the professor to determine if the absence can or will be excused. Students are solely responsible for any materials that are covered or assigned (for example, if a test or quiz date is altered) during their absence.*

2: Readings: Students will be responsible for weekly readings and assignments taken from the following texts:

Kenneth Hoover and Todd Donovan, *The Elements of Social Scientific Thinking*, 9th ed. (Boston: Thompson/Wadsworth, 2008).

Phillip Pollock, *The Essentials of Political Analysis*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2005).

++++ +, *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*, 2nd edit. (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2005).

+++++, SPSS Student Version

Zealure Holcomb, *Fundamentals of Descriptive Research* (LA: Pryczak Pub., 1998).

NOTE: The Pollock texts are part of a bundled package, containing the above books and spss software. The ISBN for the package is **978-0-87289-382-5**.

In addition to these texts, students will be responsible for supplemental readings provided by the instructor.

3.) Tests: Students will take two tests as a part of the evaluation process. The tests will be composed of short answers and data analysis sections covering material reviewed in the prior weeks.

4: Papers: Students are responsible for one research paper (based on primary sources or data) due at the end of the semester. The paper should be approximately 20 pages (not including the title page or bibliography) long, and should include all the main components (in particular: res. questions/hypotheses, literature rev., theory/methodology, data analysis) of social science research design. For evaluation purposes, students will turn in different parts of the paper during the semester. Failure to turn in any one of these components will result in a deduction from the student's final paper grade.

Research Paper Key Dates

Feb 3rd: Research Topics Due: Students must submit a brief description of their topic.

Feb. 17th: Research Questions & Preliminary Bibliographies Due: The student must formulate at least two research questions pertaining to their chosen topic, and they must identify at least five sources dealing with that topic.

March 24th: Proposals Due: Students must submit a formal research proposal that includes all the required elements (see below). Failure to submit a proposal will result in a 10 point deduction from your research paper grade.

April 7th :Data/Primary Source Due: Students must bring a “hard’ or “digital” copy of the primary source(s) or data set (s) that the study will be based on.

April 21st: Data/Primary Source Analysis Section Due: The student must submit their analysis section. Failure to submit your data analysis section will result in a 5 point deduction from your final grade.

May 3-7: Complete Draft of Paper Due: Students must submit a complete draft of the paper for the professor to review.

Final Paper Due on University Scheduled Exam Date

Research Proposal Format

– research proposals must be at least 7 pages long, and they must include the following components:

Introduction (½ -1 pg)

Research Questions and Hypotheses (1-2 pgs)

Literature Review (at least 5 pgs)

Methodology Section (½ pg)

Main Components of a Research Paper

– The final paper should include the following components:

Cover Page

Introduction (1 to 2pgs)

--Each paper’s introduction should introduce the reader to the topic area.

Statement of the Problem (approx. ½ to 1pg)

--Tell the reader specifically what problem of you are trying to investigate, and why research is needed in this area.

Research Questions and Hypotheses (1-2 pgs)

--Students must conceptualize 2 to 4 clear research questions and hypotheses that will frame their discussion.

Literature Review (no longer than 7 pages)

--Using *at least ten* academic or professional sources (this must include a minimum of 4 books, the rest can be journal articles /book chapters), the student must summarize the work of each author. Each summary should indicate what the author(s) is studying, how she or he studied the topic, and what were the author’s findings (½ to 1 page for each author).

Methodology Section(approx. ½ pg to 1 pg): The student should indicate the following: whether the paper is quantitative or qualitative; identify the data sources employed in the paper; and list what the scope or range of the paper is (for example, the years or region that paper covers).

Analysis Section (no less than 7 pages): Based on your data or primary source(s), what were your findings? Were your hypotheses confirmed or rejected?

Conclusion (½ to 1 page)

--Your conclusion should summarize the major findings of your research, and discuss any prospects for future research

Bibliography:

– Students must have at least twenty sources in their bibliography, and government majors must use Chicago/Turabian Citation Format.

