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**course time:** Monday and Wednesday, 11:00am-11:50am  
**classroom:** Scharbauer 1010  
**lab times:** Wednesdays, 1:00-1:50; Fridays 11:00-11:50 and 1:00-1:50  
**lab room:** Scharbauer 4022  
**e-mail:** michael.strausz@tcu.edu  
**office hours:** Mondays, 1:30pm-2:30pm, Tuesdays, 12:30pm-2:30pm  
**office:** Scharbauer 2007F

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**Course Description and Objectives:** This course has two aims. First, it is my goal for you to become better *consumers* of the work of professional political scientists. You will learn skills including how to evaluate the measurement of concepts, interpret statistical tables, and think critically about both qualitative and quantitative research designs. In short, you will learn to evaluate the strength of factual claims about politics. Second, it is my goal for you to learn to use the tools of empirical inquiry to become *producers* of your own political science research. You will learn to ask good questions, assemble competing explanations, gather data to test those explanations, analyze those data, and draw conclusions. Both of these sets of skills—becoming better consumers and producers of political science research—will help you in your other courses, and they will help you in life beyond college as well.

This is not a statistics class; it is a class about how political scientists do research. Because political scientists often use statistics in their research, we will pay a lot of attention to statistics, but we will also discuss qualitative research techniques, and we will spend time thinking about things like measurement, case selection, and research design, which are important for both quantitative and qualitative research.

**Expectations:**

1. *Assigned readings:* Prepare for each class by carefully reading the assigned materials, and bring the day's assigned reading to class with you. Bring your textbook to class and your textbook and workbook to lab.
2. *Attendance Policy:* Come to class on time, and stay for the duration. If you miss a class where graded work was submitted, you will receive a grade of zero on that work unless the absence was an Official University Absence or unless the absence was due to properly documented illnesses or properly documented personal/family emergencies. If you arrive more than five minutes late to a lab, leave a lab early, or miss a lab for reasons other than an Official University Absence, properly documented illnesses or properly documented personal/family emergency, you will not be permitted to submit that labwork, and you will receive a grade of zero for that week's lab.
3. *Technology Policy:* Students wishing to use computers, tablets, or smartphones to take notes in class are requested to use those devices *only* for class related purposes. I know how tempting it can be to use an electronic device for Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Ravelry (the knitting social networking site), games,

and other fun distractions, but if I catch a student doing so, that student will no longer be permitted to bring his or her electronic device to class. Remember that your primary responsibility at TCU is to learn. If you don't trust yourself to avoid online distractions, I encourage you to take notes with pen (or pencil!) and paper. Students wishing to make audio or video recordings of classes are required to come to my office hours to discuss acceptable use of those records and to sign a contract indicating that you will use those recordings responsibly. In the absence of written permission, you are not permitted to make audio or video recordings of classes.

4. *Extra Credit:* If I decide to establish an extra credit opportunity, the specifics will be announced in class or emailed out to all students enrolled in the class. So, come to class, check your TCU email, and don't expect to have an individualized extra credit assignment created for you.
5. *E-mail Policy:* Course-related communications will be sent to your TCU email account. Thus, check your TCU email regularly. "I did not see the email that you sent me" is not an acceptable excuse for failing to complete required course tasks. Also, feel free to email me questions, comments, or suggestions. In general (i.e. unless there are extraordinary circumstances), I will respond to student emails within 24 hours.
6. *Deadlines:* Deadlines for assignments are strictly enforced. Unless otherwise noted, an assignment submitted after the deadline will lose 10 points (out of 100) if it is submitted within 24 hours after the deadline, 20 points (out of 100) if it is submitted between 24 and 48 hours after the deadline, 30 points (out of 100) if it is submitted between 48 and 72 hours after the deadline, etc. So, for example, if a lab deadline is 10am on Monday and you submit your lab at 11am, you will automatically lose 10 points. Once grades have been officially submitted for the course, late assignments will no longer be accepted.
7. *Makeup Exams:* Makeup exams are not permitted unless you missed the exam due to an Official University Absence, a properly documented illness, or a properly documented personal/family emergency. "I overslept" is not an acceptable reason to make up an exam.
8. *Statement on TCU's Discrimination Policy:* TCU prohibits discrimination and harassment based on age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ethnic origin, disability, predisposing genetic information, covered veteran status, and any other basis protected by law, except as permitted by law. TCU also prohibits unlawful sexual and gender-based harassment and violence, sexual assault, incest, statutory rape, sexual exploitation, intimate partner violence, bullying, stalking, and retaliation. We understand that discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence can undermine students' academic success and we encourage students who have experienced any of these issues to talk to someone about their experience, so they can get the support they need. Review TCU's Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment and Related Conduct or to file a complaint: <https://titleix.tcu.edu/title-ix/> (this link is on the course's D2L page).
9. *Statement on Title IX at TCU:* As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your

