# POS 3734 – 82271

# Research Analysis for Political Scientists (Fall 2015)

## Tuesday and Thursday 4:30pm – 5:45pm

**Building 51, Room 1201**

Dr. Michael Binder

**Office Hours:** 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm Tuesday and Thursday or by appointment

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**Objectives**

This is the second course in our two-course research sequence and is required for all Political Science majors. As scientists we strive to find out how things work in the world around us so that we may better adapt and manipulate our surroundings. To do so in a way that is accepted by our peers and the world at large we must engage in systematic inquiry and analysis. By engaging in systematic inquiry and analysis we are attempting to remove subjectivity and let our findings ‘speak for themselves’. Furthermore, by doing so we are presenting our work in such a way that others may replicate and enhance our work, thereby benefitting the field as a whole.

This course will build on the basic principles of research design and scientific research from the Research Design course. Students are shown how these concepts are applied to real data by real researchers in the real world to answer important social and political questions. We will take a hands-on approach to allow students to gain experience working with large data sets. Through a set of assignments, students will be asked to complete the process of conducting their own independent research concluding in the submission of a research paper.

**Required Texts**

Bundled package:

Johnson, Janet Buttoph and Reynolds, H. T. 2012. *Political Science Research Methods.* 7th ed. CQ Press. **(Referred to as J&R)**

Mycoff, Jason D. 2012 *Working with Political Science Research Methods*. 3rd ed. CQ Press. **(Referred to as Workbook)**

Pollock, Philip H. 2011. An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis. 4th ed. CQ Press.

**(Referred to as Pollock)**

**Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Be able to effectively apply critical thinking and quantitative analysis problem solving skills to political issues.
2. Possess writing skills needed to communicate clearly and effectively; convey information essential to the discipline in an orderly and understandable manner.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of concepts in research design.

**Professional Interactions:**

Be respectful and professional when you communicate with me, especially through email. Use this general “professional rule” when you email anyone in a professional setting (anyone that is not your friend or family member). General Rule: Use a greeting and address the person with their formal name (based on education) and conclude with a closing and your full name. In a university setting, you should address your instructors as “Dr.” or “Professor” and then last name. You can call me “Dr. Binder” or “Professor Binder.” You should also always spell check, edit for grammar and punctuation, etc. I suggest you use these guidelines for all of your courses at UNF and other professional experiences. Additionally, your professors at UNF teach more than one course, so you should specify (either in the subject or the body of the email), which course your question is in regard to.

**Course Resources:**

Course resources such as the syllabus, selected assignments, selected readings, etc. are available on Blackboard. Not all functions of Blackboard will be used for the course, but Blackboard is an essential communication tool that is used extensively in this course.

**Attendance & Participation:**

Attendance is taken regularly and along with participation accounts for 30 points of the final course grade. Tardiness, leaving early, not paying attention and general apathy will reduce the points earned in this category.

**Reading Quizzes:** There are several reading quizzes, each worth 5 points that must be completed PRIOR to the class that those readings are discussed.

**Exercises and Assignments:**

Exercises and Assignments completed outside of class must be handed in at the beginning of class or submitted on Blackboard prior to class starting. Exercises and assignments turned in after class has begun will also be considered late. Exercises are to be turned in via hardcopy in class while the assignments posted on Blackboard (Crosstabs, Abstract, Final Paper, etc.) are to be submitted online through Blackboard. The assignments that must be submitted on Blackboard should be submitted to PRIOR to the beginning of class on the day that it is due. In order to complete these assignment you must upload the assignment (either a .pdf or .docx via the appropriate assignment submission form on Blackboard) appropriately prior to class. Assignments handed in during class that are of **multiple pages MUST be stapled**. Unstapled assignments or workbook exercises will **NOT** be accepted. I deduct 20% of the value of the assignment/exercise once it is late and then an additional 20% for each 24-hour period that the assignment is late. In order to maintain a level playing field for all students, no matter the circumstance, all late assignments are treated equally. You have the course schedule now. Remember, due dates are the absolute last minute assignments and exercises can be turned in, you are free to turn in any assignment prior to that due date. If you suspect you may have difficulty getting an assignment in on a certain date, please feel free to turn it in early.

As a side note, the Final Research Paper has to be submitted with your full name, N number, term and year of this class as the name of the file that you are submitting. For example, “John Smith – N12345678 Summer 2015.docx” is the ***ONLY*** way the Research Proposal will be accepted. PERIOD. Until a file is submitted with that style of name of the document it will be considered late, and you risk earning zero points for the assignment if you do not turn it in appropriately and on time.