Grading Scale

First Test:	20%
Second Test:	20%
Assignments.	20%
Research Paper	30%
Attendance and Participation:	10%

******Communications:** The professor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule or course requirements. Any alterations to the course will be announced in advance in class and via Angel. Announcements on Angel are sent to the student’s BSU email address. Unless there is a technical problem with the system, students must communicate via their BSU email address.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Week 1: Jan. 25-Jan. 29

The Art and Science of Politics: Research Design and Basic Statistics Review

Required Reading: Hoover and Donovan, “Chapters 1-3”

Statistics Assignment: “Exercise 11: Mean, Median, Mode, and Cumulative Percentage”

Suggested Reading: Wysocki, “Research Design;”

Week 2: Feb. 1-5

Research Design and Conceptualization

(Paper Topics Due)

Required Reading: Pollock, “Chapter 2”; Hoover and Donovan, “Chapter 4”

Stat Assignment: “Exercise 16: Mean, Standard Deviation, and 68% Rule”

Suggested Readings: Wysocki, “Conceptualization,” Baglione, “Chapter 2”

Week 3: Feb.8-12

Measures of Central Tendency using SPSS

Required Reading: Pollock, “Chapter 3;” and *An SPSS Companion*, “Chapter 2”

Stat Assignment: Holcomb, “Chapter 9: Scattergrams and Pearson r”

Suggested Readings: Neuman, “Qualitative and Quantitative Measurement”

Week 4: Feb. 15-19

Measures of Central Tendency and CrossTabs

(Research Questions and Preliminary Bibliography Due)

Required Reading: *An SPSS Companion*, "Chapter 3;" Rochefort, "Chapter 3: Domestic Obstacles to International Affairs"

Stat Assignment: Holcomb, "Chapter 10: The Coefficient of Determination"

Suggested Reading: Neuman, "Analyzing Quantitative Data"

Week 5: Feb. 22-26

1st Test: Written + SPSS Proficiency Evaluation

Week 6: March 1-5

Data Screening and Variable Treatments

Required Reading: *An SPSS Companion*, "Chapter 4;"

Stat Assignment: Holcomb, "Exercise 25: Correlation Coefficient"

Suggested Readings:

Week 7: March 8-12

Controlled Comparisons

Required Reading: Pollock, "Chapter 4"; *An SPSS Companion*, "Chapter 5;"

Stat Assignment: Holcomb, "Chapter 11: Linear Regression"

Week 8: March 15-19

SPRING BREAK

Week 9: March 22-26

Significance Testing (T-test) and Measures of Association (ANOVA)

(Paper Proposals Due– Constitutes 10pts of final paper grade)

Required Reading: Pollock, "Chapter 6"; *An SPSS Companion*, "Chapter 7;"

Stat Assignment: Holcomb, "Exercise 37:t-Test for independent groups"

Week 10: March 29-Apr.2

Correlations and Bivariate Regression

Required Reading: Pollock, "Chapter 7"; *An SPSS Companion*, "Chapter 8;"

Stat Assignment: Develop a Bivariate Model to be tested using SPSS

Suggested Reading: Berry & Sanders, "The Bivariate Regression Model"

Week 11: April 5-9
Multivariate Regression

Data/Primary Source Due

Required Reading: Mayer, "Forecasting Presidential Nominations"; *An SPSS Companion*, "Chapter 9;"

Stat Assignment: Develop a Multivariate Model to be tested using SPSS

Suggested Reading: Berry & Sanders, "The Multivariate Regression Model"

Week 12: April 12-16
2nd Test

Required Reading: Pollock, "Chapter 8"; *An SPSS Companion*, "Chapter 10;"

Stat Assignment: Analyze the Mayer reading

Week 13: April 19-23
Logistic Regression

Data Analysis Due (Constitutes 5 pts of final paper grade)

Required Readings: Pollock, "Chapter 8"; *An SPSS Companion*, "Chapter 10;"

Stat Assignment: Develop a Logistic Model for testing using SPSS

Week 14: April 26-30

Week 15: May 3-7
Full Paper Draft Due

Week 16: May 10-15
Course Review

The Final Paper Is Due On The Exam Date and Time Scheduled By The University. I will not accept any papers or assignments after this date.