written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep any information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I have a mandatory reporting responsibility under TCU policy and federal law and I am required to share any information I receive regarding sexual harassment, discrimination, and related conduct with TCU's Title IX Coordinator. Students can receive confidential support and academic advocacy by contacting TCU's Confidential Advocate in the Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education office at (817) 257-5225 or the Counseling & Mental Health Center at <https://counseling.tcu.edu/> or by calling (817) 257-7863. Alleged violations can be reported to the Title IX Office at <https://titleix.tcu.edu/student-toolkit/> or by calling (817) 257-8228. Should you wish to make a confidential report, the Title IX Office will seek to maintain your privacy to the greatest extent possible, but cannot guarantee confidentiality. Reports to law enforcement can be made to the Fort Worth Police Department at 911 for an emergency and (817) 335-4222 for non-emergency or TCU Police at (817) 257-7777.

10. *Statement of Disability Services at TCU:* Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, room 1010 or [http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability\\_services.asp](http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_services.asp). Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-6567.

Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations and accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations. Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator. Guidelines and documentation may be found at [http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability\\_documentation.asp](http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_documentation.asp).

Students with emergency medical information or needing special arrangements in case a building must be evacuated should discuss this information with their instructor/professor as soon as possible.

11. *Academic Misconduct:* (See Sec. 3.4 from the Student Handbook): Any act that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life and are listed in detail in the Undergraduate Catalog. Specific examples include, but are not limited to:
  - Cheating: Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings; using, during any academic exercise, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test; collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or laboratory without permission; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or

soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release; substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself.

- **Plagiarism:** The appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving credit therefore.
- **Collusion:** The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.

**Grading:** Grades in this course will be determined as follows:

Lab Assignments: 25% (there will be 10, so each is worth 2.5% of your final grade)

First Exam (**October 3**): 20%

Second Exam (**November 7**): 20%

Comprehensive Final Exam (**Wednesday, December 12, 11:30am-2:00pm**): 30%

Homework: 5%

Grades are determined on a 100-point scale as follows:

A: 93.5 and above	B: 82.5-86.4	C: 72.5-76.4	D: 62.5-66.4
A-: 89.5-93.4	B-: 79.5-82.4	C-: 69.5-72.4	D-: 59.5-62.4
B+: 86.5-89.4	C+: 76.5-79.4	D+: 66.5-69.4	F: 59.4 and below

If you feel that you have been graded unfairly, please wait 24 hours after the exam/assignment is returned and then contact me with a typed statement about why you believe you were graded unfairly. This statement must provide substantive reasons why you believe that you were graded unfairly. The appeal process must be initiated one week after the material was returned.

**Labs:** This class includes a lab that meets ten times. At each lab you will be given an assignment that will be due before the beginning of the next lab (unless otherwise noted). You are expected to bring your workbook to lab. If you miss a lab, arrive more than five minutes late to a lab, or leave early from a lab for reasons other than an Official University Absences, properly documented illness, or properly documented personal/family emergency, you will receive a grade of zero on the lab work that was assigned on that day.

**Exams:** This class includes three exams. No extra time will be granted for students that arrive at the exams late, and makeup exams are not permitted except in the case of Official University Absences, properly documented illnesses, or properly documented personal/family emergencies. If you need to request a makeup exam for one of these reasons, please contact me as soon as possible, and no later than 24 hours after the exam.

**Homework:** I will occasionally assign short exercises to complete at home or in class. The grades that you earn on these will be averaged together into your homework grade. Late labs will be accepted (with penalty) but late homework assignments will not be accepted, except in the case of Official University Absences, properly documented illnesses, or properly documented personal/family emergencies.

