
course time: Monday and Wednesday, 1:00pm-1:50pm

classroom: Scharbauer 1008

lab times: Wednesdays, 2:00pm-2:50pm & 3:00pm-3:50pm, Fridays 10:00am-10:50am

lab room: Scharbauer 3019

e-mail: michael.strausz@tcu.edu

office hours: Mondays 2:00pm-4:00pm, Thursdays 11:00am-12:00pm, or by appointment

office: Scharbauer 2007F

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 ask questions about the measurement of concepts, interpret statistical tables, and think critically about both qualitative and quantitative research designs. More broadly, 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 even 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 an in-class activity or pop quiz was administered, you will receive a grade of zero 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 leave early on a day when you submitted work (without prior approval) you will receive a grade of zero on that work.
3. *Technology Policy:* Students wishing to use computers, smartphones, recording devices, or other electronic devices in class are required to come to my office hours to discuss acceptable classroom use of technology and to sign a contract indicating that you will use those devices responsibly. Students using technology without permission or in violation of their contract will be asked to leave class on that day, and will receive a grade of zero for any quizzes or in-class activities that were scheduled for that day.

4. *Extra Credit:* If I decide to offer extra credit assignments, specifics will be emailed out to all students enrolled in the class (so check your TCU email!).
5. *Deadlines:* Deadlines for assignments are strictly enforced. 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 paper deadline is 10:00 am on Monday and you submit your paper at 11:00 am, you will automatically lose 10 points. Once grades have been officially submitted for the course, late assignments will no longer be accepted.
6. *Student Disability Services:* 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, 11. 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) 257-7486.
7. *Academic Misconduct:* I expect that the work that you turn in will be your own. Students determined to have committed academic misconduct will face penalties including (but not limited to) a grade of zero on the related assignment. I will not hesitate to bring suspected academic misconduct to the proper authorities. For more information on TCU's academic misconduct policy, see Section 3.4 from the Student Handbook.

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

Reading Quizzes (at least 8) and other in-class exercises: 25%

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

First Exam (February 15): 10%

Second Exam (March 28): 15%

Comprehensive Final Exam (May 11, 11:30-2:00): 25%

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

I will use the +/- system for all students, and the TCU registrar will automatically convert the grades of students not under the +/- system to the old system.

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 started one week after the exam/assignment was returned.

Quizzes: We will have at least eight reading quizzes in this class. If you do the readings and pay attention in class, your quiz grade should end up being quite high. Quizzes will usually take place at the beginning of class, and no extra time will be granted to students arriving late. If you

miss a class because of an Official University Absences, properly documented illnesses, or properly documented personal/family emergencies, you have one week to either visit my office hours or make an appointment with me to make up your quiz. If you wait more than one week to see me after missing a class where a quiz was given, you will receive a grade of zero for the missed quiz. Students who miss classes for reasons other than Official University Absences, properly documented illnesses, or properly documented personal/family emergencies will receive a grade of zero for missed quizzes.

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 (Mycoff's *Working with Political Science Research Methods*) to lab. If you miss a lab for reasons other than an Official University Absences, properly documented illness, or properly documented personal/family emergency, you will not be permitted to turn in the lab work that was assigned on the day that you missed.

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 one week after the date of the exam.

Office Hours: I encourage students to take advantage of my office hours 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 would like to get in touch with me to ask a question or schedule an appointment, I encourage you to e-mail me. You are not required to schedule 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. If you decide to order the books online, be sure to order the proper edition. Readings that aren't in these books will be available online, through the course's LearningStudio site (log in to tcuglobal.edu, go to the "Doc Sharing" section, and then view "Assigned Readings").

Janet Buttolph Johnson and H.T. Reynolds, *Political Science Research Methods* (7th Edition)

Jason D. Mycoff, *Working with Political Science Research Methods: Problems and Exercises* (3rd Edition)

Schedule:

18-Jan *Introduction*
 No assigned reading

18-Jan/20-Jan LAB CANCELLED

- 23-Jan *Lies, Damn Lies, and Statistics?*
Andreas, Peter. "The Politics of Measuring Illicit Flows and Policy Effectiveness." In *Sex, Drugs, and Body Counts: The Politics of Numbers in Global Crime and Conflict*, edited by Peter Andreas and Kelly M. Greenhill, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2010.
- 25-Jan *What is political science?*
Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 1-29
- 25-Jan/27-Jan **Lab #1: Empirical Political Science**
- 30-Jan *Empirical and normative theories*
Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 33-68
- 1-Feb *Asking good questions*
Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 74-100
- 1-Feb/3-Feb **Lab #2: The Research Process**
- 6-Feb *From question to hypothesis*
Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 102-124
- 8-Feb *Measurement*
Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 127-161
- 8-Feb/10-Feb **Lab #3: Hypotheses and Measurement**
- 13-Feb *What we know so far*
No assigned reading
- 15-Feb **First Exam**
No assigned reading
- 15-Feb/17-Feb LAB CANCELLED
- 20-Feb *Reliability and validity*
Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 165-178
- 22-Feb *Experimental political science*
Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 178-215

22-Feb/24-Feb	Lab #4: Causal Inference
27-Feb	<i>Sampling</i> Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 222-240
29-Feb	<i>More about sampling</i> Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 240-253
29-Feb/2-Mar	Lab #5: Sampling
5-Mar	<i>Making empirical observations</i> Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 257-274
7-Mar	<i>The written record</i> Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 278-304
7-Mar/9-Mar	Lab #6: Direct and Indirect Observation
12-Mar	<i>Surveys and interviews</i> Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 306-348
14-Mar	<i>Ethical issues in research</i> No assigned reading
14-Mar/16-Mar	Lab #7: Surveys and Archives
19-Mar-23-Mar	SPRING BREAK
26-Mar	<i>What we now know</i> No assigned reading
28-Mar	<u>Second Exam</u> No assigned reading
28-Mar/30-Mar	LAB CANCELLED
2-Apr	<i>Statistical inference</i> Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 396-425
4-Apr	<i>Relationships (between variables)</i> Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 428-455
4-Apr/6-Apr	LAB CANCELLED (Good Friday)

9-Apr	CLASS CANCELLED DUE TO ACADEMIC CONFERENCE
11-Apr	<i>Chi-squared</i> Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 456-463
11-Apr/13-Apr	Lab #8: Statistical inference
16-Apr	<i>Comparing means</i> Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 463-480
18-Apr	<i>Regression of two variables</i> Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 490-523
18-Apr/20-Apr	Lab #9: Relationship between variables
23-Apr	<i>Multivariate regression</i> Johnson and Reynolds, pp. 527-550
25-Apr	<i>Lies, Damn Lies, and Statistics? Reprise</i> Greenhill, Kelly M. "Counting the Cost: The Politics of Numbers in Armed Conflict." In <i>Sex, Drugs, and Body Counts: The Politics of Numbers in Global Crime and Conflict</i> , edited by Peter Andreas and Kelly M. Greenhill, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2010.
25-Apr/27-Apr	Lab 10: Multivariate regression
30-Apr	<i>What we now know</i> No assigned reading
11-May	<u>Final Exam, 11:30am-2:00pm</u>