POS 3734 – 80783
Research Analysis for Political Scientists (Fall 2022)
Tuesday and Thursday 3:05pm – 4:20pm
Building 51, Room 1201

Dr. Michael Binder
Office Hours: Monday 12:30pm – 2pm or by appointment
Office Location: 51/2222 (Public Opinion Research Lab)
Zoom: https://unf.zoom.us/j/7062786184
Email: m.binder@unf.edu

Teaching Assistant: Stef Caranza
Office Hours: Zoom by appointment
Email: n01505848@unf.edu

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 research.

Required Texts

Johnson, Janet Buttoph, Reynolds, H. T., and Jason D. Mycoff. 2020. *Political Science Research Methods.* 9th ed. CQ Press. **(Referred to as J&R)**

Mycoff, Jason D. 2020 *Working with Political Science Research Methods*. 5th ed. CQ Press. **(Referred to as Workbook)**

Pollock, Philip H. 2020. An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis. 6th 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 Canvas. Not all functions of Canvas will be used for the course, but Canvas is an essential communication tool that is used extensively in this course, so make sure you regularly check your email associated with Canvas.

Class Participation:

Attendance is taken regularly and is considered along with participation points to make up 30 points of the final course grade. Tardiness, leaving early, not paying attention, and general apathy towards lectures and classmates will reduce the points earned in this category. Asking questions, answering questions, assisting other students with questions/SPSS, all help earn points in this category.

Reading Quizzes:

There are several reading quizzes that must be completed PRIOR to the class that those readings are discussed. The quiz questions are open book/open notes and you have up to three chances to take the quiz. However, Canvas only records your LAST attempt. So, if you take the quiz and you get a 5/5 on the first attempt, you should not take it again. If you don't do as well on your first quiz and you get a 4/5 on the second attempt, but you take it a third time and get a 2/5, your score will be 2/5. This may seem like a strange way to grade quizzes, however, there is a very important reason behind this. Knowing what you are capable of and taking calculated risks are a daily part of our lives. Many times in life you will be faced with a decision about whether you should take what you have or risk what you have in hopes of obtaining something better. Getting practice in these circumstances can improve your decision-making process.

In Class Exercises (ICE):

SPSS exercises completed during class – be prepared to create Microsoft Word documents and submit them on Canvas. If you have an online version of the workbook and 'write' in the answers, you can submit a PDF of the exercise as well.

Data Presentation:

In class oral presentation (with PowerPoint or other visual aid) assessing your ability to present data in a concise and professional manner, as well as field questions from the audience.

Final Exam:

In class exam assessing your ability to use to SPSS to test hypotheses and interpret the results.

Other Assignments:

Workbook Exercises and Assignments completed outside of class must submitted on Canvas prior to class starting. Exercises and assignments turned in after class has begun will be considered late. All assignments posted on Canvas (Crosstabs, Regression, etc.), Workbook Exercises and In Class Exercises are to be submitted online through Canvas. In order to complete these assignments, you must upload the assignment (either a .pdf or .docx via the appropriate assignment submission form on Canvas) appropriately prior to class (or in the case of In Class Exercises prior to the end of class at 4:20pm). 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.

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, specifically look at pages 24 – 32: 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.

Canvas includes a tool called "Turnitin." This is a plagiarism checking device used for this course. You **will** be penalized for plagiarism in a final assignment. Please note that Turnitin 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 Turnitin.

Because students have the opportunity to learn about, check for, and avoid plagiarism prior to turning in the final assignments, I have to assume any plagiarism I find in assignments 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 questions about plagiarism ***before*** turning in your papers!

In addition, all sources of reference from which students take quotations, major theories or concepts must be properly cited. 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, personal laptop or class computer is also prohibited during class, and will detract from your overall participation points.

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, all students are expected to act in accordance with to the UNF Code of Student Conduct.

Free Expression and Civil Discourse in the Classroom:
      Throughout the semester we may encounter concepts within this course that are complex, difficult to discuss, and may make some students uncomfortable or emotionally charged. Instructional discussions are intended to present concepts related to the course and provoke critical thinking on those concepts. Discussion of certain concepts does not represent an endorsement of those concepts. You are not required to believe any perspective, position, or issue that we discuss.
      My intent is to teach students to effectively consider perspectives that may differ from their own, a skill critical to personal and intellectual development. You will be expected to learn to tolerate and respond to criticism, consider ideas and viewpoints that may differ from your own, and to critically examine and discuss course-related topics. If you have concerns about free expression in class, I encourage you to reach out to me anytime. For more information on this topic, see the [Florida State University System Free Expression Statement](#).