**Office Hours:** I encourage students to take advantage of my office hours (Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 1:30-2:30) in order to ask questions about the course materials or to chat about issues related to the course or political science more generally. If you cannot make it to my regularly scheduled office hours, please feel free to email me to make an appointment. You are not required to make an appointment to come to my regularly scheduled office hours; feel free to just drop by.

**Course Materials:** The following books are required. They are available at the TCU bookstore, but feel free to buy copies at other bookstores or online.

Pollock, Philip H. 2016. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. 5th edition

Pollock, Philip H. 2016. *An IBM SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*. 5th edition

**Schedule:**

20-Aug	<i>Welcome</i> No assigned reading
22-Aug	<i>What is political science?</i> No assigned reading
22 & 24-Aug	<b>Lab #1: Introduction to political science and SPSS</b> Workbook, pp 1-14 (skim)
27-Aug	<i>Definition and measurement of concepts</i> Textbook, pp. 1-18
29-Aug	<i>Measuring variables</i> Textbook, pp. 25-29
29 & 31 Aug	<b>NO LAB</b>
3-Sep	<b>LABOR DAY</b>
5-Sep	<i>Describing variables</i> Textbook, pp. 29-43
5 & 7 Sep	<b>Lab #2: Descriptive Statistics</b> Workbook, pp. 17-29 (skim)

- 10-Sep *LinkedIn, resumes, and cover letters for political science majors (and others)*  
No assigned reading
- 12-Sep *Hypothesizing*  
Textbook, pp. 48-58
- 12 & 14-Sep **Lab #3: Transforming variables**  
Workbook, pp. 39-55 (skim)
- 17-Sep *Comparisons*  
Textbook, pp. 58-70
- 19-Sep *Finding political science data in the TCU library and beyond*  
No assigned reading  
Bring laptop computers or tablets to class if you can
- 19 & 21-Sep **NO LAB**
- 24-Sep *Graphing relationships and describing patterns*  
Textbook, pp. 63-70
- 26-Sep *Experimental political science*  
Textbook, pp. 78-84
- 26 & 28-Sep **Lab #4: Making comparisons**  
Workbook, pp. 59-74 (skim)
- 1-Oct *What we now know*  
No assigned reading
- 3-Oct **First exam**
- 3 & 5 Oct **NO LAB**
- 8-Oct *Causal relationships*  
Textbook, pp. 84-97
- 10-Oct *Cross-tabular analysis*  
Textbook, pp. 102-112
- 10 & 12 Oct **Lab #5: Putting it together**
- 15-Oct **FALL BREAK**

17-Oct	<i>Comparing means</i> Textbook pp. 112-118
17 & 19-Oct	<b>Lab #6: Making controlled comparisons</b> Workbook, pp. 91-106 (skim)
22-Oct	<i>Foundations of statistical inference</i> Textbook, pp. 123-137
24-Oct	<i>Basic statistical inference</i> Textbook, pp. 137-153
24 & 26-Oct	<b>Lab #7: Making inferences about sample means</b> Workbook, pp. 117-126 (skim)
29-Oct	<i>Foundations of qualitative research</i> No assigned reading
31-Oct	<i>Chi-squared</i> Textbook, pp. 165-174
31-Oct & 2-Nov	<b>Lab #8: Chi-squared</b> Workbook, pp. 131-140 (skim)
5-Nov	<i>What we now know</i> No assigned reading
7-Nov	<b><u>Second exam</u></b>
7 & 9-Nov	<b>NO LAB</b>
12-Nov	<i>Qualitative Comparisons</i> No assigned reading
14-Nov	<i>Measures of association</i> Textbook, pp. 173-178
14 & 16-Nov	<b>Lab #9: Measures of association</b> Workbook, pp. 149-158 (skim)
19-Nov	<i>Correlation</i> Textbook, pp. 183-188
21 & 23-Nov	<b>THANKSGIVING</b>

- 26-Nov      *Bivariate regression*  
Textbook, pp. 188-201
- 28-Nov      *Multivariate regression*  
Textbook, pp. 201-209
- 28 & 30-Nov    **Lab #10: Correlation and regression**  
Workbook, pp. 158-161 (skim)
- 3-Dec        *Reading contemporary political science research*  
Assigned reading TBA
- 5-Dec        *Conclusion*  
No assigned reading
- 12-Dec        **Cumulative final exam, 11:00am-1:30pm**