**Citations:**

Understanding how to properly attribute credit to the original author of an idea is an integral part of the research process. In order to avoid misunderstandings, the only form of citation accepted in this course is the APSA Style Manual. You can find the guide online: http://www.apsanet.org/media/PDFs/Publications/APSAStyleManual2006.pdf

**Plagiarism/Cheating/Academic Integrity:**

During exams, all phones must be turned off and put away. If I see a cell phone, I have to assume that you are using it to cheat. As such, you will ***fail the course*** and be subject to all appropriate disciplinary action as laid out in the university’s misconduct policies.

Blackboard includes a tool called “Safe Assign.”  This is a plagiarism checking device you may use for this course.  You **will** be penalized for plagiarism in an assignment.  Please note that Safe Assign is a limited tool; it does not find all forms of plagiarism.  You remain responsible for any form of plagiarism found in your final assignment, even if you have used Safe Assign.

Because students have the opportunity to learn about, check for, and avoid plagiarism prior to turning in the final paper, I have to assume any plagiarism I find in final papers is intentional. ***There are no “second chances.”  The same is true for other violations of academic integrity***.  That you “didn’t mean to” or “didn’t know” are not excuses for plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity. I am available to assist you; please see me if you have any questions about avoiding plagiarism ***before*** turning in your final papers!

In addition, all sources of reference from which students take quotations, major theories or concepts must be properly cited – using the APSA Style Manual. Submitting plagiarized work or any other forms of academic dishonestly will not be tolerated and such actions will result in ***failure of the course*** and potentially expulsion from the University. The University’s policy on plagiarism can be found at <http://www.unf.edu/registrar/forms/misconduct_policy.pdf>.

**Electronic devices:**

I understand that sometimes we forget to turn off our cell phones. However, I ask that you are courteous to others and try to remember to silence all phones and other electronic devices. This may go without saying but I need to say it, do not answer your phone and engage in conversation while class is taking place. If you need to take a call, please leave the class and do so, but do not make it a habit. Texting or web surfing on your mobile phone or your personal laptop is also prohibited during class.

**Class conduct:**

I ask that all students respect each other and maintain our classroom as a neutral environment where the diversity of opinion is welcomed. This respect also takes place in the form of your attending class regularly and arriving on time. Excessive absences and tardiness will be reflected in your class attendance score. Additionally, according to the UNF Code of Student Conduct disruptive behavior is defined as,

“Acts that impair, interfere with, or obstruct the orderly conduct, processes and functions of the University or the rights of other members of the University community. This includes acts that occur both inside and outside the classroom setting.” Some examples of disruptive behavior include the following: eating or sleeping in class, tardiness, engaging in private conversations during class, monopolizing class discussion, talking without being recognized, interrupting while others are talking, inappropriate language, making calls during class, etc. Students will initially receive a verbal warning when found in violation of this policy. If disruptive behavior should persist, points will be deducted from your class participation portion of the course and if deemed necessary, further action will be taken in accordance with the University’s Code of Student Conduct policies. *Source:* [*http://www.unf.edu/student-affairs/documents/Disruptive%2009.pdf*](http://www.unf.edu/student-affairs/documents/Disruptive%2009.pdf)

**Assignments and Grades**

Workbook Exercises

Workbook 14.1a-c 5

Workbook 12.8, 12.9, 12.11 5

Workbook 13.2, 13.4a-c, 13.5a 5

Workbook 14.6a-b 5

In Class Exercises (noted as **ICE** in course outline below)

Making Sense of Your Data Exercise (Ch. 2 #1 in Pollock) 5

Transforming Data Exercise (Ch. 3 #1 in Pollock) 5

Crosstab Exercise (Ch. 4 #3 in Pollock) 5

Controlled Comparisons Exercise (Ch. 5 #5 in Pollock) 5

Drawing Inferences Exercise (Ch. 6 #1 in Pollock) 5

Pearson’s Correlations Exercise (Ch. 8 #1 & Ch. 3 #3 in Pollock) 5

Linear Regression Exercise (Ch. 8 #6 in Pollock) 5

Assignments

Data Description Assignment 10

Crosstabs of IV & DV 10

Edited Paper with Additional Control 30

Pearson’s R/Multiple Regression Assignment 15

Abstract 10

Research Presentation 20

Research Paper 70

Reading Quizzes

Intro to SPSS Reading Quiz 5

Transforming Data Reading Quiz 5

Making Comparisons Reading Quiz 5

Statistical Inference Reading Quiz 5

Relationships Data Reading Quiz 5

Linear Regression Reading Quiz 5

Multiple Regression Reading Quiz 5

Call Center 15

Attendance & Participation 30

Total Points 300

**Grade Scale:**

278 – 300 = A 248 – 259 = B 209 – 229 = C

269 – 277 = A- 239 – 247 = B- 179 – 208 = D

260 – 268 = B+ 230 – 238 = C+ 178 or less = F

**Tentative Course Outline:** (Subject to Change at Instructor’s Discretion)

Exercises and Assignments highlighted in **bold** under “Readings” column on their due date.