Data Resources:

Academic Data Sets (see instructor):

General Social Survey (GSS) 2006

GSS Cumulative File 1972-2008

National Election Study (NES) 2004

World Data Set (2008)

States Data Set (2006)

Political, Economic, and Social Statistics:

US Bureau of Labor Statistics

website: <http://www.bls.gov/>

US Census Bureau

website: <http://www.census.gov/>

State of Maryland Statistics

website: <http://www.statestat.maryland.gov/>

Public Opinion Data

Pew Center

website: <http://pewresearch.org/>

Gallup Organization

website: <http://www.gallup.com/Home.aspx>

Pollster.com

website: <http://pollster.com/>

International Stats

United Nations

website: <http://data.un.org/>

World Bank website:

<http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/0,,menuPK:476823~pagePK:64165236~piPK:64165141~theSitePK:469372,00.html>

Citation Format (Chicago Style Manual 14th edition)

– For a more complete listing of examples see the following links:

<http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/turabiangd.php> & <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocChicago.html>

Footnote/Endnote:

Single Author Book

1. Robert Smith, *We Have No Leaders: African Americans in the Post-Civil Rights Era* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996), 77.

Edited Book

2. Marguerite Barnett and Jennifer Hefner, eds., *Public Policy for the Black Community: Strategies and Perspectives* (Sherman Oaks, CA.: Alfred Pub., 1976), 23.

Chapter in a Edited Book

3. Vincent Harding, Robin Kelly, and Earl Lewis, "We Changed the World: 1945-1970," in *To Make Our World Anew: A History of African Americans*, ed. R. Kelley and E. Lewis (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2000), 255.

Journal Article

4. Jonathan Davies, "Urban Regime Theory: A Normative-Empirical Critique," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 24, no.1 (2002): 13.

– If you cite the author more than once you do not need to list the whole citation in proceeding references. For example, a second citation of Smith would be listed as: Smith, 78; or Ibid., (pg number if different).

*If you are using footnotes/endnotes you do not need a bibliography.

Parenthetical Reference, examples:

– Author's last name, then year of publication, followed by the particular page number(s).

(Howell and McClean 2001, 328-29).

(Reed 1999, 35).

(Howell and McClean 2001; Reed 1999; Walt 1997)

Bibliography

Howell, Susan, and William McClean. 2001. "Performance and Race in Evaluating Minority Mayors." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 65, no. 3: 327-40.

Reed, Adolph. 1999. *Stirrings in the Jug: Black Politics in the Post-Segregation Era*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press.

Walt, Stephan. 1997. "The Progressive Power of Realism." *American Political Science Review* 91, no. 4 (December): 931-35.

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

[PAPER TITLE]

A Senior Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of the
Department of History and Government

of

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

BACHELOR OF ARTS

by

[NAME]

Bowie, Maryland.
May 2006

Supplemental Readings and References

David Rochefort, ed., *Quantitative Methods in Practice: Readings From PS* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2006).

Diane Wysocki, *Readings in Social Research Methods* (Belmont, CA: Thompson/Wadsworth, 2004).

W. Lawrence Neuman, *Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Boston: Pearson, 2007).

Jarol Manheim, Richard Rich, and Lars Willnat, *Empirical Political Analysis: Research Methods in Political Science* (New York: Longman, 2002).

Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, 11th edit. (Belmont, Ca.: Wadsworth, 2007).

David Marsh and Gerry Stoker, eds., *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 2nd edit. (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

Lisa Baglione, *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science* (Belmont, CA.: Wadsworth, 2007)

John Gerring, *Social Science Methodology: A Critical Framework* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2001).

Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddie, *Mixed Methodology: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Pub., 1998).

William D. Berry and Mitchell Sanders, *Understanding Multivariate Research: A Primer for Beginning Social Scientists* (Boulder: Westview, 2000).

Craig Mertler and Rachel Vannatta, *Advanced and Multivariate Statistical Methods: Practical Application and Interpretation* (Glendale, CA: Pyczak Pub., 2005).

Rae Newton and Kjell Rudestam, *Your Statistical Consultant: Answers To Your Data Analysis Questions* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Pub., 1999).

Lee Kirkpatrick and Brooke, *A Simple Guide to SPSS* (Belmont, CA: Thompson 2005).

Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Chicago: Univ. Of Chicago Press, 1996).