Assignments and Grades

Workbook Exercises
Workbook: 11.1, 11.2, 11.4, 11.10	5
Workbook: 13.2 a-c, 13.5 a-b, 13.6 a only	5
Workbook: 12.1, 12.6, 12.14	5
Workbook: 14.11 a-h	5

In Class Exercises (noted as **ICE** in course outline below)
Hypotheses and Measurement (Ch. 1 #1, #2, #3, #4b in Pollock)	5
Making Sense of Your Data (Ch. 2 #1 in Pollock)	5
Transforming Data (Ch. 3 #1 & #3 in Pollock)	5
Making Comparisons (Ch. 4 #1 & #4 in Pollock)	5
Controlled Comparisons (Ch. 5 #1 in Pollock)	5
Statistical Inference (Ch. 6 #1 in Pollock)	5
Measures of Association (Ch. 8 #1 in Pollock)	5
Linear Regression (Ch. 8 #4a-e in Pollock)	5
Final Exam Prep Exercises	20

Assignments
Frequency and Hypothesis Exercise	10
Crosstab Exercise	20
Pollock Exercise Ch. 5 #4	10
Pearson's R/Linear Regression Assignment	20
Hypothesis and Variable Selection	5
Data Presentation	20
Final Exam	60

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
Regression Reading Quiz	5
Call Center	15
Class 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.

Dates	Topic	Readings/**Assignments/Exercises in bold** Due by date shown below
8/23	Introduction, Overviews Learning Objectives	
8/25	Hypotheses & Measurement	J&R 4
8/30	Intro to SPSS **ICE Ch. 1 #1, #2, #3, #4b**	Pollock 1 **Intro SPSS Reading Quiz**
9/1	Making Sense of Data Dispersion	J&R 11
9/6	Making Sense of Data Dispersion **ICE Ch. 2 #1**	Pollock 2 **Workbook: 11.1, 11.2, 11.4, 11.10**
9/8	Transforming Data Dummy Variables Recoding	Petrocik 2009 **Transforming Data Reading Quiz**
9/13	Transforming Data Dummy Variables Recoding **ICE Ch. 3 #1 & #3**	Pollock 3 **Frequency and Hypothesis Exercise**
9/15	Making Comparisons	Pollock 4 FDOT DUI Report 2017 Binder, Frisby & Kousser 2010 p. 1-5 Recent Press Releases PORL: http://www.unf.edu/coas/porl/ **Making Comparisons Reading Quiz** **Workbook 13.2 a-c, 13.5 a-b, 13.6 a only**

9/20	Quantitative Methods	J&R 10
9/22	Call Center Training	
9/27	Crosstabs **ICE Ch. 4 #1 & #4**	
9/29	Controlled Comparisons	Pollock 5
10/4	Controlled Comparisons **ICE Ch. 5 #1**	**Crosstab Exercise**
10/6	Statistical Inference Pt. 1	J&R 12 (Vital to read prior to class!) **Workbook 12.1, 12.6, 12.14**
10/11	Statistical Inference Pt. 2	Pollock 6 **Statistical Inference Reading Quiz**
10/13	Statistical Inference Pt. 3 **ICE Ch. 6 #1**	**Pollock Exercise Ch. 5 #4a-d**
10/18	**NO CLASS** Fall Break	
10/20	Relationships and Measures of Association	J&R 13 **Relationships Data Reading Quiz**
10/25	Relationships in SPSS **ICE Ch. 8 #1**	Pollock 8 **Hypothesis and Variable Selection – Discussion Board Opens**
10/27	Linear Regression	J&R 14 Bobo & Gilliam 1990 p. 384-386 Kogan & Binder 2014 p. 15-29 Heat and Abstention
11/1	Linear Regression	Pollock 8
11/3	Linear Regression **ICE Ch. 8 #4 a-e**	Pollock 8 Stainfield 2019 **Regression Reading Quiz**
11/8	Data Presentation Example	Linear Regression Video **Hypothesis and Variable Selection – Due on Discussion Board**
11/10	Big Picture Hypothesis Testing	**Pearson's R/Linear Regression Assignment**
11/15	**NO CLASS** Individual Presentation Prep	**Workbook 14.11a-h**
11/17	**NO CLASS** Individual Presentation Prep	

11/22	Data Presentation 1
11/24	**NO CLASS** Thanksgiving
11/29	Data Presentation 2
12/1	Data Presentation 3
12/6	Data Presentation 4
12/8	**ICE Final Exam Prep**
12/13	**Final Exam** **3:00pm – 4:50pm**