Readings/**Assignments/Exercises**

**in bold**

Dates Topic Due by date shown below

8/25 Introduction, Overviews

Learning Objectives

8/27 Making Sense of Data Minkoff 2012

J&R 11

9/1 Intro to SPSS and Dispersion Pollock 1 & 2

Making Sense of Your Data **Intro to SPSS Reading Quiz**

**ICE Ch. 2 #1**

9/3 Hypothesis, Dataset Look over feedback on your

and VariablesResearch Design paper

Control Variable? **Data Description Assignment**

9/8 Transforming Data Petrocik 2009

Dummy Variables Pollock 3

**Transforming Data Reading Quiz**

9/10 Transforming Data in SPSS **ICE Ch. 3 #1**

9/15 Making Comparisons Jax Speaks 2013 Mayor Crosstabs

Jax Speaks 2013 Education Crosstabs

FL Gov Race 2013 Crosstabs

Price 2007 p. 56-76

Binder, Frisby & Kousser 2010 p. 1-5

Pollock 4

**Making Comparisons Reading Quiz**

9/17 Making Comparisons in SPSS **ICE Ch. 4 #3**

9/22 Controlled Comparisons Lindgren p. 16-21

Pollock 5

**Crosstabs of IV & DV**

9/24 Controlled Comparisons **Workbook 14.1a-c**

**ICE Ch. 5 #5**

9/29 Statistical Inference J&R 12

10/1 Calling Center Training **Statistical Inference Reading Quiz**

10/6 Statistical Inference **Submit Edited Paper w Control**

10/8 Statistical Inference in SPSSPollock 6

**Workbook 12.6, 12.10**

**ICE Ch. 6 #1**

10/13Relationships and Measures of J&R 13 p. 428-462

Association

10/15 ***No Class***

**PORL Call Center**

10/20 Relationships and Measures of J&R 13 p. 463-526

Association **Relationships Data Reading Quiz**

10/22 ***No Class*** Edit papers

10/27 Relationships in SPSS Pollock 7

**Workbook 13.2, 13.4a-c, 13.5a**

**ICE Ch. 8 #1 & Ch. 3 #3**

10/29 Linear Regression J&R 14 p. 527-566

**Linear Regression Reading Quiz**

11/3 Linear Regression in SPSS Pollock 8

Presentation Order Selection **Multiple Regression Reading Quiz**

**Workbook 14.6a-b**

**ICE Ch. 8 #6**

11/5 Analysis SectionsData & Analysis Sections ONLY

BCMM 2014**,** Smith & McDonald 2015, Petrocik 2009, Brady & McNulty 2011, Binder et al. 2014, Binder, Frisby & Kousser 2010

Minkoff 2012 p. 17

**Multiple Regression Assignment**

11/10 Abstracts and Discussions How to Write an Abstract - Tufts

Minkoff 2012 p. 18-1

Data & Analysis Sections ONLY

BCMM 2014**,** Smith & McDonald 2015, Petrocik 2009, Brady & McNulty 2011, Binder et al. 2014, Binder, Frisby & Kousser 2010

11/12 Data Presentation Childers and Binder 2012

**Abstract**

11/17 OPEN SPSS LAB

11/19 Research Presentations Group 1

11/24 Research Presentations Group 2

11/26 ***No Class Turkey Day***

12/1 Research Presentations Group 3

12/3 Research Presentations Group 4

**Final Research Papers Due**

by **4:30PM** on **Blackboard**

12/10 3:00pm – 4:50pm

Research Presentations Group 5

As reminder, the Research Paper has to be submitted with your full name, N number, term and year of this class as the name of the file that you are submitting. For example, “Jane Student – N12345678 Spring 2014.docx” is the ***ONLY*** way the Research Proposal will be accepted. **PERIOD.** If you upload the document to SafeAssign with the incorrect file name, it will not be accepted.